

HANDICRAFTS AND TOURISM OF KASHMIR: AN OVERVIEW OF RELATIONSHIP

***Mohd Rafiq Gadoo**

Teacher, School Education Department J&K Govt.

ABSTRACT: *The handicrafts of Kashmir Valley are famous throughout the world and attract a lot of tourists to Kashmir from across the globe. Kashmiri handicrafts are unique in its richness and beauty and are famous for their quality, art and design. In spite of the increasing influence of modernity and mechanization, the artistry and skill of hand-made artifacts of Kashmir continue to receive world-wide acclaim. The aim of the undertaken study was to examine the impact of handicrafts on attracting tourists to Kashmir Valley. The respondents selected for study were the tourists on visit to the various destinations of Kashmir. A well structured questionnaire was designed and the responses were measured on 3-point likert scale.*

KEY WORDS: *Tourism, Handicrafts, Attraction.*

Introduction

Kashmir, the state of India is a country of rich and diverse tradition, beauty, nature, festivals, colors, fragrances, languages and religions, therefore Kashmiri traditional handicrafts promises everything - beauty, dignity, form and style. The majestic appeal of Kashmiri arts and crafts lies in its exclusivity and mystical tone which leaves people mesmerized. Handicrafts activities occupy an important position in the economic structure of J&K State. The Kashmiri handicrafts are unique in its richness and beauty. The traditional woolen shawls, paper-machie goods, wood-carvings and carpets have all survived the onslaughts of many centuries of socio-economic evolution only because the craft objects of Kashmir are ingrained in the socio-economic ethos of the people. The crafts and cultural traditions of J&K are deeply rooted. Here, the crafts reflect in equal measure its history, landscape and way of life. A beautiful amalgam of three cultures of the valiant earthiness of Jammu, the Kashmir Valley and the ethereal, but no more mysterious, isolation of Ladakh has a direct effect on the crafts of these regions.

Review of Literature

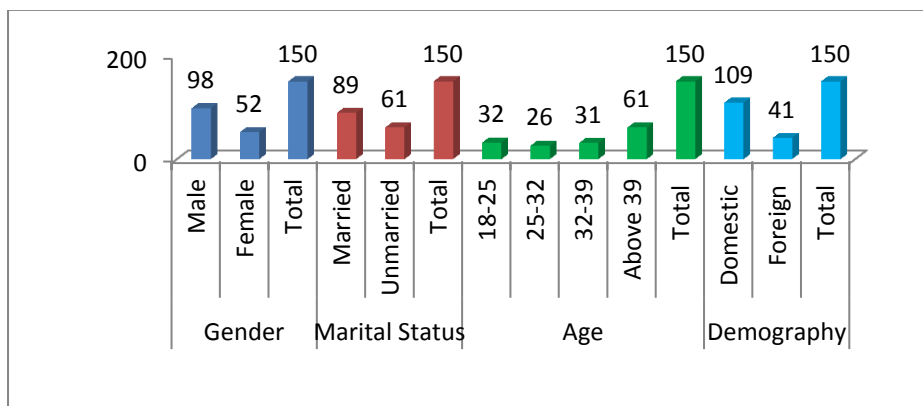
Sunita Sharma in her study revealed the structure of industries in J&K state. She suggests that the state leans heavily towards the smallscale sector and to a little extent on medium industries. The author further says that among the small scale industries, the handicraft industry occupies an important place in the economy of J&K state. Suhail M. Ghouse argues that the Handicrafts are made from raw materials and can be produced in unlimited numbers. Such products can be utilitarian, aesthetic, artistic, creative, culturally attached, decorative, functional, traditional, religiously and socially symbolic and significant. Handicrafts sector has a great contribution towards employment generation and export thereby has a direct impact on the economic development of the economy. Effat Yasmin and F. A. Bhat revealed in their study that handicrafts sector have an important role to play in the development of country in general and J&K in particular. Crafts like shawls, crewels, namdha, chain stitch, wood carving, costume jewelry, kani shawls, paper mashi, and carpets hold a significant share in the overall production and export of the state.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the role of handicrafts in promoting tourism of Kashmir,
- To analyze the relationship of handicrafts and tourism industry of Kashmir,
- To study the growth, Strategies and problems faced by handicrafts sector.

Demographic Analysis of respondents

Gender	Male	98	65.33%
	Female	52	34.67%
	Total	150	100%
Marital Status	Married	89	59.33%
	Unmarried	61	40.67%
	Total	150	100%
Age	18-25	32	21.33%
	25-32	26	17.33%
	32-39	31	20.67%
	Above 39	61	40.67%
	Total	150	100%
Demography	Domestic	109	72.77%
	Foreign	41	27.33%
	Total	150	100%

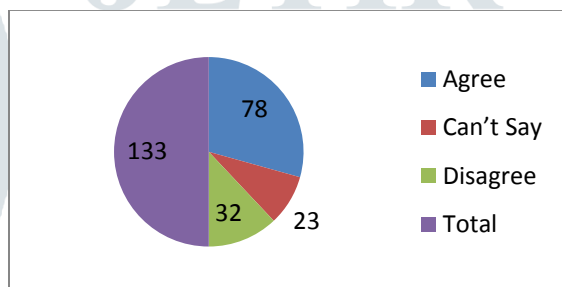


Data Analysis

A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed among the respondents for the collection of data out of which only 133 were completely filled and analysed.

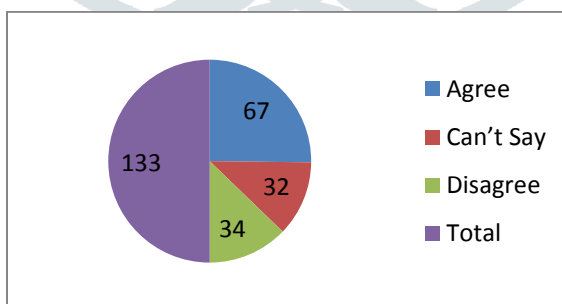
1. Handicrafts of Kashmir are globally recognized.

Agree	78	58.64
Can't Say	23	17.29
Disagree	32	24.07
Total	133	100%



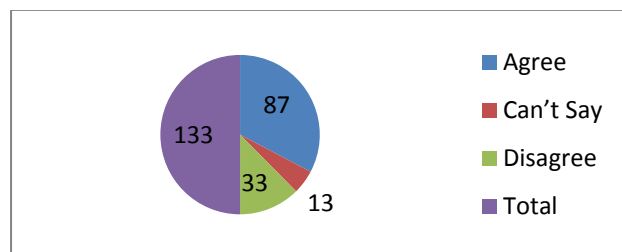
2. Handicrafts of Kashmir make tourists aware about Kashmir as destination.

Agree	67	50.37
Can't Say	32	26.06
Disagree	34	25.57
Total	133	100%



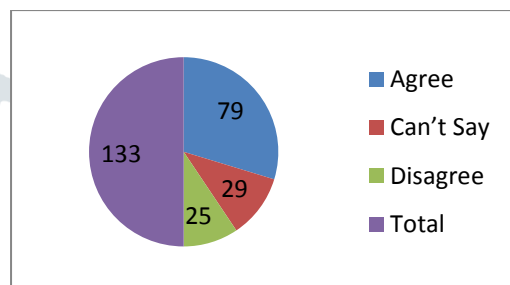
3. Handicraft make Kashmir famous all over the world.

Agree	87	65.42
Can't Say	13	9.77
Disagree	33	24.81
Total	133	100%



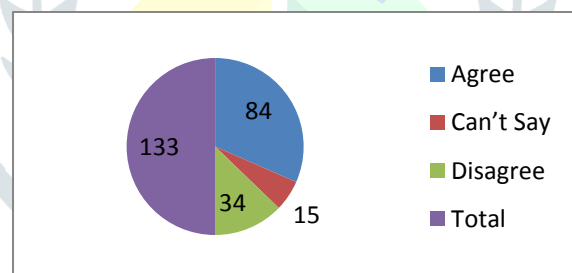
4. Handicrafts of Kashmir acts as tourism promoting tool.

Agree	87	59.39
Can't Say	13	21.81
Disagree	33	18.80
Total	133	100%



5. Handicraft products are mainly made for the tourists and develop tourism in Kashmir.

Agree	84	63.15
Can't Say	15	11.27
Disagree	34	25.57
Total	133	100%



Results and Discussions

Kashmiri handicrafts are unique in its richness and beauty. 58.64% respondents agreed that Kashmiri handicrafts are globally recognised while as 24.07% disagreed with this statement and 17.29% were neutral and could not say anything. The analysis of the responses about Handicrafts of Kashmir making tourists aware about Kashmir as destination shows that 50.37% respondents agreed with the statement while as 25.57% disagreed with it and 26.06% could not say anything. 65.42% respondents were agree with the statement that, Handicraft make Kashmir famous all over the world while as 24.81% disagreed with it and 9.77% were neutral. Furthermore 59.39% respondents agreed that, Handicrafts of Kashmir acts as tourism promoting tool. However 18.80% disagreed and 21.81% were neutral for this statement. The analysis for the statement, Handicraft products are mainly made for the tourists and develop tourism in Kashmir shows that 63.15% of respondents were agreed with the statement while as 25.57% disagreed with it and 11.27% were neutral. The analysis of the data shows that handicrafts and tourism of Kashmir are interrelated with each other and can be used to promote one another.

Suggestions and Recommendations

The Handicraft industries of Kashmir should put more interest towards the advertisement. The state Govt. should develop the strategies of using handicrafts as a tool for promoting and developing tourism of Kashmir. Handicraft industries should be developed because these reduce the unemployment to a greater level in Kashmir. More and more units or centers of handicrafts should be established so that each and every person's become aware about these industries. The various financial policies like loans should be available easily at lower interest rates so that a skilled person can setup his own unit easily. The handicraft industries should use attractive marketing strategies so that a customer will be fully satisfied with their products. Training centers should be established by the Govt. where training will be providing to skilled unskilled, semi-skilled persons.

REFERENCES

- [1] Sharma S (2010) Role of handicrafts industry in production, employment and export promotion: A case study of J&K state. Kashmir journal of social sciences 4: 43-61.
- [2] Ghouse SM (2012) Indian Handicrafts Industry: Problems and strategies. International Journal of Management Research and Review 2: 1183-1199.
- [3] Bhat FA, Yasmin E (2013) An Evaluation of Handicraft Sector of J&K-A Case study of District Budgam. European Academic Journal 1: 367-381.
- [4] Tiwari SA, Sheikh SA (2014) Skill Development and Vocational Training in the Handicraft Sector in Jammu and Kashmir. Annual Research Journal of Symbiosis Centre for Management Studies, Pune 2: 138-155.

