

Prospects of Uttarakhand as Geographical Indicators

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Abstract

Uttarakhand is rich in resources which are used to produce the large varieties of products by the inhabitants of the state. The traditional economy of Uttarakhand was largely dependent on natural resources. It was based on subsistence agriculture, forest resources, artisanal crafts, some mining, and cross-border trade with Tibet. The products produced under these various categories are painting, jewellery making, wood carving, handlooms and handicrafts. The present study is to identify these products, which have their own uniqueness as they are made using the traditional knowledge to create sustainable livelihood. They should be edged regionally, nationally and internationally and should be registered as geographical indicator to protect their excellence. The data was collected through the interpersonal discussion and questionnaire methods from the women residing in the various districts of the state. In this paper the enormous varieties are identified but since the product is not accepted widely by the retailers and consumers these indigenous products are facing danger to the rest of the products which are available in the market. The economic conditions of the producers and very low marketing strategies are waving off the benefits from the producers. It is important that these varieties should be given recognition for the captivation of the market.

Keywords: traditional knowledge, sustainable livelihood, geographical indicator, economic conditions, marketing strategies.

Introduction

Uttarakhand was carved out of Uttar Pradesh and this resulted in large expectations of the people to grow in terms of development and improve their standard of living. The state is divided into plains and hills which has created the geographical inequality that the area in the plains are much more developed than the hilly areas. But the traditional knowledge of the people has made them remove this gap. Uttarakhand cuddled in the pristine beauty of the mighty Himalayas is no less than any other state of the country having eternal beauty, ethereal scenes and having its own uniqueness in painting, jewellery making, wood carving, handlooms and handicrafts. It is a land where ethnic as well as innovation gives shape to these varieties where they live and grow and is moving towards the infinite horizons. The environment has the power to provide the aesthetic touch to the people. Uttarakhand is interspersed with lush green trees, towering mountains and a clear blue sky. These things are enough to make someone an artist. Garhwal is home of the most beautiful and defining 'Gharanas' of miniature paintings known as the Garhwal School of Painting. The traditional Uttarakhand ornaments are made of beads, gold, copper, silver, lacquer and semi-precious stones. The people of Uttarakhand are very creative in nature and the fact testifies itself in the beautiful

temples. The wood carvings of Garhwal and Kumaon are renowned for their simple yet delicate and attractive designs. It being the north temperate region has the advantage of producing apparel grade wool, cotton and silk. The state has created and nurtured various forms of arts and crafts since ages. Crafts like rugs, carpets, baskets, copper utensils are made by the people and they have a unique touch of nature in their designs.

The competitive participation in markets has pushed the state to differentiate their products from the most general to the very specific distinctive means. The present study is to identify these products, which have their own uniqueness, create sustainable livelihood, should be edged regionally, nationally and internationally and registered as GI to protect their excellence.

The environment and products of the state guarantee the benefits to the people for that they need to be developed responsibly and stay within control of their owners. The governments should make use of various protective instruments like the Geographical Indications (GIs). This would create added value in rural areas of Uttarakhand. The traditional knowledge is being currently practiced, is generating employment and income but not considerate. So, it is required to give these products a distinct identity so gain reputation in the market.

Review of Literature

The reputation of the products can only improve market efficiency by avoiding the impact of information asymmetries, if it is protected through a process of “institutionalization of reputation”. This institutionalization takes place by way of legal instruments (such as GIs) that formalize the nexus between a product’s attributes and its region of origin (Belletti, 1999). For a producer, the possibility to signal quality and thus reputation means that a GI becomes a commercial asset for the firm, as in the case of trademarks and a valuable offensive marketing tool (Grossman and Shapiro, 1988). The role of GIs as an instrument for institutionalizing collective reputation has become increasingly important in protecting the consumer (through addressing information asymmetries and quality) and the producer (by protecting reputation as an asset) (OECD, 2000). The GI captures the local resources, transforming territory into an attribute (Pacciani *et al*, 2001). Geographical indication denotes that a product originates from a particular place and has a reputation for certain features linked to that particular place (Business and Intellectual property. indd). The main reasons for using the indications are to protect the value and identification of local differentiated products; the second is to encourage alliances among producers and processors to standardize their production and processing practices and the third to facilitate access to markets where consumers have shown a preference for such distinct products. (Carlos Pomareda and Julio Paz). GIs may especially facilitate protection of the collective rights of the rural and indigenous communities in their indigenous knowledge, ensuring that the entire community which has preserved the knowledge and has passed it on with incremental refinement over generations, stand to benefit from the knowledge and that this is not locked up as the private property of one individual (Sahai and Barpujari, 2007). Evidence on the socio-

economic impacts of GIs in the Indian context are, however, limited although anecdotal evidence suggests that GIs have significant implications for producers in developed and developing countries (Jena and Grote, 2007). A geographical indication may also highlight specific characteristics of a given product due to factors other than the geographical such as human factors. This is the case of expressions such as “Swiss made” for distinguishing the origin of famous watches or chocolates. He further states that, geographical indications are subject to the same general principles applicable to all other categories of intellectual property rights included in the Agreement, mainly the minimum standards, the national treatment and the MFN clause. According to the WTO summary of responses, Members usually provide protection to geographical indications by means of (i) laws focusing on business practices, (ii) trademark law; and (iii) special or sui generis protections Escudero, S. (2001). While GIs may be the best tool among the existing IP rights instruments for the protection of Traditional Knowledge (TK), they are inadequate in many ways. First, the definition and nature of GIs itself excludes certain categories of TK from its purview. Secondly, even when it is possible to obtain a GI, the level of protection rarely measures up to the expectations of TK holders. For instance, GIs cannot guard against offensive use of TK, nor can they prevent the knowledge from entering the public domain. Therefore, instead of pigeon-holing TK into one of the existing systems for protection of IP, an attempt must be made to formulate a sui generis model that will address concerns which are specific to protection of TK (Shivani Singhal (2010).

Methodology

Data of the various varieties of the products of Uttarakhand were collected from the various regions. The target population was the people involved in the production and the processing of these various products from the private organizations, government organizations, non-government organizations, self help groups and traders. Samples were collected by simple random technique from the 13 districts; Almora, Bageshwar, Chamoli, Champawat, Dehradun, Haridwar, Nainital, Pauri Garhwal, Pithoragarh, Rudra Prayag, Tehri Garhwal, Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarkashi. The data regarding the above variables was collected through observation and interpersonal discussion and questionnaire method by the investigator. Thus, the data attained was relevant since it was directly collected by the respondents involved in the production of painting, jewellery making, wood carving, handlooms and handicrafts. These were further authenticated by the people and the agencies and then analyzed for the results and discussions.

Results and Discussions

The findings of study and relevant discussion are in accordance with the objectives of the study.

The survey was carried out to collect detailed information from the respondents about the varieties in paintings, jewellery, wood carving, handlooms and handicrafts. This survey would be beneficial for the people of Uttarakhand as the products would be identified, their value would be restored, and they would capture the market. Based on the survey the following information was collected under the following heads:

Paintings

During the 13th Century the Kumaon region was ruled by the Chand Dynasty (starting 700 AD till mid 19th Century). This long rule gave opportunity to the people to learn and develop the new styles of painting in the area, collectively called the Pahari School of Painting. In the middle of the 17th Century Suleiman Shikoh, the nephew of Mughal king Aurangzeb, was accompanied by the court painters who were fascinated by the Pahari Style, today known as Garhwal School of Painting. The folk arts of Uttarakhand are Aipan, Peeth, Thapa, Patas, Dekara.

Aipan

Aipan is basically a drawing done on the floor near the entrance door and front courtyard of a house. The Kumaoni women using their nimble fingers and palms, have not only preserved the memories of past events and the styles but also have given expressions to their own ideas and concepts on aesthetic values. During ceremonies and festivals, the women set themselves to decorating the floor and walls of their houses with designs and patterns. Aipan is a fast disappearing art form and very few patterns and designs are available today. It is made with 'Geru' or red vermilion paste as a base and rice paste patterns on top. This pristine white on deep red gives out a beautiful contrast emphasizing the designs. There are several forms of Aipens. The motifs of Aipens are used in shawls, stoles, wall hangings, bookmarks, photo frames, coasters, tablemats and cards.

Saraswati Chowki – Since times immemorial in India, Saraswati is rendered to be the Goddess of learning, so when a child begins formal education a puja is held to give him/her an auspicious start. The main feature of this chowki is a five-pointed star with a swastik flower or a diya in the center. The artist then proceeds to decorate the center piece with flowing designs or floral patterns

Chamunda Hast Chowki - This chowki is made for "havans". Two triangles interspersed with two diagonal lines running across both, with a five-pointed star in between, enclosed in a circle make the centre piece of this chowki. The gaps are filled up with floral designs or lakshmi's feet. The circle itself is often decorated with eight petals of the lotus.

Nav Durga Chowki – This chowki is used for the pujas for the Devis. The main points here are nine dots representing the Nav Durgas with parallel lines running crisscross and decorate these with lotus petals.

Surya Darshan Chowki -.Surya Darshan chowki is made for the naming ceremony of a newborn child. It is drawn on the floor, where the priest sits reciting the mantras.

Janeyu Chowki - The chowki is made especially for the sacred thread ceremony. Seven stars within a six-sided drawing form the main section. The seven stars represent the Sapt Rishis. Around this floral design with dots are drawn.

Asan Chowki - This is associated with the many kinds of chowkis used for various pujas. It is a decorated seat for the devotee and his wife for a ritual puja.

Acharya Chowki - A Swastik is made on the floor, with red color. Lotus and other auspicious symbols, such as bell, conch shell, and two parrots, are painted around the Swastik. This type of aipan is made during

marriages, where the groom is always accompanied by his own Acharya. It is drawn to give importance to the Pandit and is, thus, known as Acharya chowki.

Peeth

Peeth is a type of art made around the seating area of the Gods and Goddesses with a base of rice paste decorated with colorful natural dyes. The major difference between Aipan and Peeth is in Peeth the artist uses specific designs for each god or goddess whereas in Aipan the artist can choose any design according to his and mood. The Peeth patterns are made around 'Chowki' made of auspicious Mango wood with fingers of right hand. The drawings are usually geometric in nature with flowers, animals, divine feet and trees making up the interiors of the design.

Thapa

Thapa is painted on paper by the women of Kumaon for two Durga Pujas held during the year. This painting is highly complex almost all the Gods and Goddesses are depicted here. The pujas take place for nine days and are therefore caned Navratras.

Patas

The legendary myths which are connected to the rituals and ceremonies of the people were drawn on the walls of the rooms where these ceremonial activities take place. This is now done by printing of big sheets of paper known as Pata. The themes of the Pata paintings are done in red or multi colour and depict the stories of Jev-Matrika, Shri Krishna Janmashtami, Lakshmi and Durga. It is a time-consuming exercise and the women folk work for months together.

Dekara

Idol worship plays an important role in the lives of the inhabitants of Garhwal & Kumaon. Dekaras are the clay dolls of Gods and Goddesses in three dimensional form and are meant solely for worship. They are prepared by mixing fine clay with colour. The festival of Makar Sanskranti is an occasion for making garlands of wild pigeon or Ghugta) from sweetened wheat flour. The children feed crows with these Ghugta models. On Kartik Sanskranti the dekaras are made which depict the marriage of Lord Shiva with Parvati.

Jewellery

Jewellery is very famous in Uttarakhand. It is the decorative item worn for personal beautification. Here gold, silver along with the gemstones are used for making the jewellery. The basic forms of jewellery vary between cultures but are often extremely long-lived. It is used to mark the social and personal status. The following varieties of jewellery are worn by the ladies from this region.

On the forehead

Sishphul- As the name suggests it is in the shape of the flower and worn on the head. It is made either with gold or silver attached to the chain and the hook.

Peeda – It is piece of jewellery used to decorate the bun of the hair.

On the ears

Murkhala – It is also known as murkhi and munads. These are the ear rings worn by the women at the corner of the ear and are made either of gold or silver weighing 5 to 10 grams.

Kundals – It is also a kind of ear ring made of gold or silver in which the designs are intricated, and they are the flower or the peacock.

Kanphul- It the ear ring which covers the whole of the ear and are in the form of the moon narrow at the upper end and broad at the lower portion.

Bally – It is in the form of the inverted glass and they are worn after piercing the ear. Earlier they were made of gold but nowadays it is made up of silver and bronze.

Gorakh – These are the ear rings with danglers made of gold or silver weighing 10 grams especially worn by males

Tugyl – It is the flattened strip shaped ornament studded with green and red stones made of gold and silver and worn with the ear rings.

On the nose

Nath – This is the nose ring and in the local language known as the nath or nathuli. It is worn in both the garhwal and kumaon regions. It is made up of 30 to 40 grams of gold. The nath is circular in shape and in the lower portion of the nath three stones are engraved which are either red or green. As the nath is heavy it is tied to the silver chain which is attached to the hook to fix it on the hair. The nath from Tehri is the most famous in the Uttarakhand.

Bulak – It is prevalent in the hilly areas of Uttarakhand. It is the top inverted U-shaped hook made of gold the middle of the hook is broad and is worn in the centre of the nostrils.

Phuli – The other names of phuli is keel and sheaf. Its weight varies from 100 milligrams to 2 grams of gold. It is worn on the left of the nose. As the name suggests the design is like the flower.

On the neck

Hansuli- It is known as khagwali in the garhwal region made of 200 to 500 grams of gold or silver. It is like a solid single piece necklace in either gold or silver with designs intricate on them.

Gulband – It is also known as ramanwami in the Kumaon region. It is the principal ornament of the ladies during the marriage. It is made up of 10 to 30 grams of gold. On the base it has a velvet strip of 3 centimeters on which 10 to 12 square shaped designs are fixed in such a way that the strip fixes closely to the neck.

Matarmala - It is a double threaded (dori) chain where the gold beads in the shape of the peas are put together with a pendant in the centre of the chain.

Charyo – It is a chain made of either gold or silver beaded with laakh or thalipot beads. The gold chains are 10 to 30 grams and the silver chains are 20 to 50 grams in weight. These are worn by married women only.

Kanthimala – It is chain made of gold or silver weighing from 20 to 40 grams and the designs are engraved on the notch. The designs may be of the lotus or the fish.

Moongi ki mala – It is a thread (dori) whose length is around 40 to 60 centimeters on which red corals (moonga) and silver or gold beads are put together.

Chawanni mala- It is also known as hamel. It is made by using 22 ancient silver coins and they are threaded in such a way that equal distribution of the coins is done.

Chandanhar – It is the made of gold weighing from 40 to 60 grams which consists of layers of gold having intricate designs on them.

Timania – It is a heavy ornament made of gold which covers the whole of the neck and extends downwards. The two ends of the are tied with the big cluster of ting colored beads.

On the hands

Dhagula- It is also known as dhaguli and dhamul. It is made of gold or silver mixed with raanga. The weight of the dhagula for an adult is 100 to 500 grams and for the babies it is 50 grams. Now a day it has become the ornament of the Gods and Goddess.

Ponchi – Ponchi is worn on the wrist. It consists of cone shaped granules that are placed on the belt in four to five rows. Its weight is 200 to 300 grams and is made of gold or silver.

Cuda – It is a kind of a bracelet which is lighter in weight.

Twak – It is the hollow cylinder worn from the wrist to elbow made of silver weighing 200 grams and the bangle can be opened by the screw.

Chudi – It is round made of gold and silver with intricate designs weighing around 10 to 20 grams and traditionally five to six bangles are worn by the females.

Kangan – It is also a form of a bangle, but the width is twice than that of the bangle. It is made of gold or silver weighing around 20 to 40 grams with intricate designs.

Gokhle – This form of jewellery is made of silver coins where the coins are arranged in the chain and is worn on the arms of both the hands. The other name of this jewellery is bajuband.

On the fingers

Moondadi – It is also known as gunti or mundri. The weight of the ring varies from 5 to 10 grams. It is worn by both the females and males.

On the waist

Tigadi- The other name is patty. It is the only ornament which is worn on the waist. It is often made of silver weighing around 300 grams to 1 kilogram. It encircles the whole waist with the rectangular, circular designs interconnected to each other. It symbolizes the prosperity of the family.

On the legs

Jhinvara- It is also known as jhavar. They are worn on the calf muscles, it is hollow inside and the outer portion is decorated with small bells. They are made of silver weighing 100 to 120 grams.

Dhagula - It is made of gold or silver mixed with raanga. The weight of the dhagula for an adult is 100 to 500 grams and for the babies it is 50 grams.

Pejab- It is also known as javri or chanpati. These are the broad strips made of silver weighing from 100 to 300 grams with designs and the ankle bells.

Wood Carving

The creativity of the people of Uttarakhand can be seen in the temples present here. The wood carvings of Garhwal and Kumaon are renowned for their simple yet delicate and attractive designs. The front doors, windows and ceilings of the houses were brilliantly carved with floral designs, images of humans, animals, fish and other sacred signs and emblems. The patterns are typically of the Gods and Goddesses which adds to the opulence of the carved wooden latticed frames. These ornamental wood carvings are called kholi in the Garhwali language. In Garhwal and Kumaon the portico of the upper stories of the dwelling units are generally made of wood and attractively carved.

Handlooms and Handicrafts

The state of Uttarakhand is a land where ethnic and innovative handlooms are produced. The handloom product industry is divided into the following categories.

Woolen Handlooms

The climatic conditions of the state are the most apt as it lies in the north temperate region for producing the finest apparel grade wool. A large section of the people is involved in the rearing of the sheep, angora rabbits and pashmina goats. The Uttarakhand Sheep and Wool Development Board provides various activities from breed improvement, health and veterinary care of sheep, availability of better rams, proper shearing of wool, washing, grading and training of rearers. The varieties of wool produced locally are Harsil, Belchi and Merino. In Almora a wide range of products like kaleens, shawls, pankhi for ladies and gents and tweed (cloth for coats) are produced. Thulma and chutka are the blankets produced in Pithoragarh by Johar munisiyari for very cold climates.

Silk Handloom

Uttarakhand produces different types of silk. Mulberry silk is produced in terai and plain areas and Tassar silk of which the Oak tussar is unique. In hill areas Tassar silk is a high value silk increases the household income and used for producing shawls, stoles and dress materials.

Ringal Handicraft

Ringal is a species of Bamboo found in abundance in all over the Himalayas. It is the temperate species found in higher and colder regions. The farmers of Kumaon especially of the Nachani, Dharmgharare area are experts in making beautiful crafts from Ringaal. It is used for making various types of baskets, kitchen utility items, mats (moshtas), furniture etc.

Rambaans Handicraft

Rambaans plants generally known as sisal are found in abundance all over these hills. Some of these species yield fibers, which can be used to weave various decorative and utility items like bags, purses, wall hangings and show pieces.

Rangwali

It is in the unique Kumaoni traditional to wear the colorful ornamentation on the anchal cloth. In all the ritual ceremonies women wear the rangwali known as pichhora or kusumia. It is muslin cloth three metres in length and half metre wide which is dyed in yellow and then printed with design using padded wooden stick using red colour. At the centre either the sign of the Swastik or the motifs of sun, moon bell is made. Red concentric circles are stamped around the motif using the small coins.

Conclusion

Uttarakhand has a lot of resources within the state itself, but these products need exposure to be recognized at every level by the consumer and the marketer. As Uttarakhand is a famous tourist spot this would also give an advantage for the high selling of these varieties. The study conducted results in the identification of the various varieties and these varieties would give value addition to secure the culture of the state. The large number of varieties is attained in the painting, jewellery making, wood carving,

handlooms and handicrafts. The economic conditions, unorganized producers affect the production of these varieties within the state. The products are unique in design and are produced with the traditional knowledge following the native techniques but with very narrow base market. It was found that the people have in depth knowledge about the varieties but since the products are not well off in the markets they cannot enjoy the benefits of the value of the distinguished varieties. For this reason, these products should be given recognition, so the value of the product be retained and provide benefit to the indigenous industry. It was observed that except certain types of jewellery and handlooms rest of the varieties are not well known, and the producers are not getting profit and they are still underprivileged. With less marketing taking place, the economic conditions of the producers have gone down the most important requirement of the hour is to recognize the varieties and give the producers chances to produce them and earn profits.

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