

Traditional handicrafts of Punjab developed from plant and agro-waste materials

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■ **ABSTRACT** : Punjab has a rich tradition of arts and crafts. The traditional handicrafts of different types made from plant waste materials available in their vicinity were used in every household during the pre-independence period. *Doaba* and *Majha* were faster to adapt to the modern life style, while Malwa region with low literacy level continued with the traditional ways of life as well as craft making. But over the last two decades practice of handicraft making had sharp decline even in Malwa region. Thus, to document the valuable basketry craft, a sample of 180 respondents of rural women comprising of 60 women from each of the three selected districts of Malwa region namely, Ludhiana, Patiala and Bathinda, who had developed traditional handicrafts in their life-time was selected purposively. Older women were found to have made fifty or more traditional handicrafts from plant and agro-waste materials in their lifetime. All women used to carry out different activities of practicing craft in their leisure time such as spinning yarn on *Charkha*, weaving basketry products like *Bohey/Chhikkoo*, *Katnee(s)*, etc. and embroidering the *Phulkaris* or *bags*. The largest percentage of respondents (28.89%) had made *Bohey/Chhikkoo* followed by 19.45 per cent respondents who had made *Chhabi(an)* from plant and waste materials. None of the respondents was now found to be making these handicrafts for domestic use.

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