

## The Degree of Women's Satisfaction with their Handicraft Work and the Difficulties they Encountered

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### Abstract

There is modest contribution of tourism and handicrafts sector in Jordan with a small share of GDP. Previous studies have failed to discuss the main impacts of the situation and problems of the handicrafts sector, considering the level of satisfaction, main problems, and difficulties encountered by craftswomen. The study explores impact of the situation and problems of the handicrafts sector based on the level of satisfaction of craftswomen with their crafts, main problems, and difficulties encountered by them. A questionnaire was developed to survey the target population from one of historic touristic cities in Jordan "Ajloun". A recognized number of women working in the handicrafts field to fulfil their needs and to keep traditional vocations alive were recruited for this study. The results of the study showed that a moderate satisfaction level is related to handicrafts work setting; whereas, the social and adequacy of income domain had a moderate satisfaction level as well. The women who did handicrafts encountered a number of problems and obstacles in marketing the products and on administration level such as lack of regulation and supervision, access to raw materials, low levels of demand, and deterioration of marketing channels.

**Keywords:** women; workforce; handicrafts; satisfaction; Jordan

### Introduction

The handicraft and traditional industry sector have received noticeable attention in majority of countries across the world. This attention has been received as a result of various advantages and its impact on the individual and society, in terms of social and economic security. Handicraft and traditional industry is also appreciated as it provides home-based employment opportunities for women (Makhdoom & Shah, 2016). National, regional, and international efforts continue to raise awareness regarding the social and cultural importance of the handicrafts sector. This awareness concentrated on the availability of human resources that have the capabilities and skills required for work, and the raw materials available in the local regions. Several countries seek to develop the handicrafts sector to increase the income of the family and attract maximum number of tourists (Haddad, 2013).

Handicraft as an ancient vocation that is well known in several countries, to fulfil the daily needs of people. Handicrafts are also a unique creative field that connects the material and cultural heritage in a single unit. Moreover, handicrafts are related to customs and values; therefore, their development is considered as an indication of the development of the whole society (Hasan, 2008). Developing countries are characterized by their dependence on handicrafts more than the

developed countries. This is because of the low cost of the products of handicrafts, the job opportunities they provide, and the simple raw materials required, which are reflected through the Gross Domestic Products (GDP). Moreover, handicraft tends to decrease the poverty levels and alleviate the social problems related to poverty and unemployment (Qaqish, 2014). On the contrary, however, generally skilled craftsmen do not gain compatible monetary gains because, they are paid lesser than their additional efforts, and are often compared with other artificial or machine-made substitutes (Ranganathan, 2018).

Jordanian handicraft is considered to be an essential element that can raise the country's economy and can provide a better employment opportunities (Arinat, 2016). Women play an important role in several Jordanian folkloric handicrafts, such as embroidery, sewing, and several other crafts. It has been observed that various such sectors are restricted to women (Hassanin 2008). In Jordan, the handicraft is an important component of tourism planning strategies, which reflect their heritage and the diversity of their culture. The tourists seek to know about the history and heritage of Jordan through the handicrafts produced through the micro enterprises. There are several problems encountered in this industry by craftswomen in the governorate of Ajloun as well as the other governorates in Jordan. Handicrafts suffer from various problems and challenges at the financial, marketing and management levels, related to the development of the handicrafts sector.

It is important for the handicraft sector to fulfil its needs as a micro-enterprise to create a better living for the people (Abisuga-Oyekunle & Fillis, 2017). Micro firms need to reinforce customer and supplier relationships through innovation capability and internal transformation for sustainable development because there is positive and significant impact of customer and competitor cooperation on innovation capability (Shafi, 2020). Moreover, there is significant and positive impact of cooperation with customers and suppliers on firm performance via innovation capability. The sustainable development of this livelihood sector can be facilitated by improving market heterogeneity and developing coastal aquaculture (Simard et al., 2019). The national strategy for the development of the handicrafts sector in Jordan through the period (2010-2015) was the first attempt at the development of a unified plan. This plan aimed to improve the tourism and handicrafts sector, provide job opportunities, and assist in the formation of Jordanian cultural identity to attract tourists to Jordan (Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities 2009).

The tourism industry seems more attractive to women as they are provided with unique work opportunities in this sector. It also develops a series of indicators for monitoring the role of women in tourism in the developing countries. Travel and Tourism provides opportunities for women as employers and for self-employed work, as compared to men or working in any other sector. The contribution of the tourism and handicrafts sector in Jordan is modest, with a small share of GDP that indicates the need for field studies to explore the challenges encountered by this sector. Therefore, this study aims to shed light on some of those challenges faced by the craftswomen in the handicrafts sector in Jordan. The study explores one of the main impacts of the situation and problems of the handicrafts sector, which is represented by the level of satisfaction of craftswomen with their crafts, and the main problems and difficulties encountered by them.

The significance of the study relates to women empowerment in Jordanian community, raise awareness about poor working conditions, exploring their attitudes towards the work setting and its conditions. Additionally, this study seeks to draw the attention of decision makers towards women's work in the handicrafts sector, and its important role in the development of tourism providing various positive economic, cultural and social impacts. The results of this study are

expected to add notable value to the existing literature in the field of vocational work and workers. The research questions addressed by this study are as follows;

1. What is the level of job satisfaction among the women working in handicrafts sector in Ajloun governorate in terms of regulating and controlling the handicrafts sector, work conditions and setting, social status and sufficiency of income?
2. What are the difficulties encountered by women working in the handicrafts sector in the governorate of Ajloun, basically in managing finance?
3. Are there statistically significant differences between the means of job level satisfaction among the women working in handicrafts sector in the governorate of Ajloun based on their age, social status, and academic qualification?

### **Literature Review**

Several studies explored the handicrafts sector in different developing countries such as India, Tunisia, and Egypt. There are several studies conducted in Jordan as well to shed light on the problems encountered by the workers in this field. Tabaza (2000a) explored the traditional craft of making sand bottles in Jordan. The sample of the study consisted of 7 craftsmen in Aqapa and Petra. The participants were interviewed by the researcher, who used the photographs and audio recordings as tools for data collection. Results of the study showed that the raw materials are expensive and difficult to procure, as well as the lack of support from the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. According to Siamwalla (2019), tangible and intangible values in handicrafts enhance as the result of collaborative design efforts in textile crafts.

There are several bodies responsible for development of handicraft sector in Jordan. For instance important roles are played by four ministries including; Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Ministry of Industry and Trade and the Ministry of Social Development to manage, develop, and market such products. Some conditions like no criminal history record, shop ownership, and bank mortgage of 500 JD needed to be fulfilled to get licence and start business in Jordan. These businesses at least had 70% Jordanian goods along with other imported goods and should completely avoid kickback payment. It was expected that till year 2020, there would be more than 100 employees in these shops which are selling different handicrafts and souvenirs.

There are some diverse problems faced by Jordanian women related to the handicrafts sector. For instance, Semaan (2002) examined the participation of Jordanian women in the tourism sector, and the difficulties they encounter, which includes the difficulties related to the handicrafts sector, in Amman. The sample of the study consisted of (300) women selected through stratified sampling. Results showed that women who work in tourism are between 20 and 34 years of age and are mostly single. Results showed also that tourism sector is attractive to women due to its positive impact on their lives. Results also showed that a high percentage of employees in the sector hold Bachelor of Arts degrees, and receive high salaries compared to other employees. The main difficulties included the irregularity of working hours, and the lack of promotion opportunities and the absence of a job description. The gender inequality and monetary benefit discrimination is also witnessed in different studies conducted across the world (Topimin & Buncha, 2019).

Diverse roles are played by handicrafts in developing local community such that in Jordan. One of the previous studies by Qaqish (2014) explored handicrafts and their role in the development of the local community. The sample included workers in the handicraft sector in Jordan, and a number of Arab and foreign tourists. Data were collected through the questionnaire and interviews. Results showed that Jordanian traditional handicrafts require additional support from both the public and private sectors. The study showed also that local products need more

support in terms of promotion and marketing at the local and global levels, as well as increasing the regulations related to the marketing of exported products from foreign countries. Hassanin (2008) explored the impact of information and communications technology (ICT) on the improvement of exportation of handicrafts products made by Egyptian women to the global markets through e-marketing. The sample of the study consisted of 10 women from Cairo and 7 women working in civil society organizations. Results of the study showed that women working in the handicrafts sector in Egypt had no access to e-marketing, at both the local and the global levels, due to the absence of related knowledge and the high levels of illiteracy among the female workers.

Women's handicraft in India depicts similar discrepancies between what is written about crafts and what it means. Women's contribution is often ignored or marginalized based on the discourses or their work is portrayed as use-value production because they are completely associated with handicraft production. Basically, use-value production means that a product has a generally accepted use-value for others in society, and not just for the producer. The chicken embroidery production in Lucknow, India was explored by Wilkinson-Weber (2004) and represented embroidery production as employing the poor, generally viewed as leisure-time activity, and done by Muslim women workers on piece rates. The results depicted that embroiderers' distinctiveness shore up middle-class ideals about tradition, and heritage, which play an important part in creating demand for handicraft products. Abyareh (2009) explored the impact of tourism on the handicrafts sector in Isfahan, Iran. The results depicted a direct relation between tourism attractions and increase in occupation in the handicrafts section. The study was helpful in discovering the increasing occupation in the handicrafts section and relation between tourism attractions.

The commercialization processes of handicraft producers and factors affect their development and performance. This was investigated by Fabeil (2013) in Sabah, Malaysia. The study helped in developing understanding about switching of few producers to a greater level of commercialization, despite government support. The development and performance of small enterprises is affected by a combination of person-related and contextual factors. However, different characteristics are possessed by handicraft producers in a developing country, by following different development paths. The results showed that part-time domestic production was convenient and flexible for majority of the respondents while workshop production was a big commitment.

The level of technical skills is greater among the full-time producers, as compared to part-time domestic producers. There is significant impact of these skills on the performance of the enterprise. Therefore, the association between organising skills and status, premises and performance is not clear as part-time, domestic producers need to have these skills for managing their different commitments. Moreover, handicraft producers observed many advantages in domestic production in Sabah region; therefore, profit levels are likely to be higher as compared to the workshops. These results were achieved through the identification of different profiles of handicraft producers in this region such as contextual and person-related factors. Overall, women's handicraft is not focused much; while, favours are provided by the state and non-governmental organizations towards the development projects involving handicrafts as low-cost and low-risk interventions. The persistent exploitative forms of production are likely to compromise the value of women.

## **Methods**

The theoretical framework for the study was provided by Bourdieu forms of capital conception, especially economic and cultural capital to ground the study into its cultural and economic

contexts, properly. The motivations for young women participating in knitting was determined based on the emergent themes in comparison to Uses and Gratifications Theory. The relationship between the motivational themes emerging from the data and categories within Uses and Gratifications was illustrated by Model of Motivations for knitting among young women. The motivations of females with age ranging between 18 and 30 years was investigated by collecting data through a questionnaire comprising of 21 items. The questionnaire was made by the researcher and it included questions that highlight the satisfaction of women with the manufacturing of handicrafts.

### Study Population and Sampling

The study population comprised of women working in handicrafts in the governorate of Ajloun (n=160), of which (150), were included in the sample of the study and 143 were accepted for statistical analysis (89.4%). The sample for this study was selected randomly from the population, based on availability of the respondents to participate in the study. Questionnaire was distributed among the respondents physically and data was collected in-hand. Table 1 has shown the distribution of the participants of the study in terms of the variables of the study including their age, social status, and academic qualification.

**Table 1. Distribution of the participants of the study according to age, social status and academic qualification**

Variable	Levels	Number	Percentage
Age	Less than 30 years	44	30.8
	30-40 years	51	35.6
	More than 40 years	48	33.6
Social Status	Single	40	28.0
	Married	80	55.9
	Divorced	14	9.8
	Widow	9	6.3
Academic Qualification	Less high school	22	15.4
	high school	60	42.0
	Diploma (2-3 years)	31	21.7
	B. A	30	21.0

### Study Variables

The independent variables considered in this study included;

- Age categories: <30 years, (30-40) years, >40 years.
- Social Status: (Single, married, divorced, widow)
- Academic qualification: less than secondary stage, secondary stage, diploma, B. A.

Whereas, the dependent variables considered in this study are as follows;

- Level of job satisfaction among women working in handicrafts in the governorate of Ajloun.
- The difficulties and challenges related to the work of women in handicrafts (financial, marketing, and management difficulties).

### Instrument of the Study

The researchers developed a questionnaire, based on the previous literature that included four sections. The first section was concerned with the demographic characteristics of the study participants. While, the second section consisted of three domains measuring job satisfaction among the women working in handicrafts in Ajloun, in terms of regulating the sector (8 items), conditions and setting of work (7 items), and social status and income (8 items). The third

section was concerned with the challenges and difficulties related to handicrafts in Ajloun, in terms of finance (7 items), marketing (6 items), and management (6 items). The fourth section consisted of open-ended questions related to the problems, conditions and proposed recommendations aimed at improving the handicrafts sector. The questionnaire was based on Likert 5 points scale that ranged between strongly agree and strongly disagree. Further, the scale was divided into three degrees: high, moderate and low, concerning the rating of the degree of job satisfaction.

### Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability of study tool was tested by the experts in educational, business, and linguistic studies. These experts were instructors at Jordanian universities whose comments were used in modifying the items of the tool. Reliability of the tool was assessed through Cronbach alpha as shown in Table 2. Sharma (2016) has shown about the acceptable values of alpha, ranging from 0.70 to 0.95. The table shows that the values of Cronbach alpha for the sections of job satisfaction ranged between (0.722) and (0.752), and for the job satisfaction as a whole (0.761), which is acceptable. The values for the difficulties ranged between (0.700) and (0.719), and for the section as a whole (0.749) that are also acceptable. The value for the scale as a whole was (0.799), which is acceptable.

**Table 2. Reliability Using Cronbach Alpha Values**

	Sections	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha Coefficient
Job Satisfaction	Regulating the handicrafts sector	8	0.752
	Work Conditions and Setting	7	0.741
	Social Status and Sufficiency of income	8	0.722
	Three sections as a whole	23	0.761
Difficulties	Financial	7	0.700
	Marketing	8	0.731
	Management	6	0.719
	The three Sections as a whole	21	0.749
The scale as a whole		44	0.799

### Scoring of the Scale

The scoring of the scale ranges between 5 points (strongly agree) and strongly disagree (1 point). The levels used in the present study include;

- Low level: 1.00-2.33
- Moderate level: 2.34-3.67
- High level: 3.68-5.00

### Results

The means and standard deviations of the three sections related to the level of satisfaction of craftswomen in Ajloun were calculated to answer the first research question. The findings have been illustrated in table 3. The second section, related to the conditions and setting of handicrafts work was ranked first, with its mean at 3.5, a standard deviation of 0.73, and a moderate level of satisfaction. The section related to the area of regulations and control was

followed with a mean of 3.20, standard deviation of (0.58), and a moderate level of satisfaction. Thirdly, came the section related to social status and the sufficiency of income, (mean=3.00, SD=0.46), which showed moderate level of satisfaction. The whole scale had a mean of 3.22, a standard deviation of 0.46, and a moderate level of satisfaction.

**Table 3. Means and standard deviations of the three sections related to the level of satisfaction of craftswomen**

Section	Means	Standard Deviations	Rank	Level of Satisfaction
Regulating and supervising of handicrafts	3.20	0.58	2	Moderate
Conditions and setting of handicrafts	3.20	0.73	1	Moderate
Social status and the sufficiency of income	3.00	0.44	3	Moderate
All sections	3.22	0.46	-	Moderate

The means and standard deviations of the three sections related to the level of satisfaction of craftswomen in Ajloun were calculated to answer the second research question. ANOVA analysis was performed to check the presence of significant differences in the means related to the variables of the study (age category, social status and academic qualification) as shown in table 4.

**Table 4. Means and standard deviations of the three sections related to the level of satisfaction of craftswomen, in relation to the variable of age category**

Section	Less than 30 years		30-40 years		More than 40 years	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Regulating and Supervising of Handicrafts sector	3.31	0.50	3.07	0.62	3.23	0.59
Conditions and setting of handicrafts	3.63	0.67	3.28	0.78	3.61	0.70
Social status and the sufficiency of Income	3.09	0.42	2.96	0.41	2.96	0.48
All sections	3.33	0.41	3.10	0.492	3.25	0.45

The results depicted the presence of differences in the means related to the variable of age category. ANOVA analysis was used to check the significance of the differences at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in terms of satisfaction levels among craftswomen in Ajloun ascribed to age category (Table 5). The F values for each section related to the level of job satisfaction among craftswomen were statistically insignificant at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.5$ ), which indicated the lack of significant differences ascribed to the age category.

**Table 5. Analysis of variance of the differences in the ratings of job satisfaction levels among the craftswomen in Ajloun governorate according to the age category**

Variable	Source of variance	SS	DF	MS	F	P
Regulating and Supervising of Handicrafts sector	Between groups	1.43	2	0.71	2.13	0.12
	Within groups	47.15	140	0.33		
	Total	48.59	142			
Conditions and setting of handicrafts	Between groups	3.77	2	1.88	3.58	0.33
	Within groups	73.60	140	0.52		
	Total	77.38	142			
Social status and the sufficiency of Income	Between groups	0.55	2	0.27	1.42	0.24
	Within groups	27.20	140	0.19		
	Total	27.76	142			
All sections	Between groups	1.359	2	0.68	3.25	0.42
	Within groups	29.24	140	0.20		
	Total	30.60	142			

The means and standard deviations of the three sections related to the level of satisfaction of craftswomen in Ajloun were calculated in relation to the variable of age category as shown in table 6. Table 6 has depicted the presence of differences in the means related to the variable of age category.

**Table 6. Means and standard deviations of the three sections related to the level of satisfaction of craftswomen, in relation to the variable of social status**

Section	Single		Married		Divorced		Widow	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Regulating and supervising	3.23	0.49	3.23	0.64	2.86	0.56	3.26	0.20
Conditions and setting	3.53	0.67	3.49	0.81	3.57	0.73	3.52	0.23
Social status sufficiency of income	3.04	0.40	2.97	0.49	3.06	0.29	3.00	0.26
All Sections	3.25	0.39	3.22	0.53	3.14	0.37	3.25	0.15

ANOVA analysis was used to check the significance of the differences at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in terms of satisfaction levels among craftswomen in Ajloun ascribed to social status (Table 7). Table 7 has shown that the F values for each section related to the level of job satisfaction



among craftswomen were statistically insignificant at the level)  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ), which indicated the lack of significant differences ascribed to the social status.

**Table 7. Analysis of variance of the differences in the ratings of job satisfaction levels among the craftswomen in Ajloun governorate according to the age category**

Variable	Source of variance	SS	DF	MS	F	P
Regulating and Supervising	Between groups	1.75	3	0.58	1.74	0.16
	Within groups	46.83	139	0.33		
	Total	48.59	142			
Conditions and setting	Between groups	0.18	3	0.06	0.11	0.95
	Within groups	77.19	139	0.55		
	Total	77.38	142			
Social status/ sufficiency of income	Between groups	0.16	3	0.05	0.27	0.84
	Within groups	27.59	139	0.19		
	Total	27.76	142			
All sections	Between groups	0.12	3	0.04	0.19	0.90
	Within groups	30.47	139	0.21		
	Total	30.60	142			

Table 8 has presented the means and standard deviations of the three sections related to the level of satisfaction of craftswomen in Ajloun that were calculated in relation to the variable of academic qualification (Table 8). It has depicted the presence of differences in the means related to the variable of academic qualification.

**Table 8. Means and standard deviations of the three sections related to the level of satisfaction of craftswomen, in relation to the variable of academic qualification**

Section	Less than secondary stage		Secondary stage		Diploma		B.A	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Regulating and Supervising	3.22	.524	3.08	0.623	3.23	0.60	3.38	0.49
Conditions and setting	3.45	0.67	3.47	0.78	3.46	0.83	3.64	0.57
Social status sufficiency of Income	3.02	0.43	2.95	0.51	3.08	0.39	3.02	0.33
All Sections	3.22	0.40	3.15	0.50	3.20	0.50	3.33	0.35

ANCOVA analysis was used to check the significance of the differences at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in terms of satisfaction levels among craftswomen in Ajloun ascribed to academic qualification, as shown in table 9. Table 9 has shown that the F values for each section related to the level of job

satisfaction among craftswomen were statistically insignificant at the level)  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ), which indicated the lack of significant differences ascribed to the academic qualification.

**Table 9. Analysis of variance of the differences in the ratings of job satisfaction levels among the craftswomen in Ajloun governorate according to the academic qualification**

Variable	Source of variance	SS	DF	MS	F	P
Regulating and Supervising of Handicrafts sector	Between groups	1.77	3	0.59	1.75	0.15
	Within groups	46.81	139	0.33		
	Total	48.59	142			
Conditions and setting of handicrafts	Between groups	0.69	3	0.23	0.42	0.73
	Within groups	76.68	139	0.55		
	Total	77.38	142			
Social status and the sufficiency of Income	Between groups	0.39	3	0.13	0.67	0.57
	Within groups	27.36	139	0.19		
	Total	27.76	142			
All sections	Between groups	0.61	3	0.20	0.95	0.41
	Within groups	29.98	139	0.21		
	Total	30.60	142			

The means and standard deviations of the three sections related to the level of satisfaction of craftswomen in Ajloun were calculated in relation to the sections of financial difficulties, marketing difficulties, and management difficulties, as shown in table 10. Table 10 has shown that the means of the sections range between 2.92 and 3.82. The section related to the marketing difficulties was ranked first, with its mean at 3.82, followed by financial difficulties (mean= 3.78), and management difficulties (m=2.92). The whole sections had a mean of (3.51), and a standard deviation of (0.68), which indicated moderate level of satisfaction.

**Table 10. Means and standard deviations of the ratings of the difficulties and problems encountered by craftswomen in their work from their perspective**

Area	Mean	SD	Rank	Level of Rating
Financial difficulties	3.78	0.60	2	High
Marketing difficulties	3.82	0.60	1	High
Management difficulties	2.92	0.49	3	Moderate
All Areas	3.51	0.68		Moderate

Table 11 has presented the means and standard deviations of the three sections related to the level of satisfaction of craftswomen in Ajloun calculated in relation to the variable of age

category. The results showed that the means for the items related to financial difficulties ranged between 2.42 and 4.10. The item stating that “Cooperation exists between the organizations interested” had the lowest mean 2.42 and a standard deviation of 1.07. However, the item which stated that “Financial institutions require feasibility studies in order to provide funding”, had the highest mean, with its standard deviation at (1.07). All items as a whole had a mean of 3.78 and standard deviation 0.60 with a high level of rating.

**Table 11. Means and standards deviations related to the financial difficulties encountered by craftswomen in the governorate of Ajloun**

Number	Item	Mean	SD	Rank	Level of Rating
1	It is difficult for craftswomen to provide the guarantees required by financial institutions.	3.98	0.88	5	High
2	It is difficult for craftswomen to pay back the loans through the returns of handicrafts enterprise.	4.04	.085	2	High
3	Funding (the loan) provided to craftswomen is insufficient for the enterprise.	3.96	0.95	6	High
4	Financial institutions require feasibility studies in order to provide funding.	4.10	0.76	1	High
5	Funding handicrafts enterprises require complex procedures.	4.02	0.95	3	High
6	Interest rates on financial loans for handicrafts enterprises are high.	3.99	0.99	4	High
7	Cooperation exists between the organizations interested.	2.42	1.07	7	Moderate

Table 12 has shown the means of the items related to marketing difficulties ranging between 2.61 and 4.43, with moderate to high levels. The item which states that “I market my products through my personal efforts”, had the highest mean 4.43, with a standard deviation of (0.59), and a high level. This was followed by the mean of 4.35 for the item which stated “Craftswomen encounter difficulties in marketing their products” (SD= 0.705). The item which states that “The government contributes to the specifying of standards required for the purposes of exportation” had the lowest mean 2.61 and a standard deviation of 1.19, at a moderate level. The mean of the items related to marketing difficulties as a whole was 3.82, with a standard deviation of 0.60.

**Table 12. Means and standards deviations related to the marketing difficulties encountered by craftswomen in the governorate of Ajloun from their perspective**

Number	Item	Mean	SD	Rank	Level of Rating
8	The required experience for marketing the handicrafts products is lacking among craftswomen.	3.93	1.01	5	High
9	Owners of enterprises lack the tools of promotion, and advertisement in terms of their products.	3.94	0.91	4	High
10	Promoting and advertising of the products are expensive.	3.83	1.00	6	High
11	Craftswomen encounter difficulties in marketing their products.	4.35	0.70	2	High
12	The competitiveness of local handicrafts is	4.22	0.88	3	High

	weak in comparison to the imported products.				
13	I market my products through my personal efforts.	4.43	0.59	1	High
14	Institutions and societies assist in marketing handicrafts.	3.30	1.15	7	Moderate
15	The government contributes to the specifying of standards required for the purposes of exportation.	2.61	1.19	8	Moderate

Table 13 has shown that the means of the items related to marketing difficulties ranged between 2.61 and 3.83, with moderate to high levels. The item which states that “Craftswomen have the efficiency required for the development of enterprises” had the highest mean, with a standard deviation of 0.95. The item which stated that “A legislative umbrella for the organizations related to handicrafts exists” had the lowest mean 2.30 and a standard deviation of 0.85, at a moderate level. Management difficulties as a whole was 2.92, with a standard deviation of 0.49 at a high level.

**Table 13. Means and standards deviations related to the management difficulties encountered by craftswomen in the governorate of Ajloun from their perspective**

Number	Item	Mean	SD	Rank	Level of Rating
16	Advisory services are available for craftswomen in terms of managing handicrafts enterprises.	2.85	1.15	3	Moderate
17	Published financial and statistical data are available to be used in the management of enterprises.	2.80	1.09	5	Moderate
18	Governmental programs and policies targeting the development of handicrafts sector are available.	2.93	1.15	2	Moderate
19	Specialized societies and institutions targeting the development of handicrafts sector are available.	2.82	1.11	4	Moderate
20	Craftswomen have the efficiency required for the development of enterprises.	3.83	0.95	1	High
21	A legislative umbrella for the organizations related to handicrafts exists.	2.30	0.85	6	Moderate

### Discussion

The study results are significant as it relates to being the first study that sought to explore the level of craftswomen in the governorate of Ajloun in terms of the working conditions as well as the problems they encounter. The results can be ascribed to the lack of regulation and supervision in the handicrafts sector through modern policies and legislations. These results are in agreement with the results of Tabaza (2000b), Semaan (2002) and Wilkinson-Weber (2004). The results disagreed with some studies, such as (Stannard & Sanders, 2015), in terms of the scope of governmental regulation of handicrafts, because the governmental regulation in Jordan is lacking.

Tabaza (2013) explored the main environmental conditions affecting the traditional handicrafts in Jordan. The study found that these arts have changed dramatically due to the ongoing

evolution in their respective societies by analysing the data collected from different social groups with different socio-economic and political conditions throughout the 20th century. The study has concluded that the environmental conditions were far from optimal, in which many of these traditional handicrafts were practiced. An analysis of experiences of female business owners was provided by Haddad (2013) in micro and small handicraft businesses in Jordan. A critical realism and critical theory/feminism stance was focused on this study with focus on the interaction between agency and structure. The results of present study seem to be consistent with the above mentioned studies because the environment in which the women live and work is referred to as structure that includes; external business-related environment and the socio-cultural-religious environment. The nature and extent of the freedom demonstrated by women business owners is referred to as agency as they choose their course of action in any one of the environments.

The results of present study showed lack of significant differences between the means related to the rating of job satisfaction among the craftswomen in the governorate of Ajloun, ascribed to the variables of (Age, social status, and academic qualification). This result is reasonable in the light of the common needs of the craftswomen, as well as their common aspirations and goals, which include receiving sufficient income, especially among those who have no other sources of income. The result agrees with the results of several related studies, such as Al-Harathi (2004) and Sosola Banda & Johnson (2005). Laiqa (2009) explored the difficulties encountering the establishing of micro enterprises in the governorates of Irbid and Amman in Jordan. The sample of the study consisted of 274 micro enterprises and questionnaire was used for collecting data. Results showed the presence of a number of difficulties, including the high taxes on sales and profits, high cost of raw materials, and the high levels of competition locally. Results showed that there was no impact of demographic and job variables on the levels of difficulties encountered; while, the geographic location had an impact on the level of those difficulties. The study showed differences between the levels of governmental and public support provided for micro enterprises, ascribed to the variables of (geographic location and type of products). However, no impacts were found for the levels of support ascribed to the age of owners of enterprises, the age of enterprise, and the years of experience, which is agreement to the results of present study.

According to present study, the means of sections related to the difficulties in handicrafts sector ranged between 2.92 and 3.78. The highest mean was for the marketing difficulties (SD=0.60), and the lowest mean was for difficulties related to management (SD=0.49); while, the financial difficulties had a mean at 3.78 and a standard deviation of 0.60. These results were in agreement with the results of studies conducted by Tabaza (2000a), Jongeward (2001), and Fayoumi (2003). Tabaza (2000b) explored the conditions of the craft producing the Jordanian traditional wooden coffee grinder (Mihbash). The sample of the study consisted of 4 craftsmen from Al-Mazar region in the north of Jordan. The participants were interviewed by the researcher, who used the photographs and audio recordings as tools for data collection. In the present study, it was shown that deterioration of producing traditional coffee grinder faced several problems. The problems included difficulty of access to raw materials, low levels of demand, and deterioration of marketing channels.

## **Conclusion**

The present study has explored Jordanian craftswomen's satisfaction towards their small businesses in terms of regulating and operating the handicrafts sector, work conditions, social status, and sufficiency of income. The results have highlighted the lack of attention provided to handicrafts sector by the governmental agencies concerned, despite the connection between tourism and handicrafts sector. These results significantly contribute to existing literature as it highlights the importance of enhancing the connection between the handicrafts sector and tourism in Jordanian Policies, which will be reflected positively through working conditions. The

study also has some limitations. For instance, the study fails to discuss the issue of regulations as a national strategy to provide unified plan for betterment of this sector. Another limitation of this study is failure to discuss ergonomic to improve health problems of the hand makers, family conflicts, and producing art instead of children or sociological stereotype. However, the study has recommended to conduct additional field studies to explore the psychological factors affecting the level of job satisfaction among the craftswomen, and the problems encountered by them. The future studies need to provide legislations and laws that may contribute towards the development of the environment of handicrafts. Government need to provide the needed assistance to the female workers in terms of marketing and administrative of their small businesses. Moreover, future studies also need to conduct comparative analysis of two different countries from different regions to gain more knowledge about the prevalence of problems in handicrafts sector in different regions of the world.

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