

The Impact of Handicrafts on the Promotion of Cultural and Economic Development for Students of Art Education in Higher Education

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This paper studies the impact of handicrafts on the promotion of cultural and economic development for students of art education in higher education through handicrafts based on local customs and traditions. Descriptive, analytical, and experimental methods are used in this research. The results of the study are expected to benefit from the results of this study to provide planners handicrafts in the Ministry of Education. An effective strategy can affect the teaching and learning of handicrafts, the protection of its features and its presence and identity. The study sample consists of 45 students of the third level, batch 2012–2013, from the faculty of Education at the University of Khartoum, Republic of the Sudan. The researchers to prepare topics for handicrafts depend on the use of local materials and units which are derived from the environment and represent the Artistic heritage that is shown through handicrafts (pottery, ceramics, calligraphy, decoration, carpet weaving and textile, sewing, embroidery, sculpture and engraving on wood, metal works, and printing works). The researchers focus that the students learn the value of handicrafts in terms of economic and method of production and take advantage of it to increase the income of the individual product. The results confirms the existence of a difference in the quality and value of handicrafts for students in both groups: the experimental and control group, which confirms that the handicrafts lead to the promotion of cultural and economic development for students of art education in higher education. The researchers are recommended to consider of this topic as a main component which enables an area for further studies to develop different strategies in the field of handicrafts, for students to recognize the importance of the handicrafts value in terms of economic and method of production and take advantage of it to increase the income of the individual product.

Keywords: handicrafts, cultural, economic, art education

Introduction

Handicrafts are unique expressions of a particular culture or community through local craftsmanship and materials. With increased globalization, however, products are becoming more and more commoditized and artisans find their products competing with goods from all over the world. It is no longer possible to look at

traditional artisan communities and their products in isolation from global market trends and competition. Handicrafts are part of a much larger home accessory market, which includes handcrafted, semi handcrafted, and machine-made goods. The home accessory market is strongly influenced by fashion trends, consumer purchasing patterns, and economic conditions in end markets. In many cases, artisans are out of touch with those end markets, which presents a challenge to those seeking to export their products (Barber & Krivoshlykova, 2006).

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Handicraft production is a major form of employment in many developing countries and often a significant part of the export economy. With increased globalization, however, products are becoming more and more commoditized, with artisan producers facing increased competition from producers all over the world, particularly in China and other Asian countries. The home accessory market, often used to estimate the demand for handcrafted goods, is strongly influenced by fashion, consumer purchasing patterns, and economic conditions in end markets. Keeping up with frequently changing market trends presents a major challenge for handicraft exporters.

Handicrafts are an important productive sector and export commodity for many developing countries. The growth of international markets for home accessory products and an increased interest in global goods have opened up new market opportunities for artisans. Despite widespread production, however, there is a lack of common definition of handicrafts, although various attempts have been made to characterize this broad and rather unstructured sector (Mikkelsen & Hagen-Wood, 1998).

Crafts, by their very nature, are not mass produced. But if people are working with their hands, albeit with the assistance of tools and machines, producing goods required in a wide market space, selling to make profits and thereby contributing to national wealth, crafts can be termed as a decentralized creative industry where the human mind and hand are more important than the small machines and tools they may use. Here the machine is the instrument of the maker, owned by the maker or by the community. To that extent, craft is free of domination and exploitation. Therefore, There is a world of industry without industrialization in the traditional sense and there is both ample scope and need for it to come out of the disorganized, diminishing, and low-end profile that it has been carrying for long (Jaitly, 2005).

Historical Background

The official date of incorporation of the Arts and Crafts Movement in America is 1897, but that era started

long before this official date. The movement was the start of a transition from the traditional manufactured Victorian designs to handcrafted simple craftsmanship. This new movement originated in England around 1888, as the Industrial Revolution was eliminating craftsmanship to quantity. Hand tools were replaced by machines (Gomez, 2001). The industrialization was eliminating the skills and trades that had been handed down for generations among craftsman and craftswomen. The Arts and Crafts Movement proved to be widely influential, popular, and long lasting, spreading across the Atlantic to Boston to be established in the states starting in 1897 after a showing. A small group of architects, educators, craftspeople, and collectors organized the first crafts exhibition held in this country. The show promoted excellence in design, technical mastery, and usefulness in ever day life. Arts and crafts relied on the past medieval designs, simple and practical, straight lines and solid craftsmanship for longevity. The Gothic revival of the first half of the 19th century was an important influence of the arts and crafts movement by revisiting the influences of the middle Ages architecture and cathedrals. It also revived the skills and traditional materials used by the medieval craftsman (Gomez, 2001).

Importance of the Study

The researchers are expecting to teach the subject of handicrafts to students of art education in higher education, whereby enhancing the creative and creation.

The study will provide teachers with an effective strategy to develop their performance and improve the current teaching methods.

The researchers predict that this study enables an area for further studies to develop different strategies in the field of handicrafts.

To recognizes the importance of teaching student to learn the value of handicrafts in terms of economic and method of production and take advantage of it to increase the income of the individual product.

The Objectives of the Study

To develop means and methods to ensure the development of student's skills and knowledge, and to identify handicraft aesthetics.

To enable students to understand the relationship between economics, culture, and aesthetics.

To enable students to explore the linkages between environment, craft traditions, and society through field studies.

To develop a respect for the diversity of craft traditions and to uphold the dignity of its practitioners by understanding the difficulties that they face.

To introduce society's culture through the crafts, so that school students appreciate the variety of skills and expressions of the artist in societies.

To provide students a creative aesthetic experience of the unique visual and material culture of societies and develop values of conservation, protection the environment, resources, and heritage of the country.

Hypotheses of the Study

Handicrafts could positively impact students on the promotion of cultural and economic development for students of art education.

Methodology of the Study

The descriptive, analytical, and experimental methods were used in this research. The target population consists of students from the Faculty of Education, University of Khartoum, Republic of the Sudan. The study sample consists of 45 randomly selected students from the Faculty of Education—students of years (2012–2013).

Firstly, the 45 students were asked some of works from (pottery, ceramics, calligraphy, decoration, carpet weaving and textile, sewing, embroidery, sculpture and engraving on wood, metal works, and printing works). This test was marked out of 10 by using the criteria below. Then there was a two-week wash out period. After this period, the specific handicrafts program was taught which included the student to learn the value of handicrafts in terms of economic and method of production and take advantage of it to increase the income of the individual product. Each student was then given the same task to undertake: Make another design based on creativity. The task was marked out of 10 marks. The task was chosen as a valid measure of promotion of cultural and economic development for the handicrafts for students.

The total score for the test is 10 marks and the marks were distributed as follows:

Idea and design: Three marks.

Understanding of the relationship between tradition and contemporary trends: Three marks.

Exploration of the linkages between environments, craft traditions: Four marks.

The collected data was analyzed by the statistical program (Statistical Package for Social Science, SPSS) using the appropriate statistical treatments. The T-test for independent data was conducted to verify the significant differences between test scores before and after the implementation of the handicrafts program.

Sample of the Study

The study sample consists of 45 students of the third level, batch 2012–2013, from the faculty of Education at the University of Khartoum, Republic of the Sudan.

Crafts Traditions

Some people think folk art is only the work of uneducated, rural, older artists; some think that folk art is any handmade object that looks rustic, crude, and idiosyncratic; and others think it is solely the work of ethnic artists. Some people think that any artist who uses traditional techniques, designs, or forms in the production of, for instance, a broom, quilt, pot, decoy, paper cutting, or woven rug is therefore a folk artist. (Dowell & Avery, 2006).

In Britain, men such as John Ruskin, William Morris, and Charles Ashbee looked to the Medieval Period as a model for crafts guilds which fostered a more direct and meaningful connection between the workers and their work, with Ashbee setting up his own guild. They preserved more traditional methods of production, used more traditional materials, and turned to nature for inspiration for their designs. In America, the movement was led by Gustave Stickley (1858-1942), whose handcrafted furniture emphasized natural materials and whose Craftsman Style homes emphasized harmony between the architecture and the site (Stickley, 2009).

Stone Work

Another basic material that does not need much processing and technology is stone. Different types of stones from the most common ones to region specific ones or to precious gems have been used in different ways

from architectural construction, to sculptures, to making jewelry and so on. One would need to discuss different aspects of stone works that have existed through thousands of years.

Metal Crafts

Metal working dates back to prehistoric times. At the beginning, craftsmen had worked only malleable cold materials, followed by several forms of casting. It is much later that blacksmithing appeared, where metal was softened by intense heating and hammered into shape. Obtaining the wanted shape out of a durable material was a great step in the evolution of humanity. Modern investigation methods allow us to study the complex development of metallurgical knowledge, to determine the technologies of alloys involved, and to follow the traditional craft of blacksmiths and many others. Understanding the properties of each metal compounded in an alloy also gives us an overview on the behavior of the finite object (Gerelowitz, 1988).

Weaving

There are many natural materials found in and around your garden that can be harvested for weaving projects such as baskets, mats, and wreaths. Winter is an optimal time to gather woody vines, such as honeysuckle, grapevine, and wisteria, in preparation for weaving projects. Baskets can be woven from these different materials and making them is a satisfying and relaxing activity. It's also a very useful garden craft—students can use their baskets to collect harvested garden to produce or to gather clippings for compost.

Weaving is thought to be the most ancient of the arts. Some say humans mimicked the intricate nests of the weaver-bird or the graceful patterns of a spider web. Others credit the combination of human ingenuity and survival needs.

Textile Crafts

Clothing and textile being one of the three basic needs of human beings, apart from food and shelter, find place almost everywhere from the most common material of cotton to the expensive silk and wool. Most of the textile crafts are self-sufficient systems where the process starts right from acquiring raw materials to making them worthy to be woven, dyeing, printing, painting, embroidery, etc.. Some of these traditions are hundreds of years old.

Materials, Processes, and Techniques

The students would examine much of the following description of a broad range of materials used for crafts and alternatives adopted in changing circumstances (bone instead of ivory, mango instead of sandalwood, polyester and other synthetics, plastics, etc.), nature of craft depending on the quality of the material used, varieties and qualities of wood, stone, metals, alloys, grasses, bamboo, cane, and naturally cultivated fibers (cotton, silk, wool, jute, coir), gems/glass, animal products(leather, horn, bone (with emphasis that these are harvested only after the death of the animal)), shells, shola pith, paper dough, nature of dyes and colors (mineral, chemical, vegetable), handmade paper out of different materials etc. Each of these materials undergoes different stages of process before converting them into objects. Different techniques to handle materials each of which require various tools, possibilities of recycling by using waste materials creatively for economic purposes, and chemical waste processing etc., are other dimensions which need to be discussed.

Results and Discussion

Data Analysis of the Hypothesis

Handicrafts could positively impact students on the promotion of cultural and economic development for students of art education.

Table 1

Paired Samples Statistics

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental Before	45	104.87	31.171	4.647
Experimental After	45	113.87	35.062	5.227

Table 2

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	T.Test	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair-Experimental Before-total Experimental After-total	-9.000	18.695	2.787	-14.617	-3.383	-3.229	44	.002

Since the potential value = (0.000) is less than (0.05), it means there is a significant difference between the students' test grades before and after the handicrafts program.

The above tables (1-2) show that there is a significant difference between the students of the experimental group before and after the implementation of the program through the potential value, which amounted to (0.000). This potential value is less than the level of error allowed (0.05%) for the benefit after applying the program through the arithmetic mean value, which is amounted to (113.87) that is greater than the arithmetic mean value before implementing the program, amounting to (104.87).

Through analyzing the results, the researchers noted that before the implementation of the handicrafts program, the students were not able to use of hand skills and did not use nature materials in their implementation. The results show there is a significant difference between group's performance before and after the program. This confirms that the handicrafts could positively impact students on the promotion of cultural and economic development for students of art education.

After an analysis of the result hypothesis can be accepted. Obviously the handicrafts sector could positively impact students on the promotion of cultural and economic development for students of art education to wider through applied handicrafts.

The results reveal that the handicraft skills for students improved after the handicraft program. Therefore, it could be argued this program to assist the students' to introduce society's culture through the crafts, so that school students appreciate the variety of skills and expressions of the artist in societies. Handicraft can teach students that everything in nature is the source of all the raw materials that are functioned into handicrafts. This study has demonstrated that students will practice applying handicrafts to arrive at sustainable think solutions. To accomplish this objective, students must understand that implementation of handicrafts as skill is more complex

than simply viewing of handicrafts as a model. But if people are working with their hands, albeit with the assistance of tools and machines, producing goods required in a wide market space, selling to make profits and thereby contributing to national wealth, crafts can be termed as a decentralized creative industry where the human mind and hand is more important than the small machines and tools they may use. Give particular attention and traditional handicrafts to meet the needs of low income rural and urban poor men and women, young men and women, and the disabilities.

Practical recommendations from this research include the need to give particular attention and traditional handicrafts to meet the needs of low income rural and urban poor men and women, young men and women and the disabilities.

And the practical recommendations also include the need to consider this topic as a main component to enable an area for further studies to develop different strategies in the field of handicrafts, for students to recognize the importance of the handicrafts value in terms of economic and method of production and take advantage of it to increase the income of the individual product.

Result

Handicrafts could positively impact students on the promotion of cultural and economic development for students of art education.

Recommendations

Government should organize regular seminars for up gradation of technology and production techniques.

Efforts should be made for collaboration of handicraft and handloom sector, integrating with other departments and creation of a "handicrafts cell".

Need to consider of this topic as a main component that enables an area for further studies to develop different strategies in the field of handicrafts, for students to recognize the importance of the handicrafts value in terms of economic and method of production and take advantage of it to increase the income of the individual product.

Conclusion

It was concluded that handicrafts could positively impact students on the promotion of cultural and economic development for students of art education and a means of fostering students' creativity and practices in art education, and provides to students the opportunity of learning with practice. The contribution to new knowledge in this study included the development of advice for all participants working within and related to the field of education and in particular of art education.

The researchers are recommended to consider of this topic, as a main component, which enables an area for further studies to develop different strategies, in the field of handicrafts for students to recognize the importance of the handicrafts value in terms of cultural and economic, and method of production and take advantage of it, to increase the income of the individual product.

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Appendix

Some of student's works from (carpet weaving and weaving, sewing, embroidery, and wood works).

