

Revival of Pyatker Painting through Craft Village: Study of Jharkhand

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Abstract

Pyatkar painting is one of cultural traditions of eastern India but it is on the verge of extermination. Amadubi village in Jharkhand known for its culture and dance is also known for its one unique practice of Pyatker painting. Pyatker artisans being poor, illiterate and rural background do not get adequate opportunities to access to the domestic/ international high-end markets. A craft village at Amadubi is possible only with the help and support of government and NGOs. The present paper attempts to understand the traditional aspect of Pyatker painting, to find out the reasons of extermination of Pyatker painting and to make suggestions for promotion of Pyatker painting. This paper also attempts to highlight the importance of craft village in the revival of Pyatker painting.

This paper would be of great importance to the marketer of Indian handicrafts and also to the artisans who would be benefited through it. The data collected from the secondary sources. Before concluding the paper, the role of the government and NGOs will also be discussed in the promotion of handicraft and protection of interest of artisans.

Keywords: Handicraft, Artisan, Rural Development, Craft village, Marketing

Introduction

Jharkhand is a state in eastern India, full of renewable and non-renewable resources. Jharkhand is known for its divine climate and minerals. According to Bera (2008) Jharkhand existed, way before the Magadha Empire, as a distinct geo-political and cultural entity. Researchers and scholars believe that the Jharkhand's tribal language is identical to the language used by Harappans. This resulted into interpretation of Harappa imprinting in the form of rock painting. Art and craft have traditional influence as an integral part of life in Jharkhand. Handicraft is among

major livelihood options in Jharkhand for tribal and non-tribal population. Jharkhand is known for its woodwork, bamboo work, Pyatker Painting, tribal ornament, and stone carvings, etc.

Jharkhand has dense forest that encourages the use of wood in household articles like door panels, boxes, windows, etc. The woodcraft of Jharkhand has good market in India and abroad. Bamboos found abundantly in Jharkhand forest. Using bamboo local artisans make different artefacts like furniture, basket, hunting and fishing equipment, etc. The Malhar and Tentrri tribal communities in Jharkhand are experts in the metal crafts and household wares. Stone carving is in the process of extinction. Only few stone carvers are left and they are not performing as it fails to generate any revenue.

There are four varieties of tribal paintings in the state i.e *Sohrai*, *Kohber*, *Jadopatia*, and *Pyatker*. *Sohrai* is the art of harvest festival in autumn, using red, black, yellow, and white earth. Large images of bulls, horses with riders, wild animals, trees, lotuses, peacock, etc. are some of common art forms. It is considered to be good luck painting. *Kohber* is an art of marriage season where the walls of bridal chambers are painted. It is believed that it brings good luck to the newly wed. *Jadopatia* is practiced in Dumka district of the state. These paintings are believed to have magical and healing powers depicting the scenes from after life. This form of painting is used as a visual aid for story telling by *Jadopatia* painters. *Jadopatia* painters generally make their traditional painting using natural inks and colors.

One of cultural traditions of Eastern India is Pyatkar painting. Pyatker paintings belong to dates back to five centuries. Jharkhand's Pyatker painting is one of the oldest tribal paintings in India. But this painting is in the phase of extermination due to lack of infrastructural and

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monetary support. Amadubi village in Jharkhand known for its culture and dance is also known for its one unique practice of Pyatker painting. The families in the village are dancers and artisans. The village is designed in such a way that tourist can come and stay with tribal families to experience their traditional culture. The Pyatker painting is used to narrate ancient stories through series of sketches. The Pyatker painting is drawn on handmade paper with colors prepared from vegetables, flowers, crushed stone, earth colors and ochre color derived from certain kind of stones. Bamboo sticks are inserted at the either ends of the painting for scrolling. The eco-friendly material used in Pyatker painting makes it look rustic and warm. Narzary (n.d.) claimed that the story telling practice of Pyatkar paintings is almost five centuries old. He also quoted Anil Chitrakar's words regarding Pyatker painting as "The people sit throughout the story-telling session which involves scroll paintings and it is supported by traditional songs. These paintings give a philosophical view about life and death."

An article, Ranking in revenue with rustic appeal (2014) published in The Telegraph stated that Jharkhand established its first tribal craft village under rural tourism project in Amadubi. Amadubi has generated annual revenue of Rs. 7.3 lakh. Amadubi resort is getting tremendous response from environment enthusiasts.

An article Amadubi catches big google wave (2015) published in The Telegraph stated that how Amadubi has been proved a suitable example of successful amalgamation of technology and culture. American travel website Tripadvisor with the help of Google Maps and local villagers are creating divine atmosphere to woo tourist from Jharkhand and West Bengal.

Bose (2015) highlighted that artisans paint beautiful stories of epic battles and divine lovers but they themselves are forced to lead to struggle for their basic necessities, as Pyatker doesn't pay. Therefore artisans are forced to sell vegetables at *haats*. A community called Chitrakars is basically Pyatker painters. There are only 40 Chitrakar families left. Pyatkar is a scroll painting depicting the scenes from epic, folklore and village life using vegetable dyes. Pyatker is in the blood of Chitrakar community. Youngsters don't find this art sufficient for the fulfillment

their basic needs of food, cloth and shelter. They are finding migration to Jamshedpur as an option of better livelihood. Only Anil Chitrakar and Bijoy Chitrakar are actively working on Pyatker painting in Amadubi village.

Anil Chitrakar claimed to Bose (2015) that they have modernised Pyatker by using chart paper instead of cloth and fabric paints instead of natural colors for more durability. He also said that they want to reach more customers but don't how? It's their family tradition but passing on this art form to youngsters is difficult. People are migrating to cities for livelihood. Only handful artists are serious.

Bijoy Chitrakar told Bose (2015), "We earn between Rs 3,000 to Rs 5000 a month through Pyatker, but not always. We need more art camps in the city to reach out to customers." He also suggested that they could work with designers to imbibe Pyatker on saris, kurtis and T-shirts in bulk. He also suggested Pyatker art can be used in the forms of affordable wall hangings, files and diary covers. He showed concern for the art form and said, "If the art doesn't pay, it will die with our generation. Why will youngsters show interest in something that doesn't help them earn money? But Pyatker must live. It is magnificent."

Role of Government and NGO for preserving Pyatker Painting

Rural artisans of Amadubi have no exposure to current market scenario. Rural artisans have no means to livelihood with Pyatker painting. They are either forced to sell vegetables or to migrate to Jamshedpur for better job prospects (Bose, 2015). Government and NGOs are showing interest in Pyatker painting but require more attention as the art form is dying. At Amadubi, the state tourism department opened a centre called Rusika Sangeko- abode of artists. Kalamandir, a Jamshedpur-based NGO, runs it. Rusika Sangeko showcases Pyatker painting for tourists. An NGO named Kalamandir runs a store called Biponi in Bistupur with a mission of saving Pyatker painting. This store provides Pyatker painting in the heart of the city.

Table 1: Funds Released to NGOs under Various Handicrafts Schemes in India (2012-2013 to 2015-2016)

<i>(Rs. in Crore)</i>				
<i>Schemes</i>	<i>2012-13</i>	<i>2013-14</i>	<i>2014-15</i>	<i>2015-16</i>
Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana.	42.44	5.11	5.99	7.73
Marketing Support & Services Scheme	8.72	10.04	4.42	3.17
Design & Technology Upgradation Scheme	8.29	14.29	7.34	0.60
Human Resource Development Scheme	5.17	17.02	6.75	0.45
Research & Development Scheme	1.71	2.70	0.53	0.60
Infrastructure and Technology Development Scheme	Nil	Nil	1.01	Nil

Source: Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2064, dated on 10.12.2015.

Table 1 describes the amount of funds released to various NGOs under various handicraft schemes in India. It can be observed that funds released under Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana from 2012 to 2016 has lowered by Rs. 34.71 crore. Funds released to NGOs under Market Support and Services Scheme has lowered by Rs. 5.55 crore. Funds released under Design & Technology Upgradation Scheme has lowered by Rs. 7.69 crore. Funds released under Human Resource Development Scheme has lowered by Rs. 4.72 crore. Funds released for Research & Development Scheme has lowered by Rs. 1.11 crore. There is no fund released under Infrastructure and Technology Development Scheme for the year 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2015-16.

Ong (1997) suggested that government should work on establishment of craft village for encouraging tourism and local handicrafts. Through this, artisans can create a connection with the village. By visiting such places tourist can get the opportunity to directly experience the craft workshops. Authentication of local handicraft also helps to motivate local artisans. This will also increase the monetary inflow.

Objectives of the study

- To understand the traditional aspect of Pyatker painting.
- To find out the reasons of extermination of Pyatker painting.
- To make suggestions for promotion of Pyatker painting.

Literature review

In the words of Abraham (1964), "Handicrafts have cultural and aesthetic importance." Samal (1994) studied

how Tribal Co-operative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (TRIFED) does business and provides marketing support to the tribal handicrafts of India. They buy tribal handicrafts directly from artisans and sell the art through their outlets. They have 34 outlets in India and two outlets in overseas.

Mohapatra (2011) suggested an idea of design registration to the Government of India for preventing the incidents of design duplication.

Srivastava (2009) studied entrepreneurship potential in Jharkhand. She found that in spite of abundant natural and human resource in Jharkhand entrepreneurship is not growing as per the expectation. She suggested stifling culture and unstable government as the main reasons of dissatisfaction among the entrepreneurs. She also pointed that natives don't reciprocate towards new technologies. She suggested that Government should propose appropriate policies and programs to enforce the business climate.

She also highlighted the situation of small-scale cottage industries of India. Indian small-scale cottage industries are popular for providing employment opportunities to women and other weaker section of the society. It generally includes rural artisans and urban craftsman. India is a developing country and its small-scale industries are vital for its economic growth as it requires low capital investment and uses locally available resources.

Liao (2010) identified that local artisans are scuffling to recuperate their traditional art forms. There is stiff competition among artisans for receiving fund from government to survive their traditional art form. Artisans are manipulating their art forms to obtain grants to carry on their traditional handicrafts.

Dash (2011) claimed that handicraft sector is the second largest employment opportunity sector after agriculture. Handicraft sector is important not only because it entails low capital investment but also provide employment to artisans especially women. It also produces environment-friendly products. It is required to promote handicraft on platform like Internet marketing. This will help to avail varieties of handicraft sector on a single click.

Pandian (2011) highlighted the importance of training programs. She suggested that training programs should be designed in such way that it contribute for identification, selection and motivation of potential entrepreneurs. Some rebate schemes should be encouraged such as special incentive, tax concessions, reduced rate of interest, etc.

Mehta (2011) studied the problems of rural women. She identified that they generally face problems because of illiteracy and unawareness. She urged capacity building and training programs to provide literacy skills, production skills, marketing, finance and managerial skills. For a developing country like India, rural women entrepreneurs are the trends to follow to increase self-employment.

According to Subramaniam (2011) handicrafts have no potential in rural market as it generally produced in rural areas by rural people. Handicraft has turned to be popular among urban population. They have become sensitive for artifacts and prompt to pay premium price for their acquisition. The gap should be reduced between rural producer and urban buyers. The joint effort of government, private sectors and NGOs are required for better rural literacy, technology, IT tools, etc. Rural art forms suffer because of lack of such supports. It also endangers the art form, as youngsters are least interested to occupy as profession.

Ghosal (2012) highlighted the role of Forest Department Staff and Joint Forest Management by suggesting that they could help in circulating information regarding the use of forest product in tribal socio-cultural life. This might help to identify what artifact can possibly be made from the woods of native forest. Government intervention is required for improving the situation.

According to Nagori (2012) rural sector contribute a major part in Indian economy. Handicraft is among major occupation in rural India. But problems like lack of technical and competitive skills are commonly identified. Marketing skills like product quality, packaging, after

sales service, etc. are need to be worked on. The Internet marketing is a budding concept that might help to boost handicraft business as Internet users are increasing in rural areas as well.

Menon (2012) recognised *haats* as a great medium for exhibiting and preserving rural heritage and rural market. Bhattacharjee (2012) identified that handicrafts are generally invested for decorative purpose. Handicrafts should be making in view of utility dimension. The USP of handicrafts is that it can be marketed as green products. Today's customers are aware and ready to invest in eco-friendly products.

Dhingra (2012) identified major challenges of handicrafts that cover financial and social backwardness of artisans. She also pointed that educational background of artisans are poor. They also face poorly served social security and healthcare measures.

Harza (2012) studied the problems of tribal in Jharkhand. She identified the reasons of problems of tribal in Jharkhand are poverty, low socio-economic conditions, unemployment, etc.

According to Kumar (2013) marketing is vital. He found Internet marketing as a cheapest mode of marketing in current trend. It saves time and money. It also has capability of maximum reach.

According to Mal (2014) companies are realising the importance of socio-economic development of local community. She suggested that companies should have to study the needs of local community and should have a dedicated CSR department for better efficiency. She also described the irony role of government as motivator, facilitator and enabler of CSR rather than dictator.

Agarwal (n.d.) studied the CSR practice of TATA on Primitive Tribal Groups (PGT) of Jharkhand. He identified that the response of PGTs are enthusiastic especially of young people.

Research Methodology

The research paper used exploratory research method and is based on the secondary data sourced from journals, magazines, articles, and media reports. Available secondary data was extensively used for the study. Different news articles, books, and web sources were used which were enumerated and recorded.

Findings and Discussion

The major findings of the study

- Pyatker painting is generally performed at rural area of Jharkhand.
- There are only 40 families left of Chitrakar community who perform Pyatker painting.
- Rural artisans have no means to livelihood with Pyatker painting and they are either forced to sell vegetables or to migrate to Jamshedpur for better job prospects.
- Artisans have neither knowledge nor access to marketing channels.
- Jharkraft is providing a marketing and promotion platform for Pyatker painting.
- Government and NGOs are coming forward to save Pyatker painting.
- At Amadubi, the state tourism department opened a craft village called Rusika Sangeko- abode of artists.
- Rusika Sangeko showcases Pyatker painting for tourists.
- Kalamandir, a Jamshedpur-based NGO, runs the craft village.
- Kalamandir also helps to runs a store called Biponi in Bistupur with a mission of saving Pyatker painting.

According to Socio-Economic and Educational Development Society (SEEDS), approximately 70 lakh artisans are engaged in handicraft sector all over India. The strength of Indian handicraft sector lies with the fact that it is generally inherited skill, requires low capital investment and high value addition. The handicraft is unorganised sector and generally faces problems of startup working capital, and last but not the least, its more decorative and less utility purpose. Artisans are facing tough competition in export market because of machine made goods. Scarcity of raw material is also a concern for artisans. Artisans are great with creativity skills but lack in finance and marketing skills. It is evident that handicraft sector has great possibilities of employment generation and export but it is also true that handicraft sector is unorganised and difficult to service.

As per the report presented by Socio-Economic and Educational Development Society (SEEDS), it is observed that there is a need to make strong efforts for the survival and revival of handicrafts as machine-made goods are

giving tough competition to the traditional handicrafts. To make handicrafts popular over machine-made goods there is need to improve the quality of products by using improved tools and equipment. The quality of handicrafts should be of International standards. The design variation should derive out of consumer taste & preferences and market trends. The price of handicrafts should be competitive and economical. Financial institutions have introduced several credit and development activities for rural development to provide finance for manufacturing, processing and service activities in small, tiny, and cottage and village industries including handicrafts. NGOs are working for unemployed tribal youth by understanding their needs and translating them into effective action plans. The tourism industry and handicraft sector together have great economic potentials for the country. The government has numerous schemes for enhancing livelihood opportunity for tribal in terms of income and employment. The situation demands recognition of artifacts as a potential sector for Indian economy. The export should be focused to developed countries as they have taste for handicrafts. There is need to create awareness and usage of handicrafts. Special focus should be on reduction of drudgery and improvement of quality.

Suggestions

Publicity

It is necessary to publicise the ancient art of Pyatker painting. As Pyatker painting is on the verge of extermination, publicity will help to revive it. Publicity of Pyatker painting should be done to customers as well as to the artisanal community of Chitrakars. Publicity of Pyatker painting can be done through radio, television, print media etc. Internet marketing can also help to aware people about Pyatker painting.

Encouragement

The youths of Chitrakar community should be encouraged to continue their art professionally. The Pyatker painting should be considered as heritage art of Jharkhand as only 40 families are left from Chitrakar community who perform this form of art. The artisans who are above 60 years and still performing Pyatker painting should be given pension from Government. This will help to motivate and support the rural artisans to achieve sustainable livelihood through sale of products.

Awareness

There are a number of schemes by Government of India but artisans are not aware about such schemes. Hence they don't get the benefit of such schemes. The government should broadcast and telecast such schemes on radio and television in their regional language.

As artisans are not literate and not aware of current market scenario, they find it difficult to sell their product. They have no idea about marketing channels. The artifact has potential to generate revenue but due to lack of knowledge of marketing channel artisans are not able to generate revenue as per their expectation. Government, NGOs, and corporate houses should come forward the guidance of artisans. With help of such guidance artisans can sell their artifacts through different marketing channels from different retail outlets.

Modern Design

Artisans should focus on design by designing contemporary artifacts by using both traditional and modern methods. However, the authenticity of traditional craft will be in danger by innovation and the chances of extinction of traditional methods would be high. But promotion of handicraft can be possible by modifying artifacts in such a way that it has daily life utility. It is important to maintain traditional handicraft but sometimes it is hard to fight the battle alone with no financial support. Traditional artisans find it difficult to continue their craft because of no livelihood support from that craft. Hence the survival of traditional handicraft is in danger and appropriate measures are required to be taken by government, NGOs, and corporate houses. Government should provide subsidy to those who are actively involved in traditional handicrafts. NGOs and corporate houses should also come forward for preservation of traditional craft and culture by providing technical, financial and marketing assistance.

Reach out to masses

As Pyatker is exterminating hence it is necessary to make the art reach out to the masses. It can be possible by maximum visibility of Pyatker painting. The Pyatker painting can be used to decorate public places like railway station, bus stand, airports, etc. This will help to revive the old craft practices in their rich and vivid character and exhibit in a permanent display. Designers can do Pyatker

painting on sarees, kurtis, dress materials, etc. This will help to recreate and develop newer and trendier designs to keep in pace with the market.

Conclusion

We would like to quote words of Giddens (2003), "Tradition is invented from modernity, as it is not fixed". Artisans should design contemporary artifacts by using both traditional and modern methods. However, the authenticity of traditional craft will be in danger by innovation and the chances of extinction of traditional methods would be high. But promotion of Pyatker painting can be possible by modifying artifacts in such a way that it has daily life utility. It is important to maintain traditional handicraft but sometimes it is hard to fight the battle alone with no financial support. Traditional artisans find it difficult to continue their craft because of no livelihood support from that craft. Hence the survival of Pyatker painting is in danger. The craft village like Amadubi should function as a resource centers, to document and disseminate information regarding Tribal culture, ethics and rituals. It is required to encourage village tourism by creating an ambience so enticing, such as live display of dances shows, slides & presentations, films and demonstration to increase the footfall. Visitors will come to know about Pyatker painting in the craft village. They will know about history of Pyatker painting. They can also learn Pyatker painting at the workshop of craft village. The art of Pyatker painting should be helped to revive. Appropriate measures are required to be taken by government, NGOs, and corporate houses. Government should provide subsidy to those who are actively involved in Pyatker painting. NGOs and corporate houses should also come forward for preservation of Pyatker painting by providing technical, financial and marketing assistance.

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