



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Arts

SOCIO ECONOMIC CONDITION OF HANDICRAFT ARTISAN: A CASE STUDY OF APPLIQUE ARTISANS OF PIPILI

KEY WORDS:

Applique, pipili, Handicraft, socio Economic

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ABSTRACT

The artistic emotional bonding with the art and craft delivered through traditional handicraft artifacts. Emerged slowly and gradually through disciplined efforts of several generations, Odishan traditional handicraft making process have retained their seasoned religious and cultural values along with the freshness and charm or their own, both beauty and utility combine in them. Stemming from very ancient period of exquisite craftsmanship, the traditional handicraft works are very colorful testimony to the integral life force of the people. The handicraft artisans of Odisha have increased their skills in traditional handicraft work with visual manifestations of Odishan art and culture. This research paper examined the nature of socio economic conditions of Odishan handicraft artisans especially the applique artisans of Pipili area. Applique artisan's community of Pipili area has its own cultural values, which guide their socio economic life. The economic system of applique artisans can be understood in the purview of cultural factors.

The traditional art and craft of Odisha have been contributed so as to enhance the status of Odishan culture. Practicing religion and folk symbols and norms on traditional handicraft work is an effective method in Odisha. Odisha is having a rich cultural heritage of traditional handicraft products being produced in the handicrafts based sector. There are various types of Odishan handicrafts are popular such as silver filigree, brass and bell metal, cane works, art textiles, bamboo works, applique work, horn work, stone carving, etc. are being practiced in the state.

The most important handicraft industries encouraged by temple traditions and rituals and very much associated with the Lord Jagannath temple of Puri, is the applique work of Odisha. In Odisha most of the applique works are traditionally carried out since long in the district of Puri and Khurda. Pipili however is considered as the major place of the applique craft. The production of traditional applique craft in Odisha is more or less associated with socio cultural and religious functions.

The most important thing of the applique craft of Pipili is that it has been associated with the popular festivals of Lord Jagannath of Puri. However in contemporary modern time the applique artisans of Pipili are producing different domestic decorative items made out of cloth decorated with colorful applique works. Traditional applique work in these days at Pipili can be seen on utilitarian items such as bags, lampshades, wall hangings and tablemats etc. Applique embroidery can also be seen on blouses, petticoats, gowns, other garments, garden umbrella, ladies umbrella etc. In Pipili there is a tradition of stitching large applique canopies with a range of panels of squares in different colour combination used in temples and in festivals. Applique work provides around several employment opportunity in the handicraft sector. The applique artisan is a worker who sells his labour and skill to earn wages either on a daily/monthly or piece rate basis. He does not invest any capital but may use his own tools, which do not have much monetary value. He bears no risk. The artisans, most of the time fulfills the demand of the traders. They prepare applique products according to the order of the traders. It is a traditional craft in which all the members of the family are more or less involved. Either the head of the family or the member who is efficient in preparing applique craft takes the decision of producing applique craft. The evolution for the development of artisans of applique crafts in Pipili regarding creation of different motifs or designs, technique to patch work, manual and machine stitching, mirror work etc. has started for last two decades is remarkable. This is possible due to the presence of master trainer, skilled and excellent traders, manufacturer cum craftsmen, and entrepreneurship of master craftsman cum manufacturer.

This work requires high risk, more tension, physical work. The social stigma and gender biasness are also responsible for it. 70% of artisans are female because of their patience, intricacy and concentration to carry out finer artistic works. 8. As there are more ladies engaged as artisans in their house, it is found that their children have learned the skill and helped their

The craftsman has the innovative skill to prepare the new product as per the demand of the consumers. Important product mix of nontraditional applique products are lampshade, wall hanging, garden umbrella, ladies umbrella, bags, purse. Creation of new products and or ornamentation of the existing products can create a better market and fetch higher profit. Applique is a traditional and family oriented craft of Odisha. The family members with experience and time became skilled and excellent craftsman, manufacturer, and traders. They produced different type of traditional products as well as nontraditional products.

With modernization and globalization it is essential that appliqué manufacturing requires appropriate quality control, advanced artistic work, versatile and developed designs, introduction of new product and proper advertisement to enhance its marketability. At present appliqué is considered as one of the major prospective craft with a lot of diversification. The production of traditional products and implication to the modern design meet the demand pattern of domestic and international buyers. Customers expressed the reason of increase of demand is due to large no. of consumers for utility items and non-traditional items in applique. In connection to the behavior of the customers, it is observed that mainly applique items are purchased for their domestic use or for festivals seasonally.

The applique artisans of Pipili areas have limited means of earning and they keep themselves away from ostentation. Even in the materialistic age of contemporary socio-cultural life the generally accepted ideal in the village is a simple life and high thinking. In the socio cultural life every individual applique artisan's endeavors to attain and observe the ideals of his family and caste. The applique artisans are not incapable of making a false pretence of cultured behavior, nor are they capable of boasting. They have sympathy for others and want to meet each other on a natural and human footing. Their way of life is tranquil, peaceful and simple in which mental conflicts and complexities are almost absent. In their life there is a determined pattern for everything so that there is a division of labour among them. These artisan people keep pondering over these things. The small needs of life are fulfilled by the applique artisans themselves.

The population of applique artisans compares favorably with

the people who inhabit the urban life in matters of religion, being more inclined in this direction. This disparity arises from a number of factors of which the most prominent is their preoccupation with handicraft, which depends very much upon tourism. The life of the applique artisans in rural areas is almost completely exposed to the vagaries of nature. The folk religion of applique artisans originates in the worship of nature, the preponderance of nature being evident in every aspect or socio cultural life of applique artisans.

The socio cultural life of applique artisans attaches all kinds of superstitions to natural phenomenon. Many moral beliefs are also conjoined to applique artisans religious life. A benevolent person of high character who worships god with fervour is commonly recognized as a religious person or superior soul. In spite of a lack of agreement artisans generally look upon acts of kindness and assistance, both moral and concrete to the poor and the helpless, as benevolent. As a matter of fact, applique artisans belonging to different religions are found co-existing in the daily life. Religiousness is a fundamental element of artisan's socio cultural life, for which applique artisans still cling to tradition and is no less religious than their ancestor despite various changes that may have intruded into their religious notions and beliefs.

Whatever their level of economical status, literacy rate as well as motion of progress, most of the applique artisans communities have their own socio cultural way of life which includes traditional practices, art & crafts, theatre, songs, rituals, legends and ballades etc. Socio cultural life of applique artisans is imbibes new influences and at the same time maintain tradition and continuity. The applique artisans, despite their pre-occupation with the continual battle for survival, have retained the rich and varied heritage of socio cultural practices forming integral part of their festivals and rituals. Applique artisan's community has its own cultural values, which guide their socio-economic life. The economic system of applique artisans can be understood in the purview of cultural factors. In the conventional economic science, non-economic factors, like social and cultural relations may be considered non-essential; but they are the applique artisan's reality for the very organization of their economic process.

With the increase in urbanization, the applique artisans are also being continuously transformed. Besides, the increase in communication facilities enhance in the mobility of the applique artisans, and the artisan population is adopting the habit to travel different cities for business and other employment opportunities, which ultimately, have their effect upon traditional life.

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