

Recording Socio Economic Conditions of Appliqué Craft Artisans

Neetu Saini¹ and Radha Kashyap²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Fashion and Textiles, IIS (Deemed to be University), Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

²Head and Professor, Department of Fashion and Textiles, IIS (Deemed to be University), Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

Abstract

Every region in India has its own specialty in terms of crafts. In Chohtan village, the beautiful craft was done by female artisans. There were many factors that were responsible for their poor living standards. Therefore, researcher need studied and recorded the socio-economic status of women artisans. In order to gather the information data was collected from the 130 women artisans falling under the age group of 31–40 years through purposive random sampling. An interview schedule was used to collect data about the socio-economic status of women artisans. The results of the study revealed that the majority of women artisans are living in very poor and vulnerable conditions. The majority of women are illiterate. Their monthly income is less and they usually borrowed money from local leaders and neighbours. Hence, it suggested that the government needs to provide awareness campaign about the existing schemes to the women artisans so that their social economic condition can be improved.

Keywords: *Women artisans, socio economic status, Chohtan, Barmer, Traditional craft*

Introduction

India is a treasure trove of handicrafts, handloom weavers, and textiles that could expand the industry's scope. Handicrafts reveal a lot about history, rich culture and heritage, and the native people's traditional skills. Traditional craft skills in India must be made relevant and marketable. Folk art and traditional ideas are glimmers of our country's gaining popularity in textiles. The rich motifs and designs of this existing art and craft can be easily adapted into modern forms to make them suitable for various textile products in line with current fashion trends. Motifs and patterns are important elements in design because they influence the frame and elaboration when used. The motifs and patterns provide significant elements for designing, as the frame and elaboration depend on the motifs when applied to textiles. The motifs and patterns of any piece of art are indicative of the rich cultural heritage that the artisans have been following since antiquity.

Appliqué is one of the ancient Indian crafts in which the decorative effect is obtained by superposing patches of coloured fabrics on a base, the edges of the patches being sewn into some form of stitchery. The craft is considered a symbol of Barmer tradition. The appliqué technique is used in canopies, wall

and door hangings, quilts, covers for royal bullocks and horses, umbrellas, banners, etc., comprising a wide range of items required for house decorations and social and religious function.

Indian Perspective of appliqué craft

Appliqué embroidery is popular in India, where different communities practise a variety of applique techniques. Pieces of cloth of various colours are placed on the surface of the cloth, and embroidery along the edges and sometimes over the surface, and thus it did not differ significantly from similar work produced elsewhere in the world. Northern Gujarat, Bihar, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, and the surrounding western part of Rajasthan are important regions for appliqué work in India.

In Gujarat, appliqué work is mostly done on household items and is primarily used on festive occasions, rituals, or as a means of trapping domestic animals. Appliquéd items are used in religious festivals as banners, canopies, and bags, as well as quilts, door fringes, and some traditional dresses. The colours are vibrant, and ornamental motifs such as peacocks, parrots, horses, and elephants are appliquéd (Shrikant 2009).

In Bihar, appliqué is known as Khatwa, and men are skilled at pattern cutting while women are skilled at stitching. The art is often seen on religious tents and canopies, as well as garments like sarees, blouses, and sashes. Khatwa is also used to decorate household objects including quilts and cushion covers. Since clothing is a personal object, the motifs that appear on it are abstract and stylized. The use of red, black, green, and orange motifs distinguishes Bihar appliqué. These vibrant colours can be seen on appliqué textiles all over India, representing the vibrant lifestyle of everyday India and its diverse communities and cultures.

Pipli a small town in Orissa near the great Jagganath temple produces much-colored appliqué work.

The craft involves embroidering and stitching small pieces of coloured cloth with flowers, animals, the village's scene, and traditional design onto a large base cloth. The cloth used for appliqué patch work items are garden umbrella, wallet, walls hanging, lampshades, pouches, and bags.

In Rajasthan, the Marwari community was traditionally engaged in appliqué art. Mill made medium weight white cotton cloth forms the base on which patches of various tints, shades, sizes and shape are

arranged in a pictorial pattern later trimmed, slip stitched and finishing with running stitch and buttonhole stitches. (Naik, 1996)

Barmer is the second largest district of Rajasthan. It is located in the western part of the state forming a part of the Desert. The district border Jaisalmer district in the north jalore district in the south, pali and jodhpur in the east and Pakistan in the west. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barmer_district).

Despite the hard weather and difficult terrain. Barmer is known for its numerous crafts, dances, and musical performances. It is a hub of wood carving, ceramics, weaving floor covering, embroidery, blocks printed cloth, patchwork, and appliqué historically known as *ralli*, and also known as ancient camel trading route also. The name *ralli* may have come from the local word *ralanna*, which means "to mix" or "to unite." The craft is thought to have originated in the west, traveled to what is now Pakistan, and then to India as a result of large-scale migration in 1947, during India's division. Following the partition, the artisans relocated to Chohtan village in the Barmer District. And for their livelihood, they started applique work. The art of applique work is being passed from generation to generation, which helps to keep alive the beauty of the traditional craft.

Review of literature

According to Diasgupta (2003), globalisation has posed numerous challenges for women. To be successful, the women needed to expand their commercial and technical knowledge and information. The formation of a small group will enable women to discuss their problems, share information, and promote entrepreneurial culture in their society.

Ghouse (2012) highlighted specific issues faced by women artisans in her articles, such as marking issues, financial issues, raw material issues, labour issues, and power supply. The researcher also offers helpful suggestions for overcoming such difficulties.

Sharma &Sezhiyan (2013) investigated the socioeconomic state of Sikkim's handicraft workers. The data were analyzed using statistical tools such as the simple percentage technique in this empirical investigation. The majority of the respondents were between the age of 26 and 25year and half of them had completed their studies up to the secondary level of schooling. They lived in a kaccha house with the joint family. The monthly income recorded was between Rs. 3000 and Rs. 4000, which was insufficient to subsist in the current economic climate and meet basic demands for survival.

Jena & Gandhi (2009) described depicting the artisans' socioeconomic situation. Pipili, Banamalipur, Bhubaneswar, and Puri were among the study's craft concentration areas. The main goal objective was is to an examination of appliqué-related micro-businesses. Studying the profiles, problems, and prospects of the workers and entrepreneurs involved and recommending some direct interventions to improve their circumstances Target Groups. Workers in the craft industry do not have set working days, and there are variations depending on the nature of recruitment and skill level. While a female piece-rated worker at home earns an average monthly wage of Rs.525/-, a male appliqué worker in the same category earns 3.69 times more.

Jameli (2009) discussed the barriers to and opportunities for women's entrepreneurial activities in developing countries. The study combines significant opportunities and constraints as part of a larger, mutually dependent system.

Selvan (2016) examined the socio-economic status of bamboo handicraft workers. This study was descriptive in nature. The data was collected from two hundred respondents and the tool used for the data collection was an interview schedule. Locale of the study selected was Kodium village in Tripura. Statistical package for social science (SPSS) package was used to analyses the data. The results concluded that artisans are working in the unorganized sector are neglected by governmental organizations. The majority of artisans was facing issues related to education, health, and the working environment. They is living their life below the poverty line due to various causes. They have to struggle for the betterment of life on a daily basis. There is a need for a workable solution from the government through government and NGOs.

Chopra (1998) revealed that the majority of the embroiderer would not like their children to continue to work for zardozi and Aari embroidery as they would like to educate them. Moreover it leads to eye-sight, backache and headache problem above all wages are too less. She further stated that the various problems faced by unit owners are shortage of raw material, skilled artisans, marketing and finance. Embroidery work is not paying much as compared to the time devoted by them. They also revealed that person, bonus and material facilities are also not available. Suggestion given by the owner is that government should provide financial aid and should set exhibition to increase the sale and demand of Zardosi and Aari embroidery. Pension, bonus and medical facilities should also be provided by the government.

Objective

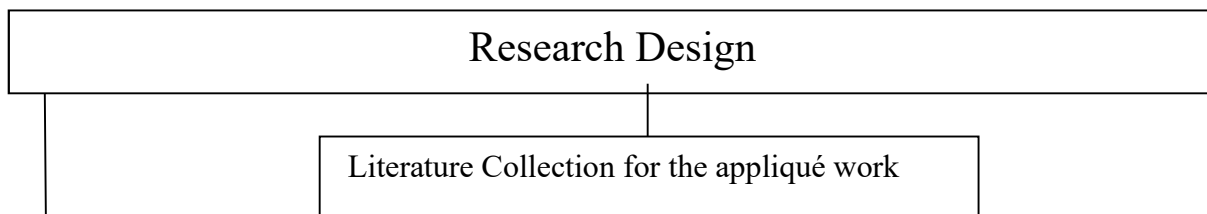
- To understand the socio-economic status of the women artisans of appliqué craft in Chohtan village of Barmer, Rajasthan.

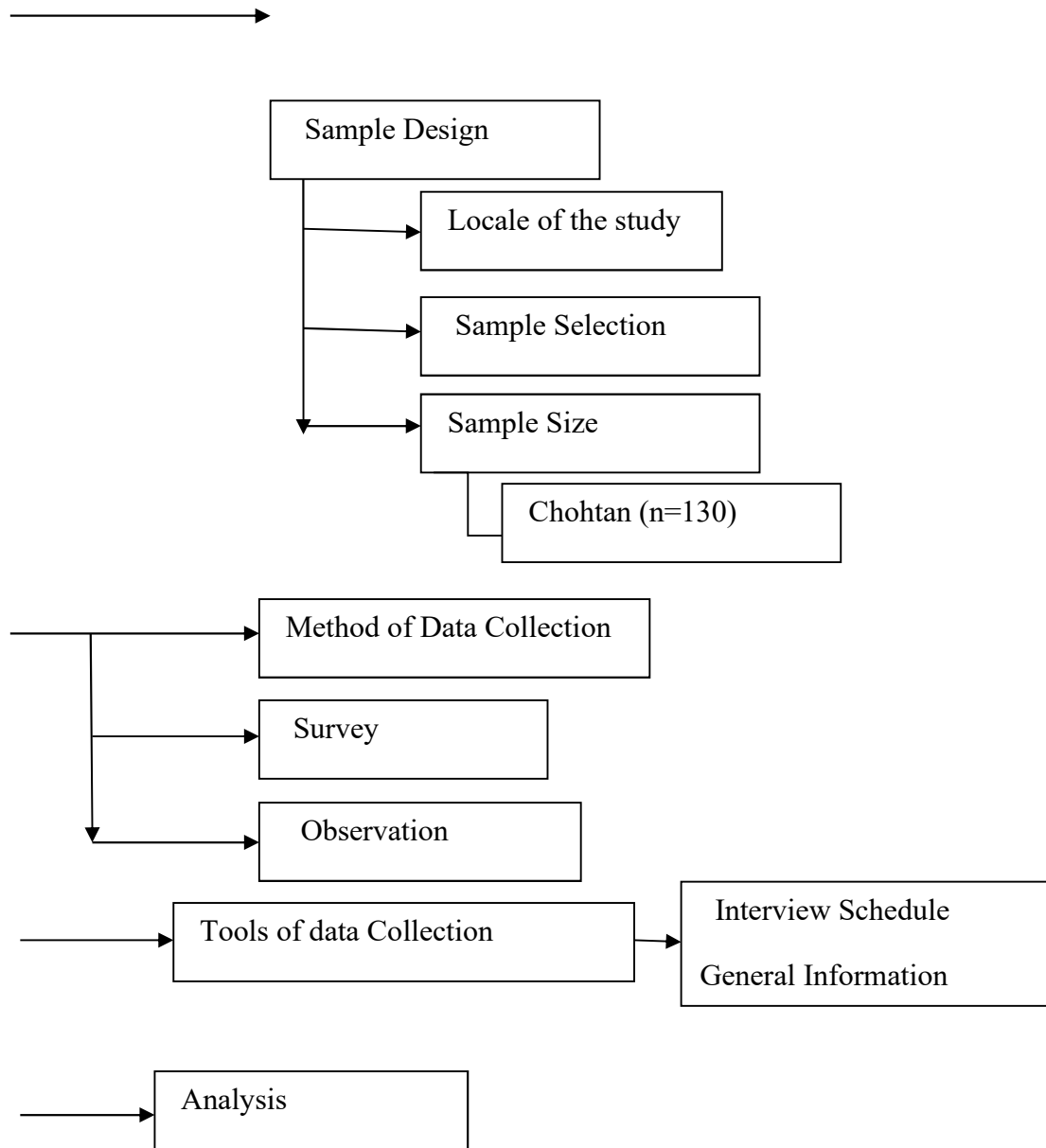
Significant of the study

Indian handicrafts are an important element of the country's rich heritage and contribute significantly to its economy. Many families in villages rely on handicrafts to make a living. As a result, the handicraft is experiencing stiff competition from mill-made fabrics, affecting the appliqué craft's overall socioeconomic situation. The current study intends to investigate in depth the socioeconomic conditions and problems of appliqué artisans in order to uncover their true living realities. The information obtained will help law makers design new policies and improve the living conditions of craftspeople.

Methodology

The methodology is an important aspect of the research. Because this study is both qualitative and quantitative, it relied on both primary and secondary data. The data for the study was gathered using an interview schedule designed around the research objective. 130 women artisans provided data. The study took place in Chohtan villages, specifically *Aidan ki Dhani*, *Bachhla*, *Alamsar*, *Bhooniya*, *Bhoomsar*, and *Bisak*. The data was gathered from the respondents using a direct personal interview technique.





Literature Collection for *Pattu* Weaving

Secondary data was gathered by the investigator in order to study the origin, raw materials, tools, motifs, current status, and working conditions of applique artisans. The information was gathered through a review of the literature, as well as visits to various museums and libraries. Central Library, University of Delhi

- New Delhi's National Museum
- Lady Irwin's Library

LOCALE OF THE STUDY

The location of any study is an important consideration. Secondary data to inform of available books, the Ministry of Textiles website, and the Barmer handicraft website will be used to explore the locale of appliqué work. These websites mentioned that the appliqué work is done in the Barmer district near the villages of Chohtan. The Barmer has been residential as one of the most creative cells in applique technique with skilled artisan's practicing this craft. The appliqué craft is developed in Chohtan small villages (Dhani) that are attached to the Pakistan boundary. The researcher will visit the Barmer district to get to know the locale better before selecting the appliqué craft areas.

Sample Selection

The researcher will be identifying the Barmer districts where the artisans are practising this craft. All the related information will be together from the artisans and NGO, such as GVCS (Garim Vikas Evam Chetna Sashta) and SURE (Society to Uplift Rural Economy) situated in Barmer district. After receiving the information, the selection of artisans will be done by the purposive sampling method.

Sample Size

A total of 130 samples were collected from Chohtan village. The snowball sampling method was employed. Each unit will have one artisan chosen.

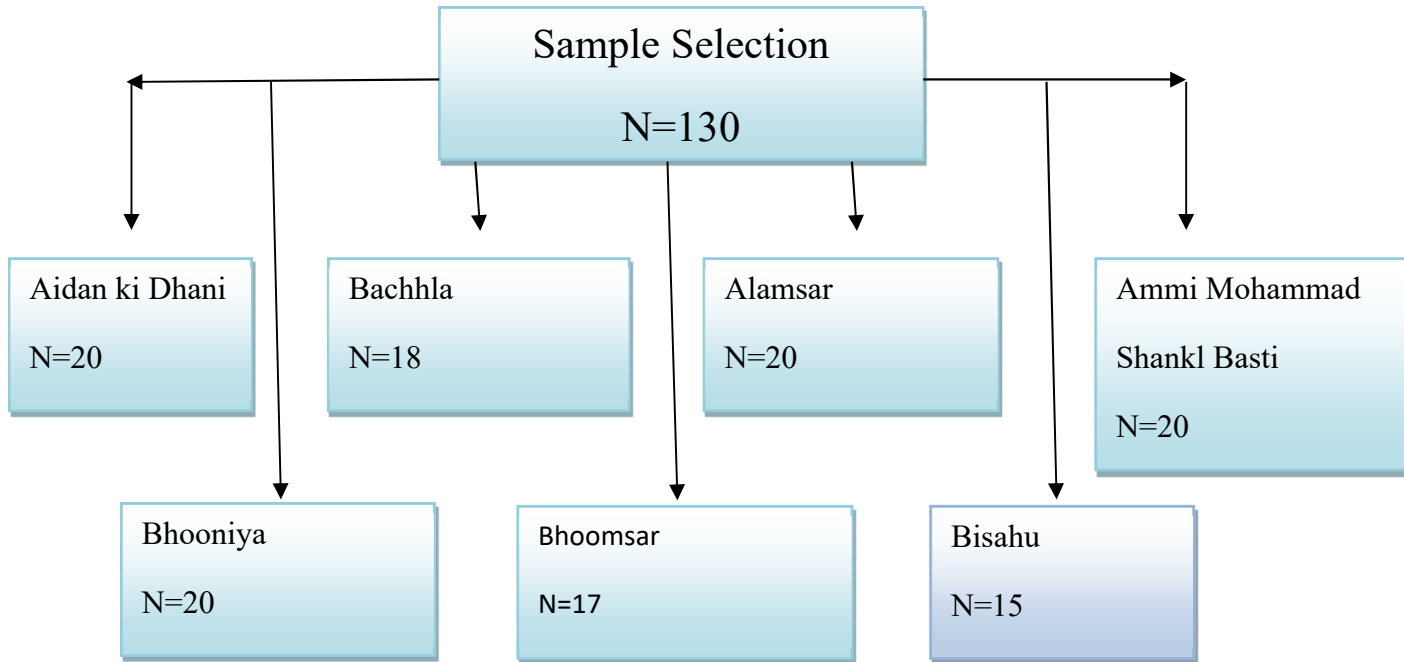


Figure 1.2 Sample Size

Tools and Techniques of Data Collection

A survey method was selected for the collection of data as the research is descriptive in nature. An interview schedule and a semi-structured observation were used to collect primary information. The interview schedule will assist the researcher in studying the socioeconomic profile of artisans as well as their manufacturing procedures, marketing practices, changes from the past to the present, and problems facing artisans. The tools are used in the present study.

- Structured Interview Schedule for Artisans
- Observation

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR ARTISANS

A structured interview schedule was used to gather data from the appliqué artisans. The aim of this approach is to ensure that each interview is presented exactly in the same order as given in the interview schedule. The interview schedule was consisting of both open-ended and close-ended questions to obtain the desired information.

The following heads were mentioned in the schedule:

General information about the artisans –Age, Gender, Marital status, Education and Residential etc.

Observation Method

Observational research findings are considered strong invalidity because the researcher is able to collect in-depth information about a particular behavior. A semi-structured observation checklist was prepared in which all the variables such as work area and surroundings was recorded systematically through photographs and video.

Results and Discussion

Socio Economic Profile

Table 1: Distribution of artisans according to age

N= 130

Age	<i>F</i>	%
20 or below	14	10.8
21-30	26	20
31-40	30	23.1
41-50	25	19.2
51-60	20	15.4
61 and above	15	11.5

Table 1 shows that artisans make up 23.1% of the artisans in Chohtan village are between the ages of 31 and 40, while only 11.5% are 61 and older. The practice of appliqué craft gradually declines with the age of artisans. The data revealed that the middle age group (31–40 years) is more likely than the younger age group (21–30 years) to engage in appliqué crafts. In their later years of age, many artisans were not able to work hard due to health issues. The elderly artisans' labour capacity to practise this craft for an extended period of time is limited due to poor vision.

Gender

Appliqué crafts are mostly done by women in Chohtan village in the Barmer district. As the result revealed, appliqué is primarily a female-dominated craft. There were no male artisans practicing. In addition to appliqué crafts, men assist by purchasing raw materials, taking buyer orders, and marketing products. Because artisans are female, they are unable to handle marketing for the product.

Location

The data revealed that all the artisans lived in Chohtan village, surrounding the bastis in a rural area.

Table 2: Distribution of the artisans according to education level**N=130**

Education	f	%
Illiterate	80	61.5
Primary	25	19.2
Middle	12	9.2
High School	13	10

Education is an essential part of life. The artisans' level of education has always been linked to their awareness of quality improvement and income generation. According to the data, the educational status of women artisans is very low. 61.5 % of appliqué artisans were illiterate, followed by 19.2 % who had completed their primary school and 9.2 % who had completed middle school. The main causes of low literacy are poor financial conditions and parental ignorance regarding female child education; and the villages' locations are remote due to the villages' remote location from the city.

Table 3: Marital status of the artisans**N=130**

Marital Status	F	%
Married	118	90.7
Unmarried	12	9.2

Marriage is one of the most important events in the human life, especially in Indian villages. It is believed that marriage makes the person more responsible towards family. Table 3 shows that majority of women artisans 90.7 % were married and remaining were unmarried. In Chohtan village artisans get tradition of early marriage.

Table 4: Distribution of artisans according to family types**N= 130**

Types of families	f	%
Nuclear family	45	34.6
Joint family	85	65.4

According to Table 4, the majority of women artisans 65.4 % lived in joint families, while the remaining 34.6% lived in nuclear families. Artisan families want to live together because they are financially dependent on one another and want to improve their financial situation.

Table 5: Distribution of artisans according to houses**N=130**

Type of Houses	f	%
Kacha house	48	36.9
Semi kacha house	42	32.3
Pkka house	40	30.8

All the respondents, 130 artisans have their own house, which was allotted to them after the India-Pakistan war in 1971. The type of house is divided into three categories: *kachcha house*, *semi-pakka house*, and *pakka house*. From the given figure, it can be noted that 36.9% of the total respondents are living in *kachcha* houses, followed by 32.3% living in *semi-pakka* houses. It was found that only 30.8% of the respondents had *pakka* houses.

Table 6: Distribution of artisans according to learning craft**N=130**

Learning	f	%
Parents	110	84.6
Community	20	15.4
Training Center	0	0

It was found that the respondents obtained the art of appliqué through their parents. Data revealed that 84.6% artisans learned the craft from their parents. While 15.4% of artisans learned

the craft, the respondents added that learning the appliqué craft was like a family tradition handed down to them by their ancestors. They need skill development programmes that are operated by government and private firms because such programmes will help them to improve their excellence, increase confidence levels, productivity, positive thinking, management skills, employability skills, personality skills, and behavioral skills.

Table 7: Distribution of artisans according to learning experience **N=130**

Learning Experience	f	%
15-20 year	40	30.8
25-30	55	42.3
35 year above	35	26.9

According to the table, artisans begin practising the appliqué craft between the ages of 25 and 30. 42.3% are women. Artisans in Chohtan village. The majority of artisans started working at a very young age and did not prioritise completing their primary education. While 30.8% started as artisans in 15–20 years and 29.6% of artisans started practising more than 35 years ago, today's artisans want to educate their children and simultaneously practise craft for the sustainability of their ancestral tradition.

Table 8: Distribution of artisans according to product manufacturing **N=130**

Product Manufacturing	f	%
1-2 Weeks	33	25.4
2-4Weeks	35	26.9
More than 4 Weeks	62	47.7

The table 8 shows that 47.7% of artisans take more than 4 weeks of product manufacturing for types of garments like saris and suits, depending on customer demand and home furnishing products (curtains, cushion covers). While 26.9% of artisans take 2-3 weeks to manufacture small products like potali, bags, etc. And 25.4% of artisans take 1-2 weeks to complete their designs.

Table 9: Distribution of artisans according to monthly income **N=130**

Monthly Income	f	%
Rs.2000-5000	13	11.5
Rs.5000-10000	97	73.1
Above Rs. 10000	20	15.4

73.1% of women artisans were getting their monthly family income of Rs.5000–10,000, while 15.4% of artisans get a monthly income of more than Rs.10, 000, with the rest earning between Rs.2000–5000 per month.

Table10: Distribution of artisans according to profit

N=130

Profit	f	%
Less than 15%	35	26.9
15-30%	79	60.7
30-45%	16	12.3

In the table, 60.7% of the artisans' profit margin is high because they produce their products and sell the whole seller's products. Only 12.3% of artisans get a higher price for the products because they have sufficient knowledge about the products' selling process and value. 26.9% of the artisan's profit margin is less than 15%. They don't have sufficient knowledge about the selling process.

Table 11: Distribution of artisans according to medium of product selling

N=130

Medium of Product Selling	f	%
Direct to the consumer	18	14
Direct to retailer	17	13
Direct to wholesaler	95	73

The table shows that 73% of artisans sell their products. They don't have much information about the selling process and trade fairs because women artisans, due to *parda pratha*, are not allowed to go to the outsiders in the market.

Table 12: Distribution of artisans according to response status

N=130

Respondent Status	f	%
Ownership	115	88.4%
Rented	0	0
As a worker	15	11.5

Data revealed that majority of 88.4% artisans work in their own houses. 11.5% of artisans work as paid workers and relatives of the owners.

Financial support

Most of the artisans get their financial support from the local leaders, known as *shahukar* as per their terms and conditions, and the rest, get financial support from their families and friends. Artisans do not get any help from the government. Due to being illiterate, they do not have much knowledge of bank loans, etc.

Conclusion

The study sought to give an insight into socio economic status and the hindrances faced by women artisans practicing the appliqué craft in Chohtan village. Socio economic status of the appliqué artisans showed that they belong to poor strata of the population. Average artisans belong to the age group of 31-40 years. Majority of them earn on per piece basis which make situation very difficult to live their livelihood. It was noted that Majority of women artisans were illiterate that is 90%. Their monthly household income was less due to which they have to borrow local leaders and friends to fulfill their needs. They don't specific knowledge about welfare programmes conducted by state and central government. They also face problem relevant to productivity, income and lack of knowledge about new technology. All these

problems discourage them to continue their work. Government should be more incentives to create awareness about the policies and provide loan at low interest.

The government should raise awareness among artisans about the various schemes and organise training programmes for rural women to understand and prepare products in accordance with market trends.

Suggestions

- Government should organise fair and exhibition
- Need vocational training about the existing techniques and trends

References

Bhandari, V., Rani, A., & Sakshi (2019). Aipan an inspiring folkart for textile designing. *International journal of current microbiology and applied sciences.*, 8(6), 527-537. Retrieved from: <https://www.ijemas.com/8-6-2019/Vandana%20Bhandari,%20et%20al.pdf>

Calibri, II. (2014). Valorization of cutting steps wastes creation of patch work fabrics and design of patch work. *International conference of Applied Research on Textiles, CITRAT-6.*, 13 – 15. Retrieved from: <https://www.researchgate.net>

Dash, M., & Mishra, B. (2021). Problems of handicraft artisans: An overview. *International Journal of Managerial Studies and Research (IJMSR)*, 9(5), 29-38. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.20431/2349-0349.0905004>.

Mishra, R. and Pant, S. (2015). *A Study of Changing Trends in Kashmiri Shawls With Special Reference To Designs And Designing Technique* (Banasthali Institute of Designing, Tonk, Rajasthan). Retrieved from shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/handle/10603/139707

Mohapatra, S. (2011). Problems Associated with Artisans in Making of Handicrafts in Orissa, India. *International journal of Managerial Studies and Research (UMSR)*, Vol(6), pp29-38. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.20431/2349-0349.0905004> www.arcjournals.org

Mohanty, B. (1980). Applique craft of Orissa. Calico Museum of Textile , Ahmedabad: General editors Alfred,Buhler, 5(1), 29-32. Retrieved from <https://www.gujarattourism.com/central-zone/ahmedabad/calico-museum-of-textiles.html>

Srivastav, M. (2014). Efficiency of developed gender specific training module on care of clothing and renovation. *Asian journal of Home Science*, 9(3), 48-53. Retrieved from www.isca.in/IJSS/Archive/v4/i3/8.ISCA-IRJSS-2014-310.pdf

Yaqoob et al (2012). Pashmina Shawl- A Traditional Way of Making in Kashmir. *Indian Journal of Traditional Knowledge*, 11(2), 329-333. Retrieved from re.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/files/file/pashmina%20shawl.pdf