

## LIVELIHOOD OF KASHMIRI HANDICRAFT ARTISANS: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

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**Abstract** The handicraft sector has over time begun to be identified as one of the vital sectors of the economy in Jammu & Kashmir. The main stakeholders within this sector are highly skilled artisans who produce a range of different handicraft items, sold all over the world. In the modern era, however, more than before, this industry has been plagued by the role and intervention of intermediaries and middlemen. They extract most of the profits, leaving the artisans with only semi-starvation wages. This article discusses the nature and characteristics of this important sector and empirically evaluates the contemporary position of artisans working within this industry. Our research relies on extensive fieldwork and ethnographic case studies to analyse the sector's predicaments and, based on the research results, proceeds to recommend a set of revival strategies to ensure a safe future for the handicraft sector in Jammu and Kashmir.

**Keywords:** handicraft, artisans, livelihood, Kashmir