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IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON POTTERY IN KARNATAKA

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Abstract:-Pottery is an ancient occupation of preparation of pots, decorative items like idols, stoves of biofuels, mud lamps (especially used in Diwali festival), etc. Pottery is community based occupation of potters and potters are known by different names such as Prajapati, Chakrasali, Kumhara, Kumbar, Kulal, etc, which reveals their occupation at different parts of country. With the impact of globalization and industrialization, the plastic and steel utensils were occupied the market and even LPG stoves are used by almost all population. As such, presently pottery is under threat. Many of the potters have revealed the present situations of pottery in Karnataka. As such, it is essential to rehabilitate and provide alternative employment to potters in Karnataka.

Keywords:Globalization , Pottery , ancient occupation , industrialization.

INTRODUCTION :-

Handicrafts in Indian villages are of different kinds. The major types of handicrafts are pottery, metal craft, gold jewellery, wood craft, shell craft, cane craft, needle craft embroidery, ivory craft, comb craft, glass craft, paper craft, sholapitha craft, weaving, silver jewellery, etc. All these types of handicrafts are considered major sources of income for numerous people in the Indian villages. The artisans create these handicrafts either at homes or in a cooperative basis or on behalf of any big concern involved with the marketing of handicrafts products. The village fairs, Melas and festivals are some of the best places for the Indian village artisans to sell their products.

Handicrafts in Indian villages are made for serving various purposes. While some of the handicrafts products are made for daily uses, there are a few that are made for decorative purposes. Villages in different parts of India are famous for producing different types of handicrafts. While the villages of West Bengal are famous for making the handicraft products like Terracotta, Sholapitha craft, etc., the villages of Gujarat are famous for the products like brass and iron items, clay items, wooden furniture, embroidery, silver jewellery, carpets, blankets, rugs, etc. The villages in other parts of the country are also famous for making different types of handicraft products.

Handicrafts in Indian villages are practiced since the ancient period. Handicraft is also a major occupation for the villagers since the ancient period. The governmental authorities in India are encouraging people to take up handicrafts as their occupation in the recent years as the Indian handicrafts products bring a huge amount of foreign currency to the country. Pottery is an ancient occupation as it is under threat due to impact of globalization and industrialization and the present study is made on the present state of pottery in Karnataka.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The present study is made to know the pottery in general and community or caste of potters in particular. Further, an attempt is made to analyze the present positions of potters in different parts of Karnataka.

METHODOLOGY:

The study was begun with literature search and secondary literature was searched to collect information about

pottery. On the present state and conditions of potters, many of the news items published in news papers, critical reviews, personal interviews with present potters, etc were made to collect the information on present state of pottery and potters in Karnataka.

POTTERY:

Pottery was in use in ancient India, including areas now forming Pakistan and northwest India, during the Mehrgarh Period II (5,500-4,800 BC) and Mehrgarh Period III (4,800-3,500 BC), known as the ceramic Neolithic and chalcolithic. Pottery, including items known as the ed-Dur vessels, originated in regions of the Indus Valley and has been found in a number of sites in the Indus Valley Civilization (Wikipedia, 2014). 'The History of Ceramics is the history of Humanity' revealed the historical importance of pottery and potters.

Pottery is the material from which the potteryware is made, of which major types include earthenware, stoneware and porcelain. The place where such wares are made is also called a pottery (plural "potteries"). Pottery also refers to the art or craft of the potter or the manufacture of pottery.

The definition of pottery used by ASTM International is "all fired ceramic wares that contain clay when formed, except technical, structural and refractory products". Some archaeologists use a different understanding by excluding ceramic objects such as figurines which are made by similar processes, materials and the same people but are not vessels.

In India, there are caste based occupations since ancient days. The term 'Kumbar' is derived from 'Kumbhakara' and in Sanskrit the word 'Kumbha' means 'water pot' and those who make pots are called as Kumbhakars or Kumbars or potters. In north India, the potters' caste is also known as Prajapatis, Kulal or Kumharas. As such, the Kumbar or potters are engaged in the occupations related to clay. That is potters used to make the pots, Stoves of Biofuels (Chula), idols during Panchami and Ganesh festivals, mud lamps during Diwali festivals, etc. It is also highlighted that many of the philosophers described the Kumbar people as 'Creator of Brahma' as they create the idols for worship. There are many Philosophers (Shivasharanas) such as Sarvajna and Kumbar Gundayya were from Kumbar community and presently, there are popular Kannada writers such as Kum. Veerabhadrappa, Dr. Ravindranath Kumbar and such others are from Kumbar community.

Pottery is made by forming a clay body into objects of a required shape and heating them to high temperatures in a kiln which removes all water from the clay, which induces reactions that lead to permanent changes including increasing their strength and hardening and setting their shape. A clay body can be decorated before or after firing. Prior to some shaping processes, clay must be prepared. Kneading helps to ensure an even moisture content throughout the body. Air trapped within the clay body needs to be removed. This is called de-airing and can be accomplished by a machine called a vacuum pug or manually by wedging. Wedging can also help produce even moisture content. Once a clay body has been kneaded and de-aired or wedged, it is shaped by a variety of techniques. After shaping it is dried and then fired.

Impact of Globalization on Pottery:

Due to the globalization and increase in the use of steel and plastic, the use of pottery products have been reduced considerably. As such there is no demand for pottery products. Narasimhamurthy (2011) reported on the status of pottery and remarked that the profession, ancient and once in great demand, has no takers in the district (Kolar) nowadays. There are very few villages near the city where one can still find some potters. Kumbarapet (of Kolar), which sheltered generations of potters, has just about 20 families whose younger generations are into other professions. The senior members of family continue to get clay vessels from outside and sell them in the village. Clay lamps, pots, plates, stoves, mini tanks, urns, troughs, cups are all sold by the senior members of the potter community, facing no trouble from any quarter.

Houses that had pottery as family profession have readymade clay articles stacked up outside. Making at home, however, is no longer seen. Potters have turned only marketers of clay vessels, as if the magic in their fingers is lost.

As described by Gayatri V Raj (2011), during Diwali festival lighting of lamps signifies hope and the yearning to get rid of darkness and bring in hope, prosperity and happiness. But now days, the life of potters, who were making earthen lamps is in dark, as the demand for the earthen lamps were considerably reduced. Similarly, Obalesh (2011) stated that with the festival of lights round the corner, the vendors selling a variety of lamps have spread their shops at every nook and corner of the city and women are seen buying new lamps to add to their collection as addition of lamps is also considered as a sign of prosperity. The traders too fix the rate of lamps as per the demands. The average size earthen lamps are being sold at approximately Rs 2 per piece. But, people are now showing more interest in buying coloured ceramic diyas as it is more attractive. The situation is not good for the kumbaras who have been involved in the trade since generations. Making of clay diyas is not simple as it involves a long procedure and takes a long time when compared to other earthen utensils. Mixing the clay to a right consistency and making clays individually by hand, later drying them in the sun before baking it and selling them. In spite of all these efforts taken out by the family

members, the lamps are not much sought after and sometimes even remain unsold. No one buys them after diwali celebrations are over. Hence, no one is showing interest in making these clay lamps and the lamps from Mysore are being sold in the market here. These reports were focused the problems faced by potters in Karnataka.

Due to the industrialization and globalization, the occupation of pottery is slowly disappearing and it is available only in remote rural areas. The reasons for decline in pottery are increase in use of plastic and metal utensils. Further, there are also scarcities of raw materials, lower marketability, cheaper price and higher cost of production of pottery. Particularly, the earthenware that has been prepared should be dried and fired and for the purpose of firing, wood is best source of energy. Due to decrease in forests and government restrictions on forest cutting, the timber is not available for the potters. Further, there are also problems of environmental pollution due to firing of the pottery.

Historically, "plumbism" (lead poisoning) was a significant health concern to those glazing pottery. This was recognized at least as early as the nineteenth century, and the first legislation in the United Kingdom to limit pottery workers' exposure was introduced in 1899. While the risk to those working in ceramics is now much reduced, it can still not be ignored. With respect to indoor air quality, workers can be exposed to fine particulate matter, carbon monoxide and certain heavy metals. The greatest health risk is the potential to develop silicosis from the long-term exposure to crystalline silica. Proper ventilation can reduce the risks and the first legislation in the United Kingdom to govern ventilation was introduced in 1899. The use of energy and pollutants in the production of ceramics is a growing concern. Electric firing is arguably more environmentally friendly than combustion firing although the source of the electricity varies in environmental impact.

In India, situation of pottery is different, as still production is made on the ancient methodology by hand made and by using a manual wheel. As expressed by majority of the potters, it is virtually impossible to get clay and timber. It is too expensive. With the entry of aluminium and steel vessels into the market, the demand for clay pots, plates and cups too fell. After pottery ceased to be a profession followed in urban areas, it continued only in villages near water tanks, where there are sufficient clay, water and timber is available. Surprisingly, as observed, only aged or middle aged people are engaged in pottery work and younger ones are engaged in other kinds of work such as employment in industries, agricultural lands, etc. Even though, the potters are facing risks and threats to their caste based occupation, still no major welfare schemes formulated for the potters by the Government.

Due to reduction in demand, there is reduction of pottery in Karnataka. As pottery is ancient skill based artistic work, it is essentially needed to be developed and revitalized. As there is lesser demand in one village or one town, many of the potters have organized themselves into a society, so as to get solved their occupational problems. As the demands for the pots and other clay products have been reduced, there is no security of livelihood for the potters in Karnataka.

CONCLUSION:

It is observed that the occupation of pottery is the most oldest occupation of Kumbar community in Karnataka. Even in different states, this communities is known by other names like Kulal, Kumbhar, Kumar, Prajapati, etc. Due to industrialization, the occupation of pottery is under threat and the future of potters' livelihood is blank. As such, the Government has to realize the problems the potters and essentially need to rehabilitate these potters and provide self-employment training to potters in other modern art based occupations like decorative arts, architecture, design of model structure in case of building construction, etc. Further, there is need to provide more reservations to potter community in getting education and employment, as their occupation to a greater extent is already disappeared and only few poor age-old potters are engaged in pottery.

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