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Growth and Development of Handicrafts in India: A Case Study of Crochet Lace Industry in Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract: *Handicrafts industry of India has a great potential in economic development of the country. The sector of handicraft is not only provides employment for the development of economy but it also acts as a sensible artistic approach of self-expression for the artisans. Handicrafts are matchless expressions as they represent culture, tradition, and heritage of a country. Handicraft sector is directly related to the economy of the rural India that means its growth. Lace Industry is a typical women labour-intensive industry with a substantial share in exports and provides an important window to look into the nature of new opportunities that have come up with trade liberalization and globalization. India's largest lace industry concentrated in Andhra Pradesh in general and occupied main place in both West and East Godavari districts. An attempt is made in this study to review the growth and development of crochet lace industry in Andhra Pradesh and to suggest measures in the study area.*

Keywords: *Handicrafts, employment, lace artisans.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Handicrafts can be defined as products which are produced either completely by hand or with the help of tools. Mechanical tools may be used as long as the direct manual contribution of the artisan remains the most substantial component of the finished product (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization/ Information Technology Community. In India handicrafts have great potential of employment generation and income generation as it hold the key for sustaining not only the millions of artisans already existing, spread over length, and breadth of the country, but also for the increasingly large number of new entrants in the crafts activity. Further, the spirit of handicrafts is the raw material used for crafts are easily available. Craftsmen and Artisans can produce products in unlimited numbers without any negative impact on sustainability. The products of handicraft have multiple uses they can be utilitarian, decoration, artistic, imaginative, culturally attached, ornamental, functional, traditional, religiously, and socially symbolic, due to such a diverse and influential values of handicraft it has becomes important aspect of every bodies life. The crafts and the artisans of the sector is significant part of economy and are making India's foot prints in global market. In addition to this, the rich culture, heritage of great art and craftsmanship has enhanced its value in the world market. The handicraft industry has a history of several centuries in India. The crafts of India were well known to the world throughout centuries. The residents of Indus valley were famous for their art, culture, and craftsmanship. Their passion for handicraft has been inherent by the modern India. Moreover, the great designing and carvings

of temples testify the fact that art and craftsmanship are not new to India it is the skill which India got from its inherent culture, and rituals.

The government of India has accorded utmost importance for the growth of these industries through five-year plans, and industrial policies because of their high employment intensity. The handicrafts industry of India comes under the unorganized sector of the village economy. This sector is an important and integral aspect of village, and cottage industries. Handicraft sector has a prevalent role of rural employment, and in the Indian economy. Indian handicraft items range from wooden stone, metal, glass, bamboo, cane, clay, terracotta ceramics, and textiles. The most popular items in Indian handicrafts are brassware, pen holder, vases, candles, and Christmas items, Lace products, ceramic pots, carpets, and other products of paper. Various states of India such as Manipur, Tripura, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Kashmir, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh are popular for its handicraft collection. Each States offers a wide range of handicrafts, with its own identity. These handicraft items represent quality craftsmanship from the respective states. Most of the manufacturing setups have local employees and indigenous owners who operate such work in homes. But unfortunately, these traditional industries are under threat of sleep or decline because of the competition from the cheaper machine made substitutes, and due to the scarcity of physical capital and risk patrons.

Though the sector has huge market potential in all Indian states, and abroad, but the growing demand for the artificial product has badly affected the livings of many skilled artisans directly, and others related to this sector indirectly. The main reason for this is it almost no innovative methods and technology advancement have been introduced in the handicrafts sector, which leads to stagnation of the sector. Further increase in manufacturing expenses has led to gap between actual product demanded, and actual product produced; the same gap is utilized by the machine made products, besides this the raw material needed in handicrafts has also fallen in short of supply in many states of the country because of more wastage, and improper utilization of available resources.

II. REVIEW LITERATURE

In view of the importance of the handicrafts in our economy and society, various aspects of handicrafts, such as, sociological, economic, technical, cultural, artistic and aesthetic aspects have been studied by a number of researchers. In the post-independence era, the role and importance of handicrafts in the economic, social and political scene were strongly felt and the industry started to revive again. The famous book of Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya "Indian handicrafts" is a famous landmark in the Indian cultural field. She says that Indian handicrafts thrived through ages stimulated by a vigorous folk tradition, a benign culture, and in an age when individualism was cherished and precision valued.

Rao (1990) in his book "Marketing of Handicrafts" observed that "Handicrafts offer solution to India, which is characterized by unemployment and foreign exchange crunch".

P. Nayak (1997) in his book titled "Role of Handicraft Cooperatives in Rural Development, Problems and Policy Options", it was found that the problems of handicraft co-operatives were due to lack of leadership, general awareness among craftsmen, political interference, lack of financial resources, raw materials technology up gradation and mismanagement of funds.

Maureem Liebil and Tirthenker Roy (2003) in his article titled "Handmade in India" found that in the handicraft sector of India, an average artisan has inadequate access to information about markets, buyers, tastes and technologies. They also face problems like inadequate capital and less availability of raw materials.

Florence (2005) reviews suggested that the strategic measures to improve markets for village crafts often supply scattered, insufficient and unsystematic data on production and sales that will be the major obstacles to develop quantitative marketing strategies.

Tiwari, (2015) his research stated, "Handicrafts are the visible symbol of cultural behaviour." He further has given a different perspective of craftsman to him. "Any articulated product in the sphere of creativity could be termed as an artistic handicraft."

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The present paper is an attempt to examine the export of handicrafts, the contribution of handicraft sector to Indian economy and the leading markets of export for Indian handicraft as a case study of lace industry. It is an effort to examine the lace and lace products industry contribution in the economic development of the country.

IV. METHODOLOGY AND DATABASE

The present paper is based on secondary source of information. Secondary data have collected through the published and unpublished source such as Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts, circulars and magazines published from various department of India. Data have been analyzed through simple percentage method and showed by statistical diagrams.

V. HISTORY AND CONTRIBUTION OF HANDICRAFTS TO ECONOMY

The handicraft industry in India has a history of several centuries. The artisans even in the early days were known worldwide for their skill and craftsmanship. In the 15th and 16th centuries the Patola fabrics of Surat were exported to cities like Baghdad and Basra. Because of great popularity, the East India Company used to import Indian handicrafts in large quantities. In Mughal times the demand for handicrafts came heavily from feudal lords and Nawabs of the country. They used the products of handicrafts to decorate their durbars. Artisans could realize very large prices for their articles. Mughal period was in fact a period of prosperity to artisans in handicrafts. The period of prosperity for the handicraft industry in India continued till the arrival of British. The establishment of British rule resulted in the abolition of Nawabs and durbars leading to a drastic reduction in the demand for handicraft goods. The definition of handicrafts given by task force is „Handicrafts are items made by hand, often with the use of simple tools, and are generally artistic and / or traditional in nature. They include objects of utility and objects of decoration".

The handicrafts sector plays a major role in the economic development to the nation. The multifaceted contribution of handicrafts impacts greatly in the development of country, region or people. The handicrafts sector contains the great potential in strengthening and development of economy of the country in terms of foreign earner as well as employment generation.

Contribution of Handicrafts: The Handicraft sector occupies a pivotal role in the country's economy as it contributes significantly employment export earnings and generation. Handicrafts were traditionally considered a cottage industry in India. There are myriad of handicraft tradition in India, which depend on social, economic and regional factors. The present status of India owes much to the rich craft traditions of the past. Most of the handicraft continues to flourish due to their utility, availability to the common people and popularity in local as well foreign markets. There is a huge domestic market for a utilitarian craft items such as bedcovers, tablemats, garden pots, barss and cabinets, jute and coir items, and lace products etc. The demand of decorative item such as traditional wall hangings, silver cutlery, brass pots, traditional paintings, wood and stone sculpture etc. is also on the rise in India and abroad. In spite of absence of royal patronage, contemporary handicrafts tradition have acquired the mantle of small-scale and cottage industry. Some of the sector within the handicrafts industry have even become full scale large industries like carpet weaving, traditional textile (Banarasi silk sari, Chickenkari etc.), gem cutting and polishing, jewellery making, gems and jewellery, leather products, jute products etc. are some industries, which are mounting with great pace.

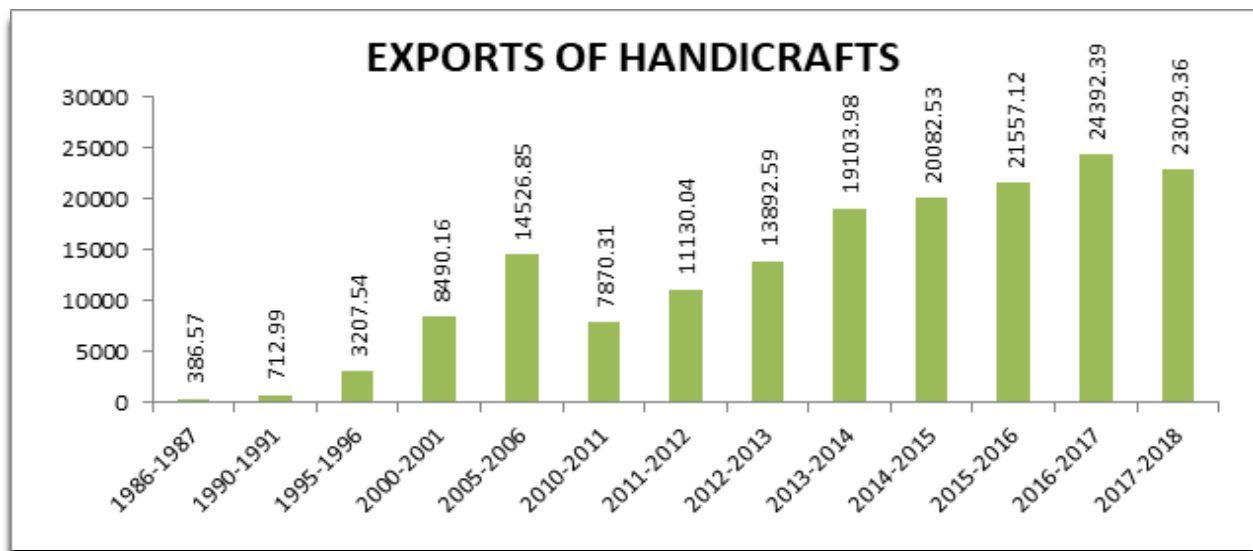
Handicrafts are more akin to the range covered by lifestyles products. The domestic retail market, both organized and traditional, is estimated to be of the order of US\$300bn. It is expected to grow at the rate of 10% per annum from 2010 to 2017, it is estimated to acquire a size US\$ 637bn. Most of the products covered by handicraft category form part of the

lifestyle products and are suitable for the retail business in India. Hence, the market for handicrafts products can easily be assessed to be of the same order as that of lifestyle products. So far exporters of handicrafts have been restricting themselves from supplying their products to the Indian retail market. Now that the buying power in India is increasing at a very fast rate and that expenses incurred by the normal person on lifestyle product is also increasing and that income levels of the normal person is on the regular increase, it is appropriate time for handicrafts exporters to open up their product supply base to the domestic retail market through the chain of organized retailers, buying houses, departmental stores and malls. The geographical break-up in revenues arising out of exports of handicrafts can be described as USA being the largest with 30.72%, UK 11.49%, Germany 10.51%, Italy 3.28%, Canada 3.10%, Japan 2.42%, Netherlands 2.87%, Saudi Arabia 2.43%, Switzerland 1.58%, Australia 1.64%.

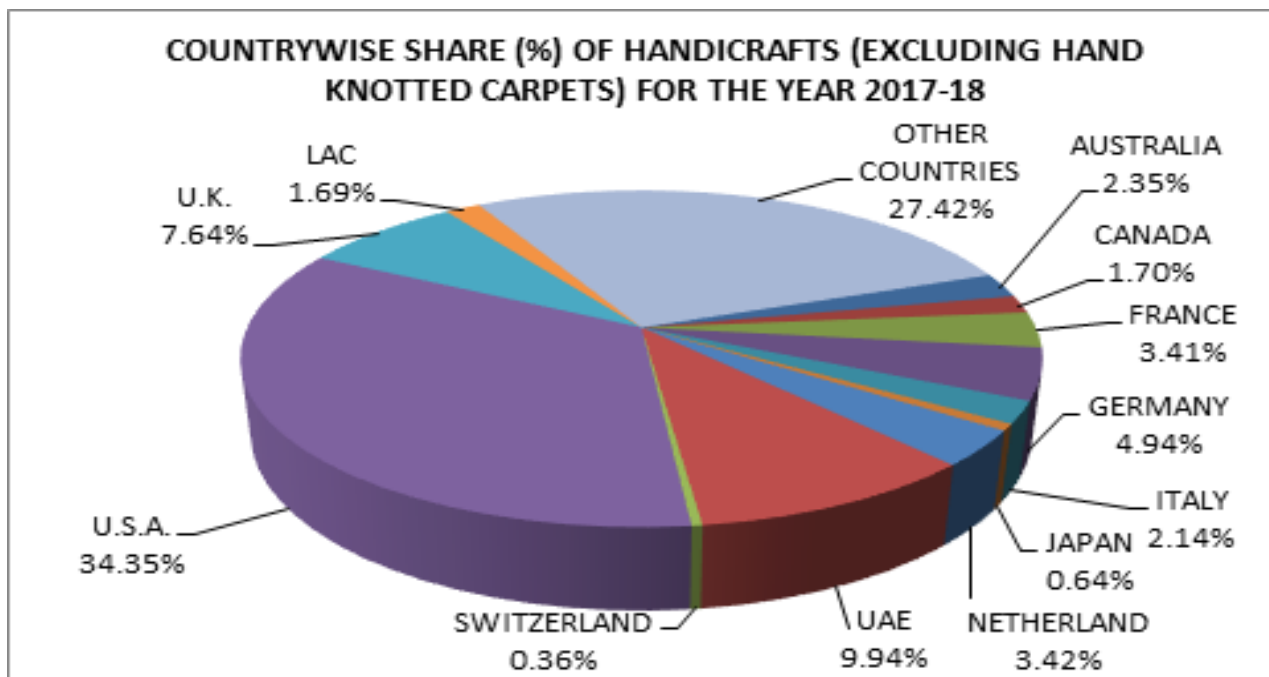
The product-wise break-up in revenue from exports of handicrafts is largest from embroidery and crocheted goods, art metal ware, hand printed textiles and scarves, wood ware, zari and zari goods, imitation Jewellery, shawls as art ware and miscellaneous handicrafts. According to a study conducted by Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts through Frost & Sullivan, the world market for handicrafts is estimated to be of the order of US\$235bn. The world market is expected to be growing at an annual average growth of 5%. Top 10 markets of the world viz. USA, Germany, UK, Japan, France, Canada, Italy, Spain, Hong Kong, Belgium account for 77.5% of the total market. USA is largest importer of gift and decoratives products, catering 32% of the world markets. Bulk imports by the USA are low value products. European Union imports medium to high quality products. At present, China occupies 30% share of the world market primarily because the Chinese products are inexpensive and suit the requirement of changing taste of consumers. India's main competitors are China, Taiwan, Korea, Hong Kong, Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand. India's share is less than 2% of the world market. The main reasons for lower share in the world market are traditional designs, hand crafted products, low technology low productivity, poor infrastructure, inadequate marketing facilities and high transaction cost. EPCH is working hard to overcome these problems. Government of India is also seized of the problems and is developing plans for making Indian handicrafts products competitive in the world market.

During 2017-2018, handicraft exports from India reached US\$ 3,555 million. During the same period, exports of various segments registered a growth like Shawls as Art wares were valued at US\$ 0.66 million, Hand printed Textiles & Scarves at US\$ 598.8 million, Agarbatis and attars at US\$ 149.82 million and Embroidered and Crocheted goods at US\$ 506.17 million. Indian handicrafts are exported across geographies, with the top 10 destinations being the US, the UK, the UAE, Germany, France, Latin American countries (LAC), Italy, the Netherlands, Canada and Australia. Government of India increased incentive rates under the Merchandise Export from India scheme (MEIS) to 7 per cent from 5 per cent for handicraft items which will help exporters to recover the input costs which are involved in the production of handicrafts, which will also lead in competitive pricing and also boost exports.

Exports of Handicrafts: The exports of handicrafts (other than hand knotted carpets) was merely Rs.386.57crores during the year of establishment of the Council i.e. 1986-87 rose to level of 23029.36crores in year 2017-18.



Source: Export promotion Council of India

Share of Exports of Handicrafts in Major Countries/Regions:

Source: Export promotion Council of India

VI. EVALUATION AND GROWTH OF LACE INDUSTRY

India's lacemaking tradition started as a way to help young women earn a living, when nuns from Europe began arriving in India as missionaries. Lace had long been a form of sustenance for women of the church and charity institutions: It was wholesome toil at a time when women were discouraged from working outside the home. There were no costly materials involved -- just thread, bobbins and needles. Moreover, making lace requires extremely hygienic conditions; dirt or dust is ruinous. So the occupation was thought to promote cleanliness, virtue and good health. The nuns in India taught poor women -- though only unmarried or widowed ones -- to make lace and other fine embroideries that would be shipped overseas. Even as the popularity of lace declined throughout the 20th century, lacemaking continued to provide women with a livelihood in rural pockets of India.

Also, India has had the openness to nurture foreign crafts in her womb. The craft of crochet lace making is one such example that stands as a testimony to the fact. Undimmed by age, over the centuries, the artisans have kept the craft alive, so much so that even art historians view the craft as one with Indian momentum. Andhra Pradesh has been a reservoir of many aesthetic craft types, one being the delicate craft of 'crochet lace making' practiced in and around Narsapur. The history of the crochet lace industry in these areas runs parallel to the colonial accession of the region during the 18th Century. A belief having ample written proof is that this craft was taught to the local women by Mr. and Mrs. Macrae of Scotland in 1844. Ever since, this craft has seen mushroom growth. Today, it has taken a giant leap on the fashion calendar. This summer, the 'handcrafted look' rules supreme in apparel and fashion accessories. Open mesh structure clothing is indicated... a concept that can be achieved by the delicate yarn craft technique of crochet.

The marketing of the lace was organized through friends and well-wishers in India and abroad. Thus, the Victoria Technical Institute of Madras sold lace for Rs. 5,475 in 1927 and the workers earned a sum of Rs. 53,025 in 1928. During the general economic depression in 1932-33 the industry suffered. In 1932, Mrs. Cain distributed Rs. 19,898 as wages among the workers; she paid US \$ 460 for material imported from England, Rs. 1,225 as customs duty and 1,018 as postage¹. She died in 1934. Though she was succeeded by Miss C. Wallen, the Dummiguddem lace industry came shortly afterwards to an end. Then Messrs. Jonah and Josef began to export lace along commercial lines they immediately re organized the production process as well. Though the missionaries had already introduced production for money, it was not yet a production of exchange values or a capitalist production process in its true sense. Messrs. Jonah and Josef organized the production of lace along the classical putting-out system. They employed several agents - mainly women of their confidence - who visited the artisans at certain intervals, gave them the thread and the designs their customers abroad had ordered and, after a certain time, they came to collect the finished articles. They paid the women artisans the wages agreed upon and gave them new thread. The agents or middle women sometimes also did the finishing work - stretching, sorting out, etc. of lace in the house of the exporters. They as well as the artisans were paid piece rates.

The Indian lace market also saw an expansion after 1970. This does not mean that Indian middle class families had started to use lace on a big scale. The growth of the home market is mainly due to the expansion of the tourist industry. Tourists buy most of the lace in Calcutta, Bombay and New Delhi, mostly from private traders, but also from the Government's Handicrafts Emporia. A lot of lace which finds its way from Narsapur to the big cities is actually also exported from there by certain traders. Thus, we can assume that about 95 per cent of the total lace production is in fact exported, either directly from Narsapur or indirectly from the big Indian marketing centres. Over 80% of the total production of lace products is exported to the major markets of USA, Europe and Japan. The range of products exported from the region include home furnishings and made ups like table covers, table mats and napkins, cushion covers, bed spread, garments and accessories. Skill development and up-gradation has always been one of the top priorities of EPCH and keeping in line with the same, the Council has initiated skilling of over 5,000 individuals at West Godavari & East Godavari, Narsapur. The skill training is based on National Occupational Standards for lace maker, furnishings, tailoring, apparel developed for lace and lace crafts. Over 3000 individuals artisans have been trained so far in 76 batches under the monitoring committee setup exclusively to see programs meet the standard and impact on skilling of artisans, said EPCH.

Exports of Embroidered and crocheted lace goods (Rupees in crores):

S.No	Country	2016-17	2017-18
1	Australia	124.36	115.95
2	Canada	49.51	63.62
3	France	222.83	236.61
4	Germany	109.03	111.89
5	Italy	197.56	231.97

¹ Madras District Gazetteers, District of Godavari 1907, Supplement, Madras, 1935, pp. 266-267

6	Japan	29.62	23.87
7	Netherlands	118.00	127.30
8	UAE	136.88	160.11
9	Switzerland	23.25	20.37
10	USA	1219.21	1229.15
11	UK	231.00	215.86
12	LAC	45.12	53.82
13	Other Countries	720.63	714.64
	Total	3227.00	3227.00

Source: Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts

VII. PROBLEM AND OBSTACLES FACED BY THE INDUSTRY

Presently, handicrafts contribute substantially to employment generation, and exports. The Handicraft sector has, however, suffered due to its being unorganized, with the additional constraints of lack of education, low capital, and poor exposure to new technologies, the absence of market intelligence, and a poor institutional framework. It is because of such bottlenecks this sector is suffering, and is lagging behind; we have highlighted some of the problems which this sector is facing.

The manufacturing process takes a lot of time, as it is handmade and requires more time to do a good work. Which leads to mismatch between actual product demanded, and actual product supplied, the gap is filled by the machine made products which are very fast in production in nature. Use of primitive techniques, high manufacturing cost, and poor quality of products have been one of the great constraints for the growth of this sector. The people related to this kind of craftsmanship are so poor that they cannot afford the basic investments and other overhead charges related to Handicrafts. Poor standard of raw materials, lack of standardized vendor, and suppliers, inadequate technical know-how for product design, and development, and carrying forward of old design from ancient times does not match the market requirements of the present world. Improper pricing of finished products, the absence of proper incentives, and schemes by the Government of India, unorganized investment patterns, and lack of regular investors are also hindrances for the proper and smooth growth of this sector. Lack of proper marketing channels and poor access to urban markets has been a problem which needed to be addressed by the government, and the responsible persons for the wellbeing of this sector which have not seen yet.

VIII. INITIATIVES OF GOVERNMENT FOR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF LACE INDUSTRY

The steps taken by the Government to boost and strengthen handicrafts sector, which includes handmade crochet lace and lace products, so as to compete with machine-made products are as follows:

- Market Development Assistance (MDA) Grant and Market Access Initiative (MAI) Assistance for participation in Fairs & Exhibitions/Reverse/Buyer-Seller Meets in India & abroad.
- Assistance provided by the Government for marketing study, branding/International publicity, participation in Fairs & Exhibitions, Buyer-Seller Meet in India & abroad etc. through Marketing and other Schemes.
- Thematic display and live demonstration of crafts by Master Craftsperson's in exhibitions abroad.
- Brand image promotion of Indian handicrafts abroad through seminars and publicity as well as awareness programs in India.
- Organizing Indian Handicrafts & Gifts Fair twice a year besides product-specific shows.
- Display of new design through exporters for creating awareness and marketing
- International Lace Trade Centre has been sanctioned in Crafts Cluster of Lace & Crocheted crafts at Narasapur, Andhra Pradesh.
- Interest subvention and grant of MUDRA loan schemes to the handicrafts artisans so as to compete with machine-made products.

- i) Council of Handicrafts Development Corporations (COHANDS) was established in the year 1983-84 under the aegis of Government of India, Ministry of Textiles, Office of Development Commissioner (Handicrafts). COHANDS is an apex body of 29 State /Central Govt. Handicrafts Development Corporations with its well-knit members throughout the country. COHANDS assists grass-root level organizations, NGOs, Self Help Groups and small entrepreneurs engaged in handicrafts for promotion of handicrafts.
- j) The office of Development Commissioner (Handicraft) is implementing the following seven schemes for promotion and development of handicraft sector: (i) Baba Saheb Hastshilp Vikas Yojana (ii) Design and Technology Upgradation (iii) Marketing Support and Services (iv) Research and development (v) Human and Resource Development (vi) Handicrafts Artisans Comprehensive Welfare Scheme (vii) Infrastructure and Technology Development Scheme.

IX. CONCLUSION

Though the many interventions of government, still the lace cluster of Narasapur has experienced limited growth in spite of potential market opportunity and its core competence of a large skill base. The production base is extremely fragmented and there is a lack of critical manufacturing infrastructure. Many of the key processes are outsourced to service providers outside the state, leading to cost escalations and an overall loss of productivity and efficiency. The cluster has been confined to the low end of the international market for lace products with limited product offerings, low quality and low margin realizations. Study is presented to provide insight, a link between lace industry and informal sector women lace workers. No systematic Census of all the lace makers and manufacturing exporters had ever been undertaken. Either government or private industries should ensure adequate employment opportunities throughout the year, which will help the lace workers to get reasonable wages. There is a pressing need to improve the economic conditions of the lace workers in the study area. There is need to change this informal lace industry in to formal industry to generate more employment opportunities and to earn foreign exchange.

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Appendices Table 1: Illustrative List of Handicrafts

Name of Handicraft	Description of items
Carpets	Carpets Woolen carpets, rugs including namdhas, gabbas and durries
Hand printing	Hand printing Hand printing and traditional dyeing of textiles
Artistic textiles	Brocades, and embroider shawls
Embroidered ,Zari work, Lace work	Embroidered and Zari work Embroidery (cotton, silk, wool), lace work including nakki and gotta, Zari and Zardozi
Metal ware	Silverwares, bidri, filigreed, brassware and copperware, bronze castings, handicrafts items made of aluminum and iron
Jewelry	Precious, semi-precious and synthetic stones, Jewelry of previous metals (platinum etc.) gold jewelry and imitation jewelry, conch shell jewelry.
Bangles and beads	Other than glass beads & bangles transferred to SSI
Conch Shell	Articles of conch shell
Wood work	Wood carving and inlay, wood turning and lacquer wares including Nirmal work, decorative furniture, hand printing blocks
Ceramics	Ceramics Pottery and earthenware (Artistic)
Stone work	Stone carving and inlay including marble work and alabaster, soap stone articles.
Cane, bamboo, straw etc.	Articles made of cane, bamboo, willow, straw and grass including mats
Flax and Fiber	Handicrafts articles made of flax and fiber
Toys and Dolls	In various materials (excluding plastic, metal and mechanical toys)
Paper Mache	Paper Mache articles of different types.
Ivory, horn and bone	Ivory, horn and bone Artistic articles made of ivory, horn and bone.
Leather	Leather goods (artistic work) embroidered uppers of jutties, Shantiniketan bags etc
Musical Instruments	Musical Instruments Traditional ones including improved types
Miscellaneous	Miscellaneous traditional art objects such as Orissa, Mysore, Tanjore paintings and handicrafts products specially made for ceremonies, articles of worship and the artificial requisites such as costumes, masks, puppets, etc