



Handicrafts: A Vision for Economic Growth to Achieve Sustainable Development

Dr. Priyanka Singh

Central University of Gujarat
Singhpriyanka1012@gmail.com, Lucknow.

ABSTRACT

The sustainable development goals given more importance to women empowerment, equality, eradication of poverty, education, health, including the economic, social and environmental dimension. Handicrafts are essential to sustainable development in order to generate economic growth. Today, the fashion world is more detrimental to the environment. The wastage of fashion is a major problem for the environment. This handicraft is a sustainable medium to achieve economic growth without endangering environment.

Keywords: Sustainable Development, Handicraft, Economic development, Environment

1.1 Introduction

The decades 1960s and 70s marked by the concern about the environment particularly health. This turns environmental critiques to discuss about sustainable development (Baker, 2006). In the time of globalization, the world is moving to reach the goal of development. Development is a major question in the present time. The last few decades have been very important in the perspective of environment. Today, the environment is a major subject for the world. The global climate changes, global warming, polluting water, deforestation, radioactive, chemical and toxic wastes are the most important challenge for us. In the social aspect, it is important to understand that the effects of our actions on the environment. It is important to understand the relationship between humans, the environment and its engagement with culture.

1.2 Historical background of Sustainable Development

It was the first time in 1972, the first conference on the topic of human environment was held in Stockholm. The term Sustainable development was used by the Brundtland Commissions (1984-1987) and its report our common future (WCED 1987), which defined sustainable development as development that “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Brundtland Commissions has come to represent mainstream thinking about the relationship between environment and development. In 1987 when the world commission on environment and development (WCED) published its report, our common future, that the links between the social, economic and ecological dimension of development were addressed in WCED 1987.

The WCED was chaired by Gro Harlem Brundtland, and ‘our common future’ known as the Brundtland report. The establishment of the WCED and its links with the emerging system of international environmental management or governance. In making the link between the economy, society and the environment the Brundtland report puts development a traditional economic and social goal, and sustainability an ecological goal together to formulate a new development model, that of sustainable development (Report on World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987).

Sustainable development does not only deal with environmental issues. It has three important features are environmental Sustainability, socio-political sustainability and economic sustainability. The UN has played a particularly prominent role in stimulating engagement with sustainable development. The UN has organized many world Summits, including the United Nations conference on environment and development. The UN General Assembly decided in 1989 to organize an international conference on the topic of ‘United Nations Conferences on Environment and Development (UNCED)’ in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The (UNCED) Conference 1992, (Rio Earth Summit) is very important for the environment and the development issues. The delegation of 172 countries, 1300 representatives of 44 non-governmental organizations and 7000 to 8000 members of the media attended the 12 daylong conference. India, Germany, Sweden, Canada, Pakistan, France, UK US, Norway, Denmark, Bangladesh addressed the subject of environment and its importance. The major outcome of the conference was ‘Agenda 21 which is Action Plan for the 21st century. Sustainable development is a major goal of the Agenda 21. It is also emphasized that the active participation of women, youth, indigenous groups, NGOs, farmers, local authorities, industrial organizations, engineers, Scientist and government is critical to achieving actively the goal of Sustainable Development (Patnaik, 2009).

In, 2002, the third world summit on sustainable development (WSSD) was held in Johannesburg. The WSSD had two goals to hold a ten-year review of the 1992 earth summit and to revive the global commitment to the sustainable development. The Rio declaration, which came from the earth summit in Rio de Janeiro, provides an official collection of normative standards that address moral issues such as gender equality and justice. It also explains how to manage and organize the promotion of sustainable development at the societal, institutional, and political levels, using governance norms (Baker, 2006).

In 2001 the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (UNESCO,2001) elaborate the concept of Sustainable development "...cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature"; it becomes "one of the roots of development understood not simply in terms of economic growth, but also as a means to achieve a more satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual existence". It has emphasized that the cultural aspect is also important for sustainable development.

The number of the Rio Summit's objectives were not achieved. Despite the greatest efforts of the United Nations, NGOs, and other organizations to tackle climate change and its consequences, they have been unable to translate their good intentions into action. Following the adoption of the discussion above the peace and sustainable development has emerged as the outcome of sustainable development goals. The human interaction with the environment, which constitutes societal progress in relation of development, is characterised by sustainable development.

In order to attain sustainability, it is important to promote social justice, enhance human and technical capacity in order to achieve social transformation and meet human needs (Roseland, 2000). The goal of sustainability necessitates the safeguarding of the natural resources basis on which future development is centered. The goal of the sustainable development is to create an ecological civilization that lives in harmony with environment and human. This need balancing economic growth, social advancement and environmental progress.

The United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development was established in December 1992 by General Assembly resolution as a functional commission of the UN economic and social council, implementing a recommendation of Agenda 21, the landmark global agreement reached at the June 1992 United Nations Conferences on Environment and Development/ Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro. Agenda 21 is a United Nations programme that promotes sustainable development. It is a broad plan of action to be implemented globally, locally and nationally by UN, governments. The major groups in every area in every area where humans have an impact on the environment. The number 21 represents the twenty-first century. The Agenda 21 was revealed at the United nations conference on 'Environment and Development' (Earth Summit), held in Rio de Janeiro on 14 June 1992, where 179 Governments voted to adopt the programme. The United Nations General Assembly had a special session in 1997 to assess five years of progress on Agenda 21 implementation (Rio+5). The assembly acknowledged unequal progress and underlined major issues such as increased globalization, widening income inequality, and continuous deterioration of the global environment. A new resolution passed by the General Assembly pledged more action. The Johannesburg plan of implementation, agreed at the world Summit on Sustainable Development (Earth Summit 2002) affirmed UN commitment to 'full implementation of Agenda 21, alongside achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and other international agreements. The implementation of agenda 21 was intended to involve action at international, national and local levels (Patnaik,2009).

The third world countries are working in the direction to reach the goal of development. There are many women's are from numerous communities from different part of the India. They all have a different religion, sect and identity. The social structure of all these women's are different from each other. However, they all are highly rigorous in their culture and identity. The women are subjugated by their culture. The women have no right to education. They are only doing household work. Women's role in the society were governed by patriarchal society. They are far from education, health, economic and political rights. They are enjoying their life as they live it. Religion, gender and culture are obstacles to their development. The development goal has not contributed any role in changing the lives of women life.

1.3 Women, Handicrafts and Sustainable Development Goals

The sustainable development goals given more importance to women empowerment, equality, eradication of poverty, education, health, including the economic, social and environmental dimension. It is a broader approach that defines major issues such as poverty reduction while also taking environmental consideration in this account. The sustainable development goals proposed by Columbia, Guatemala, Peru during the Rio + 20 proceeding are intended to remind officials and other participants of the importance of achieving a strong result at Rio+ 20 and in the future. It was the start of a new way of thinking about economic progress, social justice and environmental sustainability. The major goal of the SDGs is to rethink this idea towards sustainable development. In this women promotes handicraft as a sustainable economic source of income.

The following indicators of SDGs will be taken as indicators as for analysis handicraft as a sustainable development.

1. **No Poverty**- End poverty in all its forms everywhere.

Handicraft is provide opportunity for person who do not have experience in other fields. It is a simple but minute work. Anyone can have learned handicraft and self-employment. It is a tool for eradicating poverty in the context of local opportunities. Handicraft for women in remote communities is a best medium to empower them.

2. **Good Health and Well Being**- Ensure healthy lives and promote well- being for at all ages.

Handicraft do not need any kind of large infrastructure. It is a tainted form of free labour. Whatever products used in handicraft are organic. They are not hazardous to either human or the environment. People in industries and factories people are exposed to a variety of chemicals and radiations. Which can be hazardous to their health. Handicraft promote good health and well - being and while also protecting the environment.

3. Quality Education- Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Handicraft education is very significant in the fashion industry. Handicrafts constitute a rural and distant village's identity. Today, the fashion business is the world's fastest growing industry. It has a large number of job opening for handicraft workers. It allows rural women to display their crafts in a market setting.

4. Gender Equality- Achieve gender equality and empowered all women and girls.

Women's labour has long included handicraft work, particularly handicraft. It empowers women and offers them an equal status in society. Handicraft is a very minute work. However, it is given a low status in handicraft labour. Since it is regarded as a female –oriented occupation. People are now becoming more aware of the labour task of handicraft as a result of globalization. Today those women are becoming more involved in needle work, which is given the same respect as other handicrafts.

5. Decent Work and Economic Growth- Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable employment and decent work for all.

Handicraft is respectable occupation with a strong high economic value in national and international market. It is a sustainable work which passed one generation to others. Today's fashion industry innovates fusing the contemporary with the past. Handicraft work is always admired by the world. Through handicraft trade and work, it infused income to women and thus transformed their quality of life.

6. Peace Justice and Strong Institution- Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Handicraft activity contributes to a more peaceful society. All of the craft artisans are collaborating. Handicrafts create peaceful societies in a culturally diverse community. Many artisans from different communities, castes and religions are collaborating peacefully.

1.4 Conclusion

Handicraft work is an important part of sustainable development since it promotes socio, economic and environmental friendly atmosphere. It promotes local economy through women's cultural and traditional knowledge. Handicraft women contribute their role to fulfilling the goals of sustainable development. Handicraft is a medium for achieving the goal of human development. In this context, women are encouraging economic sustainability. Though, handicraft is the means of survival, it has not contributed towards their real development.

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