

The Status of Handicrafts in Jordan: Challenges and Prospects

*Mahmoud Arinat **

ABSTRACT

Jordan's handicrafts have great potential in playing an effective role in the development of economy in general and the tourism sector in particular through creation of employment, economic growth and poverty alleviation, as well as playing an important role in preserving local traditions. Handicrafts require simple techniques, local raw materials and low capital investment. Therefore, the social cost of handicrafts is less compared to other small and medium scale industries. This implies that, if managed and developed appropriately, handicrafts can result in high returns. It is argued that handicrafts in Jordan have not received adequate attention from academic scholars, professionals and officials. This study aims to examine the importance and the current status of the handicrafts sector in Jordan, as well as to explore the challenges face this important sector. Furthermore, the study asserts that appropriate measures need to be taken in order to improve and develop handicrafts sector in Jordan. Various groups whether governmental, NGOs, or private sector should share responsibility to organizing and developing this important sector which is considered a vital sector that can enhance the social and economic aspects of people involving in this sector.

Keywords: Jordan, handicrafts, cultural heritage, tourism, marketing.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become one of the largest and fastest growing economic sectors worldwide. Many countries like Jordan have developed policies to revitalize this sector, because they fully recognize tourism as effective tool on creation of employment, economic growth, poverty alleviation as well as contribution on the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (UNCTAD 2010; WTO 2012).

Tourism is one of the most important sectors in Jordan's economy. Jordan has become one of the most prominent tourist destinations in the Middle East, especially for foreign tourists. Furthermore, Tourism is one of the key drivers for the gross domestic product for Jordan (Alshatnawi, 2014). According to the statistics provided by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MOTA) in Jordan, Jordan's GDP from tourism activities per year amounts to 13%. As tourism in Jordan has been growing, certain sub-sectors such as Handicrafts are needed as an important tourism supply

element.

Handicrafts are tangible and intangible products that represent the cultural heritage and traditions of any country, region or local community (McKercher, 2006). Undoubtedly handicrafts have become a vital part of cultural tourism. Indeed, whatever the type of tourism, the tourist often takes home the obligatory souvenir. The United Nation World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) stated in the technical note that "tourists always purchase as a souvenir for those not accompanying or as reminders of the countries or places they visited". So, for tourists, handicrafts are a symbol for their visit, the places they have visited and the experiences they had.

In addition to their socio-cultural importance, handicrafts can have a major impact on economic development through employment creation, foreign exchange earnings and sustained economic growth. They can also help mitigate the rural to urban migration as well as reduce the poverty (Donkin, 2001). Furthermore, there is also a growing recognition that the protection and preservation of

* Faculty of Archaeology and Tourism, The University of Jordan.
Received on 6/8/2015 and Accepted for Publication on 2/9/2015.

handicrafts is an important element of sustainable development policies.

Many countries have developed several strategies and policies to preserve, develop and marketing this part of heritage. Moreover, international organizations such as United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and International Trade Center (ITC) have launched various conferences and workshops in order to improve and develop the handicrafts sector. Special priority is given to marketing in order to market this sector on the international trade.

All of these exerted efforts indicate the great potential for the handicrafts to improve and develop the economy sector. This implies that, if managed and developed appropriately, handicrafts can result in high returns. Furthermore, Handicrafts require simple techniques, local raw materials and low capital investment, as well as the ability to work at

home. Therefore, low barriers to entry enable people to enter this sector with minimal capital (Richard, 2007).

In Jordan, handicrafts comprising a variety of crafts that are found all over the country such as traditional textile, pottery, glass, wood, sand bottles, mosaic and so on (Figs 1 and 2). Jordan traditional handicrafts are a vital part of the country`s cultural heritage and traditions. Furthermore, handicraft sector is an integral part of tourism. Like many other countries around the world, Jordanian handicrafts face numerous challenges, impacting the development and improvement of this sector. These challenges range from management and organizational issues and regulations to financial issues as well as marketing and awareness.

This paper examines the current status of the Jordanian handicrafts as well as the challenges facing it, in order to make suggestions for appropriate strategies to develop it.



Figure.1 Traditional woven rugs, Madaba



Figure.2 Mosaic production , Madaba

Literature review

Suzuki (2002) and O'Connor (2006) have confirmed that handicrafts can play a significance role on economic development through employment creation, economic growth, poverty alleviation, as well as reduction of the migration from rural to urban areas. In addition, The European Conference of Crafts and Small Businesses (1994, 1997) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (2008) fully recognized handicrafts as an effective tool for sustainable development, as it can provide opportunities for employment, especially in rural communities, as well as contributing to economic growth and environmental stewardship. Richard (2007) asserted that "in many developing countries, the contribution made to the economy and the export market through artisanry is increasing as more new craftspeople, especially youth and women are introduced into the sector as a solution to both rural and urban unemployment".

Several studies performed on handicrafts confirmed the importance of handicrafts in the tourism development. O'Connor (2006) confirmed the natural link between handicrafts and tourism and they are inextricably connected – with mutual advantage in building and promoting one sector to support the other. Furthermore, Yavari (2006) and ITC (2010) have recognized that handicrafts are one of the most effective factors in attracting tourists, because they demonstrate the history, social and cultural features of a country. In addition, the UNWTO and ITC (2010) have recognized that the handicrafts can also have a substantial economic impact when linked to the tourist industry.

According to Pichaichannarong (2006) cultural tourism has been promoted to highlight historical destinations, archaeology, folk culture, handicrafts, praising living treasures in all sectors, performing arts, visual arts, and literatures tourism service sector has been encouraged to hire local personnel, to use local materials, and to provide tourists with experiences on culture, tradition and ways of life of local people.

Moreover, McKercher (2006) stated that crafts and tourism can form a beneficial partnership that enhanced the tourism experience and benefits local communities. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (2013) reported that handicrafts production and sales to tourists offer an opportunity for the craftsmen to increase their income.

According to Yunis (2006) there is a growing interest of tourists in appreciating traditional cultural expressions, such as handicrafts, and purchasing such objects during their trips."

Also O'Connor (2006) asserted that "investment by governments, donors, and NGOs, together with the private sector, will help realize the potential of this vital industry in improving the quality of life of local communities adjacent to tourist destinations.

The Current Status of Handicrafts in Jordan

Jordan is fortunate that is rich in cultural heritage resources that are found all over the country such as archaeological and traditional sites, museums and handicrafts. Natural heritage is another important part of Jordan heritage.

As for the handicrafts, Jordan has many beautiful and interesting handicrafts that reflect the country's cultural heritage and traditions. In accordance to the Jordanian Regulation 36/2002 the Jordanian handicrafts include traditional textile, embroidery, metallic work, stone carved pieces, wood, carving on wood, carving in copper and white metal, pottery and ceramics, glass, sheep wool, straw/basketry, sand bottles, mother of shells, leather, jewelry and precious stones, holy water battles, mosaic, musical instruments, swords and daggers, manually made carpets and mats, traditional costumes and some other material (Figs 1,2,3 and 4).

In the past, handicrafts had a great importance as a domestic requirement, and have been associated with the style and mode of people's living. However, due to the social and economic transformations in Jordan, these handicrafts suffered from neglect for some time and some of them are threatened with extinction, which had a significant impact on its decline (USAID, 2009; Maffi, 2009).



Figure 3. Sand bottles production

In the light of the above, it is very clear that there is diversity in the production of handicrafts in Jordan. Unfortunately, there is no statistical information about the handicrafts sector, only few exceptions are to be seen. Besides the cultural and social importance of the handicrafts in Jordan, the handicrafts sector also plays an important role in the economic development as part of tourism. The economic importance of the sector also lies in its employment potential and low capital investment (Mustafa, 2011).

There is no one official body that is responsible for organizing and developing handicrafts sector in Jordan. The Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Culture, all of these ministries and other international funding agencies, such as the European Union (EU) and the United State Agency for International Development (USAID) have exerted efforts in funding and supporting the handicrafts sector in Jordan. Nevertheless, most of these efforts to develop and organize the sector fail due to the lack of an integrated planning and coordination between them. This has in turn left the sector on margin and without vision (Gorman, et al., 2009).

In accordance to the Tourism Law 20/1988, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities has a significant role to play in managing, developing and marketing the handicrafts in Jordan.

In addition to the above ministries, there are two main associations represent the handicrafts sector in Jordan with respect to regulating and supervising the sector. The first is The Jordan Handicrafts Traders Association (JHTP) which is registered under the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, and is the official body for licensing handicrafts producers and traders in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. The second is The Jordan Handicrafts Producers Association (JHP) which is registered under the Ministry of Culture, and includes business owners and employees of formal handicraft workshops (Akhal, et al., 2008). However, these two associations do not meet the needs of the sector in terms of production and marketing (USAID, 2009).

Besides the governmental organizations, the NGO`s also have played an important role in developing and supporting handicrafts sector in Jordan. The major players of NGO`s in handicrafts development in Jordan are the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature(RSCN), Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF), Jordan River Foundation (JRF) and The Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD) (Fig.5). However, these NGO`s are faced with several problems such as unorganized marketing and inadequate market information, their missions are overlapped and they competing for the same fund and duplicating efforts. (Gorman, et al., 2009; Akhal, et al., 2008).

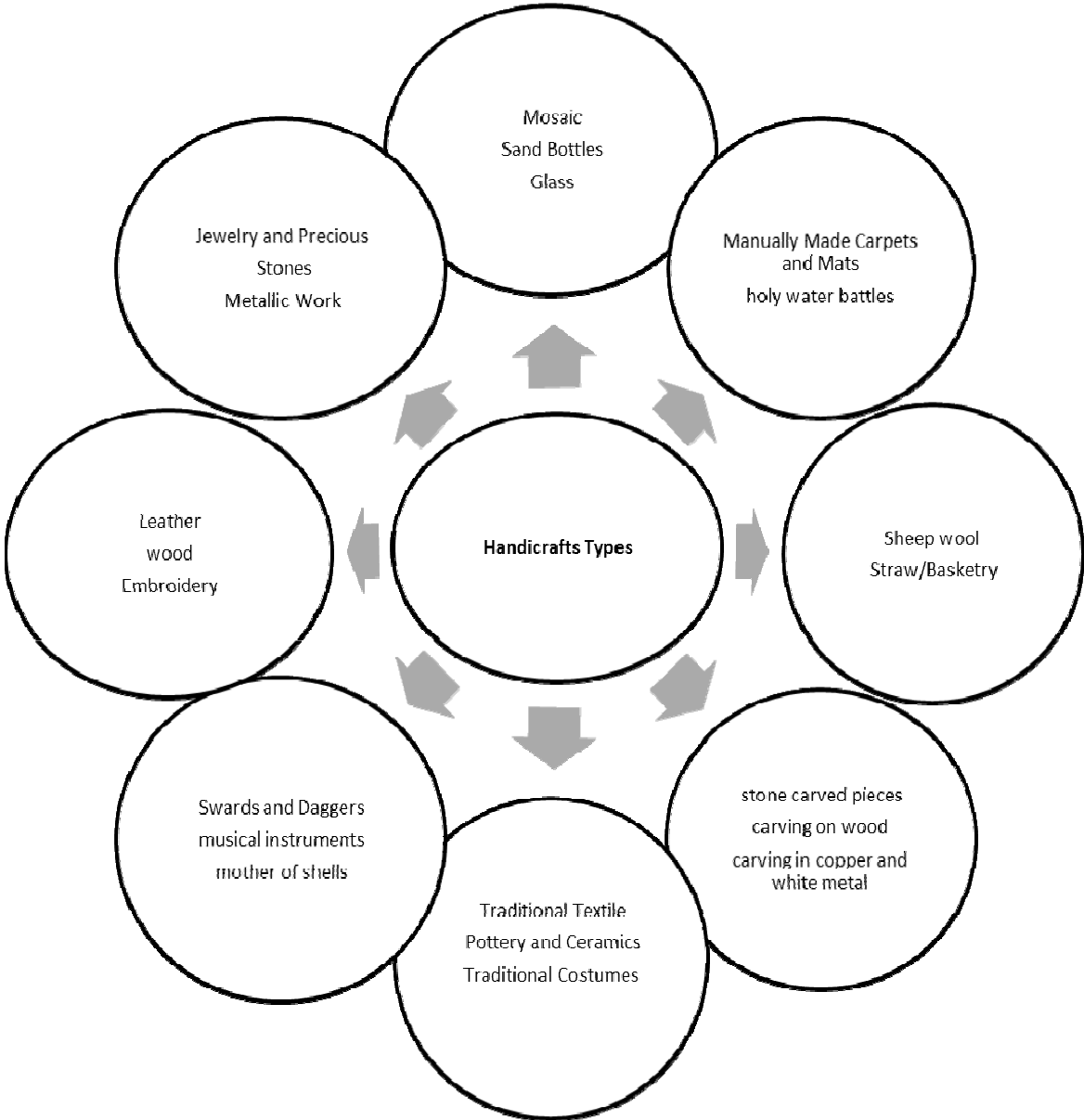


Figure 4. Handicrafts types in Jordan

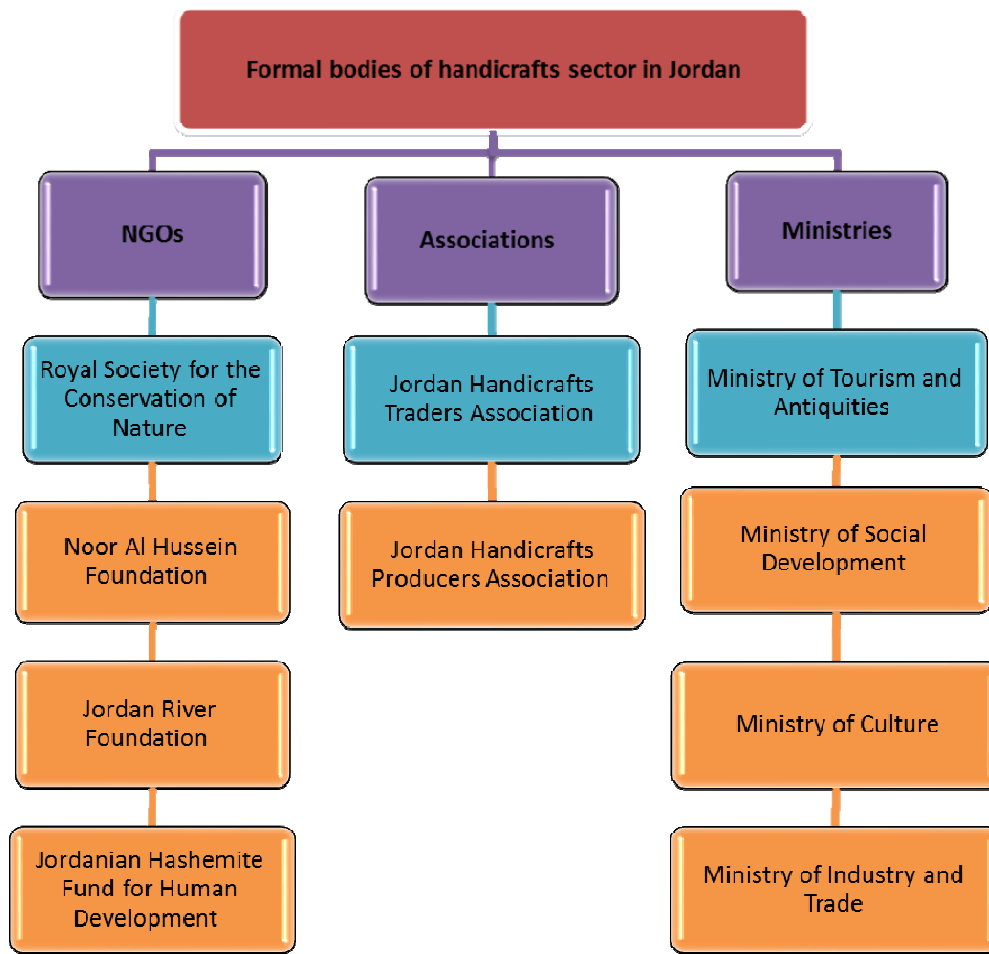


Figure. 5 Structure of the handicrafts sector in Jordan

Challenges to the development of handicrafts in Jordan

Despite the social and economic importance of the handicrafts through its high ability in the provision of employment opportunities for community groups and in contribution in the economic and tourism development, and the cultural importance as part of national heritage and identity of the country, the Jordanian handicraft sector also faces various challenges that delay its development and organization.

In the light of this situation, it is possible to sum up the main challenges facing the handicrafts sector in Jordan as following:

1- The absence of administrative body for handicrafts sector. There is no one official body that is responsible for the regulating, developing and supervising

the sector and its activities. The administrative responsible for the handicrafts sector is divided between a number of governmental bodies (The Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Culture). This leads to the fragmentation responsibility for this sector. Furthermore, there is no a unified strategy that was undertaken by these ministries with regard to administrative, organizational and financial aspects for the handicrafts sector (USAID, 2009). This due to conflicting responsibilities of the governmental bodies involved, as well as due to the absence of independent official body that is alone responsible for the handicraft sector in Jordan. This may be becomes an obstacle to the development of the sector.

2- The absence of legislations concerning

handicrafts. There is currently no clear legislation that organizes and supports the Jordanian handicrafts sector, and neither is there legislation for the protection of craftsmen rights. Currently there is tow regulations issued by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, with the aim of regulate and develop the sector. The first is the Handicraft, Traditional, and common Manufacturing and Trading Regulation No 36 for the year 2002. The second is the Regulation of The Jordan Handicrafts Traders Association No 38 for the year 2002. The Regulation 36/2002 Article 3 states that the handicraft should be practiced as main profession, based on handmade, and aimed to transforming the raw material into fully or partially handcrafted product. In accordance to the Regulation 36/2002 Article 9, which states that the owner or the manager of the handicrafts shop should be committed to some issues such as fixing a `Made in Jordan` brand on each piece made locally, putting the price on each piece, and the Jordanian handicrafts displayed in the shop should not be less than 70% of all displayed goods, as well as these local products should be put in isolated part from the imported products.

These legislations are not enough and do not adequately address the needs of the sector in regard to protection the handicrafts and the craftsmen themselves, as well as there is no strategy to control nor standers for the import and export of these products.

The absence of regulations concerning handicrafts have led to abandon these handicrafts by many artisans and discouraged others to participate in this field, because many of them believe that this sector has no future, therefore dose not find any interest and support by the government.

This was confirmed by the National Strategy for Tourism Handicrafts Development in Jordan 2010-2015. In accordance to this strategy "there is a decline in the number of people working in handicrafts sector in Jordan, especially among young people. This is most likely due to the lack of viable income generating opportunities in the sector, as well as the lack of interest in carrying on

handcraft traditions. Furthermore, the work environment of the sector discourages participation in the sector, including the lack of social security and health insurance".

3- Marketing. Marketing is one of the biggest challenges faced by handicraft sector. The locally made products facing difficulties for their marketing, due to the high and unfair competition with the imported handicrafts from outside of Jordan such as China and India (USAID, 2009). Tourist shops are filled with these imported products. The handicraft products displayed in the tourist shops in various areas of the country are mixed of craft products made locally by Jordanian artisans and many types of imported products. In most cases, it is difficult to distinguish the locally products from imported products. Furthermore, the imported products in comparison with the similar locally products, it is at a lower price and better quality, as well as more attractive designs. In some cases, the locally Jordanian designs are copied and imitated outside of Jordan at a much cheaper cost (Gorman, et al., 2009). This led to import craft products from outside of Jordan by wholesalers and trailers, which has a negative impact on the development of the locally handicraft products.

The lack of implementing of the Regulation 36/2002 was the reason for increasing the problem. As stated in Article 9 of the Regulation 36/2002, the owner or the manager of the tourist shop should be committed to some issues, but unfortunately, there is no obligation in this regard, especially with regard to the importance of branding and pricing. In addition, this Regulation requires the tourist shops to be 70% of all displayed products are locally products, and the imported products should not exceed 30%, and should be put in isolated part from the locally products.

Also, the most important issues related to the marketing of the handicrafts are the designs and the methods of production. It has been observed that the current handicrafts production mostly does not suit the contemporary tastes, with exception of a few designs, the

most are old-fashioned designs. In addition, many craftsmen copy and imitate products already in the market or as above mentioned, replicate the locally Jordanian handicrafts in outside of Jordan (Akhil, et al., 2008). This creates barriers in terms of marketing. Added to this, the methods, tools and equipments of production used by many craftsmen are old and inefficient. The result is low productivity, poor quality and high cost.

4- Training: Moreover, most of craftsmen are suffering from the lower level of training in production methods and marketing, impacting their skills and develop as well as their products. This is because the lack of training courses undertaken by governmental and non-governmental organizations for the craftsmen, the absence of training programs for quality development, as well as the lack of experience in displaying and marketing handicraft products. This in turn leads to increase the price of the product and lower the quality.

5- The lack of availability of raw materials. Most of raw materials are imported, expensive, lacking quality and inconsistently available. In addition, the high taxes of the Income and Sales and Costumes on the materials used for handicrafts production (USAID, 2009). This is leads to increase the price of products which maybe becomes an obstacle in front of the marketing of these products. This in turn leads to import of the handicraft products from outside of Jordan by wholesalers and trailers at lower prices.

6- The lack of funding. Lack of funding remains a significant problem faced by most national handicrafts organizations and artisans. There are difficulties in securing financing from banks, private sector, and financial organizations. This lack of funding prevents the ability of the sector to meet the market demand.

7- Neglecting the documentation and researches of the handicrafts. A significant lack of documentation and researches on handicrafts in Jordan is generally observed in terms of its classification, properties, development, as well as its importance for the Jordan cultural heritage. The result is lacking of comprehensive

and sufficient information through database for this sector and its workers (Mustafa, 2011). Added to this, there is no research and scientific studies that carried out about handicrafts as well as there is no conferences and seminars that are held in Jordan, highlighting the importance of the traditional Jordanian Handicrafts, their problems, and the solutions for their development.

8- Lack of awareness and introducing programs. The lack of interests of the various media that increase the awareness on the local handicrafts, in addition, the lack of awareness programs on the importance of handicrafts on the cultural, social, and economic levels. It appears that this low level of interest made many young's people hesitate before entering this field (USAID, 2009).

Suggestions for the development of handicrafts in Jordan

In the light of the observations pertaining handicrafts sector in Jordan discussed above, and in order to improve and develop this existing sector into a sustainable entity. The suggestions for the development of handicrafts sector in Jordan are summarized in the following points:

1- **Establishing one official body responsible for handicrafts sector:** This would have clear mechanisms that focus on supervising, regulating, and development of the handicrafts sector. This body should unify all exerted efforts concerning this sector; formulation strategies and programs for handicrafts development, integrate this sector into the national economy and encourage the research activities for the current and future needs for this sector. This body should also be under the umbrella of governmental organization reference such as the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and in administrative and financial independence, in order to do its work efficiency required and devote to serve this sector.

2- **Providing legislative mechanisms:** This is realized by issuing Law for Jordanian handicrafts, affiliated to the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. The Law includes regulating the handicrafts production and providing it with legal framework. It is also includes

encouragement of the artisans and protection their rights, as well as the protection of locally handicrafts from imported products. It is also realized by revising the current Regulation 36/2002, so that provides flexibility in the definition of handicrafts, as well as provides incentives to the retailers, in order to encourage them to support Jordanian handicrafts.

3- **Promoting and marketing of handicrafts:** The promotion policy plays a vital role in the marketing of handicrafts. This is realized through promotional and marketing programs (Audio, visual and print) at national and international level, permanent exhibitions and popular markets in each region or province that produce and sale handicrafts products, and developing Web Site for the locally handicrafts. The government should also develop gradually plan, in order to reduce of the imported handicraft products, as well as promote and market the locally handicrafts. In addition, the owners of the tourists shops should be committed to display at least 70% of the locally handicrafts according to the Regulation 36/2002. This is an important element on promotion and marketing of the locally handicrafts. Also they should aware about appropriate packaging and displaying their goods in a good manner, as well as putting “Made in Jordan” label. Also, competitive programs for artisans could be organized such as a national award, in order to encourage them in innovation and creativity in handicrafts, as well as to draw attention to them and their important role to play in preservation of creations heritage. Also, it is necessary for a national day for handicrafts.

4- **Providing raw materials:** this is realized through establishing national organizations in charge of supplying raw materials to the craftsmen and exporting handicraft products.

5- **Providing Funds:** This is realized through establishing a National Fund with the aim of supporting and financing the locally handicrafts. This can be supervised by the relevant ministries. This fund provides the craftsmen with the necessary financial services for the borrowing. The private sector should be involved in

supporting, investing, and development of handicrafts. In addition, coordination should be taken with banks and financial organizations, in order to finance the locally handicrafts with reasonable conditions.

6- **Providing studies and research on handicrafts:** this can be realized by establishing a national center for studies and research in locally handicrafts, with the aim of documentation, innovation, creativity, designs, and development. Also, electronic database should be created and include all the comprehensive information about the locally handicrafts and local artisans. In addition, the specialized scientific research dealing with handicrafts and its organizations should be encouraged and supported, as well as, the necessary of coordination and collaboration with the cultural organizations and universities regarding to the development of handicrafts.

7- **Building up the artisan’s abilities:** training is the basic element which any plan for handicrafts development depends on; it is also an important means for developing handicrafts. This is realized through providing the artisans with the necessary qualifications and skills, in order to get products with high value and quality that meet the tourists taste and market demand. For this, it is important to establishing a center for training, education and creativity on handicrafts, in order to strength and raises the artisan’s qualifications. In addition, coordination with the relevant bodies should be done, in order to cope with the modern technologies in materials, designs, information, tools, pricing, costs, taxes issues, and others, which help in developing and increase production.

8- **Introducing and awareness of handicrafts:** the various media has a vital role to play in introducing and awareness of the cultural, social, and economic importance of the handicrafts. So, it is necessary to develop a promotional and media strategy (Audio, visual and print.) which focuses on introducing locally handicrafts at national and international level. Also, programs for permanent and periodic exhibitions in all

the Jordanian provinces should be developed, as well as, participation in the regional and international exhibitions. It could be an advantage to use the archaeological and heritage sites to display the crafts products. In addition, cultural and heritage issues about locally handicrafts should be inserted into the school curricula, as well as create a Web Site to introducing Jordanian handicrafts internationally, this can also provide services for contract and export these products outside the country.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Jordan's handicrafts have great potential in playing an effective role in the development of economy in general and the tourism sector in particular through creation of employment, economic growth and

poverty alleviation.

This study asserts that appropriate measures need to be taken in order to improve and develop handicrafts sector in Jordan. Various groups whether governmental, NGOs, or private sector should share responsibility to organizing and developing this important sector. This implies that, if managed and developed appropriately, handicrafts can result in high returns.

Finally, this study shows clear picture of the current status, importance and challenges of handicrafts sector in Jordan. Furthermore, the study presents some suggestions for the improvement and development of this vital sector that can maximize the benefit for the locals and the country.

REFERENCES

- Alkhal, R., Shabaneh, A. and Tyroler, C. 2008. Handicraft Sector in Aqaba: Diagnostic, Strategy and Action Plan Development, Program, Aqaba Community and Economic Development (ACED) Program – iv, United State Agency for International Development USAID.
- Alshatnawi, Ehab. 2012. Assessing Communication Skills among Jordanian Tour Guides: German Tourists Perceptions, *Journal of Management Research*, 6 (1), Makrothink Institute, USA, 2.
- Donkin, Lucy. 2001. *Crafts and Conservation: Synthesis Report for ICCROM*. ICCROM.
- European Conference of Crafts and Small Businesses. (1994) *Craft and Small Enterprises: The Key to Growth, Employment and Innovation: Proceedings of the Berlin Conference*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.
- European Conference of Crafts and Small Businesses, 1997. *Employment through Innovation: Preparing Milan: Third European Conference of Crafts and Small Businesses, Milan 20th and 21st November 1997*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.
- Gorman, W., Grassberger, R., Shifflett, K., Carter, M. Nasser, I. and Rawajfeh, A, 2009. *The Jordan Bedouin Handicraft Weaving Company: A Feasibility Assessment of Job Creation for Jordanian Women*, Jordan Component of the Sustainable Development of Drylands Project, Report #9, New Mexico State University, New Mexico, USA.
- ITC, 2010. *Inclusive Tourism: Linking the Handicraft Sector to Tourism Markets*, ITC, Geneva.
- Maffi, I., 2009. *Tourist Art, traditional handicraft and the fabrication of Jordanian popular culture'. Traditions and transformations: Tourism, heritage and cultural change in the Middle East and North Africa Region*, 4-7 April 2009 Amman Jordan.
- McKercher, Bob, 2006. *Tourism as a Catalyst for Crafts: Pros and Cons*, In: *Tourism and Handicrafts, A Report on the International Conference on Tourism and Handicrafts*, 13 – 15 May 2006, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, Published and printed by the World Tourism Organization, Madrid, Spain, pp: 1-5.
- Mustafa, M., 2011. *Potential of sustaining handicrafts as a tourism product in Jordan*. *International journal of business and social science*, 2 (2), 146-152.
- O'Connor, David, 2006. *Handicrafts and Their Linkage with Tourism: Artisans Are Also Your Treasures*, In: *Tourism and Handicrafts, A Report on the International Conference on Tourism and Handicrafts*, 13 – 15 May 2006, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, Published and printed by the World Tourism Organization, Madrid, Spain, pp: 7-14.
- Pichaichannarong, Sasithara, 2006. *From Local to Global: Thai Handicrafts Being Linked with Tourism*, In: *Tourism and Handicrafts, A Report on the International Conference on Tourism and Handicrafts*, 13 – 15 May 2006, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, Published and printed by the World Tourism Organization, Madrid, Spain, pp: 25-28.

- Richard, Noëlla, 2007. Handicrafts and Employment Generation for the Poorest Youth and Women, UNESCO Policy Paper No. 17, UNESCO, Paris.
- SUZUKI, Naoto, 2002. PROBLEMS AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES FOR ARTISAN CRAFT PROMOTION, The Effective Promotion for Regional Development in Developing Countries: Part I, Chiba University.
- UNCTAD and UNDP, 2008. Creative Economy Report 2008, United Nations, Geneva.
- UNCTAD, 2010. The contribution of tourism to trade and development. Trade and Development Board, second session, Geneva, 6.
- UNEP, 2013. Green economy and Trade: Synthesis Report. United Nations Environment Programme.
- USAID, 2009. The National Strategy for Tourism Handcraft Development in Jordan 2010-2015, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Amman, Jordan.
- WTO, 2012. Tourism and trade-related services. World Trade Organization, Trade Topics.
- Yavari, Hossein, 2006. Reciprocal Effects of Tourism and Handicrafts, In: Tourism and Handicrafts, A Report on the International Conference on Tourism and Handicrafts, 13 – 15 May 2006, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, Published and printed by the World Tourism Organization, Madrid, Spain, pp: 15-16.

حالة الحرف اليدوية في الأردن: (التحديات والآفاق)

محمود عربيات *

ملخص

تلعب الحرف اليدوية الأردنية دوراً فعالاً في تنمية الاقتصاد الأردني بشكل عام، والقطاع السياحي بشكل خاص، من خلال إيجاد فرص عمل ونمو الاقتصاد والحد من البطالة إضافة إلى المحافظة على التقاليد المحلية حيث أن الحرف اليدوية تتطلب تقنيات بسيطة ومواد خام محلية ورأس مال منخفض، لذا تعتبر أقل تكلفة إذا ما قورنت بغيرها من الصناعات الصغيرة والمتوسطة، وهذا يعني أنه إذا تم إدارتها وتنميتها بشكل مناسب فسيكون لها مردود عال. ومن الممكن القول أن الحرف اليدوية في الأردن لم تحظ باهتمام مناسب سواء من قبل الأكاديمين والدارسين والمختصين والجهات الرسمية.

وتهدف هذه الدراسة إلى دراسة أهمية الحرف اليدوية في الأردن والوضع الحالي لها إضافة إلى بيان العقبات التي تقف في وجه هذا القطاع المهم حيث تؤكد الدراسة على ضرورة القيام بإجراءات ضرورية من أجل تقوية وتطوير قطاع الحرف اليدوية في الأردن، ومن هنا فإن هناك مسؤولية كبيرة تقع على عاتق المجموعات المختلفة سواء كانت حكومية، غير حكومية أو خاصة لتنظيم وتطوير هذا القطاع الهام والذي يعتبر قطاعاً رئيسياً يمكنه تحسين الأوضاع الاجتماعية والاقتصادية للأشخاص الذين يعملون فيه.

الكلمات الدالة: الأردن، الحرف اليدوية، التراث الثقافي، السياحة، التسويق.

* كلية الآثار والسياحة، الجامعة الأردنية. تاريخ استلام البحث 2015/8/6، وتاريخ قبوله 2015/9/2.