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NEED OF REVIVAL OF LACQUERED BANGLE INDUSTRY IN HYDERABAD

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Abstract

Hyderabad has 400 years history and is well known for its heritage and culture. The city is the birth place of the lacquered bangles studded with beautiful and colourful stones made of glass pieces. The industry, unfortunately, still is managed by conventional families in an unprofessional way though it has lot of potential in the export market. This article discusses various causes for the lagging behind position of the industry and explores the strategic ways for its revival and development.

Introduction

Hyderabad has been a major trading centre for centuries and is well known for its cultural products such as: Antiques, Jewellery, handicrafts, pearls, dresses, leather goods, semi-precious stones and different flavoured and traditional perfumes.

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Culturally and geographically, Hyderabad occupies a unique place in India. It is the only market place for lacquered bangles in the world market, and it is the biggest.

Affluence of cultures and traditions, the city often described as a link between the north and the south and a 'meeting' place of the east and the west.

Role of Small and Cottage Industry

Gandhiji is believed to have greater relevance in the present world of modern science and technology which has produced geographical neighbourhood but the distance between man and man has increased.

Gandhiji opined industrialisation is going to be a curse for mankind. It can't provide jobs for mankind and in addition, it would be creating problems: whereas developing thousands of cottage and village industry would provide an outlet for the creative faculties and resourcefulness of the people. It would also usefully employ many persons who are in need of employment, which in return, would add to the national wealth too.

Rural industries have played an important role in the development of the rural economy, since long, rural industrialisation is necessary for our economy, for creating employment opportunities and for curtailing rural-urban migration.

Present Position of Small and Cottage Industries

The present position of small and village and cottage industries is very bad and further, due to liberalisation and globalisation, these are facing chronic problems. The most common causes for high sickness of the village and cottage and small industries are:

- Inadequate availability of essential inputs, such as raw materials, power, transportation and skilled labour.
- Changes in the industrial policies of the Govt. from time to time.
- Shortage of finance especially working capital.
- Lack of good managerial technicians.

- Lack of professional marketing techniques (Skills).
- More duties on the import of raw materials.
- Infrastructural constraints.
- Lack of training and management education.

About Handlooms and Handicrafts

Andhra Pradesh is well known for varied types of art and traditional crafts ranging from leather puppetry to ikat weaving and in all, the Andhras are highly developed and specialised. They are still practised as a family or cottage industry and spread out across the state. Several emporia keeping the collections of traditional arts and craft for distribution. Further govt. handloom cooperatives and handicraft stores are also putting efforts in marketing and distribution. The following are some of the products specialised in:

- Ikat fabrics at Pochampally & Koyalagudemn
- Kalamakari at Machilipatnam & Srikalahasthi
- Himraoo at Darushshifa (old city in Hyderabad)
- Bidri Work at Darushshifa (old city in Hyderabad)
- Kondapally toys at Kondapally (Vijayawada)
- Lambadi Mirror Work at Lepakshi Handicrafts
- Lacquer wood works at Nirmal
- Lacquered Bangles at Hyderabad

About Lacquered Bangles

These are moulded to pure lac and studded with glittering and beautifully cut glass-pieces of various colours. These have become a traditional item and every bride wears it in her marriage.

Most of the women of different districts of Andhra Pradesh and moffusil states exclusively go to Hyderabad to buy bangles. The price range varies from Rs. 300/- to 4000/- for a set of 4 pieces.

Further foreign tourists head to visit Hyderabad to buy these bangles.

The premium price of bangles is due to the quality of studded stones; the cutting and shape of the stones, the colouring process and the designing and also facetting of the items. The glassware for premium sets is mainly imported from Belgium and Czechoslovakia. The industry is basically a village & cottage industry being managed by the selected families in Hyderabad. The product has more export potential but is not being managed well and is suffering from the following problems.

- 20% import duty on the import of glass-ware pieces.
- Family management, in other words lack of professionalism and lack of proper training and education.
- Unwillingness or inability to tap the export potential.
- Lack of innovative designs/designers.
- Lack of innovative and new applications.
- Poor marketing strategies.
- Lack of proper infrastructure.
- Lack of co-operation among the venturers though related to family.
- No standardisation in the production and designing, studding of stones etc.
- Lack of branding.
- Lack of uniform patternisation of marking price.
- Inconvenient location of the market (Laad Bazaar) and the only location for selling and is very inconvenient for the foreign tourists.

Suggestions/Recommendations

The following suggestions are put forth for the revival and to effectivate the industry

a) Training - Innovative Designs - New Applications

As the industry is managed by the family and lacking in professionalism, the need for designers in an innovative way is very much required.

Designing of stones, studding of different coloured stones and their facetting should be in the standardised manner to show no differences or variations on the outer part of Bangle sets.

New design development is utmost required to retain and attract new customers. For this the designers are to be specially trained and the training dept of SIDBI, SIDCS, NISSET, etc are to be given more scope for the development of new designs.

Use of colour stones with lac need not be restricted to only bangles and other jewellery items for ladies. The use of coloured glass stones and lac can be used for the following new applications:

- Vases made of glass or clay, the outer part can be given one coat of lac to fix the coloured stones to give more attractive look and shining. The studding of stones should follow certain new designs to give further colourful and attractive look.
- Ashtrays, Plates etc, can also be given better look with use of lac and glass stones.
- Boxes for jewellery & Holy Books. The wooden boxes used to keep jewellery and holy books (such as Geetha, Bible, Quran) can also be decorated with colourful stones in religious designs.
- 'Reehal' (stand to read Holy Books) can also be given look by the use of lacquered colourful stones.
- Stones can be fixed on the 'pallu (border) of the sarees, hair clips, gift and novelty items.
- Certain decorative pieces such as hangouts (on the wall), photoframes, 'talwars' (knife) etc. can also be given good appeal by the use of lacquered stones.
- On the other handicrafts such as bidriworks, Kondapally toys and lacquered wood works, the new appeals can be created with the use of lacquered glassware-colourful stones.

b) Effective Promotional & Marketing Techniques

The Industry is (as far as lacquered bangles are concerned) the oldest, biggest and the only one in the world. At the same time it is very inconvenient, location of the market (Laad Bazaar) while publicity and promotional aspects of the industry are almost nil. Further it has no retail outlets all over India and the world.

Effective publicity can be created by

- associating with cultural festival celebrating organisations.
- getting assistance from the marketing agencies of the Andhra Pradesh Govt.
- displaying at major & popular beauty parlours/cinema theatres and popular lady garment stores.

The marketing of products can be effectively done by:

- having a tie up with HHEC (Hyderabad Handicraft Export Corporation).
- taking the help of Export Promotion Council.
- keeping the products in the important tourist spots at the country and the world.

c) Promotion of a separate cell by the Govt of Andhra Pradesh

To develop this industry to retain the culture and heritage of AP in particular and of India in general.

d) Encouraging Women Entrepreneurs to take up this venture such as

- Self Help Groups
- DWACRA groups which are successful in most of the States. Being ladies, they can concentrate and innovate new designs and new applications.

Conclusion

The above stated measures definitely bring positive changes in the financial position of the industry and thus the industry could generate enormous employment and also foreign exchange.

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