

REPORT ON TRAINING OF VILLAGE ARTISANS IN BIHAR, 1955

1. The Study

This study was undertaken to highlight the striking features of the working of production-cum-training centres in the PUSA – SAMASTIPUR SHAKRA Project of Bihar started under Rural Arts and Crafts Programme. As this training programme was considered to have been very successful in this state, it was felt that the experience gathered in the state would be of some use to those interested in the development of village industries.

2. Objectives.

To bring the experience gathered by production-cum-training centres in Bihar to the notice of a wider circle of persons interested in the progress of village industries.

3. Sample Size/Criteria for Selection of Sample

PUSA Project of Bihar was selected for this study. The data was collected in respect of 14 centres of a peripatetic type imparting training in various village crafts and industries.

4. Reference Period

December, 1954

5. Main Findings

1. The crafts selected for the purpose of training and production were carpentry, blacksmithy, tinsmithy, palm gur making, soap and disinfectant-making, tanning and leather goods making, bee keeping, handloom weaving, calco printing, knitting, embroidery and needle work and basket making. The main considerations which governed the selection of crafts were existence of the industry in the locality, availability of raw materials and the prospect for that industry in providing supplementary employment to the under-employed.

2. The selection of villages for the training centers was made on the considerations of availability of skilled artisans, availability of raw materials and a rent-free building for the center.
3. The total number of candidates trained upto December, 1954 was 434, which was as per the target fixed for the project period.
4. The quality of the products of these training centres had been widely appreciated. Goods were sold in the villages soon after they were produced, and were also in great demand in the various rural fairs and exhibitions because they were cheap and attractive.
5. The centres helped the local artisans in selling their goods. It was reported that the carpentry centres had been busy in furnishing and providing simple implements to almost all the production-cum-training centres. The products of the training centres were supplied as raw materials to the leather goods making centre. It was also the practice of the project to distribute the products of the centres as prizes in the various competitions held under the social education programme.
6. The centres were welcomed by the trainees as well as by the people. A number of villagers applied for locating the centres in their villages. Free houses were offered by the people for accommodating the centre
7. The project authorities attached considerable importance to the training centres for providing employment to agricultural labourers. However, organization and establishment under this programme imposed certain limitations to the growth and progress of productions-cum-training centres, and
8. The subject matter specialist in this field was non-gazetted officer and a low paid supervisor (his salary was Rs. 120/- per month). He was not in a position to keep an efficient control over nearly three dozen staff members that worked under him. A close scrutiny and checking of his bills sometimes delayed payments and his position before the dealers was made awkward. Difficulties were also experienced in respect of transport of raw material and equipment.