

Research Paper :

## Dying art of Punjabi jutti in Patiala

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### ABSTRACT

Patiala, the cultural window of Punjab has gorgeous works to offer in the form of ostentations-Phulkari and colorful ornamented Punjabi Jutti. This study is an attempt to find out the present status of Punjabi Jutti of Patiala, changes and problems faced by the Jutti makers. Data were collected by interview cum survey method from 100 shoe makers in and around Patiala. Data were analyzed and tabulated. With modernization and machines taking over most manufacturing activities, Punjabi Jutti has undergone lot of changes in raw materials, colour, ornamentation products and procedures, threads, price and manufacturing process. Different problems faced by shoemaker community of Patiala are high cost of raw material, shortage of skilled labour, no direct export of Jutti, decrease in demand and bad financial conditions of the workers. Government has tried to revitalize this dying art by opening CRC, Footwear Design and Development Institute (FDDI) in Patiala under United Development Programme but consistent efforts made by them has not reaped results as expected. Hence, it is important to recognize, admire and buy these "exquisite pieces of art" and encourage the Jutti makers.

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Patiala, the princely city of Punjab located in the South East part of the state, is famous for its turban, paranda, peg, jutti and Patialashai Salwars. Traditional Punjabi Jutti in golden colour with profuse ornamentation speaks of gorgeousness in unmistakable tone. Punjabi Jutti with intricate patterns are made in parts of Punjab-Patiala, Malerkotla, Muktsar, Ludhiana, Malout, Fazilka, Faridkot and Abohar (Kipling, 1985). Patiala's 'Tilla Jutties' also known as Patiala Shahi Jutti is linked to princely days. These jutti were believed to be the relics of the reign of the Khilji and Lodhi, Kings of Delhi. These 'pieces of art' are an inseparable part of Punjabi attire and are popular traditional footwear which essentially complement Indian ethic or Indian casual wear perfectly. (Randhawa, 1960) It encapsules cultural diversity, local ethos and ethnicity (Kohli, 2002). Therefore, the present study was undertaken with the following specific objectives : to study the changes in Punjabi Jutti of Patiala in relation to raw material, manufacturing process, ornamentation, designs and colours, to study the problems faced by Jutti makers and industry as a whole, to critically analyse the efforts made by Punjab Government to revive the trade of Jutti making and to give suggestions for revitalization of this dying art of Punjabi Jutti making.

### METHODOLOGY

Survey, interview, questionnaire and observation methods were selected for conducting this study. Random sampling technique were used to select 100 shoemakers from in and around Patiala. The raw data collected were classified on the basis of respondents, coded (in the form of frequencies) and tabulated (in percentage) and these were then presented in the form of graphs and tables. Sheesh Mahal museum of Patiala was visited.

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Handicraft is an expression of the human spirit in material form which gives delight to mankind. Every state has a distinctive handicraft which speaks of its culture ex- Punjabi Jutti of Patiala is valued not so much for the soundness of leather but for the beauty of ornamentation (Mehta, 1960). Most of the respondents or Punjabi Jutti makers were in the age group of 30-40 years.

Regarding the age of respondents (Fig. 1) 50% were in age group of 30-40 years.

Regarding education (Fig. 2), it can be seen that (80%) were illiterate and (15%) were educated up to Primary School only.

Majority of the respondents *i.e.* 95% were Hindu

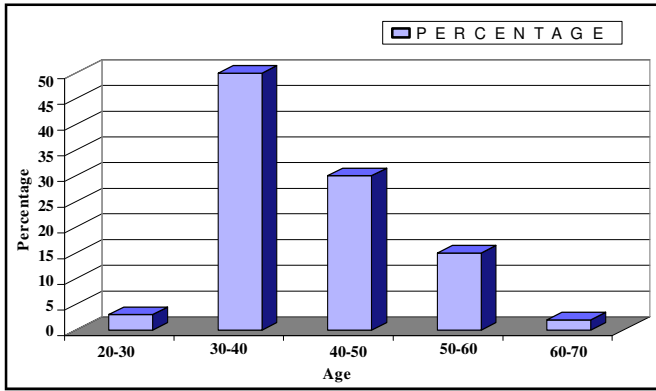


Fig. 1 : Distribution of respondents according to age

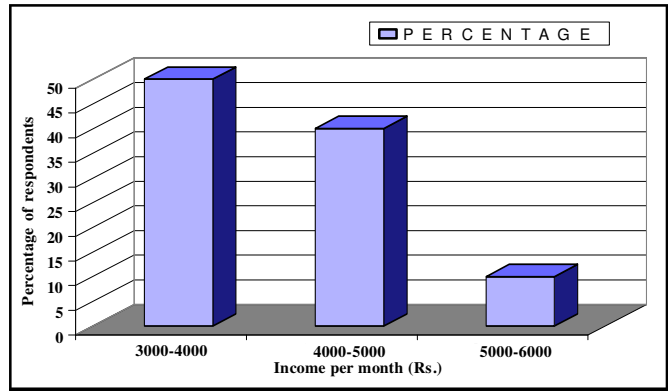


Fig. 4 : Distribution of respondents according to their income

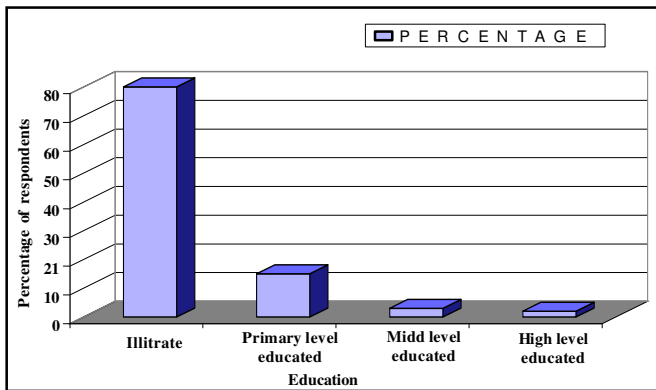


Fig. 2 : Distribution of respondents according to their educational level

income *i.e.* 3000-4000 rpm and only a 10% had income of Rs. 6000-7000 per month (Fig. 4).

Majority of respondents had learned the art of Jutti making from their ancestors which being a family tradition (95%) while 5% of respondents learnt this art from other shoemakers. Most of the respondents (85%) had started learning the trade of Jutti making at the age of 10-15 years while they were indirectly involved since 2 year of age (Fig. 5).

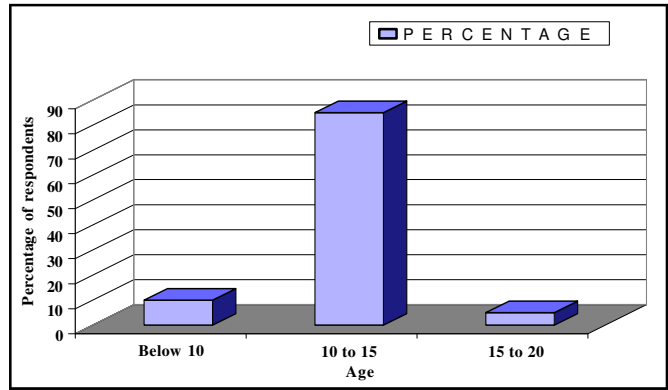


Fig. 5 : Distribution of respondents on the basis of age at which they started learning jutti making

chamar and rest (5%) were Muslims (Fig. 3). Harijans from Rajasthan were mainly involved in Punjabi Jutti making. Majority of respondents *i.e.* 80% had nuclear families while 20% had joint families. Nuclear family had 4-6 members who preferred freedom and independence, while joint families had 15-20 members as they preferred to work together.

50% of the shoemakers had comparatively less

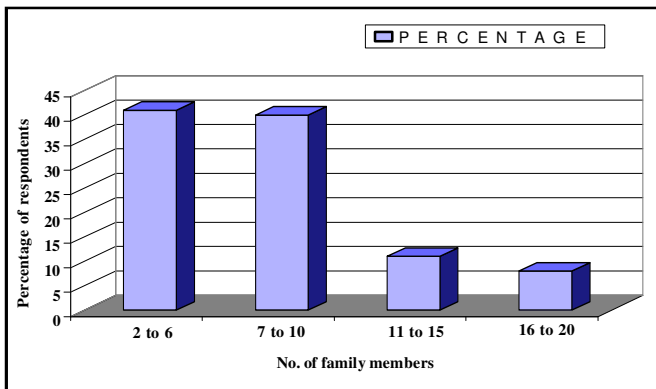


Fig. 3 : Distribution of respondents on the basis of number of family members

70% of the respondents worked in the rented areas where the range of rent was Rs. 500-1000 per month. While 30% had their own place. 90% of them had financed their business themselves while 10% had taken loan from bank. Majority of them (95%) were working for shopkeepers or exporters on daily payment basis.

With modernization and machines taking over for most manufacturing activities, change has been seen in the making of Punjabi Jutti, shortage of leather, no subsidy and VAT on items, use of machines, less demand of Jutti due to less publicity, Jutti no longer used as daily wear and less profit margins are some reasons for decline in its popularity (Fig. 6).

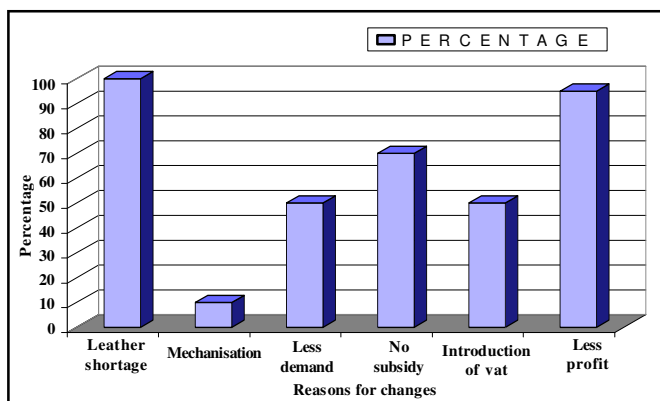


Fig. 6 : Distribution of respondents on the basis of reasons for changes in jutti making

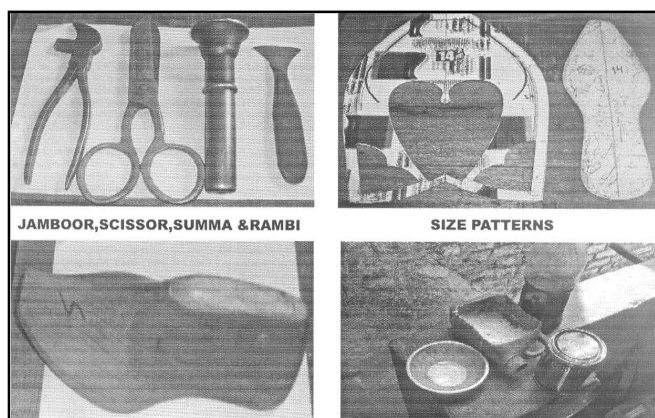


Fig. 8 : Tools used for raxine Punjabi Jutti

In Patiala, raxin pasting and stitching Juttis are now being made while leather stitching Jutti are generally made by around 10 juttimakers and rest are brought from Fazilka, Abohar, Muktsar in Punjab and Rewari in Haryana. Machine and hand embroidered upper parts of Juttis are mostly made in Sanaur village near Patiala. In Sanaur, women are mainly engaged in hand embroidery while men are involved in machine embroidering the upper part of Juttis. Machine Jutti embroidery business had started about 5-6 years back here (Fig. 7).

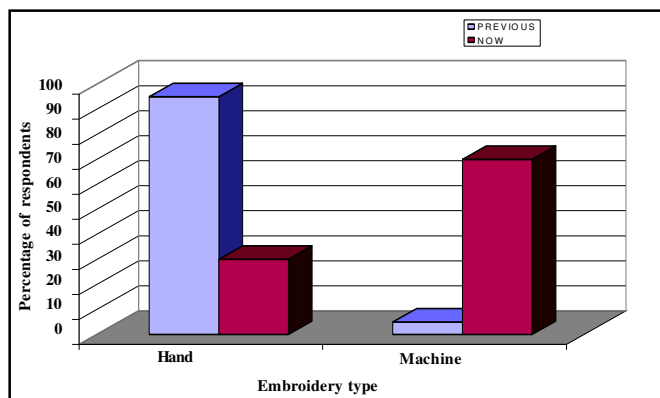


Fig. 7 : Distribution of respondents on the basis of embroidery type

Different types of tools used for Jutti making have been given in Table 1 and presented in Fig. 8.

The raw materials used for making Jutti have undergone changes. Earlier only buffalo, cow, sheep, calf and sambher hides were used but now as leather is rare commodity in Patiala, raxin, velvet Japani, canvas, hardboard, sheet sole (rubber), leather board which are imported from Delhi are mainly used. Different raxin varieties are available – Taiwan, Aero plane pillow, Drammer, Milar, Marble, Crepe, Soft foam, Ice nappa, Leather nappa, Nappa, Capsule foam, Wrinkles and

Gumeri, foam etc., out of which Taiwan is of good quality and most commonly used. The raxine Jutti has reduced the gap between rich and poor and is finished in such a way that it looks and smells like leather (Fig. 8).

Earlier only cowhide, goat skin, was used to make Panna outermost part but now mainly raxin is used. For Astar (interlining), cow hide was used but now foam is generally used (Fig. 9). Thick Puran was generally made of cow and calf hide but now canvas is mainly used. Goat and sheep skin were used for piping (kor) but now mainly raxine varieties are used. Sole of Juttis were made either of buffalo or oxen hide but now sheet sole rubber is being mainly used. In leather Juttis, sutli or dor were used to stitch the upper part to lower portion of Juttis but in pasting Jutti polyester or cotton thread is used to attach piping to the upper piece with the help of machine (Fig. 10).

Earlier Maida paste and oilseed cake paste were generally used for binding but now rubber adhesive PU (Poly ulnoroprene) are generally used.

Colours, earlier preferred were black, gold, silver, cream and brown but as leather dyes and raxine colour

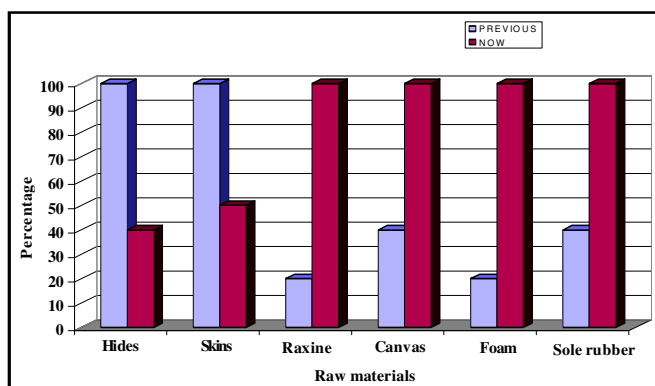
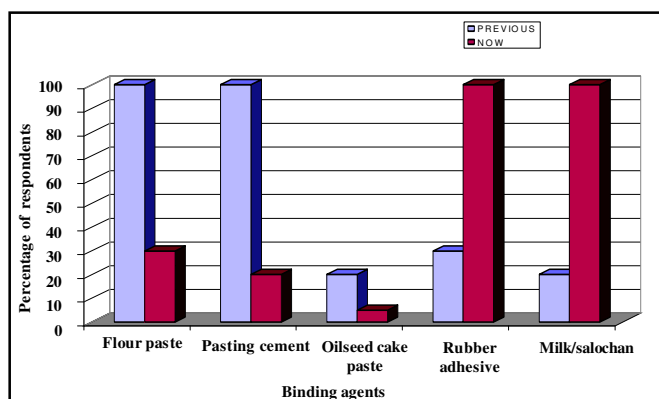


Fig. 9 : Distribution of respondents on the basis of raw materials

**Table 1 : Tools**

| I.   | Cutting and scrapping   | Purpose                                   | Stitched jutti | Pasted jutti |
|------|-------------------------|---|----------------|--------------|
|      | Ramba (Big cutter)      | To cut leather                            | Yes            | No           |
|      | Rambi (Small cutter)    | To cut leather                            | Yes            | Yes          |
|      | Scissors (12''-18'')    | To cut leather                            | Yes            | Yes          |
|      | Scraper                 | To scrape the leather                     | Yes            | No           |
| II.  | EMB. Tools              |   |                |              |
|      | Katani (Needle)         | Bodkin awe to carry embroidery threads    | Yes            | Yes          |
|      | Embroidery Machine      | To embroider jutti's upper part           | Yes            | Yes          |
|      | Wooden Stick            | To keep embroidery piece in place         | Yes            | No           |
| III. | Stitching               |   |                |              |
|      | Aari                    | Boring tool to make holes                 | Yes            | No           |
|      | Needle                  | Small pointed pierced round wire of steel | Yes            | Yes          |
| IV.  | Finishing               |   |                |              |
|      | Kalboot (Toe block)     | Stretch juttis                            | Yes            | No           |
|      | Pauches (In step block) | Stretch juttis                            | Yes            | No           |
|      | Heel block (Addi)       | Shape to juttis                           | Yes            | No           |
|      | Singni                  | Used to polish jutti                      | Yes            | No           |
|      | Wooden scrapper         | Smoothen out wrinkles                     | Yes            | No           |
| V.   | Other                   |   |                |              |
|      | Slab (Silli) Stone      | Working Platform                          | Yes            | Yes          |
|      | Fali (Wooden board)     | To cut leather on                         | Yes            | No           |
|      | Summa (Iron hammer)     | Beat leather                              | Yes            | Yes          |
|      | Morga (Wooden hammer)   | Beat leather                              | Yes            | No           |
|      | Kalboot                 | Wooden frame for fitting                  | No             | Yes          |

**Fig. 10 : Distribution of respondents on the basis of binding material usage**

varieties are available, hence Juttis in lot of new colours are being made. Dull colors are generally preferred by local people but brighter and shiny colored Jutties are preferred by foreigners *i.e.* for export. Changes in manufacturing technique was observed.

#### Preparation:

To make leather stitched Jutti, raw leather is washed and rubbed with mustard oil or butter milk and then scrapped with stone and iron to flatten it and then beaten to make it hard. While no preparation is needed to make

raxine Jutti as different varieties of raxine are directly available at low price.

#### Cutting:

Layout of different parts of jutti is traced on leather. Two parts of Jutties are upper and sole. Upper includes Panna (outermost layer), Astar (interlining) and Puran (lining after Astar). These pieces are joined using flour paste. Sole includes 2 -3 layers. Talla (outer layer) and Patava (inner layer). Cardboard pattern sizes are used to out different parts. In case of raxine pasting Jutti, raxine is used for Panna, Foam for Astar and canvas for Puran. They are pasted using synthetic adhesives (Fig. 11).

#### Embroidery:

It is done on Panna using readymade designs paper pasted on it or by embroiderers imagination in case of raxine pasting Jutti, machine embroidery is mostly done using traced designed.

#### Stitching of Jutti:

In leather stitched jutties, after embroidery, three layers *i.e.* Panna, Aster and Puran are sewn together around inner edge and strip of red/black goat skin piping is attached to inner edge. Sole is sewn to upper with soot starting from toe to heels. In raxine pasting Jutti, only

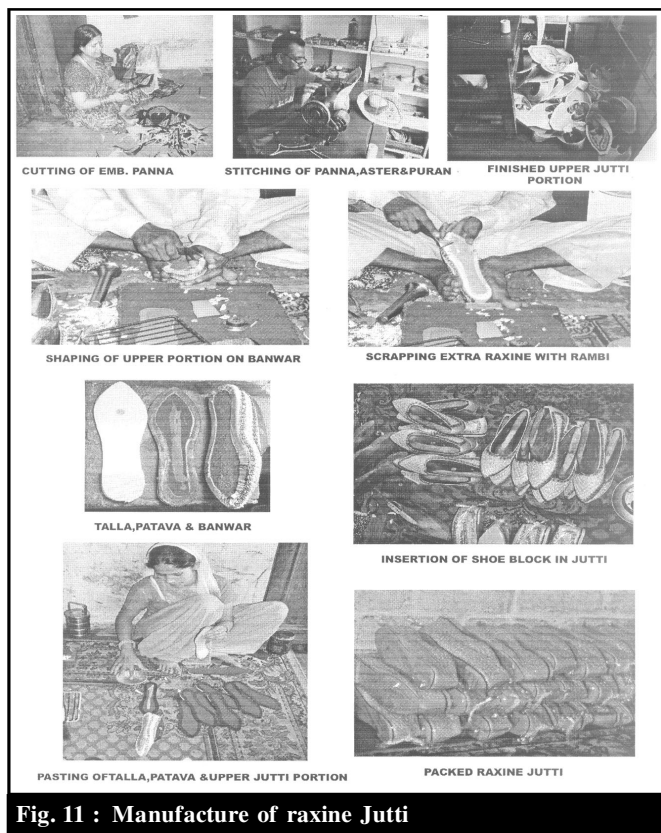


Fig. 11 : Manufacture of raxine Jutti

piping of synthetic raxine is machine stitched and upper piece is softened on heat and moulded on Kalboot (Wooden shoe block) with jambur and is pasted to the sole portion with rubber adhesive.

**Finishing :**

Toe, in step, heel moulds are put in leather jutti to keep them stretched in proper shape and later wrinkles are smoothened. While in raxine pasting Jutties, after keeping wooden shoe block in Jutti for one hour, it is removed.

Earlier only spangles along with Dabka and Tilla work were used but now Ghungroo, Sippi, Sitare, Moti,

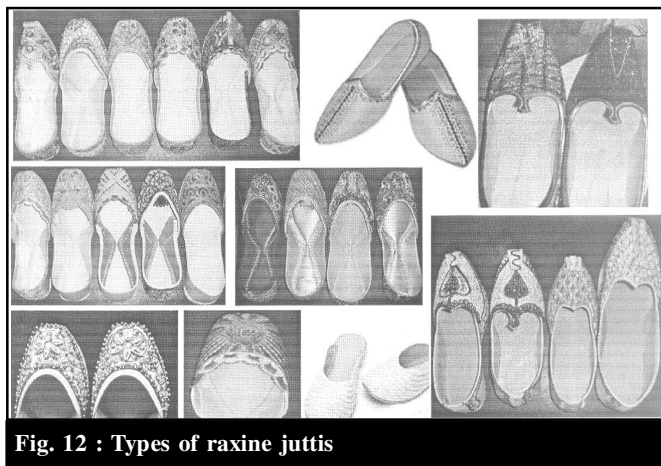


Fig. 12 : Types of raxine juttis

Koke wali, Sequins, Pompons, Shells, Salma, Mirror, Ceramic beads, Cowries shells and brass nails are used. Different surface ornamentation techniques like Cut work, Appliqué, Cane, Decorative stitching and Phulkari machine embroidery are being done on Jutti.

All the shoe makers worked for nearly 10-12 hours per day depending on the demand. Leather plain Juttis take 1-2 days, embroidered or complicated designs takes 3-10 days to be constructed. While new raxine Juttis have been made fast *i.e.* 10-12 pairs in a day. Majority of shoe makers store Juttis in polythene and boxes in their rented homes. The criteria of fixing the price of Jutti was same amongst all respondents. The price depends mainly upon type of raw materials, labour involved, embroidery of designs and accessories used. Leather Jutti's price varies from Rs. 150-2500 but raxine Jutti range from Rs. 40-250 hence are cheaper. Middlemen are the main buyers of Punjabi Jutti who further export (60%) it to Dubai, Thailand, Taiwan, US, UK, Germany, Switzerland, Singapore, Hong Kong, etc. hence reducing the profit margin of shoe makers.

Fig. 13 shows that majority of respondents faced the problem of unavailability of raw material *i.e.* leather. If available it is of low quality as high quality leather is exported to Chennai and Bangalore and also available at high price. Another problem is of low financial status of Jutti makers who have hand to mouth existence, so they can't afford to block cash by sending Juttis in exhibition or directly exporting as they have to pay cash for raw material while buyers take it on credit. They earn Rs. 10-12 per Jutti and Rs. 100-150 per day. Shortage of skilled labour and lack of committed workers who didn't complete their work within the stipulated time period was another problem.

Direct export of Jutti is not done as it involves a lot of complications, so manufacturers export their Juttis through

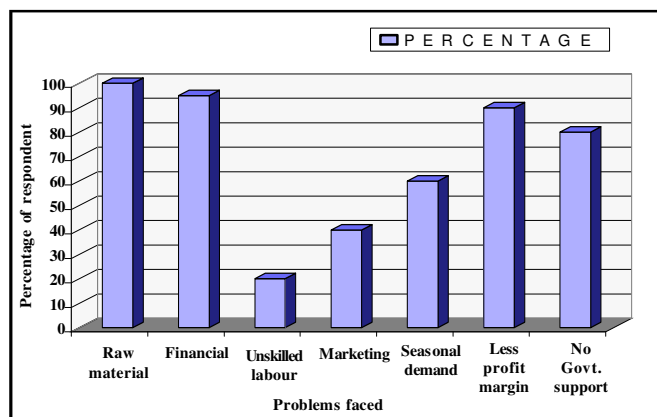


Fig. 13 : Distribution of respondents on the basis of the problems faced by Jutti makers

middlemen who is turn exploit them by giving less price. Less publicity has led to ignorance among people of different states. Seasonal demand *i.e.* low sale during rainy season and high during marriage season. Because of less profit, Jutti makers have shifted to cheaper version of raw material and intricacy of designs has also gone down leading to extinction of old traditional embroidered Juttis and durability of the Juttis has also gone down. Govt. has removed the subsidy on Punjabi Jutti and also put VAT on sale of Punjabi Jutti. Due to corruption, artisans are not allowed to participate and are even not entertained during different exhibitions. Due to financial problems, migration of artisans to other professions and cities was observed. Artisans are not interested in allowing their children in this trade. Punjabi Jutti is no longer a daily wear as it bites you and is not very comfortable. During summers while making raxine Juttis, Jutti makers have to sit in front of heater to soften upper part of Jutti which is very difficult for them.

The art of Jutti making is on decline. The Punjab Government in order to revive this dying art has opened Footwear Design and Development Institute FDDI, in Topkhana chowk in Patiala. It is one of the premier footwear institutions in the world and it organizes:

- Training of stitching, designing and pattern cutting for artisans and skill up gradation
- Provides design inputs.
- Assists artisans in contemporarising the products by blending ethnicity with changing fashion trends so that contemporary products can be strongly positioned in the global fashion market. Products related are undoubtedly in finest modernization without specimen of mechanization.
- Helps in producing eco-friendly slippers made through traditional methods using vegetable tanned leather from fallen animals thus free from harm full chemicals and provide excellent thermal insulation.
- Monthly meeting of Jutti makers or artisans in order to discuss their problems and help them in all possible ways.
- Forms Swam Sahita group of 12-15 artisans who will attend training for 4 hours and market their products themselves with help.
- Employed local artisans in the institute and Government has also issued artisans photo identity cards to Jutti makers so that they can hold exhibition and participate in competitions. It is issued by office of the Development Commissioner, Handicrafts, Ministry of Textile.
- Most of the respondents *i.e.* 95% were not satisfied with the efforts of Government in order to revive this dying art. Different solutions suggested by them to

prevent the extinction of this cultural heritage.

- Subsidize the rate of raw material and make the raw material easily available to the artisans.
- Removal of VAT on sale of Punjabi Jutti which are Punjab's pride.
- Introduction of left right differentiation.
- Provide easy and without interest loan to Jutti makers.
- Provide newly developed patterns which may add value and element of exclusiveness and differentiation to the product.
- To improve the marketability of the product in Domestic and International market, introduce appropriate packaging materials.
- Reopen a leather tannery in Patiala.
- Open Leather Depot where leather at subsidize rates will be available to the Jutti makers as in Haryana.
- Allow easy entry to artisans in exhibition and allow them to participate after checking the authenticity of the artisans card.
- Training and exposure to newer designs, stitching methods and sole adhesion processes

### Conclusion:

“Jutti Kasuri Pairin Na Poori, Hayo Rabba Ve Sannu Turna Peya” is the famous line of the Punjabi Folk song sung by Surinder Kaur. The damsel in the Folk song may be having trouble walking in ill fitting Juttis, but the Jutti itself has walked far and wide and has reached far off lands as the artisans of Punjab are making ornamental Juttis by using wide variety of threads, bead and designs for all age groups and supply all over India and abroad. The revival of trade of Jutti making has boosted the morals of the sole makers and they are looking forward to a brighter future.

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