4. Introduction

Soft, attractive and elegant Kashmiri Shawls are the result of the weaver’s skill in colouring, designing, embellishing and the use of fine fabrics. The geographical position of the Kashmir valley, the North-West region of India, is also vital in providing the finest and softest fleece, the main source of wool. After cleaning and processing, the fleece is used for creating woollen items.\(^1\) The principal source of wool is a Central Asian species of the mountain goat (*Capra hircus*). The quality of wool usually depends on the climate and the altitude at which the animal is found. The Shawl goat which lives on a higher altitude and a colder climate has the finer fleece and the thicker coat. The natural habitat of such wool-producing species is on a very high altitude, nearly above 4,500 metres (14,750 ft.). The wool used for *Pashmina* Shawls made in Kashmir comes mostly from Tibet. Wool from Tibet is called *Chokul*. Largely, wool is derived from two kinds of sources—the domesticated shawl goat, *Capra hircus*, and from a variety of non-domesticated animals. Wool obtained from the domesticated shawl goat is called “*Pashm*”, widely used by Kashmiris for making the *Pashmina* fabric.

4.1. Types of Shawls accorded GI Status

4.1.1. Kashmiri *Pashmina*

Kashmiri *Pashmina* was filed for registration as GI under Application Number 46. The application was filed by the Craft Development Institute, Srinagar which is a Registered Society under the Jammu and Kashmir Societies Registration Act, 1998.\(^2\) Application was made for the registration of *Pashmina* in Class 24 of the Schedule Fourth appended to Geographical Indication of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 (hereinafter referred to as the GI Act, 1999).\(^3\)

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3. Class 24 includes textiles and textile goods, not included in other classes; bed and table covers.
Kashmiri *Pashmina* is the woven form of *Pashm*. It is made in three qualities which are largely assessed on the fineness of the yarn and tension of the weave. During the weaving process the fabric is woven in three basic weaves, viz.,

i. Twill or *Sade Bunai*;

ii. Diamond or *Chash-m-e Bulbul Bunai*; and

iii. Herring Bone or *Gada Kond Bunai*.

Among the three, diamond weave is produced in large quantities and considered special to Kashmir while as Herring Bone is made on specific orders only.

### 4.1.1.1. Description of Goods

Himalayan farmers climb the high altitude pastures of Western Himalayas, including the contiguous South Eastern Ladakh with an altitude of about 4500 meters (14500 feet). The area has harsh windswept terrain and winter temperatures that fall as low as -30°C. They comb fine woollen undercoat from the neck and belly of the *Capra hircus* or *Pashmina* goat, as it is popularly known. The fleece obtained is very fine in the inside and gradually becomes coarse in the outside. *Pashm* has a special lustrue due to its long, fine fibres, which are as thin as 12-16 microns. Thus, *Pashmina* is exceptionally light, soft, warm and feels luxuriant against the skin. The natural colour of the fleece ranges from white to grey, red, brown and black.

### 4.1.1.2. Method of production

The traditional method of production has evolved for more than 600 years and has helped in retaining the unique soft character of *Pashm* wool, and given to the world of craft the most exquisite *Pashmina* products for which Kashmir is renowned.

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4 The fibres from premium sheep’s wool such as Merino are extra fine and 23 microns thick while a human hair range up to 200 microns in thickness.

5 G.I.J. No.13, August 1, 2006/SRAVANA-10, SAKA 1928.
The process of converting raw Pashmina to marketable Pashmina fabric involves elaborate stages of manufacture and artisans who are specialists in a particular task. Therefore, it can be described as highly specialised production chain. The fabric is dyed according to the requirements of the end product. A separate class of workers called the Kashmiri Rangrez, who are proficient in dyeing yarn, capture the softness of natural colours of the past with industrially produced dyes. Finally, the fabric is carefully washed by the traditional washers in the running waters of the tributaries of river Jhelum.

A sequential process of production starting from procuring the Pashm wool from the Capra hircus goat, till the fleece is finished into fabric to make the much sought after Kashmiri Pashmina is described as under:

4.1.1.3. Procurement of raw materials

The raw material is procured either by way of Natural shedding, combing and Manual trimming.

**Natural Shedding:** - The animals shed their coat by rubbing against rocks and bushes. The producing communities later collect this.

**Combing:** - The fleece is obtained by combing the goats in the late spring, just before they molt.

**Manual:** - The domesticated goat is trimmed with a special trimmer once a year at the commencement of summer. Scissors are not used because they allow the inner and outer layers of fleece to mix. Thus, the outer hair are cut first and the under fleece is combed towards the head and cut off progressively.

4.1.1.4. Preparation of the Pashm wool

At this stage, the raw Pashm is greasy, lumpy, discoloured wool mixed with strong hairs and many organic impurities like dung, dirt and even pieces of skin. It is the women folk, who buy the Pashm from small retailers called Fumbwanis so that they can process and spin it into yarn. However, it involves the following steps:
i. The first step is the manual removing of all the organic wastes and the strong hairs which weigh around $\frac{1}{3}$ of the total weight. This is done by nails and fingers.

ii. The next step is the most tiring one. Cleaning and separating the removing remaining coarse hair from the second’s wool is done. Second’s wool are fibres of shorter length. This shorter length fibre makes the spinning more difficult and renders the yarn weak. The fine Pashm is kneaded with comb and finger tips, to remove the second’s wool.

This process is called Vechnawun and the instrument used for this purpose is called the Kangni. The Kangni is made of wood and firmly mounted on a frame to allow smooth conduct of the job. The treatment given to Pashm in this way involves:

- First, the fine Pashm wool is kept in the clean cold water usually for 24 hours till it produces a peculiar Pashmina odour and becomes soft.

- Water is then drained off and the Pashm wool is mixed with rice flour. It is occasionally doused with water if the weather is hot. After about an hour, the flour is shaken off along with any lingering dirt and the wool is opened out and torn to pieces by nails and comb. During the combing process the second’s wool which is of a shorter length and of inferior quality fall to the floor.

- Soap is not used and it is said that the floss absorbs excess oil in the Pashm and facilitates combing.

- The Pashm is piled up and rendered into soft flat tufts or square pads, called Tumber. Pashm is thus cleared off the Phiri or the second’s wool.

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6 Second’s wool is wool of inferior quality.
The soft and delicate pads of wool (tumb) are kept in deep stone (Kanz) or clay pots or tas to keep them free from dust and dirt until it is spun.

4.1.1.5. Spinning the yarn

A lump of Pashm is manipulated by the fingers of the left hand and the right hand is used to turn the Yeinder smoothly which is a traditional Charkha. The yarn thus prepared gets automatically wound around a detachable length of straw enclosed around the iron spindle (Poikon). The next step is to twist two of these threads together into a single yarn using a Preitz.

When substantial yarn is collected around the Yeindertul, it is slipped off, counted and knotted into denominators of 10 threads each. The length of the yarn is usually measured in pan wherein 1 pan = 10-12 inches (approximately).

The yarn continuously breaks and requires the deft fingers of the skilled artisans to regulate their speed and pressure, desirable to make an even and smooth yarn.

4.1.1.6. Arranging the warp

Before weaving actually commences, the yarn is subjected to warping, dressing and reeling. Each of these processes require the services of separate workers.

A. Warping: - Naqat, the warp-maker adjusts the dyed yarn for warp and weft. The warp consists of 1500 to 2400 threads of double yarn cut into 15-20 meters length. The weft is usually of single but thicker yarn wound around the Bobbin in the shuttle. Generally, it takes one day to prepare the warp and weft. There are variations in the combination of the yarns for the warp and weft depending on the closeness or openness of texture proposed and the kind of value-addition that it has to take.

B. Dressing: - Pennakami-gor or warp-dresser with the help of sticks stretches the length into a band and immerses it into boiled rice water.

C. Reeling: - After getting it out of the water, the yarn is squeezed and then again drawn into bands which is brushed and left to dry. In this process
each thread is stiff and rests apart from each other. The yarn is then given
to the warp-threader who passes it through heddles with the help of an
assistant; weavers later on fix it on to the loom.

4.2. Weaving the fabric

The entire process of weaving is by hand on a basic type of foot loom set up on
a wooden frame work, with a bench for the weaver. It has a warp beam,
heddles and comb suspended from the top. This traditional loom works on the
throw and catch movement of the shuttle back and forth across the warp. The
wooden comb is brought down heavily to push the wool into place after each
line of warp is woven.

The shuttle used for weaving is entirely different from modern looms. It is
tapered towards the ends with a hollow cylinder in the middle, into which the
weft yarn is stuffed after being wound around a long stick.

Four heddles are controlled by foot pedals to create different weaves like Twill,
Diamond and Herring Bone. Unlike modern looms, the regularity of throw and
catch movement is continuously interrupted as the delicate yarn keep breaking
and the weave has to re-attach it with fresh Pashmina yarn.

4.3. Clipping the loose threads

_Pashmina_ thus woven in this manner is sent to _Purzgar_, the clipper whose role
is to free it from disordered hair or yarn and nips which gets mixed with the
threads during spinning. He also removes loose ends and knots with perfection.
_Purzgar_ employs a pair of large pincers and moves it rhythmically over the
fabric in a clipping action.

4.4. Dyeing

The woven yardage is given to the _Rangrez_ to be dyed according to the
requirements of the end products. The process consists of soaking the
_Pashmina_ yarns in boiling water mixed with specified proportion of dye
material. An acetic acid solution is added in the last stages to open out the
Pashm wool so that the colour is scaled inside. The yarn is subsequently rinsed thoroughly and dried.

4.5. Washing and packing

Finally, the shawl is sent to a washer man who has specialised in shawl washing. He washes it very cautiously with locally manufactured caustic free soap comprised of “Rethas” etc. The soap is used for white shawls only and is applied to shawls in clear, cold water on the bank of streams in Srinagar in open air. The more modern washing units use laboratory soaps and softeners along with hand operated machine to remove excess water.

The washed and dried shawls are subjected to calendaring, which is done with the help of a wooden cylinder for two days. After this process, shawls are pressed and wrapped in sheets of smooth kite paper and polythene bags to prevent insects and moths.

4.6. Specifications which led to GI protection of Pashmina Shawl

i. Made of undergrowth of fleece from the mountain goat “Capra hircus”, having a fineness of 12-16 Microns;

ii. Made of delicate, fine woollen yarn that is spun out of this fleece by the hand spinning process;

iii. Hand woven using warp and weft yarns;

iv. Woven in three weaves:
   (a) The twill weaves;
   (b) The diamond weave; and
   (c) The herring bone weave.

v. Have dyed/un-dyed yarn for weaving; and

vi. Rendered/un-rendered with fine hand embroidery in different proportions.
4.7. Kani Shawl

Application for registration of Kani Shawl as GI was made by the Craft Development Institute. It is the GI Application Number 51 and falls in Class 25 of the Fourth Schedule appended to the GI Act, 1999.\footnote{Class 25 deals with clothing, footwear, headgear.}

A Kani Shawl has a distinct antiquity. It has proved its worth and has enticed the aesthetic buds of the craft lovers since ages. The intricate patterns, splendid weaving and the exotic colours of this shawl have smitten its admirers across the globe.

A small hamlet Kanihama, located on the Gulmarg road, 20 kms from Srinagar has monopoly over the weaving of this age old craft. But with the passage of time many villages in district Budgam started working on this craft.
The word *Kanihama* means the village of “*Kanis*”. The craft is sustaining in *Kanihama* since ages. Later some city dwellers too learnt the craft and established looms in Srinagar city. Several number of refined wooden sticks or *Kanis* are used in weaving of this world famous Shawl. Multi-coloured weft which is wormed on these sticks and interlaced within the shawls got its name as *Kani* Shawl.

It is said that the technique of *Kani* Shawl weaving come to Kashmir from Persia ages back. It got an additional name of *Jamawar* in the valley due to the fact that its pieces were stitched on the dress of royal dignitaries. Since “*Jama*” means a “dress” and “*war*” means pieces so the *Kani* Shawl got another name of *Jamawar*. In the Mughal Period thousands of *Kani* Shawl looms were being operated in the valley by highly skilled craft masters and it is reported that only in Srinagar 18000 looms were existing during the period of Budshah. But with the wearing of time and change in the history this weaving also received a set back like other arts and crafts. It was a tragic and dark period of the history when many handloom techniques were completely lost. But fortunately this *Kani* Shawl weaving technique was saved by a family living in village *Kanihama* Kashmir and known as Wani Family. It is traced that since 1770 the said family retained this technique and latter on, one of its family members namely Sh. G.M. *Kanihama* an Ex. M.L.A. left no stone unturned for its revival in different capacities.

4.7.1. Description of Goods

The first step taken towards the development of the craft was of its production in rolls of one and a half yards of width and three and a half yards of length. A few threads of the same wool were going dyed in indigo and were woven of from breadth wise border of about a barley grain width on either sides of the roll. Subsequently, the usage of a shuttle for weaving was made giving two different colours to its ends. A shuttle is a thin instrument chiselled to a definite shape called “*Seekh*” (spit of a spoke). The colours commonly used in Kashmir
those days were white for male and red for female. Later gold and yellow colours were also included and indigo was a common colour used in other crafts as well. The threads of these four colours were used in weaving shawls in accordance with the method of “SPIKE” shuttling which is known today as “Kani Weaving”.

*Kani* Shawls are delightful expressions of hand craft, hand woven using numerous eyeless wooden spokes called “*Kanis*” or *Tujlis*.8 These shawls involve intricate weaving in their production and as such have rich traditional value. *Kani* shawls are produced from fine hand spun fibres of *Pashmina* wool which add to its richness. Though 80% of the contemporary *Kani* shawl continues to be produced out of fine hand spun fibres of *Pashmina* wool, now-a-days silk and other fine wools are also used for its production.

*Kani* shawls display shades of colourful and intricate patterns, woven in subtle shades of colourful and exquisite designs, with inter-twining motifs with utter simplicity. The patterns on the shawls have designs mostly portraying the flora and fauna of the Kashmir valley. Though now-a-days other patterns are also woven. The *Kani* shawls are light in weight and have a fine and luxurious texture, being the product of a compact weave.

The *Kani* shawls are a work of great delicacy, tremendous concentration and much of patience. The resultant creations are shawls with different characteristic features. The characteristic *Kani* shawl designs are:

a) *Hashiadaar* Shawl with narrow running borders on all four sides.

b) *Jamavar* or *Pur-mattan* Shawl in which the entire field is covered with intricate allover pattern and motifs.

c) *Chand-daar* Shawl or *moon Shawl* a square or rectangular shawl with a central medallion and four quarter medallions on four corners.

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8 “*Tujli*” or “*Kani*” means eyeless in the Kashmiri language and is used instead of a shuttle for the weft yarn.
d) *Du-Shaali Two Shawls* are stitched together back-top-back in order to form a single palladar shawl with intricate pattern only on the two ends of the shawl along with narrow borders.

e) *Butidaar* shawl which has small or large “butis” (individual motif), used respectively.

f) *Khat-e-raas* shawl with stripped pattern rendered with almond, leaf and flower motifs. *Longe-daar* and *Tharidaar* are variations in a stripped shawl.

g) *Reversible shawl*: This shawl can be worn on both sides.

The above-mentioned patterns comprise of a range of floral, Almond, cypress tree, Chinar leaf and fruit motifs inspired by the flora and the fauna of Kashmir valley. The predominant motif that is seen in the *Kani* shawl is the elongated “*Almond Buti with a bent tip*” also known as the “*Tear Drop*” motif, “*Kairi*” or mango motif and the elongated cone or “*Paisley motif*”.

4.7.2. **Proof of Origin**

The origin of *Kani* shawl can be traced to the 11th century. The craft has evolved over 100 years by absorbing the Indian aesthetic influences. Eleventh century wall paintings at the Archie monastery, Ladakh depict finely woven Kashmir *Kani* Shawls.

Sanskrit poet and scholar Kshemendra who lived between 990 to 1065 A.D. has in his books “*Desopadera*” and “*Narmemala*” referred to *Kani* shawls. Another writer Billana of the same period also refer to *Kani* shawls in his writings. More recent proof of origin of *Kani* shawls can be found in the following works:

b) Kashmir woven *Kani* Shawl has been found as fragments in Tipu Sultan’s war coat. There were almost 20 *Kani* Shawl fragments that were found sewn with the Jacket’s quilter interlining layer. These fragments are dated to be of the pre-1650 period and oldest surviving examples are presently housed in the Victoria and Albert museum. Another earliest surviving shawl piece in a public collection is a fragment preserved in the Calico Museum of Textiles, Ahmadabad.

### 4.7.3. Specifications which led to GI protection of *Kani* Shawl

i. Long documented history of more than 300 years of traditional practice from Mughal Empire;

ii. Wool as a material with a unique quality of fineness directly linked with the local climate and geographical conditions;

iii. Highly celebrated and easily recalled product reputation directly associated with the region;

iv. Distinctive process of production with unique method of articulating weaving sequence through “*Taleem*” singing;\(^9\) and

v. Localised terminology of weaves and processes as a part of vernacular vocabulary.

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\(^9\) *Taleem* refers to the language of shawl weaving. Each line of the *Taleem* is the clear representation of each stage (*Raftar*) of weaving or the pick of the weaving. The increase or decrease of colours, or changes in their places necessary to produce the required flowers, are exactly represented through *Taleem*. 
Apart from *Pashmina* and *Kani* Shawls other important variety of Kashmiri Shawls is *Amlī* or *Amlīkar* Shawls. The *Amlīkar* Shawl is essentially a combination of two different traditional activities - the *Pashmina* plain Shawl wearing craft activity and the fine needle craft called “*Sozani*”. The needle work is of an all over pattern using fine strands of silky yarn. This traditional
needle embroidered shawl is termed as the “Amlī” Shawl or “Amlīkar Shawl” by later European Researchers. The term “Amlī” meaning “worked upon” or to “imitate”. Both Pashmina and Sozani embroidery are registered GIs; therefore Amlīkar Shawl is also a fit candidate for GI registration. Though it has been put forth before GI Registry but has not yet been accorded GI status.

I. Production, Employment avenues and Export of Kashmiri Shawl

Table 1: Employment generation in Kashmiri Shawls

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment (in Lakhs)</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.133</td>
<td>1.143</td>
<td>1.123</td>
<td>1.214</td>
<td>1.199</td>
<td>1.231</td>
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</table>

Source: Directorate of Handicrafts, Jammu and Kashmir

Fig. 1: Employment generation in Kashmiri Shawls
Table 2: Number of *Kani* Shawl Artisans Registered with Assistant Directorate Handicrafts, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Artisans</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003-04</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-05</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>2006-07</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>61</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010- August 11</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Assistant Directorate Handicrafts, Zaldagar, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir*

Table 3: Number of *Kani* Shawl Artisans Registered with Assistant Directorate Handicrafts, Pulwama, Jammu and Kashmir

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Artisans</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003-04</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004-05</td>
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<td>2009-10</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010- August11</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-04-2012 to 31-08-2012</td>
<td>59</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Assistant Director, Handicrafts, Pulwama, Jammu and Kashmir.*
Table 4: Number of Kani Shawl Artisans and Units Registered with Assistant Directorate Handicrafts, Anantnag, Jammu & Kashmir

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Artisans Registered</th>
<th>Number of Units Registered</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>0</td>
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Source: Assistant Director of Handicrafts, Anantnag, Jammu and Kashmir.

Table 5: Number of Kani Shawl Units and Artisans Registered with Assistant Directorate Handicrafts, Budgam, Jammu and Kashmir

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Units Registered</th>
<th>Number of Artisans Registered</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2012-Oct. 2012</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>111</td>
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Source: Assistant Director of Handicrafts, Budgam, Jammu and Kashmir.

Table 6: Year wise details of Shawl production

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Production (in Crores)</td>
<td>19.66</td>
<td>19.79</td>
<td>275.00</td>
<td>315.00</td>
<td>310.00</td>
<td>320.00</td>
<td>420.58</td>
<td>254.00</td>
<td>249.10</td>
<td>343.10</td>
<td>520.20</td>
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Fig. 2: Year wise details of Shawl production
Table 7: Year wise details of export figures of Kashmiri Shawl

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Export (incrores)</td>
<td>36.69</td>
<td>175.00</td>
<td>195.00</td>
<td>210.00</td>
<td>240.00</td>
<td>240.00</td>
<td>293.00</td>
<td>225.50</td>
<td>137.13</td>
<td>302.00</td>
<td>607.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1. Local Banks dealing in foreign exchange  
2. Corporate Head Quarter, J&K Bank  

4.8. Post-GI Challenges

4.8.1. Lack of adequate enforcement mechanism

Kashmiri *Pashmina* which is renowned for its delicacy and the weave has attracted attention of the nations from all over the world since times immemorial. The use of this aesthetically crafted apparel has been the pride of oriental royalty and European Lords. Despite upheavals of times, the Kashmiri *Pashmina* is being threatened by the influx of similar looking sub-standard counterfeit products sold in the name of original Kashmiri *Pashmina*. It is the artisans of Kashmir who have protected and sustained this traditional practice through difficult times. The same practitioners are now up against every country and community who are not only imitating these crafts but are also claiming ownership over these practices. In these times, many main woollen
production centres like Amritsar and Ludhiana have also started production of cheap jacquard woven woollen Shawls copying the traditional *Pashmina* designs and marketing the same as “*Pashmina*”. These shawls are largely manufactured and are of inferior quality. Apart from these attempts, the other countries producing machine- made *Pashmina* products are also marketing their produce with the same “Kashmiri *Pashmina*” Brand even though they do not meet the quality standards. *Pashmina* type products are also being manufactured by China. These machine-woven shawls are competing with the hand-woven Kashmiri *Pashmina* and driving it out of business. This leads to the loss of traditional skills of the craftsmen and an erosion of their profits as the high cost genuine (handmade) work is forced to compete with the low quality product. All this is being done in spite of the fact that the name “*Pashmina*” is inextricably attached to the region of Kashmir. In fact, when a product has the *Pashmina* tag attached to it, it signifies two things: one that the product has been made in Kashmir, and two, that the product possesses certain characteristics which owe to the unique method of manufacture followed by the people of that region. Both these factors which make *Pashmina* unique, are being misappropriated and abused, by the use of the name in loose sense by these other manufacturers. This rampant misuse of Kashmiri *Pashmina* demonstrates the urgent need for effective enforcement mechanism.

10 WILLIAM MOORCROFT AND GEORGE TREBEC, TRAVELS IN INDIA, 110 (2000).

11 For instance, due to wide publicity by the Nepal shawl industry, a misconception has now become widespread that *Pashminais* originally a product of Nepal and not of Kashmir. Even a Google search reveals that there exist a number of web portals associated with the sales of *Pashmina* that refer to it as originating from Nepal. In fact, this so-called “*Pashmina*” industry in Nepal is a major foreign currency earner for the country. There are over a hundred “*Pashmina*” producing units in Nepal, out of which 95% are in Kathmandu valley alone. Over 90% of *Pashmina* manufactured in Nepal is exported and only 10% is consumed locally. Nepal “*Pashmina*” is exported to around 40 countries, mainly in Europe, America and Asia. As per media reports, of late, Nepal “*Pashmina*” has earned a bad name in the international market. Even, polyester and woollen mixed materials are being exported in the name of *Pashmina* recently. Nepali “*Pashmina*” entrepreneurs say that it is also due to the breakneck competition in the international market. See Supra note 26, Chapter III.

4.8.2. Production of raw Cashmere (Pashmina)

Of the estimated 16,000 MT (metric ton) annual production of raw Cashmere\textsuperscript{13}, China produces an estimated 12,000 MT per year, Mongolia just over 3,000 MT, Afghanistan around 1,000 MT, and Iran and other countries like India, Nepal, Pakistan, Tibet, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan produce smaller quantities. China is a major Cashmere shawl producing country followed by Nepal, Europe and India. In respect of Kashmir, the wool is known as Pashmina and due to inadequacy of raw material, Mongolian or Chinese Cashmere wool is used in the manufacture of Pashmina Shawls, therefore, Kashmir does not have monopoly in raw material segment.\textsuperscript{14} However, in respect of Pashmina, Kashmir has monopoly and exclusivity to the extent of hand embroidery done on these shawls. These embroidered Pashmina and Kani Shawls are mainly and mostly consumed in the domestic market. It therefore, emerges that strategy for international market for Pashmina “Cashmere” needs to be revisited in the face of the fact of this competition which deserves recognition.\textsuperscript{15}

4.8.3. Establishment of Pashmina De-hairing Plant

Changpas is a nomadic, schedule tribe leading a pastoral life in the mountains of Ladakh and Tibet regions. Historically they have been the principle suppliers of the soft wool to Kashmir where it underwent a number of processes before getting on to the loom. The traders in Kashmir region used to procure raw Pashmina produced by Pashmina goats which was distributed to middlemen in Kashmir. The middlemen had an identified network of women, scattered across the valley, who processed the raw Pashmina on spinning wheels to make a fine

\textsuperscript{13} Pashmina fabric is commonly referred to as Cashmere in the West and it comes in various forms such as, shawls, stoles, etc. Pashmina is the highest form Cashmere made in Kashmir.

\textsuperscript{14} As per J&K State Wool Board there is a demand of around one lakh kgs of Pashmina per year in Kashmir region but the traders are able to procure only 15,000-20,000 kg from Ladakh.

\textsuperscript{15} Craft Development Institute, Srinagar Diagnostic Study – Kashmiri Shawls: Kani, Pashmina, Raffal, 22 (2011). (unpublished manuscript) (on file with the Institute).
thread out of the wool. The thread was then sent to manufacturing units where artisans manually weaved it to make fine quality *Pashmina* products.

In 2004, *Pashmina* De-hairing Plant was installed in Leh. It was jointly funded by Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Union Textile Ministry and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Plant is run by a Cooperative group called All Changthang *Pashmina* Growers Marketing Society. The Cooperative group sell the processed *Pashmina* directly without involving middlemen. The dehaired *Pashm* could be supplied to wool companies such as Oswal and Raymond. The National Conference government in Jammu and Kashmir had proposed ban on the De-hairing Plant, arguing that *Pashm* dehaired in machines was of inferior quality.\(^{16}\) The market experts and *Pashmina* dealers also blame the introduction of mechanical dehairing units for creating the *Pashmina* divide. The dealers argue that the chemicals and machines have reduced the durability and quality of *Pashmina*. It is also possible that the people in Ladakh may start manufacturing this craft on a large scale with China and Nepal in the name of Kashmiri *Pashmina shawl*. This issue needs to be addressed at the earliest possible time. Same will be the situation if the people in Tibet start practising the same craft because Tibet is the main centre of raw material procurement for this traditional Kashmiri craft.

### 4.8.4. Reaping benefits

Reaping of benefits by the stakeholders is yet another challenge. A main stakeholder in this craft is a chain of persons who include women involved in de-hairing and spinning, clippers (*Purzgar*), weaver (*Vover*), washermen (*Chalungar*) and dyers (*Rangur*). It is their labour and skill which is being reaped by the traders. They toil hard but receive less. It is their haplessness which is being exploited by the moneyed people who have access to global market. Those with the superior bargaining powers in the supply chain

\(^{16}\) *Pashmina*: the future is warm Down To Earth available at www.downtoearth.org.in > Home > Cover Story (24 May 2012). *See also The Tribune*, Chandigarh, India, March 29, 2004.
appropriate a disproportionate share of the economic benefits out of GI protection. Thus, benefits do not get percolated down to the weaker sections of the chain downstream, thereby nullifying to a large extent, the development implications of GI-protection. It is essential to ensure that any benefits accruing out of GI-status of a product percolate down to the actual producers/artisans, not only because it is their legitimate right, but also to ensure the survival of the age-old products in future. The artisans have kept these handicrafts tagged with GI alive. In absence of adequate returns, new generations will prefer to move to alternative professions which is already visible.\(^\text{17}\)

In valley, more than 80% weavers/artisans work under job work arrangement with the manufacturers called “Wustkar” who himself may or may not be a skilled weaver. The broker intermediates between the weaver/artisan and retailer/exporter and negotiates the price depending on quality, look and finish. The payment to artisan is not instant and can stretch for a month which is a common practice. This may over time make the traditional knowledge (TK) based product extinct.\(^\text{18}\)

A number of middlemen actively involve themselves in the various places of the supply chain. The involvement of these middlemen is responsible for the fluctuations of the prices of both the raw materials as well as the end products. Those artisans who make their own product do not find it easy to have direct access to the raw materials and believe that it is only upper class of the Pashmina segment that has control over the raw material. The middle men buy the raw material from the suppliers of Ladakh and supply it to the machine owners. Therefore, there is a scarcity of raw material in the market and the local artisans requiring the raw material in smaller quantities do not find it

\(^{17}\) Kanihama, a small village in District Budgam, was once known for its Kani Shawls. But now members of the families, who have been engaged in Shawl weaving for generations, are turning to other professions due to economic reasons, (Firdous Hassan, *Kani Shawl faces extinction*, THE KASHMIR MONITOR, November 24, 2011).

\(^{18}\) The process of Kani Shawl weaving for instance is complex and needs high degree of skill and patience. One Shawl may take more than six months for completion and for these six months an artisan supports his family on meagre resources.
accessible. Some people also buy raw material in bulk and dump it and sell it at higher prices to the local artisans thereby making it difficult them to be cost effective in manufacturing their own products. Further, they cannot sell manufactured products directly to the customer because of the involvement of the middlemen. They have to sell their products to the middlemen (known as dalaals) at a little lower rate. The middlemen then sell it to other people higher up in the hierarchy which has the customer as the terminal point. It is these middlemen who reap the benefits for the hard work which is being done by the artisans in manufacturing these products.

The problem is compounded by the fact that the GI Act, 1999 defines registered proprietor in relation to a GI as meaning any association of persons or producer or any organisation for the time being entered in the register as the registered proprietor of the GI. The term “producer” in relation to handicrafts means any person who trades or deals in such production, exploitation, making or manufacturing, as the case may be, of the goods. This definition does not distinguish between a real producer, retailer or dealer. As a result of this discrepancy the benefits of the GI Act may not percolate down to the real producer.

4.8.5. Quality control

In State of Jammu and Kashmir there is Jammu and Kashmir Handicrafts (Quality Control) Act, 1978 (Q.C. Act) for the improvement of quality of handicrafts and every manufacturer who is registered as such shall be allotted a Quality Control Mark which shall be stamped on a handicraft manufactured by him and the dealers who deal in such handicrafts should bear such Quality Control Mark (Q.C. Mark). It is observed that Kashmiri crafts including shawls which are put forth for sale in different retail outlets of the State are not bearing this Quality Control Mark and consumers are seldom getting the real

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19 GI Act, 1999, Section 2 (n) and Section 2 (k).
value of their money for lack of authenticity. The GI Act, 1999 and the Q.C. Act may apparently appear to contradict each other but the deeper analysis of the provisions of these two enactments reveal that they are complementary to each other and should be implemented and enforced in combination with each other in order to maintain competitiveness and quality of the products in market, the former guaranteeing the origin of the goods and the later maintaining the quality. The quality standards cannot be established, met, complied and certified through law alone. It is to be supplemented by accredited testing laboratories and the efforts like brand building and positioning these as high value products with historical background. It is to be further augmented with certification and labelling conforming to international standards.

As an initiative towards building an international brand for Kashmir crafts, specially the world renowned Pashmina-based textiles, a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for setting up a testing and quality certification facility at Srinagar was submitted to the State government so that the due share of Kashmir Pashmina may be reclaimed in the global market through its standardisation and hallmarking. The unique project involved identifying real Pashmina Shawls and tagging them with a Radio Frequency Identification Chip (RFID). The Chip would be coded with information about the manufacturing source as well as product specifications. To undertake these functions a Quality Control Officer has been appointed at Craft Development Institute (CDI) Srinagar.

4.8.6. Unfair trade practices associated with the Shawl

Unethical practices are common in this craft activity and these are carried out at production level as well as marketing level and no support is available to the Shawl industry to survive or negate the stiff unfair competition both at national

\[21\] CDI, Srinagar, Proposal for establishment of Testing and Quality Certification Centre for Promotion of Pashmina Exports at Bagh Ali Mardan Khan (2009), (unpublished manuscript) (on file with the Institute).
level as well as international level. At production level, because of non-availability of indigenous raw material and therefore, high dependency for raw material on competitors, use of cheaper variety of yarn or finer count yarn mixed with coarser variety during spinning is resorted to. Wool blends are used in case of woollen shawls to cut input costs. In case of Pashmina, Mongolia wool imported by spinners outside the State and mill spun is used which has greatly affected indigenous hand spun Pashmina. Various synthetic yarns are used to produce Pashmina imitations and is sold under fancy names. Though “Kashmiri Pashmina” has been brought under the GI Act, 1999 but manufacturers and traders are not using this as a certification mark. In case of “Kashmiri Shawls” handloom mark or wool mark could also be used for quality certification but the traders/exporters do not utilises this certification as well.

There is a lack of direct contact between the craftsmen and the customers. Even though the market price of Kashmiri Shawl is very high, the weavers as already pointed out, are literally paid peanuts for their efforts. Intermediaries try their best to impoverish the poor weavers. Apart from this, the brokers’ pocket enormous profits by resorting to certain malpractices. They purchase the masterpieces at rock bottom prices and later sell them in the market at skyrocketing prices to the foreigners who are ignorant of their actual price.²² Further, there are Vendors within the valley who sells machine-made shawls in the name of Kashmiri Pashmina Shawls.²³ Such practices are in no way less detrimental to the reputation of Kashmiri Shawl trade. It is pertinent to note that handicraft sector is closely linked to tourism and any tourist visiting the valley is attracted to have a look at fascinating varieties of Kashmiri handicraft.

²² At one occasion, a customer from Bulgaria informed that she purchased a shawl from a reputed shop in Srinagar for rupees 5 lakhs but its actual price was rupees 50000 only. See, Arshi Javid, *Wanning Art of Weaving Kani Shawls*, GREATER KASHMIR, June 3, 2007.
and takes back with him a variety of these gifts. Here the tourism department has an important role to play. Under the Jammu and Kashmir Registration of Tourist Trade Act, 1978, the tourism department is vested with powers to check the menace. The Act empowers the Commissioner of Tourism to blacklist any trader involved in any malpractice. For this purpose, malpractice inter alia includes dishonesty, cheating, touting, and impersonation, charging a price higher than that displayed on the label or remuneration higher than that fixed under the Act. Where the reasonability of the labelled price is in dispute, the opinion of the Director of Handicrafts, J&K shall be final.

4.8.7. Lack of Financial Support

Majority of artisans are from poor economic background and, therefore, they mainly face economic problems. A larger group of artisans do not have resources to setup their own looms. There are artisans who have setup their own looms but they still find it hard to work for their own product. They require a substantial amount to start working for their own product because they have to pay for the raw materials in cash and also they get the payment for the shawl only after completion of the shawl and that too in instalments. As a result their money gets blocked in the market with traders thereby making it necessary to have more money with them to start working on next product because if they wait for the money of the finished product, they will be losing a number of working days. The compulsion to quickly sell the product due to poor financial conditions makes it very difficult for the artisan to take a risk of working on their own products and sell them on their own.

26 Id., at Section 7 (1).
27 Id. at Section 2 (g).
28 Id. at Proviso (3) to Section 2 (g).
4.8.8. Old Age Problems

The artisans can earn till they are fit health wise. As they grow older they cannot work as hard as they could in younger days. The artisans mainly those associated with Kani Shawl face many health problems especially eye and neck problems which requires money to be cured and taken care of. Since it is not easy for an artisan to work in the older days of their life and also they don’t have any source of income apart from craft activity, they consider themselves in dire need of proper support from the government in the form of old age pension or some other financial support so that they could survive and fulfil their basic needs.

4.8.9. Skill and Dedication Trade-offs

Since the daily expenses of the modern times are very high and the income of the artisans is very low, the artisans are found to compromise on the grounds of skill. Sometimes the real skill of craft is not delivered because the artisans are not working with the same dedication since they are being under paid. Therefore, they want to work on products which would be easier to work on.

However, the market demand for the skill is ever increasing and the present day customers innovate designs every time but the artisans are not ready to those masterpiece skill works for the income they are being paid. The perception built over the years for the Kashmiri Pashmina products is getting a hammer as the customers are not ready to buy the same products every time and the artisans are not willing to show their skill for the feeble incomes.

4.8.10. Inaccessibility to Market for Independent Artisans

Working for their own products invites a number of problems and risks for the artisans and one of them is the inaccessibility to the market for their products. There exists a near absolute disconnect between the individual artisan and the market. The artisan who often works for the master craftsman or cooperative has no information for whom the product is produced and how it is marketed.
Artisans working for their own products have to look for the customers in the vicinity or domestic market in order to make the efforts of making their own product cost effective. Financial conditions do not allow them to collect their manufactured products and then look for customers. Hence it is very difficult for them to get the better customer for their products. The result is that they prefer to work for their master where they face no problems of market since in that case they are bothered about their labour and have no concern about the utilisation of the product being manufactured.

There are artisans who have sufficient resources on manufacturing side but are facing the problems of market. They demand the support of the government in making outlets available at tourist spots in peak tourist season on lease or rental basis in order to make it possible for them to come in direct contact with the customers.

4.8.11. Time- Specific Export Trade

In order to compete with the manufacturers across the globe export orders are to be completed in a specific period of time and the traders are looking to get orders of higher magnitude. This compels the manufacturers to compromise on the grounds of quality.

4.8.12. Registration Problems

Majority of artisans are not registered with any group/association /government departments and they are being deprived from the privileges given by the State or Central Government to artisan groups. Artisans want the process of registration to be made easy for them. Artisans find it difficult to fulfil the formalities of registration as it is a time consuming process and it is not possible for local artisan to lose his working time in completing these formalities.
4.8.13. Use of New Designs

The artisans work for their masters and they provide the designs to be made to the artisans. The artisans have no say in the designs and they are only concerned about their labour after the making of the product. The designs are mostly the older ones and they make new designs only when an order is received. There is a lot of hesitation on the part of masters in experimenting new designs.

Many artisans who make their own products also lack awareness about the modern market preferences for designs and as such repeatedly use the old designs.

4.8.14. Women Folk abandoning Spinning

One of the big setbacks to the Pashmina craft has been the women folk giving up the spinning of Pashmina. The raw material procured is given for spinning to women folk who use traditional charkhas (Yeinders). The women folk use spinning wheel for spinning the Pashm to obtain the yarn from the Pashm.

Presently spinning can fetch a woman about Rupees 10-15 a day and as such women find it better to do something else other than spinning. Consequently, hand spun yarn is becoming scarce which makes it easy for machine spun yarn to overtake the market.

4.8.15. Consignment Basis Trade of Arts Emporium

The J&K Arts Emporium was established with the purpose of giving a cushion to the traders where they would be selling their products. But now the goods are delivered to the emporium with the understanding that payment for the goods is made only once the goods are sold. The traders do not find it useful and are hence very hesitant in delivering their goods because as per the traders they cannot afford to keep their costly goods in the custody of the emporium where they themselves cannot play any role in selling those goods. There have been cases where the traders were returned the goods at the end of the season.
with the justification of lesser demand for the products and the goods being returned were not in a good condition and it incurred extra expenses to give them finish again for selling them in the market.

4.8.16. Need for wider Governmental Measures

The production of a variety of handicrafts in J&K means that there is a vast potential for employment in this sector. Realising this vast potential for employment, the J&K government has during the last more than twenty years undertaken large-scale training programmes for the youth in learning and creating new designs and new products while conserving the past. This is being done with the hope that these trainees after the completion of the said courses could become craftsperson and will not only have their source of living but would utilise their efforts for modernisation and revival of traditional handicrafts particularly Kani Shawl. Unfortunately, the dreams did not come true. Since these trainees are from poor families, they are not in a position to erect their own looms and bring warps for weaving. The result is that these boys and girls after receiving the training either go for other jobs or are sitting idle and waiting for some financial assistance. The Jammu and Kashmir Handloom Development Department is running production centres in the Kanihama area, but each is heaving a limited capacity of ten looms only. So they can accommodate only 60 workers.29

Further in case of Kani Shawls and Pashmina Shawls, the number of training centres is very less. Besides, there are Amli Shawls also and government altogether has ignored them while establishing the training centres at district levels. There is a need for enhancement of the number of training centres in all districts in respect of all types of shawls.

### Table 8: District wise position of *Kani* Shawl Training centres and Trainees trained by Handicrafts Department, J&K.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Srinagar</th>
<th>Ganderbal</th>
<th>Budgam</th>
<th>Anantnag</th>
<th>Kulgam</th>
<th>Pulwama</th>
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<th>Baramulla</th>
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TC = Training centres  
TT = Trainees Trained  
Source: Directorate of Handicrafts, Jammu and Kashmir

### Table 9: District wise position of *Kani* Shawl Training centres and Trainees trained by Handloom Development Department, J&K.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Srinagar</th>
<th>Ganderbal</th>
<th>Budgam</th>
<th>Anantnag</th>
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Source: Directorate of Handloom Development Department, Jammu and Kashmir

### Table 10: District wise position of *Pashmina* Training centres and Trainees trained by Handloom Development Department, J&K.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Srinagar</th>
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Source: Directorate of Handloom Development Department, Jammu and Kashmir

Scanty welfare schemes from the government had also been forcing the artisans to leave this age-old trade.\(^\text{30}\) On paper some health and group insurance schemes, that provide the family of the artisans a free treatment cover, were

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introduced. But these benefits were never passed on to them as the schemes were never implemented.\textsuperscript{31} Majority of the artisans do not have any awareness regarding various activities affecting their craft directly or indirectly. They are unaware about the various artisan schemes. There are artisans who had some knowledge about the various schemes being provided to them and they had applied for the various schemes but the lengthy procedures and the poor response being shown by the authorities had made them disinterested in any such activity. They considered every such activity as the sheer wastage of their time. A number of artisans had been asked to pay hefty sum of money in order to get their cases forwarded for the allotment of funds. The poor artisans find it miserable to pay such money for the loans which they are supposed to repay with interest.