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Determinants of Participation in Indigenous Handcraft Traditions: Evidence from Rural Households in Gondar Zuria District, Ethiopia.

Fasil Tefera

fasiltefera29@gmail.com

Injibara University

Tegegne Derbe

University of Gondar

Kibrom Adino

University of Gondar

Wuletaw Mekuria

University of Gondar

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Determinants of Participation in Indigenous Handcraft Traditions: Evidence from Rural Households in Gondar Zuria District, Ethiopia.

ABSTRACT

Indigenous handcraft traditions constitute an important component of rural livelihood systems in Ethiopia, providing culturally rooted skills and alternative income opportunities beyond agriculture. In Gondar Zuria District, agricultural productivity remains constrained by environmental and socioeconomic challenges, participation in indigenous handicraft activities has become an important source of livelihood diversification strategy. This study examines the determinants of household participation in indigenous handcraft practices and explores the socioeconomic and cultural factors influencing engagement in these traditions. A mixed-methods approach was employed, and data were collected from 267 households selected through multi-stage sampling across three kebeles. A binary logistic regression model was used to identify key determinants of participation. The findings reveal that dependency ratio, access to market information, strength of social networks, and availability of working space significantly and positively influence engagement in indigenous handicraft activities, reflecting the role of social capital and enabling environments in sustaining traditional skills. The study confirms that participation in indigenous handcraft traditions contributes positively to household income, underscoring their importance for rural livelihood diversification and cultural preservation. Strengthening institutional support, improving access to credit and market information, and enhancing working spaces are essential interventions to promote wider participation and sustain indigenous knowledge systems in the district.

Keywords: Indigenous knowledge; Handcraft participation; Rural livelihoods; Determinants; Cultural traditions; Livelihood diversification; Ethiopia.

1. Introduction

1.1.Background and Justifications of the study

Non-farm livelihood diversification has become an increasingly important component of rural economies across developing countries, including Ethiopia. As agricultural productivity declines due to land scarcity, climate variability, environmental degradation, and demographic pressures, rural households are compelled to engage in alternative income-generating activities (Neglo et al., 202). The extent and nature of non-farm engagement, however, varies significantly across regions. In Ethiopia, approximately 61.2% of rural households in Oromia, 73.4% in the Southern

Region, 81% in Tigray, and 45% in Amhara participate in non-farm activities (Neglo et al., 2021; Tshabalala and Sidique, 2020). Between 80% and 90% of these activities rely primarily on household labor, and about 70% operate as self-employed enterprise (Neglo et al., 2021) Evidence suggests that non-farm income contributes between 20% and 35% of total household earnings (Kerorsa, 2022, thereby playing a crucial role in reducing poverty, strengthening household resilience, and enhancing food security (Rahman and Mishra, 2020;Bayu, 2021; Kidane, 2019).

Among the various non-farm livelihood options, indigenous handcraft production represents a culturally embedded economic activity with substantial livelihood significance. Handcrafts provide households with opportunities to diversify income, reduce reliance on rain-fed agriculture, and stabilize earnings through self-employment (Demie and Zeray, 2016; Kassegn and Endris, 2021). Beyond economic benefits, the sector supports cultural preservation, contributes to rural economic growth, enhances income distribution, and offers pathways out of poverty (Duong et al., 2021; Ibrahim et al., 2019). Ethiopia's diverse cultural heritage has led to the production of a wide range of indigenous crafts, from weaving and pottery to basketry and metalwork, forming an integral part of rural livelihood systems (Abreham, 2022; Kemal, 2020).

Despite its significance, the indigenous handcraft sector faces persistent challenges. Prior studies highlight constraints such as outdated production technologies, limited technical and business skills, inadequate working space, scarce raw materials, weak market linkages, and exploitative intermediaries(Temesgen et al., 2018; Wondirad et al., 2022; Kalbo 2021; Abate 2018). Institutional challenges, including fluctuating input prices, stringent loan requirements, and limited infrastructural support, further impede the sector's potential Datiko and Wondirad (2024) and Eshetu (2020). Ethno-archaeological studies also note negative public perceptions, weak government support, and raw material shortages as determinants of declining craft traditions in some regions (Hassen and Roba, 2019; Kebede, 2019; Wodajo, 2022). Although these studies offer valuable insights, they are geographically narrow and do not comprehensively examine the determinants of household participation in handcraft activities. Existing research tends to focus on challenges or cultural significance rather than the socioeconomic and demographic drivers influencing participation. The available evidence is fragmented and not sufficiently grounded in local contexts, despite clear regional differences in culture, market access, and livelihood

systems. This leaves a substantial knowledge gap, particularly regarding the socioeconomic, cultural, and structural factors that shape household engagement in indigenous handcrafts in distinct localities such as the Gondar Zuria District, where traditional craft-making remains an important livelihood practice.

Gondar Zuria district is well known for its rich cultural heritage and long-standing craft traditions; however, empirical evidence on the determinants of household participation in indigenous handcraft activities remains limited. Given that many rural households continue to depend on handcrafts for supplementary or primary income, understanding these determinants is essential for informing livelihood interventions, supporting rural enterprises, and strengthening the cultural economy. The lack of localized, systematic empirical analysis underscores the importance and novelty of this study. Hence, this research seeks to fill the existing gap by analyzing the determinants of household participation in indigenous handcraft activities in Gondar Zuria district. The findings are expected to contribute to policy design, rural development strategies, and cultural heritage preservation efforts. Therefore, the study aims to identify the determinants of household participation in indigenous handcraft activities in Gondar Zuria District, Ethiopia.

2. Conceptual Framework

Participation in indigenous handcraft activities is shaped by a complex set of socioeconomic, demographic, cultural, and institutional factors. These factors collectively determine whether rural households engage in handcraft production and the extent to which such participation contributes to household income. This study conceptualizes that indigenous handcraft participation is not an isolated economic activity but is deeply embedded within broader livelihood strategies and household resource endowments. Empirical studies in Ethiopia and other developing countries highlight that household participation in handcraft activities is influenced by multiple interrelated factors. According to CSA (2017) and Kassa (2019), access to credit, road infrastructure, market availability, livestock ownership, and training opportunities positively affect engagement in indigenous handcraft production. Similarly, (Demie and Zeray, 2016) emphasize the importance of family labor availability, training, credit services, and access to information as key determinants of household involvement in non-farm craft activities. Evidence from Ayambila et al., (2017), shows that demographic characteristics, such as sex,

education level, marital status, total landholding, and access to information, significantly shape household decisions to participate in craft production.

Drawing from the literature, the conceptual framework for this study groups the determinants of handcraft participation into four broad categories:

Demographic factors: including sex, age, household size, education, and marital status, which influence labor availability, skills, and household decision-making.

Socio-Economic factors: such as livestock holding, land size, household income, family labor availability, community networks, and information access, which shape the transmission of indigenous skills and which reflect the household's resource base and financial capacity to engage in craft production?

Institutional factors: such as training opportunities, access to credit, access to markets, extension services, infrastructure (roads), and supportive policies, which determine the enabling environment for indigenous handcraft activities.

These factors are assumed to interact in influencing both household participation in handcraft activities (the primary dependent variable) and the income derived from handcraft production (the secondary outcome variable). Participation in indigenous handcrafts, in turn, is expected to contribute to improved household welfare through income diversification, reduced vulnerability, and enhanced livelihood resilience. Figure 1: presents the relationships between dependent and independent variables of the study.

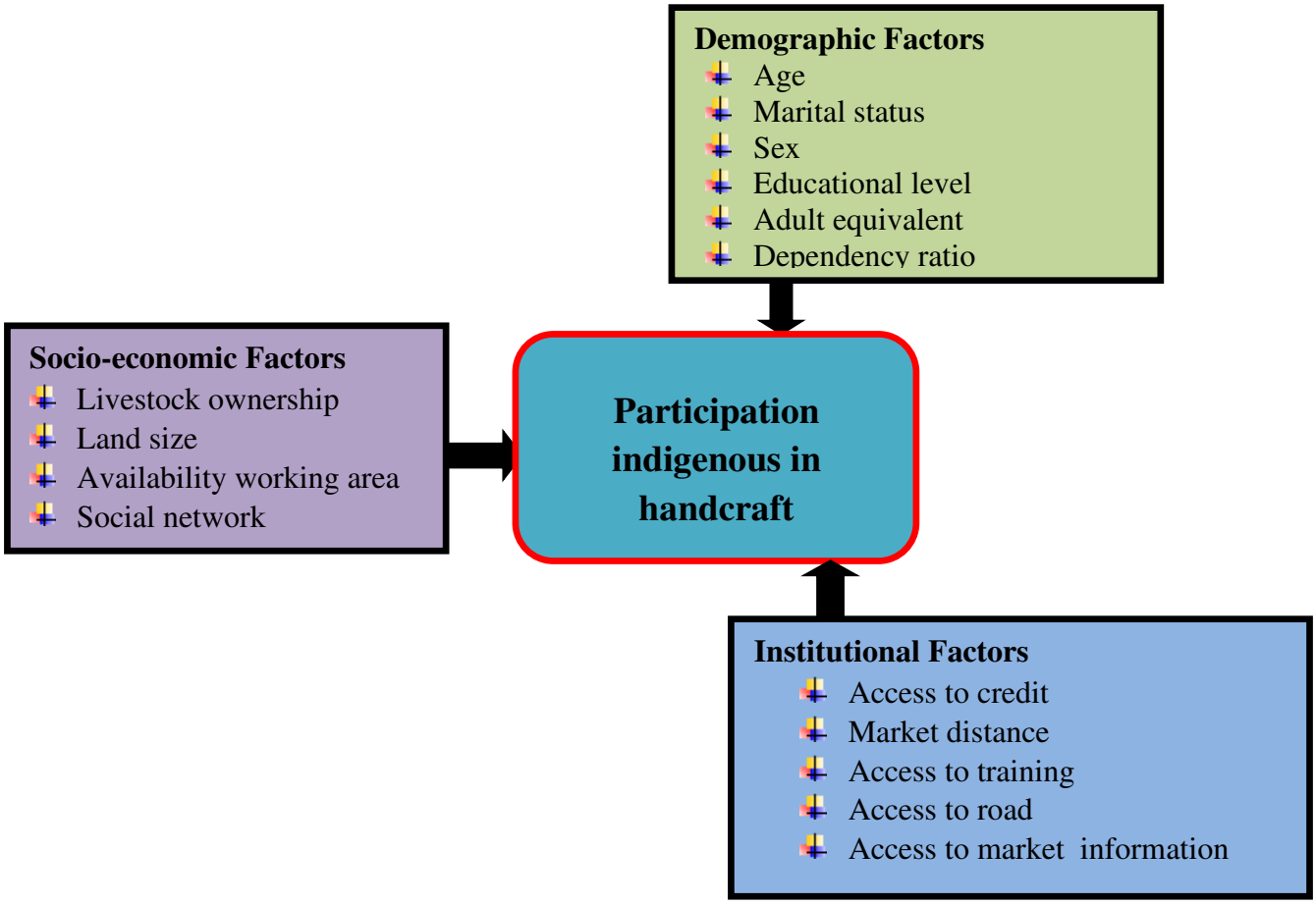


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the study

Source: Adapted and modified from Abdi (2020)

3. Research Methods

3.1. Description of the Study Area

The study was conducted in Gondar Zuria district, a significant area within the Central Gondar Zone of the Amhara National Regional State, Ethiopia. Located approximately 695 km from Addis Ababa, the district is bordered by Wogera, West Belesa, Lay Armachiho, Dembia, Lake Tana, and Libo Kemkem districts, encompassing a total land area of 114,983 hectares. The area features a diverse agro-ecology, with the majority (76%) classified as Woina Dega (mid-altitude, temperate) and the remainder as Dega (high-altitude, cool), reflecting an altitude range of 1,800 to 2,700 meters above sea level. This topography is predominantly flat (65%), and land use is dominated by cropland (63%), where the average household farms approximately one hectare,

cultivating major annual crops like teff, sorghum, and millet. The district supports a total population of 290,460, with a strong rural bias, as 85.2% of residents live in the 38 rural kebeles. The local economy is a mixed farming system where the integration of crop farming and animal husbandry (including rearing oxen, cows, and small ruminants) forms the primary livelihood, supplemented by small-scale petty trading and traditional handicraft activities like weaving and pottery.

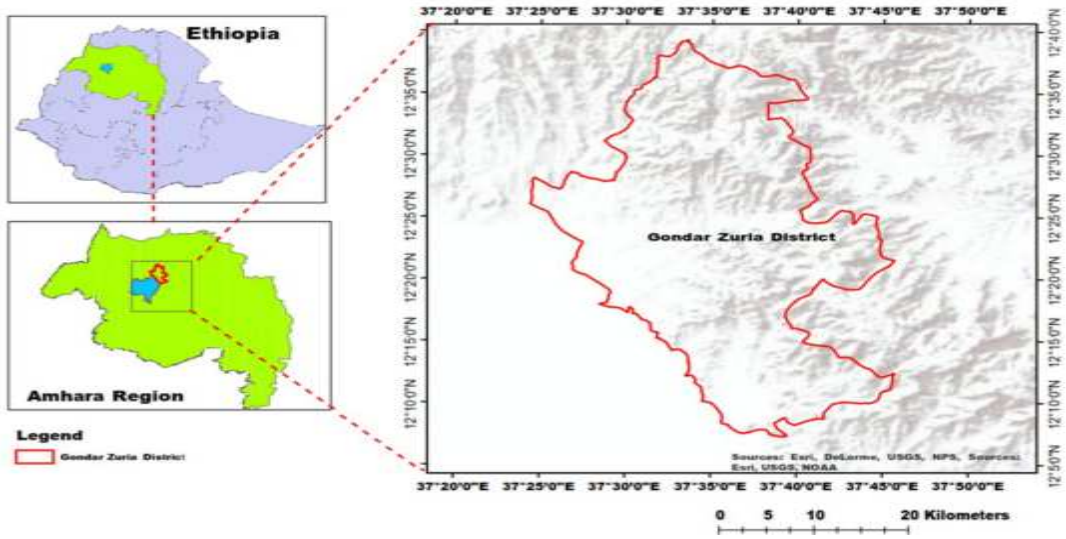


Figure 2: Location Map of the study areas

Source: GIS shape file of Ethiopian administrate map

3.2. Research Design

The study has employed non-experimental research design with quantitative research approaches in terms of a cross-sectional study. A determinant of indigenous handcraft participation was analyses by using binary logit regression econometric model.

3.2.1. Sampling Techniques and Sample Size Determination

To select respondents' from the district, a multistage sampling technique was employed. In the first stage, Gondar Zuria district was selected purposively due to abundances of handcraft activities in the district (Nurhusien, 2017). In the second stage, out of the 38 kebels in the district, three kebels were purposively chosen: *Enfranz, Maksegnit* one*,* and *Maksegnit* two. They were chosen, because they had a strong potential for indigenous handicraft goods and products. Those Kebeles practice and historically rich indigenous handcraft activities such as weaving, pottery, blacksmithing, leatherwork, wicker work and woodwork handcraft (Nurhusien, 2017). In

the third stage, each kebeles households is grouped into strata with participants and non-participants in handcraft activities, than 267 respondents were selected using systematic random sampling techniques by probability proportional to size technique (PPS) from the number of households listed in each three-sample kebeles.

The sample size for the study is determined based on Cochran (Cochran, 1977), developed the equation to yield a representative sample for proportions. This formula used for heterogeneity populations.

$$n = \frac{z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

Where, n= the required numbers of sample,

z =the value of the desired confidence level or confidence interval (1.96),

e = the desired level of margin error or precision

p=estimated variability or proportion of an attribute in the population,

q =1-p.

Accordingly, the researcher were used to 94.5% confidence level (z=1.96), the maximum variability among the population, and ±5.5 % margin of error/precision by looking the expected criteria. The researcher used a 5.5% margin of error because it is a common and reasonable margin of error for many studies.

When we apply the formula, $n = \frac{3.8416*0.3*0.7}{(0.055)^2} = 266.69 = 267$. Accordingly, the sample size for the study was determined as Table 1.

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Table 1: Total number of sample household heads

Sample Kebeles	Total HH	Participants	Non participants	Sample from Ps	Sample from NPs	Total sample from each Kebeles
Enfranz	2494	864	1630	33	62	95
Maksegnit Kebele1	2186	720	1466	28	56	84
Maksegnit Kebele2	2294	756	1538	29	59	88
Total	6974	2340	4634	90	177	267

Sources: Gondar zuria woreda office of agriculture GZWOA (2025)

3.2.2. Data Type and Source

The research utilized a combination of primary and secondary sources to gather essential data for the study. Primary sources encompassed survey participants. On the other hand, secondary sources comprised materials and document, annual reports such as how many types of handicraft activities were exist in the district and how many people's or household are participated, and non-participants in handcrafts were relevant to the research problem or directly associated with the study. In accordance with the incorporation of secondary data, which is collected and analyzed by others or derived from written sources, facilitates the interpretation and documentation of primary data (Kothari, 2004).

3.2.3. Methods of Data Collection and Instruments

Interview schedule is survey instrument, which refers to the set of questions and other tools used to gather data from respondents in a systematic manner (Aborisade, 2013)**.** Composed of both closed ended and open-ended types of questions in the interview schedule was prepared and used to collect primary data from survey respondents. The interview instrument used to collect and get information about determinates of indigenous handcraft participation. Before conducting the actual survey, the questionnaire was translated into the local language (Amharic). Then the questionnaire was pretested by administering on non-sample 20 households and based on the feedback from pretest, a modification was made. The researcher selected five enumerators who were familiar with the local community and spoke the local language, to conduct the survey. Five enumerators were recruited and training was given for one day on data collection procedures, methods for how to collect data from the respondents and the importance of the collected data for the thesis. They collected the necessary data under the close supervision of the

researcher. In total, 267 interviewers were completed at the respondents' homes and returned for further analysis.

3.2.4. Methods of Data Analysis

To analyze the determinants of indigenous handcraft participations, the binary logit econometrics model were applied.

Econometrics model specification

An econometric model was applied to analyze the data. These were the binary logit / logistic regression model for determinants of indigenous handcraft. There are several binary outcomes models to analyze the data. However, for this particular study, binary logit model was selected over probit model. While both binary logit and probit models are used for binary outcomes, logit models often have advantages computational efficiency, and sometimes align better with theoretical assumptions. However, despite its computational simplicity, as recommended by Amemiya (1981) and Gujarati and Porter, (2003), it has a serious defect in that the estimated probability values can lie outside the normal 0-1 range. Hence binary logit model is advantageous over probit models.

In this study, the dependent variable is a dichotomous variable representing participation in indigenous handcraft activities (1=participant, 0=non-participant). The appropriate econometric model for such a variable would be the binary logit model, as it best captures the non-linear relationship between the dependent and explanatory variables. When analyzing qualitative choices, researchers often face the decision between using logit or probit models. While both models have statistical similarities, the simplicity of calculation and the bounded probability range (0 to 1) of the logit model make it a popular choice. Additionally, the logit model's probability approaches zero and one at a slower rate as the explanatory variable values decrease or increase, respectively, providing a more gradual transition in predicted probabilities. This justification for using the logit model is supported by Amemiya (1981) and Gujarati and Porter, (2003), highlighting its practical advantages in modeling binary outcomes with explanatory variables.

Logistic regression, introduced by statistician David Cox in 1958, is a statistical method used to model the relationship between a binary response variable and one or more predictor variables.

The binary logistic model is particularly useful for estimating the probability of a binary outcome based on the values of predictor variables (Cox, 1958).

Also, Newman et al. (2018), reported that the logit model is computationally easier to use than the other type. The logit model was applied in this study to assist in estimating the probability of household participation in indigenous handcraft activities that can take one of the two values, participated or not participated household. The binary logistic regression model was employed to examine the factors influencing household participation in handcraft activities. The logit regression equation used to predict the probability of the outcome variable (Y) is as follows;

$$Pi = Pr(Y = 1|X = xi)$$

Then we can write the model

$$\log\left(\frac{pi}{1-pi}\right. = logit(pi = \beta o + \beta 1xi$$

We can write the model in terms of odds as:

$\frac{pi}{1-pi}$=exp ($\beta o = +\beta 1xi$) or in terms of the probability of the outcome occurring as:

$$Pi = \frac{\exp\ (\beta o + \beta 1xi)}{1 + \exp\ (\beta o + \beta 1xi)}$$

Conversely the probability of the outcome not occurring is:

$$1 - pi = \frac{1}{1 + \exp\ (\beta o + \beta 1xi)}$$

Notice that we have so far not included a residual term in the models, and have instead expressed the model in terms of population probabilities. But we could write it as:

$$pi = pi + ui = \frac{\exp\ (\beta o + \beta 1xi)}{1 + \exp\ (\beta o + \beta 1xi)} + \text{ui} \qquad (1)$$

Where: Where, P (i) is probability of occurring, exp is natural logarithm base (e ≈ 2.71828...), $bo$is interception at y-axis, b1, is regression slope coefficient of Xi, and Xi is predictor or independent variable that predicts the probability of Y. Therefore, in this study the dependent variable handcraft participation is dichotomous i.e. participant and non-participant of handcraft and the explanatory variables were continuous and dummy So that, all explanatory variables were included in the model of binary logistic regression equation.

Multi-collinearity diagnostics

Multi-collinearity diagnostic methods were checked through variance inflation factor (VIF) in continuous variables indicates that all variables have a value of VIF less than 10, which is an indication that there is no series problem of multi-collinearity among the continuous variables in (Tu et al., 2005). As a rule of thumb, if the VIF of a variable exceeds ten, which happens if R2 exceeds 0.90, that variable is said to be highly collinear (Gujarati and Porter, 2003). In the same way, it is necessary to test whether there is or not interaction between discrete (dummy and categorical) variables that can lead to the problem of multi collinearity or association using the contingency coefficient (CC). As a rule, a CC value of one indicates a higher association (a problem of multi-collinearity), and a value of below 0.75 indicates no association (not series problem of multi-collinearity) (Herawati et al., 2018).

Prior to the estimation of regression analysis, that can significantly impact the reliability of parameter estimates. This technique involves regressing each selected continuous variable on all other continuous explanatory variables to calculate the coefficient of determination (R-squared) in each case. Accordingly, Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) technique was employed to detect the problem of multi-co-linearity for continuous explanatory variables (Gujarati and Porter, 2003). Each selected continuous variable was regressed on all the other continuous explanatory variables, the coefficient of determination (R_{XY}^2) being constructed in each case. If an approximate linear relationship exists among the explanatory variables then this results, in a large 'value for (R_{XY}^2) is at least one of the test regressions.

$$VIF=\frac{1}{1-R_{XY}^2} \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\

Moreover, to detect this problem, coefficients of contingency were computed. The contingency coefficients are calculated as follows; $c = \sqrt{\frac{x^2}{n+x^2}}$ ..... (3)

Where: C = Coefficient of Contingency; x2 = chi-square test and n = total sample size.

Table 2: Descriptions of explanatory variables and their working hypothesis

Variables Acronyms	Description of the variables	Type of variable	Unit of measurement	Expected Sign	Reference
HCA	Handcraft participation as dependant variable	Dummy	1=participant,0 otherwise		
SEXHH	Sex of household head	Dummy	0= Female, 1 = Male	+/-	Abdi (2020), Abate (2018)
EDUL	The educational level	Continuous	Grade of the households	+/-	W/kidan and Tafesse (2023)
AGEHH	Age of the household	Continuous	Measure in year	-/+	Nanda et al. (2019)
Martial	Marital status	Categorical	0=unmarrid,1=married,	+/-	Jabeen et al., (2020)
ADUEQU	Household labor	Continuous	Adult equivalent	+/-	Abdurezak and Ahmed (2020), Igwe (2020)
DEPEND	Dependency ratio	Continuous	Dependency ratio	-/+	Asfaw et al., (2017), Wake et al., *2020)
LIVES	Livestock ownership of the households	Continuous	TLU	+/-	Abdurezak and Ahmed, (2020) W/kidan and Tafesse, (2023)
LAND	Total Land size	Continues	hectare	+/-	Neglo et al. (2021)
CRACC	Credit access	Dummy	1=yes,0 otherwise	+/-	Yulisa and Permana (2022),Edota (2023)
ACCINFO	Access of market information	Dummy	Have access=1, 0=other	+/-	Ahmed et al. (2021) Kazungu (2023)
DSMAR	Distance market	Continuous	Measure in walking hour	+/-	Damena and Habte (2017)
TRAIN	Training access	Dummy	Have access=1, 0=other	+/-	Abate (2018), Gatdet (2021)
DSROAD	Road distance	Continuous	Measure in Kilometer	+/-	Dalal et al. (2024) Damena and Habte (2017)
NETWORK	Member of social network	Dummy	1 member,0=otherwise	+/-	Mohamed, (2019) Bayu, (2021)
WORKAR	Working area	Dummy	1,yes, 0= otherwise	+	Ferreira et al., (2019; Kazungu, (2023)

4. Results and Discussion

4.1.Determinants of Participation in Indigenous Handcraft Activities

A binary logistic regression model was employed to examine the factors influencing household participation in indigenous handcraft activities in the study area. The choice of this model aligns with the methodological justification provided earlier. The analysis was conducted using STATA version 17, and the regression results are summarized in Table 3.

As shown in Table 3, out of the fifteen explanatory variables included in the model, five were found to significantly influence household participation in indigenous handcraft activities. These variables are sex of the household head, dependency ratio, social network, access to information, and availability of a working area. Their effects were observed at the 1% and 10% significance levels, indicating both positive and negative influences on the likelihood of household engagement in handcraft production.

Sex (SEXHH): Sex of rural households is a factor that affects household's participation in indigenous handcraft in the study area. The result of the binary logistic regression analysis revealed that this variable was found to be statistically significant at 1% of significance level and influences rural households 'participation in indigenous handcraft negatively. The marginal effect result indicated that household head was male, the probability of participating in a handcraft activity decreased by 54.57%. This implies that male-headed households place more emphasis on other income-generating activities due to cultural habits and social norms. Moreover, key informant interviews reveal that this could be due to many socio-cultural factors that male-headed households might involve out-of-house activity. According to Eshetu and Mekonnen (2016) also found that females are more likely to participate in local indigenous handcraft activities. However, Leza (2019) found the male or female of a household head to have a significant and positive effect on handcraft participation.

Dependency Ratio (DEPEND): This variable was significant at the 10% significance level and positively influenced households' participation in indigenous handcraft. The result of the marginal effect endorsed that households have a dependency ratio; the probability of their participation in handcraft activity increased by 45.05%, other things being constant. It implies that as the household dependency ratio increases, households are more likely to engage in indigenous handcraft activities, because of in order to get incomes to feed the high number of dependency and those child dependants family members helps to supply take, and delivering handcraft inputs. According to Makhdoom and Shah (2016) indigenous handcraft activity in a large dependency ratio can be seen as using it to supplement their income and support their dependents. This means that when there is a higher dependency ratio in a household relative to working-age adults, the household is more likely to engage in handcraft activities.

Access to market information (ACCINFO): This variable positively and significantly affects handcraft participation at 10% significant level. The marginal effect of 0.28 for access to market information implies that, compared to households without access to market information, the probability of households with access participating in handicraft activities is 28.03% higher, holding other variables constant. This suggests that information about market trends, prices, inputs and demand for handicraft products empowers individuals to make informed decisions regarding their participation in the sector. Improved access to market information can help artisans identify opportunities, reduce risks, and increase their chances of success in the handicraft market. Additionally, information access allows handcrafters to learn new techniques and skills that can improve the quality of their work. In consistent with this result Dufera et al. (2023) and Astatike and Gazuma (2019) concluded from their study that access to market information increased participation in handcrafts due to the craftsmen known the overall information about handcraft marketing. Moreover, the research result is supported by the findings of Yadav et al. (2022), who examined access to market information significantly, affected handcraft participation households.

Social Network (NETWORK): Members participation on social network was found to be a determinant factor for the households 'participation in handcraft. The social network was found to positively and significantly affect handcraft activity at a 10% significant level. The marginal effect for social network indicates that households with social network connections have a 24.89% higher probability of participating in handicraft activities compared to those without, holding other variables constant. These are due to the social network developing the working habits of society, sharing the benefit and loses and supporting each other with in a group had a potential of sharing their experience during meetings or other social networking systems, and non-participants may asking about handcraft activities. These studies were consistent with Ahmed et al. (2021), the result of the logit model analysis comes up with a finding showing that membership in social groups such as iddir and iqub significantly and positively influences participation in handcraft. This is because becoming a member of a social organization was used for sharing the experience of how handcraft is practiced in a group. A study by Shafi et al. (2019) also agrees with the result of this study, which indicates that become members are encouraged to attend social network meetings, support each other on handcraft activities by creating linkages

between those networks and promoting financial flows, and enhance collaboration between different social network groups.

Working Area (WORKAR): This variable was significant at 1% of significant level and positively influences households' participation in handcraft activities. The marginal effect for working area revealed that households with access to a working area are 96.43% more likely to participate in handicraft activities compared to those without, holding other variables constant. It implies that households with working area could produce more handcrafted products and production and also supply more units of those products to the market. Finally, they gain more income. As a result, the household is motivation and encouraged to participate in handcraft activities. This study is consistent with Ahmed et al. (2021), and Kazungu (2023) revealed that households with their working area are more likely to participate in handcraft activities.

Table 3: Binary logistic regression of determinants handcrafts participation

Handcraft participant Yes No N=90 N=177			
Variables	**Marginal effects**	**Std. err.**	**Z**
Sex of sample household	-0.546	0.18	-3.03***
Age of sample household	0.002	0.01	0.27
Marital status of the household	-0.155	0.15	-1.04
Educational level of the household	-0.015	0.03	-0.50
Adult equivalent	-0.072	0.06	-1.21
Dependency ratio	0.435	0.26	1.67*
Total livestock in TLU	0.001	0.01	0.05
Land size	-0.032	0.04	-0.75
Road distance	0.003	0.01	0.28
Market distance	0.003	0.01	0.27
Access to market information	0.280	0.14	1.99*
Credit access	-0.029	0.15	-0.20
Training access	0.015	0.08	0.18
Social network	0.249	0.15	1.72*
Working area	0.964	0.02	48.05***
Constant	2.939	3.04	0.97
Number of obs =267	Pseudo R2 = 0.8057		

LR chi2(15) = 274.95 Log likelihood = -33.1591

Prob> chi2 = 0.0000

***, * Significant at 1%, and 10% probability level respectively

Source: Authors Computation from survey data, 2025

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1.Conclusion

This study examined the determinants of indigenous handcraft participation among rural households in the Central Gondar Zone, specifically in Gondar Zuria District of the Amhara Region, Ethiopia. Primary data were collected from 267 households selected through a multistage sampling procedure from *Maksegnit* One, *Maksegnit* Two, and *Enfranz* kebeles. A semi-structured questionnaire was administered to gather quantitative information on the demographic, socioeconomic, and institutional characteristics of the households. The data were analyzed using a binary logistic regression model, chosen based on the nature of the dependent variable and supported by previous empirical literature. The results reveal that the dependency ratio, access to information, social networks, and availability of a working area significantly and positively influence household participation in indigenous handcraft activities. Conversely, the sex of the household head, specifically being male, was found to negatively influence participation. These findings highlight that household engagement in indigenous handcraft activities is shaped by interrelated demographic, social, and institutional factors. Strengthening these determinants is therefore essential for enhancing participation and improving livelihoods among rural households.

5.2.Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed to enhance handcraft activities and improve household income in Gondar Zuria District:

- **Support Female-Headed Households**: Female-headed households were less likely to participate in handcraft activities. Targeted interventions, including tailored training programs, access to credit, and market support, should be implemented to empower women artisans. Collaborative efforts between female-headed households and local authorities can empower these families and unlock their full economic potential.

- **Develop Accessible Workspaces**: The availability of dedicated working areas significantly increases household participation in handcraft activities. Local governments and community organizations should establish shared workshops and marketplaces equipped with the necessary tools and facilities. Such spaces can enhance productivity, promote collaboration, and create visible platforms for selling products.
- **Enhance Market Information and Linkages**: Access to reliable market information is critical for both participation and income generation. Stakeholders should promote information dissemination through multiple channels, including mass media (radio, mobile), community networks, trade associations, and tourism offices. Organizing regular networking events and business forums can facilitate knowledge exchange and strengthen market linkages for artisans.
- **Integrate Handcrafts into Development Strategies**: Policymakers should recognize handcraft production as a vital component of rural economic development. Integrating handcraft promotion into broader livelihood, cultural heritage, and tourism development programs can provide sustainable income opportunities and preserve indigenous skills.
- **Encourage Community-Based Collaboration**: Community-based initiatives, including cooperatives and artisans' associations, can strengthen collective bargaining, resource sharing, and market access. Collaboration between artisans, local government, and development organizations can create a supportive ecosystem that enhances participation and income.

Ethical Approval

This study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Department of Rural Development and Agricultural Extension, College of Agriculture, Food and Climate Science, Injibara University (Approval No.: INU/CAFECS/RDAE/46/2025; Date: March 24, 2025). The ethics committee was chaired by Mr. Amsalu Embiale Hunegnaw, along with its members. All procedures followed the Declaration of Helsinki, and informed consent was obtained from all participants.

Informed Consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants prior to their involvement in the study. Participants were informed of the purpose, procedures, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence

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