

# Socio-Economic Problems of Women Artisans in Gulbarga District: A Sociological Study

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**ABSTRACT** The artistic and handicraft based occupations are playing significant role in rural economy and it also provided employment to women. Due to establishment of large scale industries in the post-globalization era, these artistic women fear of losing their occupations. Hence, a survey to assess the socio-economic problems of women artisans in Gulbarga district by interviewing 400 women artisans. The paper provided detailed socio-economic problems of artistic women in Gulbarga district.

# Introduction:

The Artisans and handicraft sector is the largest decentralised and unorganised sector of the Indian economy. Craftspeople form the second largest employment sector in India, second only to agriculture. Handicrafts are rightly described as the craft of the people: there are twentythree million craftspeople in India today. In India, craft is not merely an industry but a creation symbolizing the inner desire and fulfillment of the community. While handicrafts, be it metal ware, pottery, mats, wood-work or weaving, fulfill a positive need in the daily life of people, they also act as a vehicle of self-expression, and of a conscious aesthetic approach.

Artisans traditionally belonged to the profession of blacksmith, carpentry, pottery, shoe-making, weaving and oil-extraction. They used to provide effective support and servicing facilities for the economic activities like household tools and farm equipments and maintenance's of these equipments in the village. In return they used to get a fixed share of the peasants' produce and raw material for producing the equipments and households things (Das, 1994).

The caste based artistic occupations are also involved in women's work. In other words, in many of the caste based occupations, women are actively involved. But, it is highlighted that due to the establishment of big industrial organizations, their occupations are in danger, as these industries manufactures the products in bulk and sell it cheaper compared to handicrafts or artisans, who were played an important role in the same earlier. As such, the people engaged in caste based handicrafts and artistic work are now unemployed or under-employed. Consequently majority of these people are poor. A particular characteristic of these people is they are living in rural areas, as the big industrial organizations become popular in urban areas. In caste based occupations, women are playing an important role in manufacturing the artistic works and services. Due to the globalization, their economic status is under threat. Hence, to study the socio-economic problems of women artisans the present study was made in Gulbarga district.

# Objectives of the Study:

1. To know about the education level of women artisans

in Gulbarga district;

- 2. To assess the economic status of the women artisans by income; and
- To examine the impact of globalization and modernization on artistic occupations in general and women artisans in particular.

# Methodology:

Due to globalization, artistic occupations started to disappear and in rural areas they are still in demand. Hence, the author surveyed 200 women artisans in towns in the Gulbarga district and Gulbarga city. Further, 200 women artisans living in villages and rural areas were surveyed. The primary data is collected through interviews and the collected data is analyzed and discussed as under.

# Analysis and Discussion:

### 1. Age of the Respondents:

Age plays significant role in assessing the knowledge and expertise in artistic works of the women artisans. If there is higher age, then there is more experience and expertise in their work and vice versa. As such, the information was collected from the respondents on the age and presented in the following table.

# Table No. 1. Age of the Respondents

	Urban		Rural		Total	
Age	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Below 18 Years	04	2.0	11	5.5	15	3.7
18 to 25 Years	21	10.5	25	12.5	46	11.5
26 to 40 Years	40	20.0	51	25.5	91	22.7
41 to 50 Years	52	26.0	43	21.5	95	23.7
51 to 60 Years	45	22.5	39	19.5	84	21.0
More than 60 Years	38	19.0	31	15.5	69	17.2
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

The age of all the respondents revealed that, 15 (3.7%) are of below 18 years, 46 (11.5%) are between 18 to 25 years, 91 (22.7%) are between 26 to 40 years, 95 (23.7%) are between 41 to 50 years, 84 (21.0%) are between 51 to 60 years and the remaining 69 (17.2%) of the respondents are of more than 60 years. It is generalized from the information collected on the age group of the respondents that

few of the women artisans are minors and working in their family occupation and considerable number of respondents even though reached more than 60 years, still they are working in their occupations.

# 2. Education:

Education is an important aspect as it influences the new trends and developments in the artistic works. Many of the women artisans have even completed Graduation and engaged in their artistic works. Hence, the collected responses of the women artisans on their educational background are tabulated as under.

Education	Urban		Rural		Total	
Education	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Illiterate	13	6.5	44	22.0	57	14.2
Up to 10th Standard	122	61.0	130	65.0	252	63.0
Under-Graduate/ PU 2nd Year	48	24.0	21	10.5	69	17.2
Graduate	17	8.5	05	2.5	22	5.5
Post-Graduate						
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

As expressed by all the respondents, a great majority that is, 252 (63.0%) have completed primary or secondary education (up to 10<sup>th</sup> Standard) followed by, 69 (17.2%) have completed under graduation or pre-university level, 57 (14.2%) are illiterates and 22 (5.5%) of all the respondents have completed graduation respectively. It is surprising to note that none of the respondents have completed their post-graduation. Further, considerable numbers of respondents are illiterate respondents in rural areas.

# 3. Caste:

Caste plays significant role in determining social culture of each of the communities. As such, information collected on the castes of the respondents is presented in the following table.

# Table No. 3. Caste

	Urban		Rural		Total	
Caste	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Scheduled Caste	43	21.5	35	17.5	78	19.5
Scheduled Tribe	12	6.0	07	3.5	19	4.7
Other Backward Classes	121	60.5	143	72.5	264	66.0
Others	24	12.0	15	7.5	39	9.7
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

Among all the respondents, great majority that is, 264 (66.0%) are from Other Backward Classes followed by, 78 (19.5%) are from scheduled castes, 39 (9.7%) are from others or forward castes and 19 (4.7%) are from scheduled tribes respectively. It is highlighted that majority of the other backward classes are traditional occupation based and as such, majority of the respondents in the present study belongs to other backward classes.

# 4. Nature of Work:

As stated in the research methodology, the artistic works

covers diverse types of work that need expertise and skills. The artistic works include many occupations and as such, it is not possible to cover all the artistic works and the women engaged in all the artistic works. Hence, sampling of the artistic works was made and women engaged in these occupations were surveyed. In particular, the women artisans engaged in different types of works as stated in the following table.

### Table No. 4. Nature of Work

Nature of Work	Urban	Urban		Rural		
	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Weaving	22	11.0	17	8.5	39	9.7
Pottery	38	19.0	31	15.5	69	17.2
Black Smithy	10	5.0	14	7.0	24	6.0
Matt/ Rope/ Basket Makers	14	7.0	22	11.0	36	9.0
Sculptors	04	2.0	07	3.5	11	2.7
Knitting, Stitching, Embroidery	25	12.5	21	10.5	46	11.5
Carpenter/ Agricul- tural Implements Makers	12	6.0	16	8.0	28	7.0
Cobblers/ Leather Workers	41	20.5	38	19.0	79	19.7
Traditional Jew- elry Makers (Gold Smiths)	11	5.5	17	8.5	28	7.0
Painters, Drama- tists, Folk Artists, etc.	06	3.0	11	5.5	17	4.2
Others	17	8.5	06	3.0	23	5.7
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

Of all the respondents, 39 (9.7%) are engaged in weaving, 69 (17.2%) are engaged in pottery, 24 (6.0%) are engaged in black smithy, 36 (9.0%) are engaged in matt, rope or basket making, 11 (2.7%) are working as sculptors, 46 (11.5%) are engaged in knitting, stitching and embroidery, 28 (7.0%) are working as carpentry, 79 (19.7%) are working as cobblers or leather workers, 28 (7.0%) are engaged in traditional jewelry makers, 17 (4.2%) are working as painters, dramatists, folk artists, etc. and 23 (5.7%) are engaged in other types of works.

# 5. Training in Crafts/ Art based Works:

Artistic works and crafts are generally caste and family based. But due to the government's interventions, training is also given in many of these occupations such as leather works, ceramics technology, pottery, embroidery, etc. Hence, it was asked to the respondents that whether they have gained any training in crafts or art based works and the collected information is presented in the following table.

Table No.	5.	Training	in	Crafts/	Art	based	Works
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	Urban		Rural		Total	
Training in Crafts/ Arts	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Short term courses from Specialized Institutions	23	11.5	54	27.0	77	19.2
General Courses in Management of Small Business	04	2.0	05	2.5	09	2.2

# RESEARCH PAPER

Worked as Trainee in Crafts based Institutions			08	4.0	08	2.0
None	173	86.5	133	66.5	306	76.5
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

Among all the respondents, a great majority that is, 306 (76.5%) have not attended any of the courses or workshops, followed by 77 (19.2%) have attended short term courses from specialized institutions, 09 (2.2%) have attended only general courses in management of small business and 08 (2.0%) have worked as trainee in crafts based institutions respectively. It shows that the occupations of the respondents are caste based and family based rather than training based.

# 6. Worth of Capital Investment:

Worth of capital investment reveals the quantity of business and rewards from such business. If the investment is low, then return should be lower, vice versa. As such, information on the worth of capital amount invested in arts or crafts business by the family members of the respondents initially was collected and tabulated as under.

	Urban		Rural		Total	
Worth of Capital Investment	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Hereditary Occupa- tion/ Don't Know	107	53.5	130	65.0	237	59.2
Below Rs. 25000	12	6.0	20	10.0	32	8.0
Rs. 25001 to Rs. 50000	58	29.0	36	18.0	94	23.5
Rs. 50001 to Rs. 1 lakh	23	11.5	14	7.0	37	9.2
More than Rs. 1 lakh						
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

As stated by all the respondents, 237 (59.2%) have no knowledge about capital investment of the business as it is hereditary, only 32 (8.0%) have disclosed capital investment as below Rs. 25000, as stated by 94 (23.5%) of the respondents, the capital investment is between Rs. 25001 to Rs. 50000 and the capital investment of 37 (9.2%) of the respondents is between Rs. 50001 to Rs. 1 lakh. It is highlighted from the collected data that the main occupation of majority of the respondents it artistic based handicrafts or occupation. As such, it was carried by the elders in the families and as such a great majority of the respondents are not aware about the initial investment made by their elders for the occupation and it is also noted that none of the respondents have invested more than Rs. 1 lakh capital investment.

# 7. Level of Demand:

Many of the artistic works such as paintings have international demand, whereas other works such as pottery, rope, matt, etc have local demand rather than regional or state level or even national level demand. As such, the level of demand for the artistic or handicrafts was noted and presented in the following table.

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Table No. 7. Level of Demand

	Urban		Rural		Total	
Level of Demand	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Local Level	141	70.5	160	80.0	301	75.2
District/ Regional Level	53	26.5	38	19.0	91	22.7
State/ National Level	06	3.0	02	1.0	08	2.0
International Level						
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

It is noted that large majority, that is 301 (75.2%) have stated that their products are demanded locally, followed by 91 (22.7%) have expressed that their products are demanded at district or regional level and the products of 08 (2.0%) of the respondents are demanded state or national level.

# 8. Reasons for Choice of Occupation:

Many of the people choose their occupations based on their education and expertise, similarly the occupations are also based on family and a few just choose occupations for their livelihood. Hence, it was asked to the respondents to give details that how they have chosen the present artistic occupation or handicrafts and the collected responses are shown as under.

Table No	. 8.	Reasons	for	Choice	of	Occupation
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	Urban		Rural		Total	
Reasons for Choice of Occupation	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Caste based/ Fam- ily Business	166	83.0	172	86.0	338	84.5
Special Expertise in Crafts/ Arts	12	6.0	23	11.5	35	8.7
Got Special Train- ing in Crafts/ Arts	04	2.0	05	2.5	09	2.2
Indispensable for Livelihood	43	21.5	72	36.0	115	28.7
Special interest in Arts/ Crafts						
Any Other						
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

Surprisingly, an overwhelming majority that is 338 (84.5%) have chosen the occupation as it is caste based and family business followed by, 115 (8.7%) have chosen the business as it was indispensable for their livelihood, 35 (8.7%) have chosen the occupation as they have special expertise in crafts and arts and 09 (2.2%) have chosen the occupation as they have got special training in crafts and arts respectively.

# 9. Monthly Income from Artistic Work/ Handicrafts:

Monthly income shows the economic status of women and they also measure standard of living of the respondents. Hence, the primary data was collected on monthly income of the respondents from their artistic works or handicrafts and tabulated as under.

Table No. 9. Monthly Income from Artistic Work/ Handicrafts

	Urban	Urban		Rural		
Monthly Income of Respondents	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Below Rs. 3000	121	60.5	168	84.0	289	72.2
Rs. 3001 to Rs. 6000	72	36.0	32	16.0	104	26.0
Rs. 6001 to 12000	07	3.5			07	1.7
Rs. 12001 to Rs. 25000						
More than Rs. 25000						
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

The monthly income of all the respondents from artistic works and handicrafts revealed that, 289 (72.2%) of the respondents have monthly income of less than Rs. 3000, that of 104 (26.0%) of the respondents is between Rs. 3001 to Rs. 6000 and monthly income of 07 (1.7%) of the respondents is between Rs. 6001 to Rs. 12000 respectively. It shows that none of the respondents are getting monthly income of more than Rs. 12000 and as such, majority of the respondents are living below poverty line.

### 10. Income Sufficient to Meet Family Expenses:

As discussed above, nearly half of the respondents are getting inadequate profits for their products and hence, it may be noted that their families have insufficient income to meet family expenses. Here expenses are classified as regular expenses, that include food, clothing, shelter and such other necessary expenses and extraordinary expenses include medical expenses, marriage expenses, etc. Hence, information was collected from the respondents on whether their occupational income sufficient to meet the family expenses and shown as under.

Table No.	10. Income	Sufficient to	Meet	Family	Expenses
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	Urban	Urban		Rural		
Income sufficient to Meet Expenses	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Sufficient for Regu- lar Expenses	83	41.5	102	51.0	185	46.2
Sufficient for Regu- lar & Extraordinary Expenses	37	18.5	46	23.0	83	20.7
Not Enough to Meet Family Ex- penses	61	30.5	35	17.5	96	24.0
Income earned is meager	19	9.5	17	8.5	36	9.0
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

It is surprising to note that, 185 (46.2%) have stated that their income is sufficient to meet their regular expenses, 83 (20.7%) have expressed that their income is sufficient for regular and extraordinary expenses, 96 (24.0%) have stated that their income is not enough to meet their family expenses and 36 (9.0%) have stated that their income is meager.

# 11. Impact of Globalization and Modern Technology on Handicrafts and Artistic Works:

Modern technology derived from globalization has be-

come boon to few artistic works, as raw materials can be imported and easily available for artistic works. On the other hand, establishment of large scale industries made the small industries, handicrafts and artistic works disappear as these small scale businesses or occupations can't able to compete with large scale industries. Hence, it was asked to the respondents to give the impact of globalization and modern technology on handicrafts and artistic works and the information furnished by the respondents is tabulated as under.

Table No.	11. Impact of Globalization and Modern Tech-
nology on	Handicrafts and Artistic Works

	Urban		Rural		Total	
Impact of Globali- zation & Modern Technology	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Decrease in De- mand for Artistic Works/ Handicrafts	127	63.5	148	74.0	275	68.7
Increase in De- mand for Artistic Works/ Handicrafts	22	11.0	16	8.0	38	9.5
No Change in De- mand and Supply	38	19.0	26	13.0	64	16.0
Modernization of Handicrafts/ Artistic Works	13	6.5	10	5.0	23	5.7
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

It is emphasized that majority that is, 275 (68.7%) have felt that there is decrease in demand for artistic works and handicrafts due to globalization and modern technology followed by, 64 (16.0%) have agreed that there is no change in demand and supply due to globalization, 38 (9.5%) have remarked that there is increase in demand for artistic works and handicrafts and 23 (5.7%) have opined that there is modernization of handicrafts and artistic works. To conclude, there is more decrease in demand for handicrafts and artistic works due to globalization and modern technology and it is applicable to majority of the artistic works, however, a few of the handicrafts and artistic works have benefitted due to such modern technology.

# 12. Get Adequate Profits/ Rewards:

As discussed above, due to globalization there is decrease in demand and as such, there is lesser production and consequently there is lesser profit. Further, the investment made is lesser and as such profit is also lower in case of handicrafts and artistic works. In this regard, a question was asked to the respondents that whether they are getting adequate profits or rewards for their works and the collected responses are presented in the following table.

Table No.	12.	Get	Adequate	Profits/	Rewards
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	Urban		Rural		Total	
Get Adequate Profits/ Rewards	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Yes	111	55.5	104	52.0	215	53.7
No	89	44.5	96	48.0	185	46.2
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

On getting adequate profits or rewards, only 215 (53.7%) of all the respondents are getting adequate profits or rewards, whereas 185 (46.2%) are not getting adequate

profits or rewards. As nearly half of the respondents are not getting adequate profits, there is need to provide selfemployment to these families in other occupations, so that they can earn for their livelihood.

# 13. Status as Artisan Woman:

Each individual has his or her own individual status and respect. Due to social and economic inequalities in Indian society, many of the individuals are not getting adequate status and respect. The artisan women are also not exception to the same. Hence, information was collected from the respondents on their personal status as artisan woman and tabulated as under.

	Urban		Rural		Total	
Status as Artisan Woman	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Higher Status in Society	15	7.5	23	11.5	38	9.5
Economic Status as Working Woman	37	18.5	52	26.0	89	22.2
No Status, as Oc- cupation has Lower Status	148	74.0	125	62.5	273	68.2
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

Table No. 13. Status as Artisan Woman
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Among all the respondents, it is surprising to highlight that only 38 (9.5%) have higher status in society, 89 (22.2%) have economic status as working woman and 273 (68.2%) have no status, as their occupation have lower status. It is emphasized that no occupation is lower or higher, but still there is caste based and occupation based rigidities in Indian society. Due to such conventional ideas, women artisans are not getting adequate status and respect.

# 14. Challenges and Problems in Occupation:

Like in others' occupations and businesses, the women are also facing many problems and challenges. It may be scarcity of raw materials, lower demand, lower price, shortage of finance, competition, etc. The information collected on the challenges and problems of the women artisans are tabulated as under.

Table No. 14	Challenges a	and Problems	in Occupation
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	Urban		Rural		Total			
Challenges & Prob- lems	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%		
Competition from Large Industries	112	56.0	97	48.5	209	52.2		
Scarcity of Raw Materials	14	7.0	10	5.0	24	6.0		
Inadequate Finance	43	21.5	61	30.5	104	26.0		
Decreasing Demand	35	17.5	47	23.5	82	20.5		
Any Other	16	8.0	23	11.5	39	9.7		
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100		

As expressed by all the respondents, 209 (52.2%) are facing competition from large scale industries, 24 (6.0%) are facing problem of scarcity of raw materials, 104 (26.0%) are facing problems of inadequate finance, 82 (20.5%) are facing the problems of decreasing demand for their products and 39 (9.7%) are facing other types of problems. It is highlighted that the establishment of large scale industries has become threat to the occupations of women artisans, as large number of respondents are facing competition and there is shortage of finance for women artisans to develop and modernize their occupations.

# 15. Comparative Economic Status:

Generally people engaged in one occupation compared their work as well as the rewards with other occupations. As such, it was asked to the respondents that what is their opinion on their occupations compared to other occupations and the collected responses are tabulated as under.

Table No. 15. Comparativ	e Economic Status
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	Urban		Rural		Total	
Comparative Eco- nomic Status	No's	%	No's	%	No's	%
Other Occupations are Better & More Profitable	55	27.5	32	16.0	87	21.7
Self-Occupation is Better	26	13.0	18	9.0	44	11.0
No Future for All Artistic Occupations	83	41.5	68	34.0	151	37.7
Don't Know about Other Occupations, but it is Indispensa- ble Occupation	36	18.0	82	41.0	118	29.5
Any Other						
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

Among all the respondents, 87 (21.7%) have expressed that the occupations are best and more profitable compared to others, 44 (11.0%) have stated that their own occupation is better compared to others, 151 (37.7%) have remarked that all the artistic occupations have no future and 118 (29.5%) have no knowledge about other occupations and think that the present occupations is better for them. Surprisingly, it is emphasized that there is no future for artistic occupations and handicrafts. It shows that there is need to provide self-employment training to them so that they can engage in other occupations.

# Conclusion:

From the above discussion, it is noted that women artisans are facing threat to their income due to globalization. Hence, there is need to rehabilitate these artisans so as to earn for their livelihood. In this respect, there is need for technology based modern occupations training for these women artisans so that these artisans can change their conventional occupations to modern occupations.

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