Chapter 7

Information and Knowledge Needs of Artisans in a Knowledge Society:
A Case Study of Willow– Works Artisans in India

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ABSTRACT

The chapter demonstrates the concept of information, knowledge, and the knowledge society. Stress was given to highlight the information and knowledge needs of artisans, problems faced by them, and how they can achieve socio-economic development in a knowledge society. The particular ascent was given to highlight the perceptions and beliefs of willow-works artisans of district Ganderbal, India. The sample of 100 artisans was surveyed and it was founded that majority of them are between the age group of 20-40 years; 63% among them are educated (ranging from 5th–PG above), and there are both genders which practice willow-works, but the majority of them are males. Their tenet is that knowledge can change their standard of living, if there are provisions in knowledge society for creating and disseminating the new knowledge among these artisans pertinent to technology, scientific cultivation of raw materials, marketing, availability of new markets, and potential exploitation by entrepreneurs.

INTRODUCTION

It is universally accepted that knowledge is the power to achieve the higher standards in ones living, by putting it in the right direction at right time. The society which makes extensive use of knowledge is termed to be the knowledge society. The societies which are economically and culturally dependent to create scientific and technical knowledge to use it as a competitive factor between the nations in general and companies, the market in particular. The dominant principle in a knowledge society is networking among knowledge producers, effectiveness in applying, controlling and evaluating & learning (Style, 2018). The main advantage of knowledge society includes the predominant large-scale production, transmission and application of knowledge, the massive investment in education, Research & Development. The majority of the labour forces of the state are knowledge workers and continuous innovation by organizations (Thomson Gale, 2008). The purpose of the knowledge society is the development of the society by concentrating on more usage of knowledge at every step in different settings by different people, to yield the maximum output with minimum input or achieving greater benefits with limited resources.

A Society is consists of diverse sections associated with different jobs like farmers, teachers, doctors, engineers and others etc. All of these have a dependence on the freshest, appropriate knowledge to perform their everyday tasks engaged. The output they produce is counted in terms of the development of the society in which they used to live. The standard of their living and the luxuries they enjoy all is indirectly considered as the outcome of knowledge they used to achieve the same, thus prime focus goes to call upon knowledge society. One of the important and a broad section of every society are of artisans & craftsmen. If this section of society may get benefited from knowledge, definitely the advancement of society is due. The concept of the knowledge society and its characteristics need, artisans and their information/ knowledge requirements all needs to be explained. Besides, it also needs to be emphasized that, does the artisan community gets impacted by knowledge society and if yes how they were? And what are their perceptions and tenets towards the knowledge society? How they can accomplish their developmental goals by accessing and utilizing the new knowledge. These are some questions which need to find answers. In this milieu, the present study has made an effort to find reliable answers to these questions. It has been tried to explain the concept of information/ knowledge, knowledge society & its characteristics, artisans information & knowledge needs, the problems they generally face, knowledge society & its impact on artisans and social-sustainable development. Besides, an empirical approach was also followed to identify the beliefs and views of willow-works artisans of district Ganderbal-191201 in the state of Jammu & Kashmir, INDIA on how their socio-economic sustainable development is possible in the knowledge society. More simply,

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