

Possibility Assessment of Utilization of Crop Residues to Uplift Economic Condition of the Rural Women

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ABSTRACT

Women have the most creative mind to make various products by using various designs. Handmade products are in fashion at present time and by this economic support can be provided to creative women. The present study was conducted in Mathura district to perceive an opportunity for the upliftment of rural women economically in the handicraft sector with the use of crop residues. A total of 75 rural women were selected for the present study and data was collected through a self-prepared interview schedule. The findings of the study depicted a significant difference at <0.01 level in the interest of women related to basketry handicrafts based on their age, occupation, and educational status. Most of the women were involved in labour work and they want to uplift their economic condition through basketry. There is a significant difference found at <0.05 level in skilled women in making basketry handicraft based on their occupation and monthly family income. Handicraft making is one of the major opportunities for those women who are not so educated but yet can support their families economically. Income is a very important factor for rural women to motivate them to nurture their interests which will help to develop their handicraft skills.

Keywords: Basketry handicraft, Crop residues, Interest and skills of women, Tradition, Upliftment

INTRODUCTION

Handicrafts that are made in huge variety are the identification of the rich cultural heritage of India. Nowadays, hand-made products are considered to be a fashion statement and an item of luxury. Indian handicrafts are helping to survive many of the artisans from the very old period. According to Singh and Fatima (2015), Uttar Pradesh has a lot to offer in handicraft sector in India and it provides markets opportunities for economic growth in this sector. Women's creative minds always help in making newly designed products. Earlier, rural women used their time to make handicraft products with plants and crop residues (Rani & Brar, 2017). At present, they can use their skills in handicraft

entrepreneurship for empowering themselves. It is a useful tool for rural women for being economically empowered. The most relaxing part is that these types of handicraft products can be prepared at home without having any problems and they can involve to serve their hand in rural craft tradition (Din, 2017). Empowered rural women are also working for rural economic development unknowingly. Handicraft products can be made attractive and innovative when the artisan works with enough skills and interest. The present study focused on the assessment of the interest and skills related to basketry handicraft in Mathura district in Uttar Pradesh, to find out the tradable possibilities of these products for the purpose of earning money.

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OBJECTIVES

- To assess the utilization status of crop residue for making basketry handicraft products.
- To assess the skills and interests of women regarding basketry handicrafts.
- To perceive the tradable possibilities for basketry handicraft products.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present study is descriptive in nature. Three villages of Mathura District namely Nauhjheel, Firozpur, Daulatpur were selected purposively. Seventy five rural women were randomly selected by taking equal number (25 women) from each village. A self-made interview schedule was used to fulfil the first and second objective of this study which was divided in two parts. First was for their socio-economic status, their skills for making handicraft products, types of products which they have produced, type of material used, reasons for discontinue products making and their interest to restart making trade-based basketry handicraft products

through plant material. Second part included the details related to their interest and skills level. A total of 13 items were used to collect primary data. Scoring was used to analyse the data. For the first part, positive response was scored as 1 and the negative response was scored as 0 and for the second part, 5 point rating scale was used. Secondary data was collected for the third objective by using authentic journals, previous research, articles, etc.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Objective 1: To assess the utilization status of crop residue to making basketry handicraft products.

Basic parameters were included to know the utilization of locally available crop residue for making the basketry products which were prepared by skilled rural women. It is important to know that which types of crop residues can be used in making products in the selected area so that the women can reach easily and get different crop residues. The results obtained are given below:

Table 1. Types and no. of products which were prepared with locally available crop residues by skilled women

S. No.	Name of products	Name of the used crop	The part of crop used	No. of women who prepared products (50)	%	Total no. of products prepared in three months (average)
1.	Basket (Bohiya)	Wheat crop	Stem (Straw)	42	84.00	4
		Moonj Grass (Saccharum munja)	The outer part of the grass	33	66.00	3
2.	Hand fan (Beejna)	Moonj Grass	Stem	39	78.00	5
3.	Doormat (Aasan)	Maize	Husk	27	54.00	4
		Rice	Stem	07	14.00	2
4.	Winnowers (Soop)	Moonj Grass	Stem	12	24.00	3

The above given table1 revealed different types of basketry products that were prepared in three months by rural women. Most of the products were prepared by using the stems of each crop. The majority of respondents 84.00% were

used wheat crop residue for making Bohiya and average of 4 products were prepared by the women in three months whereas 66.00% of women were used the outer part of Moonj grass for making the same product but in

different design and methods and an average of 3 items were prepared in three months. Hand fans were prepared by them which was called Beejna in the local language. Total of 78.00% of respondents have used the stem of Moonj grass which is locally called Barua for making Beejna and an average of 5 items were prepared in three months. Doormats locally called Aasan were prepared by 54.00% of women by using maize husk and 14.00% of women used the stem of rice crop for making doormats. Out of the 50 women, a total of 12 (24.00%) were able to make Winnowers with the use of the stem of Moonj grass (Barua) and average of 3 items were prepared by them in three months. This data shows that the residues of wheat, rice, maize and Moonj grass were used for making handicraft products in selected areas.

Rural women took residue from different places for making basketry handicraft products. As per data most of the women (64.00%) got residues from other farmers' fields without any charges and 36.00% of women got residue from their own farming. So that none of the women were needed to pay for getting crop residue for making handicraft products.

Objective 2: To assess the skills and interests of rural women regarding basketry handicrafts.

This objective will help to know the present status of women related to their interest and skills for making basketry handicrafts domestically. The researcher found skilled and interested women in making handicraft products with the use of crop residue. To fulfil the objective the results obtained are given below:

Table 2: Status of the rural women related to their skills and interest

1.	Interested/ skilled women in making products	No.	%
i.	Only interested	58	77.33
ii.	Only skilled	50	66.66
iii.	Both interested and skilled	33	44.00
2.	Skilled women status (N= 50)		
i.	Involved in basketry handicraft at the time of the survey	11	22.00
ii.	Stopped making products	39	78.00
iii.	Interested to restart this handicraft	22	44.00
iv.	Interested to learn new designs and techniques	33	66.00
v.	Do not want restart the activity	17	34.00

The table shows the status of women related to their skills and interest in making basketry handicraft products at the time of the survey which was conducted in November 2019. This data shows that the majority of the women 77.33% were interested in making basketry products and 50 (66.66%) women were skilled and can make products by using 2 or more different techniques and from the total, only 44.00% women were those who were interested and also skilled at the same time. The researcher got more information from skilled women that a total 22.00% of skilled women were involved in making basketry products and on other hand, 78.00% of women stopped their work because

of various reasons and 44.00% of women were interested to restart this work. The data also indicated that 66.00% of women were interested to learn new designs and techniques

The maximum number of respondents were skilled to make basketry handicraft products. The respondents who were not skilled but wanted to learn about handicraft making and the uninterested respondents had various reasons for not to involve in this field like their age, eyesight problems, involvement in other works, etc. whereas interested respondents wanted to involve in this field to increase their family income, to spend their time in the development of rural handicraft tradition.

Table 3: Assessment of Interest of women in basketry handicrafts based on their age, occupational status, educational status and monthly family income

		N	%	Mean	SD	t value	p-value
Age	Below 30	48	64.00	4.94	6.30	3.30	<0.01
	Above 30	27	36.00	3.89	4.70		
Occupational status	Employed	44	58.66	4.88	5.98	2.99	<0.01
	Unemployed	31	41.33	3.90	5.14		
Educational status	Below 5 th class	43	57.33	4.59	5.93	3.12	<0.01
	Above 5 th class	32	42.66	3.63	5.26		
Monthly family income	Below 5,000 Rs.	54	72.00	3.83	6.98	0.12	>0.05
	Above 5,000 Rs.	21	28.00	3.77	3.98		

Table 3 indicates the interest of women related to basketry handicrafts based on the above given factors. It shows that the mean value of rural women of age below 30 for their interest was found higher (4.94) in comparison to the women of age above 30 which was 3.89. A significant association was obtained between both categories of age and it has been proved by $t=3.30$ at <0.01 significant level. Same as employed women were more interested in making basketry handicrafts for which mean score was 4.88 and unemployed women had lesser interest regarding this with mean score 3.90. This difference is cleared by the t value 2.99 which is significant at <0.01 level. Employed women might understand the importance of income so they have shown more interest. The women having below 5th class education

were more interested with mean score 4.59 as compared to the women having above 5th class education with mean score 3.63. It has been obtained by the t value 3.12 which is significant at <0.01 level. This craft provides an opportunity to the uneducated or less educated women but education helps more in handicraft production as per a study of Gurung in 2017.

Mean score of the interest of women whose monthly family income was below 5000 Rs. was found to be similar (3.83) with the women whose monthly family income above 5000 Rs. in this regarding (3.77). I cant as >0.05 level. **Gurung (2017)** also stated that women should also develop the feeling to support their family financially by involving in making handicraft products.

Table 4: Status of skills of women for basketry handicraft based on their age, occupational status, educational status and Monthly family income

		N	%	Mean	SD	t value	p value
Age	Below 30	48	64.00	3.69	6.58	1.13	>0.05
	Above 30	27	36.00	4.07	4.72		
Occupational status	Employed	45	60.00	4.19	6.30	1.77	<0.05
	Unemployed	30	40.00	3.45	5.12		
Educational status	Below 5 th class	43	57.33	3.72	6.26	1.53	>0.05
	Above 5 th class	32	42.66	4.30	5.11		
Monthly family income	Below 5,000 Rs.	54	72.00	4.6	6.95	1.70	<0.05
	Above 5,000 Rs.	21	28.00	3.72	4.11		

Table 4 shows the status of skilled women in basketry handicraft. There is a significant difference found in between employed and unemployed skilled women. Employed women were more skilled with the mean score 4.19

than the unemployed women (3.45) and this difference is resulted as significant ($t=1.77$, $p<0.05$ level). Similarly, the mean score of the women whose monthly family income was below ₹5,000 related to their skills was 4.60

and the women whose monthly family income was above ₹5,000 had mean score 3.72. This difference has cleared by t value 1.70 which is significant at <0.05 level. It can be seen that the women who have lesser income were more skilled. Income is the main reason which motivates them to be learned and to work in the handicraft sector. But Gurung (2017) stated that lack of money restricts women not for doing any other enterprise.

On the other hand, there is similarity found in mean value of skilled women of age below 30 (3.69) and the women of age above 30 by 4.07 related to their status of skills. There is no age limitation to learn anything. It is proved by the t value 1.17 which is insignificant at >0.05 level. Similar results have been observed in skilled women whose educational status was below 5th class and the women of above 5th class education. It has been cleared by $t = 1.53$ which is insignificant at >0.05 level.

Objective 3: To perceive the tradable possibilities for basketry handicraft products.

As the handicraft is Indian culture and tradition and this thing helps to generate interest among women. This handicraft will provide the opportunity to earn money for them. Women have to develop their skills and have to grow their interest in making handicraft products which can be possible with the help of training programs. They would get appropriate profits for them and it can be possible by making these handicrafts successfully tradable. Here are some previous researches which worked on different handicrafts and made its trade possible.

Arif and Nadeem in 2020 mentioned in their study that in Kashmir, with the help of government facilities of training centres artisans were showing keen interest in that field and they produced many types of attractive products which are demandable and fashionable. To provide better marketing reach, the Ministry has launched an E-commerce initiative in Flipkart. This strengthens the existing primary weaver

co-operative society by assisting entrepreneurs from the weavers' families in taking up production and supply directly to the customers in a market.

According to Chakraborty (2013) whose research was based on Zari's work in Murshidabad District of West Bengal, some measurements were provided for marketing of handicrafts successful as like:

- There was insufficient selling in the local area so marketing was limited. Effective marketing strategies at the block level connected with district-level headed by a government agency can create a scope to propagate products outside the known boundaries.
- Local government interferences are required for ensuring raw materials at convenient prices for the female employed in situ.
- Workshop and group classes can be held to standardize the craft and to enhance the modern designs and trends going on to facilitate and meet the present demands.
- Financial assistance in form of short-term loans on uncomplicated conditions will be helpful to any handicraft as lack of monetary support restricts proper development. Organizations like Self Help Groups or the formation of cooperative societies will be beneficial for them. It will act as the bridge between government and root-level workers.

Another study by Tripathi and Mohanty (2014) found that in the villages of Jajpur district of Odisha products were prepared in two categories as traditional and modern and attractive and marketable products were produced. The training was provided to make modern items through Some government organizations like ORMAS (Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society) as well as some NGOs.

The above given data analysed that online marketing is also a good option in modern times for trading and different organizations are also playing a great role in making handicrafts

tradable successfully. It can be said that if an initiative is taken in Mathura district, then basketry handicraft may be successful at some level. They also can produce innovative and unique products which will attract people.

CONCLUSION

Handicraft is one of the major sources of India which helps to increase not only the economic growth but also the fame of our nation globally. But if we see the rural area which was the main centre for the basketry handicraft than they just need the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge about the market opportunities so that they can prove themselves. The present study analysed that below 5th class of women were more interested than the women who were above 5th class educated. This handicraft can give opportunities to those women who are not so educated. Skills are also affected because of income. The present study analysed that the women below ₹5,000 of monthly family income were more skilled than the women whose income was above ₹5,000. So that low income can also be effective to increase in the interest for better skills and to involve in the basketry handicraft sector. Based on their interest and skills many women can involve in this field but for this, they have to provide some more skills by which they can stand in the present market and it can be said that with more efforts in this basketry handicraft, economic support for skilled women may be possible.

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