



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Various Schemes And Developmental Plans In Regards Of Development Of Folk Craft Sector: A Case Study Of Some Selected Craft Of Jangalmahal Region.

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Abstract:

Developmental schemes and policies are the crucial aid for achieving sustainability of folk and cottage sector in India. Such policy framework helps to ensure financial assistance, technological support, marketing assistance for the artisans of folk crafts. The selected crafts like Chhau, Terracotta and Stone craft also influenced by the policy frameworks taken by the government. The museum is one of the important strategies to preserve Chhau mask (mukhosh) of Charida village of Purulia district.

Key-words: Folk craft, Chhau, Terracotta, Stone craft

Introduction:

Now a days the traditional folk crafts in western province of the state West Bengal often known as Jangalmahal region becomes highly popular in regional and national level market. To some extent its business dimension is now spread overseas and abroad very successfully. It provides employment opportunity with a significant contribution in rural development depends upon craft based economy. All over India this craft based economy provides employment up to five million people. It is economically feasible and important as it can run by minimal amount of capital investment, high value addition, high potential for export and foreign exchange. It also have its significant in terms of generating green economy as it is based on hand made techniques and natural ingredients like sand, stone, soil, paper, tree bark etc. It is an important aid to alive rural ethnicity and traditional culture which is expressed by its motifs and idols.

The terracotta craft items are famous globally for its long necked horses, royal elephants, terracotta jewellery which remains at the centre of attraction in Bankura district of Jangalmahal region. Besides that the stone craft and stone cutting arts are famous in Susunia hills. The Dokra and brass metal work in Bikna village expresses royalty and enriched aesthetic values through its idols and other decorating articles. The Chhau-Mask made in Charida village in Purulia shows its cultural symbol of this district which is integrated with its ethnicity

and immortal cultural values. History reveals that The Malla dynasty in Bishnupur region of Bankura have also encouraged the Terracotta artisans in promoting the folk crafts, The majestic terracotta temple in Bishnupur, the temple town which bears its evidence.

There are various developmental plans and welfare program that initiated in regards of development of folk craft sector in this Jangalmahal region.

The craft sector provides sustainable source of income generation to artisan and other semi-skilled and unskilled workers engaged in it. To recognize the potentiality in employment and capital generation through export of craft commodity an autonomous body is formed by Govt. of India. This folk craft sector act as an unorganized sector of economy which initially started as a decentralized, primitive, subsistence and part time based economic activity which is transformed into flourishing economic activity at present decade due to high market demands. It holds the key to sustain not only a large number of existing artisans but at the same time it will enhance the scope of new entrants in this craft sector along with its increasing potentiality in export and trade practice. But at present the folk craft sector has been suffered by some additional constraints like lack of education, proper capital, infrastructural assistance, poor institutional framework which is further aggravated by poor communication and coordination between producer artisan, distributor and consumers. To resolve this acute crisis various developmental strategies is now taken and applied for this traditional craft practice. These developmental projects, legal assistance regarding to craft sector are discussed below.

Developmental schemes of folk craft industry:

The folk craft sector is undoubtedly one of the effective media to contribute the employment and livelihood generation among artisan as well as all stakeholders engaged with this economic practice. The Govt. of India established an autonomous body named as All India Handicraft Board in the year 1952. The Office of Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) advises the union government and assists state government to look after about the export issues of Folk crafts and build up inclusive planning and developmental strategies.

The Office of Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) is soul authority to take formulation and implementation of developmental plans and strategies at the central level. It also provides directions and guidance to all state government for formulation and implementation of this plan at the grass root level in a rational way. So a proper feedback system regarding artisan's economic, social, aesthetic and promotional need to transmit to this craft agencies is the need of the hour.

The craft centric developmental plans and strategies are described as below:

1. Babasahib Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana:

Key objectives and goals:

Its key goal to promote the traditional and ethnic craft practice as well united the artisans by developing a professionally managed and self reliant artisan forum which is based on the principal of mutual cooperation and effective coordination in craft related production and business. It also aimed to sustain the craft productivity through a rational engagement of artisans that leads to their successful empowerment.

Key ingredients:

- i. Social innovation and intervention which may suggest the diagnostic survey on credit assistance and mobilization of artisans.
- ii. Technological up gradation through proper implementation of improved tools, designs, equipment, training and skill enhancement.
- iii. Implying innovative and rational marketing strategies like trade fairs, market events, publicity and media activity etc.

- iv. Financial assistance informs of micro credit facilities, loan repayment etc.

Key Eligibility:

- i. Financial assistance should be provided through reputed NGO's , trusts, Govt. organizations/Bodies, NIFT, IIT, IIM, University research department, central and state craft organization, Federation of NGO's which is established under Section 8 of the companies act, 2013 registered under proper statute for sustainable craft development and promotions.
- ii. To get this financial assistance the concern organization need to submit their project report which entails about the activity list in very brief.

2. Bima Yojona for Handicrafts Artisans:

Key objectives:

The Bima Yojona is a welfare scheme which is implemented on 2003-04 with the aim to provide insurance coverage and protection of life of artisan community of male and female of the age group 18-60 years. This development strategy is run by Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) which consists two important sub scheme named as '*Janashree Bima Yojona*' and '*Add-on Group Insurance Scheme*'.

In '*Janashree Bima Yojona*' the artisans need to pay the premium amount of Rs. 470 / annum which is shared by the concern ministry Rs. 290, by the LIC Rs. 100 and the remaining Rs. 80 contributed by the concern craftsman. In addition it has some other value added service like it covers risk for death (Rs. 20000/- for Natural death, Rs. 50000/- for Accidental death) and disability (Rs. 25000/-), at the same time it also covers for educational assistance of Rs. 300/- per quarter for two child's of corresponding artisan up to secondary and higher secondary level.

Under the assistance of '*Add on Group Insurance scheme*' the beneficiary artisan and Govt. of India both shared equally Rs. 180/- per annum. This amount component enhanced the death coverage up to Rs. 50000/- for Accidental death and disability coverage (partially up to Rs. 25000/-, permanent Rs. 50000/-).

Under this scheme for craftsman up to 31st march, 2006 around 1,96,507 artisans have been covered against of 2 lakh artisans, 324 artisans have been settled involving amount Rs. 64,80,000/-. Besides this above an amount of Rs. 18,31,200 has been disbursed by the LIC under the welfare scheme of Shiksha SehyogYojona.

Key eligibility:

All artisans in this region who are the age group between 18-60 years are eligible for getting covered under *Bima Yojona for Handicrafts Artisans*.

3. Credit Guarantee scheme:

Key Objectives:

The basic aim to make poverty eradication and assure the collateral security or third party guarantee and provide uninterrupted credit flow in this craft sector. Under this welfare scheme an amount of credit covers up to 75% of credit facility is provided is subject to maximum of Rs. 18.75 lakhs for the loan amount up to 25 lakhs.

Key eligibility:

The artisans engaged in craft practice or manufacturing of small folk crafts are eligible to cover under this scheme.

Training and Extension program:

The main aim of this welfare scheme is to provide proper training and capacity building initiatives to the artisan in small scale manufacturing sector.

Composition:

It provides financial assistance to artisans community to make intensive field study in various craft unit and took training from India and abroad . it also offers financial packages to organize various seminar and hands on training in craft production and technological renovation by engaging NGO's and other organizations.

Key eligibility:

This scheme shall be implemented to various research departments, public and private sectors and experts in this specialization area.

4. Research and development:

Key Objectives:

The principal objective is to assist and collect regular feedback system on social, economic, aesthetic and promotional aspects of artisans and address a proper resolution to overcome various crises is the key intension of this program. Various developmental strategies are taken by the Govt. in which numerous qualitative assessments executed in forms of research and development. It is intended to attain feedback about the contemporary economic, socio-cultural aspects of craftsman community. Through this research work it can be assessed that up to which level, the standard of living is prevailed among the artisans and in which way it can be promoted by maintaining proper guide line of trade forum, industrial regulation and wage acts.

Key Components:

It includes:

- i. Survey of marginalized crafts on which massive survey or study is not been conducted earlier.
- ii. Various problems regarding lack of raw materials, poor technology and lack of designs are taken under research study.
- iii. Market related study of craft units
- iv. Techno-economic evaluation of craft manufacturing.
- v. Research study on weaker section of artisan community.
- vi. Financial and legal assistance for artisan community.
- vii. Mechanism to protect historical, traditional and heritage of some extinct craft is to studied carefully.
- viii. Broad promotion initiatives are taken under this study.
- ix. Mislenious problems regarding folk craft sector are to be studied under this research program.

Key eligibility:

This research assistance are extended to that organization which is registered under statutory act (Companies act, 1956) or registered under bodies like DCSSI of Handicrafts any research department of Universities. It also extended to an eminent research scholar or a person engaged in craft sector since a long time.

5. Export promotion activity:

Key objectives:

The basic objective of this scheme is to make convenient the marketing and promotion of hand knotted carpet and other small sector crafts in India. The key agendas of this scheme included research study, fashion and design up gradation, liberalization business policy that are undertaken in post WTO scenario. Globalized demand, customize production policy, acceleration of business export are the key agenda of this folk craft sector and its survival. Specially the *Terracotta Horse* which has a high rise demand not only in national market but also in the global market. The main aim of this strategy is to make huge publicity, socio-economic welfare and sustainability of livelihood in this craft sector.

Key composition:

- i. The development of craft items.
- ii. Endorsement and popular marketing.
- iii. Socio-economic welfare activities.

Key eligibility:

The financial assistance under this scheme is provided to various autonomous bodies functioning under handicraft development and allied activities like Handicraft Corporation, Council of Handicraft Development Corporation (COHAND), NGO's, registered statutory society like CEPC, IICT, India Exposition Mart and registered designer organization approved by DC (H).

6. Design and Technology Upgradation:

Key objectives:

Its basic aim is to achieve the new skills and efficacy for artisans, arrangement for new designs and diversified products range, utilization of modern improved equipments, revival of craft heritage, preservation of aesthetic values etc. Various designers, fashion professional, master artists are taken as a resource person in this hands on training cum workshop. This training and knowledge building programme will help the artisan to hold sustainability and productivity. In craft villages like Charida and Panchmura of Jangalmahal region, some special handicraft training programmes are initiated by Govt. or other agencies through the association of artisans samiti (cooperatives) to build more strategic and potential as well as trained manpower (artisans) in this field. It has a special motto to upgrade the existing skills, using more eco-friendly and budget friendly fuel, improved marketing techniques of the artisans. This multipurpose training program helps to direct the craftsman in a path to achieve optimal productivity and sustainable livelihood often offered by The Directorate of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME), Government of West Bengal.

Key composition:

- i. Financial assistance to various institutes like MHSC, IICT, NCDPD.
- ii. Financial assistance to master craftsman (Shilpa Guru).
- iii. Financial assistance to organize various training and skill development course.
- iv. Financial assistance for using of modernized tools and technology.
- v. National award for excellent and outstanding performance of designer in handicraft sector.
- vi. Financial assistance to build in efficiency in preserving the craft items through craft museum.

Key eligibility:

The financial assistance scheme is provided to various central and state organization like handicraft organization, apex cooperative society, NGO's, research institution like IIT, IIM, NIFT and other reputed designers and technology builders in this craft sector.

7. Marketing Support and Service:**Key objectives:**

The basic aim of this plan is to provide financial assistance and technological supports along with awareness generation of craftsman located in big and small cities. This is a complete financial solution strategy taken for the needy craftsman. It is formulated to generate common awareness among craftsman about the craft items to organize various trade event (viz. fairs and festivals), entrepreneurship management, financial support through NGO, Self-help group etc.

Key composition:

- i. To organize various marketing events like *Craft Bazaar, National Handicraft Expo, Craft & Art Exhibition* etc.
- ii. To develop new market infrastructure like setting up of new huts, craft emporium, craft development centre etc.
- iii. To apply new marketing service like state and national level workshop, craft fairs, entrepreneurship development etc.
- iv. Advertisement and publicity.

Key eligibility:

This developmental scheme is extended to various central and state Handicraft development organizations, COHANDS, apex bodies, NGO's, registered trusts, section 8 companies who are associated for craft promotional activity and registered under statutory acts.

8. Craft Museum:

To store, preserve and maintain this age old craft items and enhancement of its visual significance establishing a Craft museum is very crucial. It also preserves the sample craft in various decades and holds its cultural significance alive. In Charida village *The Chhau Mukhosh Museum* is constructed by The West Bengal Khadi & Village Industries Board in association with District Rural Development Authority (DRDA), which is fully decorated with latest design and variety of Chhau mukhosh. The tourists may know about the wide variety of Chhau artifacts from this craft museum. In Panchmura village, in spite of having initiatives taken by The West Bengal Khadi & Village Industries Board, taken initiatives to construct museum at Panchmura village, but

due to scarcity of land availability till date museum is not constructed. In Susunia village, unfortunately no such craft museum is established due to lack of association of artisans, lack of initiatives taken by local authorities etc.

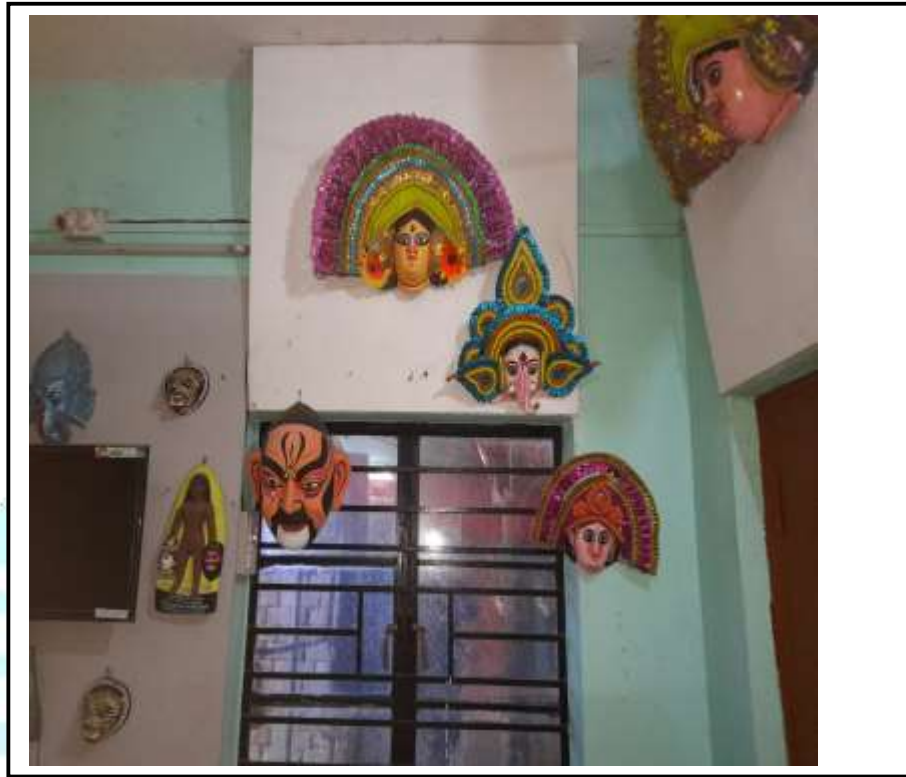


Fig: 1. Some typical Chhau mukhosh is showcasing in the wall of Chhau museum at Charida

It is found that the schemes like *Babasaheb Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana*, *Bima Yojana for Handicrafts Artisans*, *Credit Guarantee Scheme*, *Training and Extension program*, *Export promotion activity* and *Design and Technology Up-gradation* are available for the development of folk crafts. From each selected craft village, 50 sample artisans were selected through purposive sampling technique to collect opinions regarding benefits of said projects for them.

Table: 1. Scheme wise level of benefits received by the artisans in selected craft villages

Name of the scheme	Opinion of Chhau artisans (%)					Opinion of Terracotta artisans (%)					Opinion of Stone artisans (%)				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Babasaheb Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana	72	8	2	16	2	74	8	4	10	4	84	16	0	0	0
Bima Yojana for Handicrafts Artisans	72	4	2	16	6	66	14	2	14	4	86	10	2	2	0
Credit Guarantee scheme	66	14	0	12	8	66	16	0	14	4	80	14	2	2	2
Research and development	56	10	0	16	18	46	8	0	30	16	72	8	0	16	4
Export promotion activity	60	6	0	14	20	54	8	2	24	12	76	12	0	6	6
Design and Technology Upgradation	70	18	0	8	4	62	14	2	16	6	76	16	2	6	0
Marketing Support and Service	60	10	0	16	14	64	10	0	18	8	78	16	0	6	0

(Source: Field survey, 2024)

Scheme wise level of benefits received by the artisans in Charida village

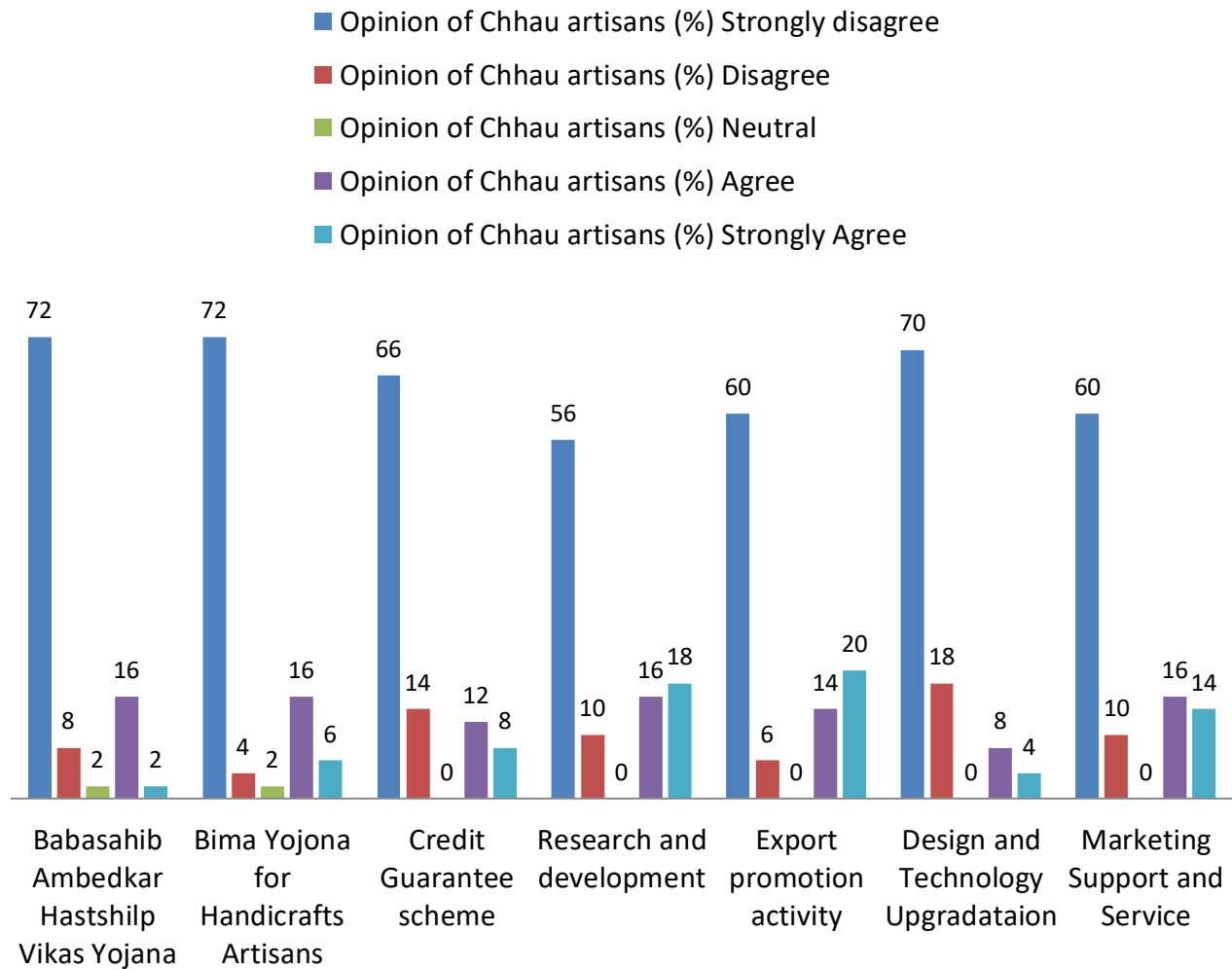


Fig: 5. Scheme wise level of benefits received by the artisans in Charida

Scheme wise level of benefits received by the artisans in Panchmura village

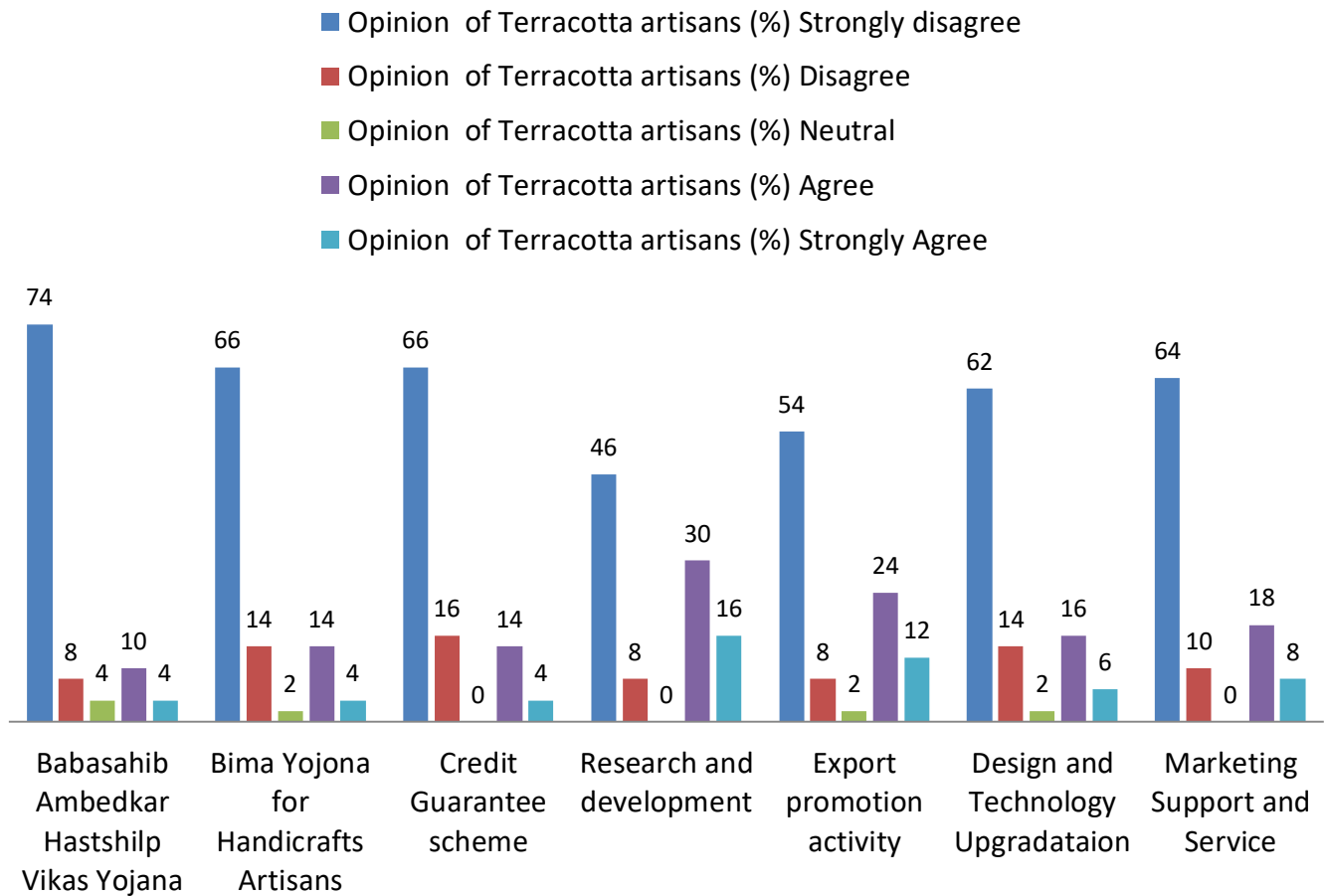


Fig: 6. Scheme wise level of benefits received by the artisans in Panchmura

Scheme wise level of benefits received by the artisans in Susunia village

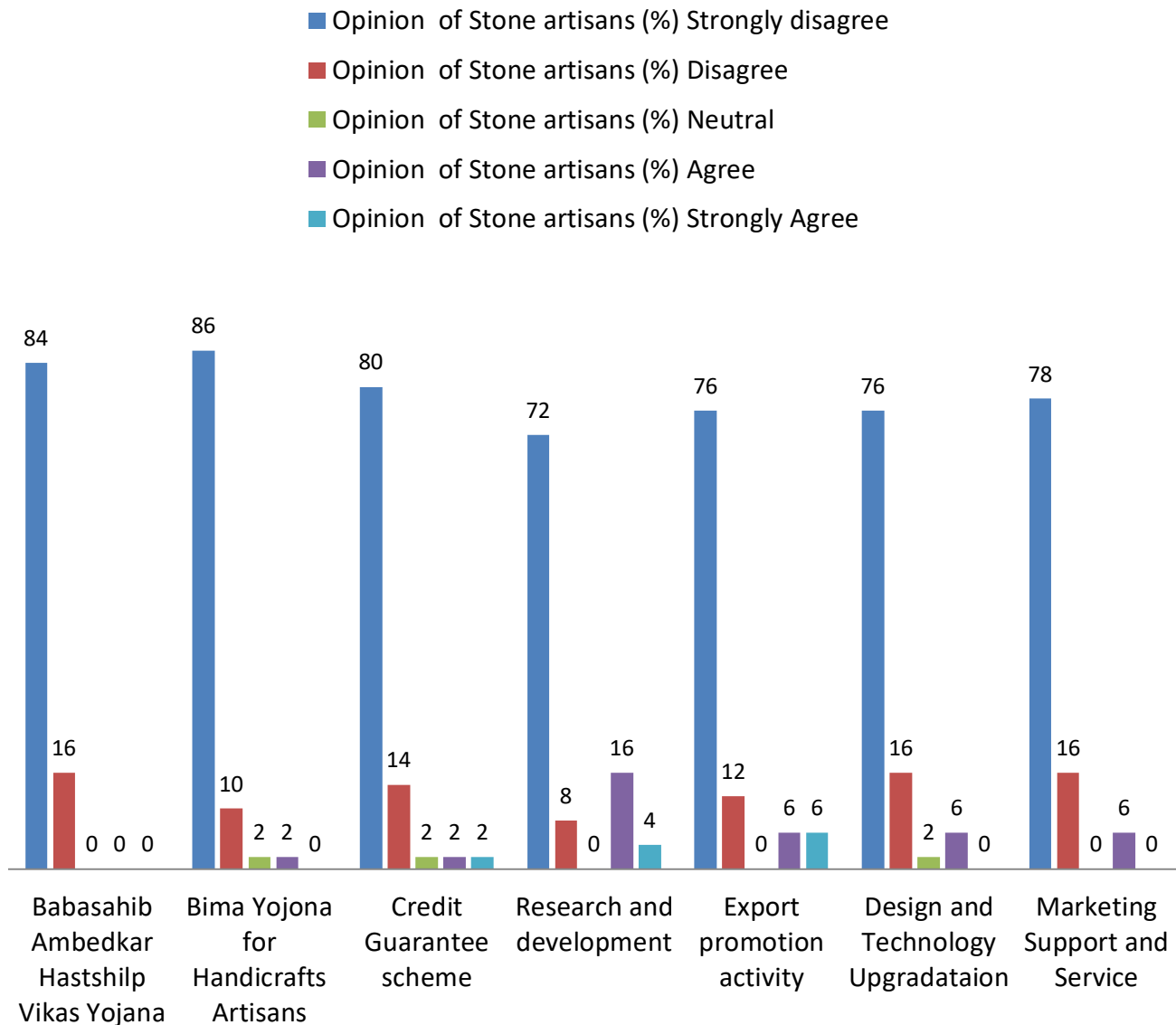


Fig: 7. Scheme wise level of benefits received by the artisans in Susunia village

The '**Babasahib Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana**' scheme has an aims to promote traditional and ethnic craft practices and unite artisans through a professionally managed forum based on mutual cooperation and effective coordination in craft-related production and business. In Charida village around 18% mukhosh artisans were benefitted by the scheme. In Panchmura village around 14% terracotta artisans were benefitted by the scheme. Whereas in Susunia village no artisans were benefitted by the scheme. The '**Bima Yojona for Handicrafts Artisans**' is a welfare scheme launched in 2003-04 to offer insurance coverage and protection to the artisan community aged 18-60 through Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC). . In Charida village around 22% mukhosh artisans were benefitted by the scheme. In Panchmura village around 18% terracotta artisans were benefitted by the scheme. Whereas in Susunia village only 2% artisans were benefitted by the scheme. The '**Credit Guarantee scheme**' ensures to eradicate poverty, ensure collateral security, and maintain uninterrupted credit flow in the craft sector. . In Charida village around 20% mukhosh artisans were

benefitted by the scheme. In Panchmura village around 18% terracotta artisans were benefitted by the scheme. Whereas in Susunia village only 4% artisans were benefitted by the scheme. The '**Research and development**' aims to assist artisans by collecting regular feedback on social, economic, aesthetic, and promotional aspects, and addressing crisis resolutions. . In Charida village around 34% mukhosh artisans were benefitted by the scheme. In Panchmura village around 46% terracotta artisans were benefitted by the scheme. Whereas in Susunia village only 20% of artisans were benefitted by the scheme. The '**Export promotion activity**' aims to facilitate the marketing and promotion of hand knotted carpet and other small sector crafts in India, focusing on research, design upgrades, and liberalization business policies in post WTO scenario. . In Charida village around 34% mukhosh artisans were benefitted by the scheme. In Panchmura village around 26% terracotta artisans were benefitted by the scheme. Whereas in Susunia village only 12% of artisans were benefitted by the scheme. The '**Design and Technology Upgradation**' has a primary objective to enhance artisans' skills, create diverse designs, utilize modern equipment, revive craft heritage and preserve aesthetic values. In Charida village around 12% mukhosh artisans were benefitted by the scheme. In Panchmura village around 22% terracotta artisans were benefitted by the scheme. Whereas in Susunia village only 6% of artisans were benefitted by the scheme. The '**Marketing Support and Service**' aims to provide financial and technological support, awareness generation for craftsmen in cities, and support entrepreneurship development programs through apex organizations and cooperative bodies. In Charida village around 30% mukhosh artisans were benefitted by the scheme. In Panchmura village around 26% terracotta artisans were benefitted by the scheme. Whereas in Susunia village only 6% of artisans were benefitted by the scheme.

Besides all these developmental strategies some financial assistance program has taken by Government to strengthen this morbid craft sector. Assistance is provided to all exporters of crafts for its promotion in abroad and representation of Indian heritage and aesthetic beauty. To make more convenient and rational of the exportation of craft article in national and international level Assist Export Promotion Councils (EPCs) (i.e. EPCH for Handicraft) is formed and functioning on this issue. This EPCH is providing various financial and technological assistance to all approved organizations/trade institutes to take innovative designs and strategies for craft promotion and publications. Recently Govt. of India make an effort on Focus export promotion strategies in some part of India and abroad which include FOCUS (LAC), Focus (Africa), Focus (CIS) and Focus (ASEAN + 2) programs. The craft technology, production procedure, innovative series and promotional techniques training program and hands on training initiatives are taken by Govt. within the artisan's residential colony. Two separate assistance scheme are launched by Govt. of India in favor of folk crafts for its better and convenient way of marketing through craft fair and exhibition and other selling platform. These are Market Development Assistance (MDA) Grant and Market Access Initiative (MAI). Various financial and technical assistance schemes are provided by Govt. of India for better promotion, publication and branding (patenting) so that this craft items are able to participate various national and international fairs and exhibition, make buyer-seller relationship more friendly and holding stability. Through online support and digital technology Indian traditional craft are displaying in a live concert at foreign exhibition. Enhancement of brand image of heritage craft and its publicity through thematic display in various national and international seminars. Arranging craft fairs frequently in various corner of countries at various regional festivals or other ceremony. Thematic representation of Indian craft items and it customize look, need based designs (modernized appeal) through exporters in various corner of country. Providing 'MUDRA' loan to all machine

enable craft sector artisan for more technological up gradation and betterment in terms of stabilization of their craft items. Thus, the policies play a crucial role for development of artisans of folk crafts in India.

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