



## CANE AND BAMBOO BASED TRADITIONAL HANDICRAFT INDUSTRY: A PROFITABLE BUSINESS FOR YOUTH SELF HELP GROUP OF ASSAM

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**ABSTRACT** Handicraft is the making of decorative or useful object by hand and widely spread occupation . One of the most important handicraft is cane and bamboo craft . Assam the North East Indian state is blessed with abandoned forest resources. Most of its forest are richly stocked with bamboo and cane of various species . Even cane and bamboo are the two most commonly used materials in daily life of Assam. Every villagers produces various kind of products of bamboo and cane for their daily life in their leisure time . It is also a part time earning source of most of the villagers . If people of Assam take this occupation for their primary income source it will help them to earn more in short period of time . Moreover unemployment is one of the biggest problem in Assam . The number of unemployed in the state keeps rising by the day . A large number of youth go outside the state in every year for seeking job and they are engaged in various work for little money . In this case if these large number of youth engaged themselves in traditional handicraft occupation such as cane and bamboo based rural industry through self help group then it became more profitable .

**KEYWORDS :** Handicraft, Self Help Group .

### INTRODUCTION:-

Handicraft is making of decorative or useful objects by hand . People living throughout the world create handicraft for number of reasons . Cane and Bamboo craft is believed to be the oldest creation of man and is considered to be the oldest craft. Assam economy continues to be predominantly an agrarian economy as more than 85% of the population is living in the rural areas and more than 52 percent of the total labour force are found to be engaged in agriculture and allied activities as per population census 2011. Cane and bamboo based traditional handicraft can play a significant impact on employment generation in the state and plays a vital role in income generation both the rural and semi –urban economy .

Assam is gifted by nature with sylvan resources and the most of its forest are richly stocked with bamboo and cane of various species. Bamboo and canes are used to make so many products used by the people in their daily lives . These are light in weight and have their own style and elegance . Bamboo is plentiful in the villages throughout the state . Recent advances in technology and in product and application , development have brought about a growing realization that bamboo in particular can be the vehicle for value addition , incremental income and employment . It is a material that lends itself easily to simple processing technologies. Thus bamboo can revolutionize the economy of the state ensuring employment opportunities to a large number of people .

Bamboo and cane handicraft products are in evidence everywhere in Assam . The important among them are basket, jakoi , khaloi, juluki, pollo, mats and furniture , decorative items, walking sticks , bows and arrows , chaloni (sieve), kula (winnowing fan) , khoralu (small basket) , dukula (big basket) , doon and dhol (measuring basket) , fishing traps , Hats , mug , hukkas , musical instrument , hand fans , screen and floor mats . Japi , Dolls and Toys , Toy shot guns , umbrella handle , bags mats , rugs , Flower holder bag , magazine stands and straw hats etc .

**Self Help Group :-** Self help group is a small village based financial intermediary committee of poor people, usually composed of 10-20 local people , preferably from the same socio – economic background . They come together purpose of solving their common problems through self help group and mutual help . These self help group are engaged in various economic activities to develop their financial condition . The establishment of rural industries like cane and bamboo handicraft can be very effective in creating new job opportunities and producing a satisfactory income source for youth self help group .

### OBJECTIVES:-

- (i) To study the impact of cane and bamboo based handicraft industries in improving socio-economic status of youth of Assam.
- (ii) To study the advantage of cane and bamboo based handicraft practice through youth self help group.
- (iii) To study the problems of cane and bamboo based rural industry.
- (iv) To study the future aspects of cane and bamboo based rural industry.

**METHODOLOGY:-** Information were collected from secondary sources.

### FINDINGS:-

- (i) Cane and bamboo based handicraft requires low investment and offers high profit. It is well suited to the agrarian economy of Assam. It ensures optimum utilization of resources human and other inputs locally without harming nature.
- (ii) Cane and bamboo handicraft is a business profitable within a short period of time. It provides regular income to farmers throughout the year. Therefore there is no possibility of stop the income among the self help group.
- (iii) Assam is one of the largest bamboo producing state in India . Apart from forest, bamboo is also plentiful in the villages throughout the state. Therefore there is no problem of scarcity of raw material for the farmers.
- (iv) Cane and bamboo is renewable resources and inexhaustible raw materials if properly managed bamboo and handicraft improve the quality of life in villages towns and cities .
- (v) Assamese people are familiar with cane and bamboo handicraft. It is always a subsidiary occupation of most of the farmers. They practice this culture during their leisure time. If they will take this activities in large scale through self help group. It will easy to develop their business.
- (vi) The craft of cane and bamboo does not involve many tools. Therefore this business does not require large capital.
- (vii) Bamboo and cane handicraft plays a vital role in the flow of income from the urban rich sections of the society to the rural poor because today there is great demand of bamboo product world wide and to keep pace with the general public demand products like decorative furniture , bed, mats, rugs, flower holder bags, magazine stand and straw hats, japi, dolls and toys, ornaments which very famous.
- (viii) Modern cane and bamboo based products are becoming decorative items for many people residing in urban areas.

### PROBLEM:-

- (i) Lack of highly skilled artisans who produce fine decorative and attractive furniture on commercial basis .
- (ii) Cost of cane and bamboo are increased day by day.
- (iii) Farmers facing problem of irregular supply of raw materials due to deforestation of cane and bamboo mostly in the rural areas of Assam .
- (iv) Bamboo is susceptible to attack by fungus, insects and borers. Traditional methods of conservation cannot be applied to bamboo handicraft for new application.
- (v) Though Assam has been traditionally rich in bamboo, bamboo craft from Assam do not figure prominently in the handicraft market of India and Assam share in the export trade is negligible.
- (vi) The age old art faced with several challenges including stiff competition from plastic and fibre products, lack of marketing initiatives and soaring price of bamboo. The artisans are compelled to sell items at lower prices.
- (vii) There is lack of systematic botanical information on the growth

and spread of suitable species for handicraft on the basis of area to area.

**CONCLUSION:-**

- (1) There is a need to develop entrepreneurial perspectives and skills among local artisans .
- (2) Government of assam should encourage , promote and support the development of the bamboo sector in a comprehensive manner through a multidisciplinary , multidepartmental and multidimensional integrated approach to provide economic benefits to the people of the state .
- (3) Traditional tools and equipments should be replaced with power driven machines .
- (4) Attempts should be taken to capture foreign market . Moreover fairs and exhibitions of quality products should be held at national and international levels . This process will definately raise the income of the handicraft products .

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