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ARTS AND CRAFTS AND UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

RZEMIOSŁO ARTYSTYCZNE A CELE ZRÓWNOWAŻONEGO ROZWOJU ONZ

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to show the links between arts and crafts and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations. The UN aims to cover the most important challenges that humanity and the global economy must face in the nearest future, such as poverty, hunger, health, access to education, climate change or sustainable development. According to the author, arts and crafts, although it is a narrow field listed within the group of cultural and creative industries, can contribute to achieving the goals of the UN, positively influencing, among others on employment, fair trade and ethical production.

Keywords: *arts and crafts, handicrafts, United Nations, sustainable development, global economy, sustainable development goals, cultural and creative industries, inequalities*

Streszczenie

Celem artykułu jest przedstawienie powiązań między rzemiosłem artystycznym a ustanowionymi przez Organizację Narodów Zjednoczonych Celami Zrównoważonego Rozwoju 2030. Cele ONZ obejmują najważniejsze wyzwania, którym ludzkość i globalna gospodarka muszą sprostać w najbliższym czasie, takie jak ubóstwo, głód, zdrowie, dostęp do edukacji, zmiany klimatyczne czy zrównoważony rozwój. Zdaniem autorki rzemiosło artystyczne, chociaż jest wąską dziedziną wyszczególnioną w ramach grupy przemysłów kulturalnych i kreatywnych, może przyczynić się do osiągnięcia celów ONZ, wpływając pozytywnie m.in. na poziom zatrudnienia, sprawiedliwy handel i etyczną produkcję.

Słowa kluczowe: *rzemiosło artystyczne, Organizacja Narodów Zjednoczonych, zrównoważony rozwój, gospodarka globalna, cele zrównoważonego rozwoju, przemysły kulturalne i kreatywne, nierówności*

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Statement of the problem in general outlook and its connection with important scientific and practical tasks.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are the set of principles prepared and implemented by United Nations in 2015. They are treated as global call to action to end the most important problems of contemporary world and global economy, such as poverty, endangered environment, lack of potable water and human rights. According to the UN report, following the rules and guidelines up to 2030 people can minimize all of the listed global challenges.

17 Sustainable Development Goals grouped by UN are as follows:

GOAL 1: No Poverty

GOAL 2: Zero Hunger

GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being

GOAL 4: Quality Education

GOAL 5: Gender Equality

GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

GOAL 10: Reduced Inequality

GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

GOAL 13: Climate Action

GOAL 14: Life Below Water

GOAL 15: Life on Land

GOAL 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions

GOAL 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal

The 17 SDGs are recognized as being self-integrated. The action in one area can affect outcomes in another (eg. No poverty has an impact on Good health and Wellness, Decent work has an impact on Reduced Inequality etc.) The common vision of all of the is to have sustainable world (UNDP). In sustainable goals UN member states set out a transformational vision of a world free of poverty, hunger, disease as well as fear and violence (UN 2015).

What all this ambitious goals, linked rather to the global politics, strategies of the biggest companies and high technology solutions, can have in common with the world of artisans, craftsmakers, and small handmade production? In the long run, handicraft is not the field of interest of the majority of state decision makers. The participation of handicraft in macroeconomics is rather inconspicuous, moreover, the place of this sector in Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI), in which it is classified, is modest and even questioned.

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Nonetheless, the raise of handicraft movement is one of the global trends which is possible to observe recently. Handicraft, originally deeply rooted in local cultures, rural closed societies, traditional guilds of craftsmasters, are becoming more and more popular, not only as a way of spending free time and the way of relaxation, but also as an idea of born global business. This is the reason why handicraft is considered as one of the tool to make SDG goals more reachable.

Analysis of latest research where the solution of the problem was initiated.

The subject of SDG is primarily dealt with by agencies subordinate to the UN. One of them is UNESCO, an institution responsible primarily for culture and education.

This agency puts the whole culture at the heart of SDG, protection of its heritage and its use by subsequent generations is certainly an end in itself.

At the same time, however, it is culture that can directly influence the goals of SDG, such as decent work, reducing social inequalities, and access to education. In contrast, indirect benefits of culture are obtained through culturally conscious and effective implementation of development goals. (Hosagrahar J., 2017)

Undoubtedly, there has recently been a significant increase in the entire CCI sector, in which we also place arts and crafts. At the same time, crafts, being nowadays on a rising wave of popularity, can also make a valuable contribution to achieving sustainable development goals.

This is evident in the global approach to this sector served by international organizations, and the benefits of using a craft approach to building added value in the economy are highlighted at national and global levels (UNCTAD, 2018).

In the latest studies, a sustainable economy is placed next to a value-based economy, identified with product improvement and polishing of own skills, focusing on satisfying needs in a sustainable, yet close to perfect manner.

A contemporary look at craftsmanship also fits into this idea. According to value-based economics, there is a need to go beyond the financial aspects of transactions and to know their cultural significance. The idea of the importance of culture contrasts sharply with the traditional approach to the economy, where culture has a marginal or only instrumental role. (Klamer 2017, p. XV).

Craft certainly has considerable potential to support sustainable development, especially in developing countries. It can also potentially interact with knowledge and the information revolution to gain access to new, lucrative sustainable markets.

For these reasons, it gives developing countries the opportunity to join the overall development paradigm, provided it can interact with an innovation-based area that gives added value (Reubens R., 2019, p. 63).

Increasingly, small, home-based craft businesses are being promoted as an alternative to unsustainable production and consumption. This is done especially in terms of environmental and the human rights of local life and a healthy society.

Just like farmers' markets, slow-living practices, exchange trading, social exchanges, contemporary craft economy is clearly positioned in a larger picture of emerging microeconomic activities (Luckman S. 2015, p. 132).

Aims of paper. Methods

The aim of the article is to collect and classify information about good craft practices that can significantly affect the realization of the SDG objectives.

The collection is open and may be changed while implementing. Nevertheless, it may be a clue on how economy can use the seemingly narrow field of human activity (as arts and crafts mostly are) to achieve larger global goals.

The methods used in the article consist in analyzing the current literature on the implementation of SDG and the impact of culture on sustainable development, with particular emphasis on artistic craftsmanship.

For the purposes of this study, there is a need to discuss the following goals within the framework of SDG, which the arts and crafts are the closest to and most directly related:

GOAL 1: No Poverty

GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being

GOAL 4: Quality Education

GOAL 5: Gender Equality

GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

GOAL 10: Reduced Inequality

GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

Exposition of main material of research with complete substantiation of obtained scientific results. Discussion

Artistic craftsmanship in most countries is not treated as a competitive advantage, profitable way of doing business or leverage of innovation. Its most common problems are considered from the point of view of protection of cultural heritage, as the given technique and aesthetics are often associated with a particular place, an ethnic or social group or specific moment in the history of art.

At most, its value is considered through transactions related to the art and antiques market, as the border between arts and crafts and works of art is extremely fluid and fuzzy.

However, we are currently witnessing a growing interest in arts and crafts.

This moment in literature is called the third wave of craft development (the first two were the rise of the English Arts and Crafts movement in the nineteenth century and the hippy movement in the 1960s-1970s). The third wave is, among others, the aftermath of the financial crisis of the early 21st century, changes in the value and way of life of many people. (Mignosa A. 2019, p. 2)

We are also currently experiencing the emergence of both a new type of client - aware of the value of human hands and willingly supporting local small producers - as well as a new type of craftsman, which frequently may be, for example, a former financier or marketing manager who formerly worked in a large corporations.

The third wave of craftsmanship is also linked with the dynamic development of the Internet, the emergence of global sales platforms, new possibilities for cashless transactions and fast delivery methods. It is also establishing global contacts without the need to travel, building virtual communities and easy exchange of information between creators and consumers. The exchange of information also involves sharing your

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knowledge and skills, for example through craft techniques courses and stimulating creativity.

So how can the implementation of the UN global strategy be linked to a small inefficient area of the economy, which is arts and crafts? There is created proposal to involve crafts in the implementation of selected SDG goals.

SDG1: No Poverty

This goal is mentioned at the top of the SDGs list. Poverty refers to the most basic living needs of man, such as access to food drinking water and shelter. And Although the number of people living in extreme poverty has fallen by more than half in the decade 1990–2015, there are still hundreds of millions out of poverty.

Uneven progress in combating poverty is also a problem. Developing countries, such as China and India, have achieved significant progress due to rapid economic growth, but simultaneously we can observe the growth of social contrasts in these countries accelerated.

Women are particularly vulnerable to remaining in poverty because of unequal access to education, less paid work, less wealth and the social roles assigned to them in most places, which links Objective 1 to Objective 5 of Gender Equality.

How can crafts support the fight against poverty? For example, trying to break the so-called third wave of popularity of craft arts. Craft, thanks to the Internet, virtual galleries and ease in distant travels, is much easier to show the world, and thus - to sell.

Local communities "immersed" in craft for generations can benefit. In countries struggling with poverty (such as India or Nepal, Central or South African countries), craft can become a lever of international trade, thanks to the opportunity to show it to global audiences.

Mass tourism and people coming from distant countries to the workplace of local craftsmen also give a chance (although at the time of writing this article it is difficult to assess how the global coronavirus pandemic will change the tourism industry).

Tourists more and more often value authentic souvenirs in the form of handmade items.

This is a great advantage of the craft sector over the mass souvenir industry, which offers the same products in virtually every latitude. In a natural way, you can successfully entangle the promotion of tourism of a country or region showing local artists and their works, which benefits the economy but also craftsmen in the end.

SDG3. Good Health and Well-being

Although the world has made great progress in the fight against disease and mortality in the 20th century (which resulted in a dramatic increase in life expectancy or a decrease in child mortality), there is still a lot to be done, especially when it comes to access to basic health care or equipping health facilities.

Environmental pollution and climate change, as well as the outbreak of the global coronavirus pandemic, also pose new challenges.

It is also worth taking into account the need to protect mental health, which is additionally exposed at the beginning of the 21st century to the risk of deterioration due to overwork, social alienation, and the inappropriate use of new technologies, including social media.

In the case of achieving this goal, civilization facing uneven progress again. Not everywhere health insurance is universal and guaranteed by the state.

Access to medicines is not guaranteed everywhere and financially available.

The impact of craft on health and well-being is difficult to see at first glance. Or even it makes more doubts. What can have to do with spending time in one uncomfortable position or tiring your eyes while sitting in low light over a complicated pattern? Here it is worth considering using the craft for therapeutic purposes.

This solution has been used for a long time, especially in the form of workshops that help treat autism, sensory integration or depression. Focus on creation also helps in reducing stress, also increases self-esteem (Horghagen S. 2014, p. 146).

SDG4 Quality Education

It is worth seeing the huge progress that has been made in the field of education development in recent years. Undoubtedly, the goal of qualitative education coincides with other SDGs and often depends on them. For example, goal 1 No poverty - without achieving this goal, it is difficult to talk about access to education in the first place. Social inequalities, unfortunately, do not make the task easier, as do armed conflicts, internal crises, and natural disasters. However, this does not change the approach to education as one of the key ways of sustainable development.

Craft and education - this combination seems to be consistent. Often countries focused on solid craftsmanship, investing in educating future masters (in master schools) have a much more stable economy and a wealthier society (Crafts Council, 2014). An example would be Western Europe with Germany at the forefront (Fjeldsted T., 2019, p. 92).

SDG5: Gender Equality

Gender equality is a goal particularly closely related to goals 1, 4, 8 and 10. Here, too, there has been an improvement in recent decades, but there is still much to be done in women's access to the labor market, health care, and the same rights to education as men. Equality has been proven to be one of the most important ways to improve the entire economy and its sustainable development. Evidence of this is even the results of developed countries.

In the case of traditional handicrafts, women have been involved in such a profession for generations. They perform the most arduous and laborious activities, such as weaving, sewing, embroidery, knitting. At the same time, these are relatively poorly paid jobs. There is also the problem of an invisible contribution to the manufacturing process and the sale of handicrafts - the latter activity in many places in the world falls to men. Therefore, men often become the "face" of the craft. The buyer has direct contact only with them.

On the so-called Third Wave of Craft, a lot of new women's craft businesses have also been created recently. The perception of the invisible and small-scale women's "hobby" is changing due to the very good visibility of global portals enabling the sale of handicrafts from Etsy.com at the forefront (Luckman 2015, p. 96).

Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

This goal is definitely related to the battle against poverty, but it is also close to the goals related to eliminating inequalities (goals 5 and 10). It is associated with the promotion of work on official, equal terms, the liquidation of the gray economy in employment, and a decent valuation of all types of work.

It is also one of the problems of contemporary arts and crafts. The work of craftsmen in poor countries costs differently, otherwise in wealthy ones. Hand-made products in Nepal or India can therefore be bought at a very favorable price, including long-distance

shipment, customs and commissions, as opposed to manufacturers operating in France, Denmark or Great Britain.

Inclusive and sustainable economic growth can drive progress and generate the means to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. Globally, labour productivity has increased and unemployment is back to pre-financial crisis levels. However, the global economy is growing at a slower rate. More progress is needed to increase employment opportunities, particularly for young people, reduce informal employment and the gender pay gap and promote safe and secure working environments to create decent work for all (UN, 2019).

However, the growing awareness of the consumers is important. He or she chooses products often using information about the place of manufacture, materials and even people who work in a given place.

Consciously choosing manual products gives up the purchase of products even with similar aesthetics, but still mass-produced. When making such a purchasing decision, the customer often opts out having even more attractive prices offered by big industry.

Therefore, to meet such consumer requirements, artisan workshops should focus on the implementation of the fair trade idea.

Full price transparency of the offered products may be helpful. This type of strategies is also favored by offering better and better working conditions - with an official fixed agreement, social security, holidays, increasing the comfort of performing duties and an effective employee remuneration system (Reubens R., 2019, p. 65).

Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

Aspects of the prevailing global economic environment have not been conducive to rapid progress on Sustainable Development Goal No. 9. While financing for economic infrastructure has increased in developing countries and impressive progress has been made in mobile connectivity, countries that are lagging behind, such as least developed countries, face serious challenges in doubling the manufacturing industry's share of GDP by 2030, and investment in scientific research and innovation remains below the global average (UN 2019).

How can crafts help the industry, is that even possible? Craftsmanship certainly inspires designs and styles, but also simple solutions that can then be mechanized in industrial production. In turn, the human factor, which stands at the center of the craft, is also successfully used even for quality management in production.

It is even worth taking a look at the German approach to craft, the famous *handverk* glorifies the work of human hands and skills trained under the guidance of masters. *Handverk* has been operating in Germany for years, literally understood as the work of hands, and symbolically as the personal supervision of a man, not a machine over the design and manufacture of objects, and the resulting guarantee of product quality.

The German approach to craftsmanship therefore focuses not so much on the aesthetic or look of craft products, but on their quality and functionality (Fjeldsted T., 2019, p. 91).

Artistic craftsmanship is undoubtedly an area that stimulates creativity, necessary in creating innovative solutions.

Goal 10: Reduced Inequality

Inequality within and among nations continues to be a significant concern despite progress in and efforts at narrowing disparities of opportunity, income and power. Income inequality continues to rise in many parts of the world, even as the bottom 40 percent of the population in many countries has experienced positive growth rates.

Greater emphasis will need to be placed on reducing inequalities in income as well as those based on other factors.

Additional efforts are needed to increase zero-tariff access for exports from least developed countries and developing countries, and assistance to least developed countries and small island developing States. (UN 2019)

Eradicating inequalities is another goal deeply integrated with others (e.g. SDG 5 or 8) and very close to arts and crafts. How can crafts support the process of eliminating inequalities? For example, by providing additional "human" values to everyday objects. Craft is the domain of many developing countries is often neglected in these places. Craft societies often live in poverty devoting themselves solely to manual labor.

Thanks to greater support for crafts, people working in this sector will gain greater customer acceptance, their work will be more appreciated and needed.

Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

Cities that focus on sustainable development are a better place to live. Residents live more comfortably and peacefully, in clean air and in an aesthetic environment of greenery as well as well-designed architecture and convenient access to public services.

The idea of craft cities fits well with the ethos of a craft city. A network of creative craft cities worldwide has been launched by the World Crafts Council (WCC) in the framework of the creative economy and in response to the growing awareness of the contribution of local authorities, craftspeople and communities to cultural, economic and social development (World Craft Council).

One of the first places that obtained the status of Craft City is the Danish island of Bornholm, which is a region with characteristic ceramics and glass processing. Undoubtedly, it is also a place that is the quintessence of sustainability, focusing even on ecological transport and recycling.

When analyzing the Craft Cities map, it is worth noting that the majority of Craft Cities is located in Asia and South America. The status of Craft City is to facilitate the promotion of local handicrafts, increase its prestige, but also to strengthen the craft ethos on the spot among the inhabitants of the region.

Goal 12 Responsible Consumption and Production

Worldwide material consumption has expanded rapidly, as has material footprint per capita, seriously jeopardizing the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 12 and the Goals more broadly.

Urgent action is needed to ensure that current material needs do not lead to the over extraction of resources or to the degradation of environmental resources, moreover it should include policies that improve resource efficiency, reduce waste and mainstream sustainability practices across all sectors of the economy (UN, 2019).

Arts and crafts are one of those fields that deeply support responsible consumption and production.

Craft workshops necessarily operate on a small scale, most often use small amounts of resources, the activity of craftsmen is increasingly pro-ecological (upcycling and recycling). These are also the expectations of the market for recipients of craft goods and this is how arts and crafts are perceived.

If the conscious consumer intentionally buys a product made by an artistic craftsman, he or she expects a product made by hand or with simple tools, usually in one piece, using natural or harmless environment (and thus also users) materials (Crafts Council, 2014).

The decision to buy a handmade or craft product is often associated with a higher transaction cost. However, this is a conscious choice of the buyer who wants to invest increased resources in an object manufactured in a more responsible way than mass products.

The craft approach of responsible production and consumption probably best reflects the DIY movement, which on one hand stimulates creativity and is a form of spending free time (which, for example, helps to improve well-being or is a support in therapeutic workshops), but also has an impact for the reuse of unnecessary items that can be given new life. A great example are the various types of custom decorations that people can make themselves according to the maxim of movement.

There are many examples, starting with the reuse of packaging (making of decorations), and ending with giving new life and new functionality to used items (e.g. old bicycle used as small garden architecture, using unwanted clothes and pieces of fabric for jewelry and toys).

Goal 13. Climate action

With rising greenhouse gas emissions, climate change is occurring at rates much faster than anticipated and its effects are clearly felt worldwide. While there are positive steps in terms of the climate finance flows and the development of nationally determined contributions, far more ambitious plans and accelerated action are needed on mitigation and adaptation. Access to finance and strengthened capacities need to be scaled up at a much faster rate, particularly for least developed countries (UN 2019).

This goal is undoubtedly strongly associated with the previous one (SDG No 12). Responsible production is also usually pro-environmental, reducing environmental pollution and climate change.

The small scale of production, a small share of natural resources in the production of goods, reuse of waste, negligible mechanization of production that does not contribute to greater environmental pollution are the main advantages and strengths of artistic craft in the fight against climate change.

Table 1. Text SDGs and role of handicrafts

No	SDG	Goal Explanation	Role of handicrafts
1.	No Poverty	End poverty in all its forms everywhere	the use of global sales platforms to sell handicrafts; craft participation in tourist promotion of a country or region
3.	Good Health and Well-being	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	workshops, social proximity, contact with art
4.	Quality Education	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	manual development, stimulation of creativity
5.	Gender Equality	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	promotion of female craftsmanship
8.	Decent Work and Economic Growth	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all	price transparency, emphasizing the value of human hands work
9.	Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	stimulating creativity, quality management
10.	Reduced Inequality	Reduce inequality within and among countries	promotion of local traditional crafts
11.	Sustainable Cities and Communities	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	craft cities UNESCO, inclusive craftmakers societies
12.	Responsible Consumption and Production	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	conscious shopping, transparent production
13.	Climate Action	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	small scale of production, upcycling, sustainable raw materials

Source: compiled by the author

Conclusions

Although the goals of SDG UN relate primarily to global system changes going towards a balanced life on Earth, and thus focusing on the largest political and economic players of the globe (country authorities, corporate boards), it is worth noting the role of the recurring trend of arts and crafts popularity.

Crafts is becoming an important force influencing purchasing decisions (a return to tradition, uniqueness, original aesthetics), but also increasingly is chosen as a way of spending free time among the middle class, which is important for the development of the economy, and sometimes becomes a way of earning money through sale of handicrafts or services (workshops and courses).

At the time of writing this article, it is difficult to state unequivocally what will be the impact of the Covid-19 global pandemic on both craft development and, above all, on the degree to which UN sustainable development goals are met within the prescribed period. In the event of a downturn, problems in the tourism industry, declaration of bankruptcy of companies or suspension of economic activity, the picture of the situation of artistic craftsmanship may be quite different.


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