

Skill Development in Children (A Case Study of the Gem Industry in Jaipur)



Anita Tamboli

Lecturer,
Dept. of Sociology,
Government J.D.B. Girls College,
Kota, Rajasthan, India

Abstract

Rajasthan is famous all over the world for the vibrant colours of its culture which has a binding force to attract and enslave everyone who comes here to enjoy its historical and cultural heritage reflected through its local arts and crafts, historical monuments, forts, havelis and the points of visit. Jaipur, the state capital of Rajasthan is popularly known as 'the Pink City' which is witnessed by the pink colour on most of the houses, buildings, offices and business organizations of the city.

The city with pink buildings architected in a distinct style, makes a lasting impression on the tourists who come here from around the world in order to satisfy their passion, literary, historical and aesthetic sense. It is the beauty of the city that receives the tourists of the world in an incredibly increased number. The more the time is advancing, the more the tourists are choosing Jaipur their destination.

The research paper is a case study of the skill development of the children engaged in the gems and jewellery industry of Jaipur. The findings reveal that the negative aspect of the industry is the working of the children in this industry, while the positive aspect is that the children get opportunities to develop several skills relating to the gems polishing that eventually allows them to be self-depend in terms of money and income. The paper shares the story of five boys who feel satisfaction as they are able to provide financial support to their families.

Keywords: Skill, Development, Gem, Jewellery, Polishing, Shining, Shaping, export, Skill development schools, Diploma, Degree

Introduction

In addition to the socio-cultural features, Jaipur is known for the industrial growth and development. Probably all the industries imaginable on the part of man are running here successfully. However, the rarest industry, that is, the gem and jewellery industry, imparts Jaipur a distinguished identity. The gem and jewellery industry of Jaipur is a world famous industry. It is a great source of income to the local people.

The men and women belonging to the different age-groups work in it in order to earn their livelihood. As observed and reported by many researchers, the worst aspect of the gem and jewellery industry is the child labour, that is, the working of the children in this industry.

However, it cannot be denied that the gem and jewellery industry enables thousands of poor boys and girls to learn and develop skills of cutting, shining, polishing and shaping precious stones and to shape up them into various articles of jewellery.

It is evident from the stories of 3 boys and 2 girls. Farhan (17 Years), Qadir (16 Years), Mohit (17 Years), Iram Bano (16 Years) and Anju (16 Years) are work in the different gem and jewellery industrial units in Jaipur. Each of them admits that when they joined the work, they had no idea how to do the varied works relating to the polishing and shaping, but day-by-day they learnt a great deal through the trainings and teachings imparted to them.

They admit that for the skill development of the employees working in the gem and jewellery industry of Jaipur, there are special institutes that provide offline and online classes in the gem and jewellery skill development, and on the completion of the courses, they give certificates which are later found very useful in switching the industrial units and nature of jobs.

The selected cases report that it is the poverty and adversity of life that force the young children to work in the gem and jewellery industry. They are bold enough to share that the gem and jewellery industry which deals in shaping, shining, polishing and cutting the precious stones is very helpful in earning and in making them self-depend and in providing their families financial support.

The cases belong to the poor families, and have responsibility to take care of their ageing parents who are unemployed and of their younger brothers and sisters. They know that their working has kept them away from the formal education, but they are glad to share that their skill development has developed in them a self confidence that through the skill development they can switch over their jobs and may get higher wages.

Review of Related Literature

1. Neera Burra (1988), in Exploitation of Children in Jaipur Gem Industry

Structure of Industry, unveils that Jaipur's flourishing gem industry is as old as the city itself. But this world of jewels hides the miserable work conditions of thousands of children in the industry. Though a recent phenomenon arising out of the growing export market, child labour is now quite widespread and parents see this trade as an avenue of upward mobility. The second part of the report appearing next week deals in detail with the health and work conditions of the children in gem industry.

2. K.S. Babu (1998), in The Educational Status of the Child Labourers and the Special Schools in Gem Polishing Industry of Jaipur

Finds that majority of the parents favored sending the children to school irrespective of the sex of the child. Many parents were of the opinion that if male children learned work, it would be useful to them later on. Majority of the parents favoured providing vocational training to boys, and only 4.9 percent of the total parents were in favour of sending girls for training. As far as the working children were concerned 42.4 percent of them had formal schooling, 17.1 percent had dropped out and 40.5 percent had never attended school. The special schools were started in 1988.

As of 1992, there were 20 such schools in Jaipur city. The minimum age for enrollment is 8 years and the maximum age 11 years. In the schools the same text books are being used. However, certain lessons which are not relevant to the urban settings are deleted for the syllabus. Besides formal education they have other vocational courses in crafts. In these schools, sixty percent are boys and forty percent are girls. There is one Gem Stones Artisans Training schools (GATS) in Jaipur.

3. Rosanna M. Vetticad Vitul Gupta & Avni Jain (2014), in The Gems and Jewellery Industry

Contributing to "Make in India", report that gems and jewellery industry is one of the fastest-growing sectors in the Indian economy. It is a highly export oriented and labour intensive

industry, thus contributing greatly to the exchequer in terms of foreign exchange, and to employment. Gold jewellery forms a large portion of the Indian jewellery market, the balance comprising fabricated studded jewellery that includes diamond and gemstone studded jewellery.

A predominant portion of the gold jewellery manufactured in India is consumed in the domestic market. India is also the world's largest cutting and polishing centre for diamonds. Increasing per capita income and the status symbol attached to jewellery are also likely to contribute to the growth of the industry.

4. Angel L. Martinez Cantera (2014), in Indian children toil in Jaipur gem industry

Shares the touching tale of Mohamed Akbar, a ten year old boy who worked in the gem industry under unbearable conditions of living. His neck still covered with colours from the chemicals that he used in the workshop, Mohamed lamented how much he missed going to school. "My uncle brought me here – to Jaipur – because he also works in the industry. I get Rs50 (\$0.8) every Sunday and my family gets paid by bank transfer. I didn't want to go to school before, but now I want [to go]," he said.

His story, as also those of the other 50-odd children rescued last January in a joint operation by the non-profit Resource Institute for Human Rights (RIHR) and the anti-trafficking unit of the city police, brought to focus the grime, sweat and heartbreaks that invariably lie hidden beneath the glitter and glamour of an industry that by nature dazzles outsiders. Forced to work from dawn to dusk, the children suffer from poor vision, burns, chronic cough and even finger malformation.

5. Priyanshu Sharma & Roopali Sharma (2014), in Special Economic Zones in Rajasthan

A Study of Gems and Jewellery Segment in Jaipur, observe that the Indian Gems and Jewellery industry is the backbone of the economy by being one of the major contributors towards the export led growth of India. The industry has gained a global popularity because of its talented craftsmen, its superior practices in cutting and polishing fine diamonds and precious stones and its cost efficiencies. India is one the world's largest manufacturers of cut and polished diamond with an aggregate contribution of approx. 60% of the world's supply in terms of value, and 80% in terms of volume.

6. RR Tiwari, A Saha (2014), in Morbidity Profile of Child Labor at Gem Polishing Units of Jaipur, India

Hold that the gem polishing industry at Jaipur, India, is an informal sector industry, which employs substantial proportion of children. Approximately, 200 000 people are employed in this industry of which about 20 000 are children. The workers are not covered with any health service schemes. In this industry, the waste materials of organized sectors are purchased by

the parents as raw material for the cottage industry and which is then passed through various processes to make a final product to be sold in the market. All these processes are carried out in a workplace with poor ventilation, illumination and improper workstations. Therefore, this is the first attempt to find out the baseline information about the morbidity status of these children.

In the gem polishing industry, the raw stones are cut with the help of rotating saw to remove parts containing impurities. This is followed by separating the raw stones based on their colors. After sorting, using a rotating wheel, the stones are pre-shaped as desired and then calibrated to the appropriate size by various calipers. This is followed by faceting the stone so that the multiple facets using the principle of refraction give shine to the stone. Finally, these stones are polished using chromic oxide powder and quartz powder to increase the shine and luster. Except for making of jewelries, sorting and marketing, the children work in almost all the processes and thus are prone for hazards associated with them.

7. Nesar Ahmad (2015), in Behind the Shine

The gemstone industry of Jaipur, India, holds that city of Jaipur in Rajasthan, also known as the Pink City, is a major centre of coloured gemstone processing (cutting and polishing) in India and the world. The gemstone cutting and polishing industry is more than a century old. The Jaipur is known for its handicrafts like handmade footwear, pottery, handloom products, printed cloths and jewellery. The Jewellery and gemstone are "foundation of a major industry in Jaipur, for which the city is justly famous". The report of the study is divided in five sections. This introductory section discusses the gems and jewellery industry in general in India and gemstone industry in Jaipur, a brief history and recent changes, and an estimate of the size of the industry in Jaipur as well as a classification and typology of the gemstones in general. The second section maps the entire supply chain of the gemstone industry in Jaipur, Rajasthan, which starts from import of the raw material and then goes on to processing the stone and finally is traded in India and abroad.

Specific Objectives of the Study

1. To study and mirror in short the significance of the culture of Rajasthan
2. To have a peep into the industrial growth and development in Jaipur
3. To concentrate on Jaipur as a hub of industrial units and organizations
4. To explore the trends of tourism in Jaipur
5. To make a special focus on the gem and jewellery industry of Jaipur
6. To share the public opinion about the prevalence of child labour in the gem and jewellery industry of Jaipur

7. To produce the glimpses of the varied works related to the gem and jewellery industry of Jaipur
8. To explore the positive and negative aspects of the gem and jewellery industry of Jaipur
9. To learn and let others learn about the skill development in the children engaged in the gem and jewellery industry of Jaipur
10. To discuss the advantages of the skill development programmes meant for the skill development of the children engaged in the gem and jewellery industry of Jaipur

Working Hypothesis

The working hypothesis which formed the basis of the present study include the following-

1. Jaipur, the capital of Rajasthan, is touching higher and higher horizons of success in the field of industrial development and growth
2. Jaipur has a wide industrial area
3. The most popular industry in Jaipur is the gem and jewellery industry
4. The gem and jewellery industry is a great contributor to the export from India to the various countries
5. The gem and jewellery industry of Jaipur is a great source of employment to the local people in particular
6. The workers in the gem and jewellery industry of Jaipur belong to different age groups
7. Child labour prevails in the gem and jewellery industry of Jaipur
8. The workers engaged in the gem and jewellery industry have to work under hard conditions
9. The wages given to the workers is insufficient in fulfilling the needs of the workers
10. The skill development programmes meant for the workers and especially for the child labourers are helpful in providing them better job opportunities

Methodology Adopted for the Study

The method adopted for the study involves a specific process that includes the following steps-

1. Selecting the Problem
2. Defining the Problem
3. Going through the related literature, getting a feedback about the problem and capturing the spirit of the theme
4. Defining the Objectives of the Study
5. Formulating the hypothesis and testing it through the study
6. Working out an appropriate methodology that is helpful in developing a better understanding of the issue and in helping the author draw objective conclusion
7. Collecting the primary data using the case study method
8. Collecting the secondary data from the published studies available on the different sites of internet in the form of research papers
9. Classifying the data on the basis of their nature
10. Interpreting and analyzing the data
11. Making conclusion

Conclusion

The gem and jewellery industry of Jaipur is one of the major industries that provide job to

thousands of men and women belonging to different age groups. Theoretically, there is no child labour in it, but the practice says that the child labour does prevail there, and that the small children who are supposed to enjoy their boyhood or girlhood associating themselves with the traditional modes, are forced to be engaged in this industry and to help in cutting, shining, polishing and shaping the various precious stones and in creating and making attractive jewellery for the people.

In Jaipur and other cities of Rajasthan, there are special institutes that impart the skill development trainings through the various courses. For the skill development of their employees, the gem and jewellery industrial units scattered all over the city allow their workers to get benefited by such programmes, as it is only through developed skills that the gem and jewellery industry can manufacture better jewellery and can help in increasing the export.

It is good to learn that from time to time, the gem and jewellery industry launches several skill development for its employees, and particularly, for the young children who have just started their career in this industry. The skill development programmes, certificate courses, diplomas etc. allow the workers to develop their varied skills and to prepare themselves to work in a better way and to earn more and more.

References

1. Angel L. Martinez Cantera- *Indian children toil in Jaipur gem industry*, Aljazeera, 2014
2. K.S. Babu- *The Educational Status of the Child Labourers and the Special Schools in Gem Polishing Industry of Jaipur*, *Journal of Social Sciences*, Volume 2, Issue 4, 1998
3. Neera Burra-*Exploitation of Children in Jaipur Gem Industry: I: Structure of Industry, Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Jan. 16, 1988), pp. 75-79
4. Nesar Ahmad-*Behind the Shine: The gemstone industry of Jaipur, India*, Canberra: *The Australian National University Project*, June 2015
5. Priyanshu Sharma & Roopali Sharma-*Special Economic Zones in Rajasthan: A Study of Gems and Jewellery Segment in Jaipur*, *ZENITH International Journal of Business Economics & Management Research*, Volume 4, Issue 5, 2014
6. RR Tiwari, *A Saha-Morbidity Profile of Child Labor at Gem Polishing Units of Jaipur, India*, *The International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, Volume 5, Number 3, July, 2014
7. Rosanna M. Vetticad Vitul Gupta & Avni Jain-*The Gems and Jewellery Industry: Contributing to "Make in India"*, 2014