

Rise of the Phoenix: Revival of Rural Crafts

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Abstract:

Traditional cottage industry has been the backbone of rural industry and socio-economic status of the rural population. The women have been invisible in carrying on the handmade crafts heritage of the region across centuries. However, in the current century there has been felt an urgent need to try and resurrect the languishing craft forms of yore. Among the most prominent one is the dari weaving craft of Haryana, All over the state. Most households in the villages have the rural women weaving daris from yarn and even from strips torn from old clothes. The skill is available. What is required is hand holding to ensure that the craft gains an impetus for facing competition in the current domestic market.

The objective of skill building and capacity enhancement of the rural women in this particular craft will focus on vegetable dyed yarns and hand woven 'daris'. All the women can be trained to make daris suited to the needs of the current consumers. This would entail innovative changes in the size specifications, colour palette and design inputs.

The women will be trained to make quality controlled, home décor and environment friendly daris that are appreciated and demanded by the consumers. Many of the earlier designs pertained to the local motifs that were taken from the immediate surroundings like birds, animals and floral expressions.

The current housing has little space for carpets and floor accessories. There is a need to provide for mats and floorings that give an aesthetic appeal as also ensure a tasteful yet functional attraction for the consumers.

Key words: Traditional, cottage industry, rural industry, rural population, languishing craft, weaving, yarn.

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Introduction

The current housing has little space for carpets and floor accessories. There is a need to provide for mats and floorings that give an aesthetic appeal as also ensure a tasteful yet functional attraction for the consumers.

Traditional cottage industry has been the backbone of rural industry and socio-economic status of the rural population. The women have been invisible in carrying on the handmade crafts heritage of the region across centuries. However, in the current century there has been felt an urgent need to try and resurrect the languishing craft forms of yore. Among the most prominent one is the dari weaving craft, over the state of Haryana. Most households in the villages have the rural women weaving daris from yarn and even from strips torn from old clothes. The skill is available. What is required is hand holding to ensure that the craft gains an impetus for facing competition in the current domestic market.

Daris have been traditionally made for two purposes, one for placing on the bed in place of mattress or for usage below as a thin mattress or for floor covering. Once, daris making was highly preferred activity for income generation among rural women. Competition from the powerloom industry and changed consumer preferences have witnessed this age old craft almost diminishing. A majority of the rural women of Haryana state are practicing daris weaving as subsidiary occupation to supplement their family income. Besides daris they also make a variety of allied products like foot mats, prayer mats, stool mats and bags. Mainly floral/foilage, geometrical, animals and birds motifs were used. Most products were sold locally with a profit of 10-20 percent. The craft suffered lack of demand and the younger generation is not interested in adopting this craft.

The village and cottage crafts play a significant role in the rural industry and social and economic life of our country. These fulfill some daily needs and act as mode of self expression and a sustained source of income generation. Pottery, embroidery and handloom weaving are some of the major crafts of Haryana. Punja daris can be seen in almost every household in the villages of Haryana. It is mainly practiced as a leisure time activity by the women.

Creativity of the Rural Women

The creativity of the rural women is visible in the rich art work and unique handloom and hand

Embroidery that they indulge in regularly. Punja daris can be seen in almost every household in the villages of Haryana and Punjab as the most popular main leisure time activity by women. The craft gets its name from a metallic claw-like tool called the punja in local dialect. It is used to beat and set the threads of the weave. The punja daris are mostly woven in bright colours having a number of locally derived motifs. The designs are skillfully made as they have been trained across generations to enhance the aesthetic appeal of these daris. The daris are woven into stripes, checks, squares, and have imaginative depiction of motifs that may be floral or have figurines and representations of local fauna like ducks, rabbits or even vegetables like carrot radish, brinjals. These motifs may also be taken from everyday life like tubelights, airplanes, ships etc. the earlier daris were most colorful and depicting events like wedding processions or even chores of everyday life.

Regions of Haryana located around Delhi have many small scale units. This is probably because Delhi is a major commercial centre and is a steady source of raw materials supply to the several industrial units placed across in the Northern region and most prominent across the states of Haryana and Punjab. Haryana enjoys a number of benefits and also suffers through many adverse circumstances.

Most of the small scale units in the state can obtain their supplies of raw material at very short notice, even in small quantities as required and at suitable competitive rates. These units enjoy the benefits of cost effective transportation open competitive market and access to domestic and international buyers for their products. They also have access to cheap and highly skilled labour among the many migrants thronging to Delhi in search of lucrative livelihoods better wages. With the announcement of the New Industrial Policy as well as the Infrastructure Development Policy recently more investment is being attracted to the state. Several special incentives and facilities are being provided to entrepreneurs for the setting up of units under the Rural Industry Schemes (RIS). The State has set up two Research and Development common facilities centres, namely, the Instruments Design Development and facilities Centre (IDDC) at Ambala and the Electronics Research Development Facilities Centres (ERDC) at Gurgaon.

Small Scale Enterprises: Status and Sustainability

The Small Scale Enterprises sector has consistently played a significant role in development of all forms in the fields of socio-cultural and economic growth. These enterprises have generated employment opportunities, increased incomes, investments and savings in the economy. They have helped in decreasing poverty, unemployment and all forms of socio economic inequality. Haryana is fast emerging as an economically developed states. Gurgaon, Faridabad, Panipat and Panchkula are main industrial hubs. The state has attempted to create and maintain a conducive environment for investors.

The small scale industries have contributed significantly to the socio-economic development objectives namely:

- (i) Labour absorption
- (ii) Income creation
- (iii) Rural development
- (iv) Poverty eradication
- (v) Regional promotion of entrepreneurship development
- (vi) Employment opportunities for the people
- (vii) Decentralization of industries

This would ensure a redistribution of incomes in various state of society and consolidation of economic power.

At the outset most small scale enterprises found it difficult to state up and survive however, currently the economic environment support start ups and favours MSME. These industries tend to occupy a position of strategic importance especially in terms of their contribution towards outputs, exports and sustainable employment.

Initiatives under the New Industrial Policy of Haryana

The State Government has spearheaded certain initiatives and launched the New Industrial Policy which has the following salient features:

1. “Ease of doing business”
2. Enhancing competitiveness by reducing cost of doing business.
3. Balanced Regional Growth through equitable geographical dispersal of industries.

4. “Focus and support to the MSME Sector”
5. “Implementation structures / mechanism to ensure monitoring and implementation of policy along with the promotion, outreach, grievance redressal and constant engagement with the industry”.

Larger Access of the Small Scale Industries

The State Plans to adhere to a growth trajectory through its path breaking “Enterprises Promotion Policy-2015” (EPP). This Policy envisions:

- (i) GSDP growing at a rate higher than 8%, an investment of INR 1 lakh core
- (ii) Employment generation for 4 lakh persons
- (iii) Positioning Haryana as a prospective investment destination.

The all encompassing mission for MSMEs is increasing the competitiveness of the MSMEs through cluster development and adoption of “Zero Defect Zero Effect” manufacturing practices.

In fact ‘Make in Haryana’ has been put totally on mission mode adhering to the objectives of the Government of India campaign ‘Make in India’.

- (i) The Industries Department of Haryana has taken major initiatives for improving the “Ease of Doing Business” through.
- (ii) Simplification of procedures minimizing waiting period
- (iii) Improvement of business environment
- (iv) Introduction of information technology to make governance more efficient and effective

All these steps are being taken to strengthen the image of Haryana as an investor friendly state.

The Haryana Government has adopted a comprehensive approach to assist MSMEs to become globally competitive. The MSMEs have been recognized as the backbone of the manufacturing sector. They are seen to have tremendous employment potential. The government aims to give a magnanimous boost to the MSME Sector for its manufacturing and skill development, upgradation across all parts of the rural industry.

These have been several measures put in place to ensure youth are infused with the spirit of entrepreneurship among the young educated youth of Haryana.

The Youth Oriented Employment Programme

Government of India is implementing a credit linked subsidy programme. It is called the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) for the generation of employment opportunities for small business and startups. This is through establishment of Micro Enterprises especially in the rural and urban areas. The PMEGP programme is a poverty alleviation programme. There are a number of different schemes being run under the aegis of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) of Haryana State.

There are 29 MSE-CDP Schemes clusters operational in Haryana since 2019. The distribution of these cluster is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Location and Number of Clusters in Haryana

Sr. No.	Location	Number of Clusters
1	Karnal	6
2	Panipat	5
3	Gurgaon	3
4	Yamunanagar	2
5	Jagadhri	1
6	Faridabad	3
7	Bahadurgarh	1
8	Kundli	1
9	Sonipat (Rai)	1
10	Bhiwani	1
11	Amabala	1
12	Sirsa	1
13	Rohtak	1
14	Rewari	1
15	Panchkula	1

The aggregation of these clusters on the nature of works and goods products is depicted in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Nature of Clusters in Haryana

Sr. No.	Cluster Location	Nature of Cluster
1	Karnal	• Agricultural Implements • Print and Packaging • Pharmaceuticals • Dairy processing • Signage and Advertising
2	Bahadurgarh	• Footwear
3	Panipat	• Textiles and (3) • Home Furnishings • Textile Machinery
4	Gurgaon	• Readymade Garments • Printing and Stationery • Leather Products
5	Kundli	• Stainless Steel Utensils
6	Sonipat (Rai)	• Printing and Packaging
7	Bhiwani	• Fitness and Surgical Equipment
8	Ambala	• Scientific Instruments
9	Yamunagar	• Plywood • Engineering Goods
10	Jagadhri	• Metal Utensils
11	Faridabad	• Dyeing • Fabrication and Fittings
12	Sirsa (Dabri)	• Hosiery Woollen, Knitted Garments
13	Rohtak	• General Engineering
14	Rewari	• Fabrication
15	Panchkula	• Auto Tractor Parts

Micro enterprises have come to be recognized in the past decade as a significant part of the enterprise sector. One third of the population in developing countries derives its income from micro enterprises. The small, non-framing sector income generating units, include family businesses, cottage industries and artisan groups in the informal sector. The micro businesses include a wide spectrum of rural traditional crafts handed down generations. Micro enterprises embody initiatives, skills and talents that have the potential to contribute effectively towards economic growth.

Defining the Premise

Defining the structure and function of the enterprises under the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MSMED) Act, 2006 it must be clarified that according to the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MSMED) Act 2006 the concept of

‘enterprises’ (comprising both manufacturing and services) and integrating the three-tiers of these enterprises, viz, micro, small and medium is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Classification of MSMEs based on investment slabs

I	Manufacturing Enterprises	
1	Enterprises	Investment in Plant and Machinery
2	Micro	Upto Rs. 25 Lakhs
3	Small	More than Rs. 25 Lakhs and upto Rs. 5 crores
4	Medium	More than Rs. 5 crores and upto Rs. 10 crores
II	Service Enterprises	
1	Enterprises	Investment in Equipments
2	Micro	Upto Rs. 10 Lakhs
3	Small	More than Rs. 10 lakhs and upto Rs. 2 crores
4	Medium	More than Rs. 2 crores and upto Rs. 5 crores.

Source: Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Act, 2006.

Sonia and Kansai Rajeev (2009) studied effects of globalization on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the pre and post liberalization period from 1973-74 to 2008-09. They used four economic parameters namely:

- (i) Number of units
- (ii) Production
- (iii) Employment
- (iv) Exports

It was Sanchita (2010) who observed that management problems and constraints experienced by women entrepreneurs in Small Scale industry of Haryana included:

- (i) Lack of confidence
- (ii) Problems of finance
- (iii) Working capital
- (iv) Socio-cultural barriers
- (v) Production problems
- (vi) Inefficient marketing arrangements

She felt simple and systematic procedures at all administrative levels should be put in place for ensuring planned benefits reaching the needy women entrepreneurs for their optimal utilization without the underutilization and wastage of scarce financial resources.

Singh et al, (2012) had analyzed the performance of Small scale industry in India focusing on policy changes that opened up new opportunities in this sector. The study recommended the emergence of technology development and strengthening of financial infrastructure.

What Ails the Micro Enterprises in Haryana

The development of micro enterprises has suffered with many problems like:

- (i) Competition healthy and unhealthy: They have to compete with medium and large scale industries in terms of
 - a) Competent entrepreneurs
 - b) Abundant and superior raw material
 - c) Modern and sophisticated equipment
 - d) Development of latest technology
 - e) Financial backing
 - f) Latest marketing strategies

The microenterprises are riddled with:

- a) Primitive methods of production
- b) Limited financial resources
- c) Illiterate, incompetent, ignorant entrepreneurs
- d) Non-standardized nature of product

Thus the micro enterprises are out performed by the large scale industries in a very big way. There is a vital need for the micro enterprises to be incentivized and subsidized by the government. Their very survival is threatened. It would prove disastrous if these labour intensive and employment generating units close down due to thus un-viability.

- (ii) Lack of adequate and appropriate raw material: Raw material is a basic pre-requisite of any industrial enterprise. Without the adequate and timely supply of required raw material, no enterprise can make much progress.
- (iii) Lack of skilled or unskilled labour : The labour is an essential and active factor of production along with raw material, power and capital. An empirical study by Eresi

(2001) concludes “that labour related problems constitute one of the most important reasons for the failure of micro enterprises”. Well planned recruitment orientation and training facilities are basic requirement for industry. Proper manpower planning and its utilization are the basic requirements for an effective working force in an enterprise.

- (iv) Power shortage: If there is short supply of power or electricity and there is interruption in the production stream then the entrepreneur has to suffer heavy losses.
- (v) Problems of Working Capital: Small scale industries have small means and require short, medium and long-term loans to meet their obligations. Usually internal sources of micro enterprises consist of ploughed-back profits. They have to depend upon central and state governments, commercial banks and other private financiers.
- (vi) Marketing problems: In a competitive world, the sale of products can be improved with suitable marketing strategy. Marketing concepts signify more than the traditional form of selling. It is form an integrated effort. Being small in size and financially not very strong, most of the individual units have:
 - a) Limited production capacity
 - b) Limited sustaining power
 - c) Less competitive strength
- (vii) Policy Implications: The policy implications are:
 - a) Problems of entrepreneurs need to be addressed.
 - b) Survival of the micro is under grave threat in the face of stiff competition in the globalised era.
 - c) Upgradation of technology
 - d) Innovations
 - e) Liberal credit facilities
 - f) Marketing devices
 - g) Proper and intensive advertising
 - h) Capturing national and international markets
 - i) These steps therefore need to be taken on priority.

Micro enterprises will help in the development of the Indian economy by generating additional employment opportunities, reducing poverty and regional inequalities. The need of the hour is to will boost micro enterprises to increase the number of units, employment, investment and production.

Summary and Conclusion

While much is being done by various government, private and non-government agencies to help the micro-enterprises find their focal path to be taken now is to concentrate all efforts towards strengthening the micro enterprises and ensuring their survival and triumph in the faced globalization race for excellence in production, marketing and economic supremacy.

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