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## **GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES FOR ENHANCING ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE TEXTILE AND HANDICRAFTS SECTOR: FOSTERING INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

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### **Abstract**

*The textile handicraft sector has an ability to produce a number of entrepreneurs irrespective of its potential in the globalization era. The state's textile handicraft industry generates a lot of job, but it currently facing many challenges, related to priorities, government interest, employment, income, production, raw materials, etc. These issues cause the industry to drastically decline and migrate towards urban areas in search of work to earn for family. Nonetheless, despite ongoing government actions, there is a disparity between the available programmes and their recipients. Therefore, a SWOT analysis of the identified programmes was conducted in order to understand this gap. The findings outlined the utilization of the government identified programme and suggest some methods to overcome the gaps so that it is helpful to ensure implementation of programme to its fullest extent. Government officers and beneficiaries should cultivate a better relationship. More information of the program through camps and awareness campaigns should be organized by those in positions of responsibility within the community, including higher education reach out programmes and researches for filling the gap of implementation and regulation. This study is an innovative strategy in overcoming the weakness and fighting the threats of the programmes initiated by the government for developing entrepreneurship skills.*

**Keywords:** *Entrepreneurship, Government Programmes, Skills, SWOT analysis, Textile Handicraft.*

### **Introduction**

Entrepreneurship refers to the creative and initiative progress towards growth of individual, family and community. Such responses can take place in any field of subject: enterprise, agriculture, community work, industry, education, textile- handicrafts. Thus, modifying previous version of skill with new techniques creates entrepreneurship (Rao & Pareek,1978). According to Kumari, I. (2014), finances create opportunities through advancements which are viewed as a significant wellspring of intensity in world economy. The economy on the other hand, depends upon joint efforts by the Government

policies, programmes, schemes, and the stakeholders. There are many schemes that have been launched to promote, support, and assist budding and existing entrepreneurs. Through financial support along with mentorship and guidance. Focused on the comprehensive advancement of the textile handicraft sector, the study targeted aspects such as financial assistance, skill enhancement, job creation, and the promotion of entrepreneurship development.

Organizations such as UNESCO, UNCAD, or WTO have recognized handicrafts as artisanal items wherein the artisan's direct manual contribution constitutes the most

significant portion of the final product. A few characteristics that set handicrafts apart include their practicality, creativity, beauty, cultural attachment, decorativeness, functionality, tradition, and social and religious symbolism. Handicrafts are a clear example of a nation's legacy and symbolize it. The handicraft industry, which primarily employs women and members of lower castes, employs 68.86 lakh Indians in total, according to the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. Under the topic "Poverty Eradication, Especially Extreme Poverty," the UNESCO Inter Sectoral Program highlighted the socioeconomic significance of handicrafts. The "Handicrafts and Employment Generation for the Poorest Youth and Women" initiative included a research that focused on the handicrafts industry as a means of creating jobs at a low cost without upsetting the balance of culture and society. This study indicates that the handicraft industry is a vital source of income during times of famine and drought, and that it also provides a foundation for additional revenue during periods of typical agricultural production. Additionally, UNESCO stressed that the handicrafts sector's primary contribution to the economy and export market in developing nations is a means of addressing unemployment, particularly among women and young people living in rural and urban areas. According to Pitchai & Akilandeswari (2014), the government ought to conduct regular surveys and counts of craftspeople.

Textile Handicrafts products being eco-friendly as compare to other machine made products required special inputs on the part of individuals and government. The Indian government has implemented various measures to restore the prominence of textile handicrafts. To add to the initiative of government of India has introduced multiple schemes such as the Baba Saheb Hastshilp Vikas Yojana, initiatives for design and technology up-gradation, marketing support and services, research and development, human and resource development, a comprehensive welfare scheme for handicrafts artisans, and a scheme for infrastructure and technology development. These measures have been implemented periodically to support the growth of the handicraft industry.

Handicrafts within the textile domain can be divided into those that involve manual

embroidery, hand painted, hand printed and crochet work. There are surface and structure design that make the fabric decorative and enhance their quality and utility. The hand skills used in crafting these regional textiles products not only enhances the face value of the fabric but also enriches the culture, craft and pocket. Various Indian textile handicrafts, such as the handloom-woven Patola saree from Gujarat, the handembroidered Chamba rumal from Himachal Pradesh, the hand-painted Kalamkari craft from Andhra Pradesh, the hand block-printed Sanganer and Bagru prints from Rajasthan, the hand-embroidered Phulkari from Punjab, the hand-embroidered Kantha from Bengal, and numerous others, showcase diverse hues of Indian culture. These textile handcrafted products from different regions not only embody the rich cultural tapestry of India but also exemplify the unity found in its diversity.

The present review research work entitled, "Government's Programmes for Developing Entrepreneurship Skills in the Textile Handicraft" was carried out with the objective of studying the available textile-handicraft centered government programmes for enterprising women. The methodology adopted for the study includes the analyses of secondary data that was gathered from national and international journals with published MSED, DIC, Census surveys, and books on government programme of textile handicrafts and entrepreneurship. More than hundred social welfare programs are being implemented across different Ministries of the Government of India to provide support in the textile handicraft sector, at both the national and state levels. These initiatives specifically cater to artisans and crafts producers, with a focus on benefiting artisans, women, tribal communities, minorities, and youth. The local administrative offices bear the responsibility for executing these programs at the grassroots level, which involves tasks like increasing awareness, promoting participation, and facilitating the processing of benefits. The total outlay for Ministry of Textiles in the financial year 2016-17 was Rs. 3350 crore, of which Rs. 219 crore was allocated for National Handicraft Development Programme. On the other hand, the government had also sanctioned Rs 1.22 lakh crore advances to small scale organization under the PM Mudra Yojana by March 2016. As per the latest data

of the financial year 2022-2023, number of loan sanctioned under PMMY was Rs.62310598 crore which includes the sum authorized Rs. 456537.98 crore and sum dispensed Rs. 450423.66 crore. Out of the many Government programme especially for textile handicraft - five major programmes concerned with the holistic development of textile handicraft sector in the field of financial support, skill development, employment generation and entrepreneurship development were selected for the purpose of the study. The Programmes under study were subjected to content analyses. Their strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats were identified and tabulated. Some interesting findings revealed during the analysis are discussed in their profile.

#### **National Handicrafts Development Programme (NHDP)**

The National Handicrafts Development Programme (NHDP) was launched in the year 2005. This program recognizes the cultural and economic significance of handicrafts and aims to support artisans and craftsperson's by enhancing their skills, improving their livelihoods, and preserving the country's rich craft heritage. The main aim of NHDP is to preserve and promote the diverse and culturally significant heritage of Indian handicrafts. By providing support and recognition to traditional crafts, it ensures that these valuable traditions are passed down to future generations. NHDP facilitates market access for handicraft products. It works on connecting artisans to domestic and international markets, expanding their reach and increasing the demand for Indian handicrafts. It is a dedicated effort to support and promote the rich heritage of Indian handicrafts. Its objectives include preserving cultural traditions, empowering artisans, enhancing their skills, providing market access, and ensuring the economic growth of the handicraft sector while promoting inclusivity and quality standards.

SWOT Analysis of PMEGP Strengths Weakness Opportunities Threats Job creation and reduction of unemployment; Financial support through subsidies and loans; Rural development impact; Skill development. Bureaucratic procedures; Limited funding; Loan default risks; Limited awareness; Regional imbalances; Challenges in monitoring. Digital integration for Streamlined

Processes; Diversification into various sectors; Collaboration with Private sector; and NGOs Promotion of eco-friendly and sustainable businesses. Economic downturn; Increasing Competition; Policy changes; Technological disruptions; Changing consumer trends; Loan repayment issues; Market saturation

In navigating these factors, a strategic emphasis on overcoming bureaucratic obstacles, securing sustainable funding, and leveraging digital advancements can enhance program effectiveness. A vigilant approach to economic shifts, policy changes, and technological advancements is crucial to mitigating potential threats. This is a 'credit linked subsidy programme' for generation of employment opportunities through establishment of micro enterprises in the rural as well as urban areas. Directorate of Economic Research, 2011 – 2012 reported in that KVIC is the nodal agency at the National level for implementation of the programme. The scheme will give scope for economic independence to entrepreneurs in different states of India as found to be successful in Kohima district, Nagaland in study conducted by Kumar, S.J. (2022).

PM MUDRA Scheme: The PM MUDRA Yojana (Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency) was launched in April 2015. A pioneering initiative that recognizes the vital role played by micro and small businesses in India's economic development. It was introduced to address the challenges faced by these enterprises in accessing finance and credit facilities. By facilitating access to credit, MUDRA seeks to boost entrepreneurship and foster inclusive growth across the country. The primary objective of the MUDRA scheme is to promote financial inclusion by extending affordable and accessible credit to micro and small businesses that often have limited or no access to formal financial institutions. This is a significant step towards fostering entrepreneurship, job creation, and inclusive growth by providing financial support to micro and small businesses in India. Its core objective is to address the financial needs of these enterprises and empower individuals to embark on their entrepreneurial journeys, ultimately contributing to the country's economic development.

#### **SWOT Analysis of PM MUDRA Scheme**

Strengths Weakness Opportunities Threats Promotes micro and small enterprises;

Financial inclusion for underserved populations; Accessible credit with simplified; Application and approval processes; Job creation. Possibility of loan defaults; Limited financial literacy; Challenges in credit assessment; Limited risk mitigation; Regional disparities; Limited awareness in rural areas. Digital integration and fetch partnerships; Diversification into emerging sectors; Capacity building for financial literacy; Green and sustainable. Entrepreneurship. Economic downturn; Increased competition; Technological disruptions Risk of fraud; Policy changes; Market saturation. The emphasis on supporting micro and job creation and local economic vitality. Verma S.(2015) has explained that the design of PM Mudra scheme will not give the financial support to MSMEs but will also provide moral support to young growing population to become an entrepreneur. Explored the aim, scope and function of PMMY, Gupta S., (2015) revealed that this scheme with the aim of “Funding the unfunded” will serve as a bridge for the exploring of mass entrepreneurship and the creation of jobs. small enterprises is a robust strength, fostering economic growth at the grassroots level.

#### **Skill Development Program**

The National Skill Development Mission and the Skill India campaign were launched in 2015 by the Government of India. It was comprehensive initiative designed to enhance the skills and employability of the country's workforce. This program recognizes the critical role of skill development in achieving economic growth, reducing unemployment, and ensuring that individuals are equipped with the competencies required for today's job market. The Skill Development Program in India is a multifaceted initiative that seeks to enhance employability, reduce unemployment, promote entrepreneurship, foster inclusive growth, align skills with industry needs, and enhance the nation's international competitiveness. It plays a pivotal role in ensuring that individuals are prepared for the workforce and can actively participate in the country's economic development. Skill development isn't limited to job readiness; it also encourages entrepreneurship. The program supports individuals in acquiring the skills needed to start and manage their own businesses, contributing to economic growth.

However, the persisting threats of skill obsolescence, funding cuts, and increased competition underscore the need for strategic planning and continuous adaptation to ensure a robust and responsive education system. In their 2014 work, Sheikh and Tiwari emphasized the significance of skill development initiatives and vocational training within the handicraft sector, particularly focusing on Anantnag district in Jammu and Kashmir. The research concluded that training is a crucial requirement for entrepreneurs, business professionals, employment generation, and plays a vital role in contributing to the economic development of the nation. In study conducted by Anita Swan & Sunita Swan (2020), on “Skill-Development in India: Challenges & opportunities” it was found that ‘Skill India’ the mission necessitates a heightened emphasis on fostering entrepreneurial skills to boost job creation in the country. According to Dr. Chandra Sekhar Dash and Shilpa Dash (2020), journal issues like gender inequality and sectorial imbalances in skill development, training, and placements continue to exist. Nevertheless, positive changes can occur through skill transformations, addressing skill gaps, and implementing organizational structures that prioritize learning.

#### **Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)**

The (WEP) was an innovative and forward-thinking initiative was launched in 2018. It has been established to foster and facilitate the growth of women entrepreneurs, acknowledging the crucial part that women play in the economic advancement of the nation. WEP is a digital platform that provides a space for women entrepreneurs to connect, collaborate, access resources, and gain visibility for their businesses. The primary objective of the Women Entrepreneurship Platform is to empower women by providing them with the tools, resources, and opportunities they need to become successful entrepreneurs. It aims to break down gender-related barriers and biases that may hinder women from starting and scaling their businesses. A pioneering initiative that aims to empower women entrepreneurs by providing them with the resources, support, and opportunities they need to succeed. The platform offers skill development programs and training to enhance the entrepreneurial and leadership skills of women. This makes them

better equipped to lead and manage successful enterprises. WEP fosters networking, mentorship, skill development, and access to markets, all while promoting gender equality and inclusivity in the entrepreneurial landscape of India.

Supporting women entrepreneurs is a powerful force for empowerment and economic independence, yet faces challenges of limited access and competition. The potential threats of technological disruptions, cyber security risks, and regulatory changes emphasize the need for a strategic and adaptable approach to ensure sustained success in advancing women's entrepreneurship. Renu & Anupama, (2018). Suggested that digitalization will provide a unified platform for customers, traders, investors, scholars, and the media, enabling easy access to locate artisans (assisted by maps) and retail outlets for handmade products. In his 2015 article titled "The Sector of Handicrafts and its Contribution to the Indian Economy," Bhat, J.A. highlighted that the handicraft sector not only serves as a source of employment for economic development but also serves as a thoughtful and creative means of self-expression for artisans. The digital infrastructure opens diverse avenues for women to become digital innovators (Suseno & Abbott, 2021). Progress in digital infrastructures and technology offers opportunities for alternative funding, moving beyond the dependence on conventional venture capitalists (Brush et al., 2008).

### Conclusion

All programs under preview are contributing significantly to economic development and job creation in India. Empowerment is a recurring strength, whether it's artisans, entrepreneurs, or women. Limited reach and awareness are common weaknesses, suggesting the need for improved outreach strategies. Financial literacy is a shared challenge, particularly evident in the MUDRA Scheme and the Women Entrepreneurship Platform. Multiple programs face challenges related to reaching their target audience and creating awareness about their offerings. Weaknesses in financial literacy are identified in various programs, impacting the effective utilization of resources. Leveraging technology is identified as an opportunity across multiple programs for enhanced outreach, efficiency and programme

effectiveness. Partnerships with industries and financial institutions emerge as opportunities for various programs. Economic factors pose threats to the success of these programs, indicating vulnerability to economic downturns. Societal norms and stereotypes are highlighted as potential threats, particularly for initiatives like the Women Entrepreneurship Platform. Comprehensive government initiative in India focused on nurturing and advancing the traditional textile handicraft sector. State government as well as central government have launched programmes which are focusing to boost-up textile handicraft sector but at the same time, this sector face much problems in form of programme and scheme implementation and regulation. Present study concludes that although the available programme are providing platform, resources, equipments and other essential tools required for developing enterprise but there is a lack of awareness among semi-skilled women who want to build their enterprise. There is a need for more awareness and positive relation between government and beneficiaries. Awareness programmes and camps should be arranged for the masses in general and women beneficiaries in particular by its government authority. Government should develop localized enterprising skilled strategies so that the skill in handicraft matches the skill demands of textile handcrafted industry. Merging the needs of the programmes with the outreach programmes and researches of higher education can bring revolutionary change in their implementation it will also fill the gap in its regulation.

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