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Where there is Rural Wellbeing
there is Universal Prosperity

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A Swastika Model for Rural Design Schooling (SMRDS)

Impact Assessment of Kala Raksha Vidhyalaya in Kutch, Gujarat

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Introduction

The word **handicraft** includes a varied range of pieces. The Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) gave a workable meaning in the Eighth Plan: "Items made by hand, often with the use of simple tools, and generally artistic and/or traditional in nature. They include objects of utility and objects of decoration". Basically, handicrafts are categorized into two class: a) Objects of everyday usage and b) Ornamental objects (Shah and Patel, 2017).

One of the exceptional characteristics of India is the determination of a wide range of different consistent rural cultures. These cultures can be rapidly marked by material culture: clothing and traditional arts and crafts. The exceptional characteristic, nevertheless, more than the clothing and crafts themselves is the circumstance that such expressions come from a collective understanding of the world, a common identity, and an atmosphere in which art is joined into day-to-day life. Additionally, the arts are the creation of traditional learning schemes, which diverge from those of official learning with which people are familiar. With faster development and globalization, such rural lifestyles are nowadays threatened. Yet, it can be gained from them whereas they are still integral (Frater, 2012).

The Handicrafts Part plays an important part in the economy of India. It offers employ to an immense sector of artisans and produces considerable foreign exchange for the nation, whereas conserving its cultural inheritance. Additional, most commercialized craft points for fast, standardized and small cost replication. This reproduces the factory model. The forte of hand craft, creative idea involved and handmade quality are elapsed. The net outcome is that even when artisans can get a living by making contemporary types, most do not wish their children to be artisans (Kala Raksha, Kutch). Assuredly, some method must be changed to allow the artisan to be socially and economically powerful so that

they can withstand and spread the Indian cultural inheritance from generation to generations forever (Shah and Patel, 2017).

Jadhav (2013) indicated that the Indian handicraft business is an unorganized, decentralized, work exhaustive cottage business. Some of the fortes recognized are availability of plentiful and inexpensive work in the nation, utilization of local resources, small capital asset and sole craftsmanship in the elaborating of products along with rising appreciation by transnational customers. Notwithstanding the fortes, the business confronts a amount of difficulties in the nation such as small literateness and education levels, absence of contemporary/ technological skills and absence of suitable finance. The development commission recognizes the fact that the unorganized area that establishes around 93% of the workforce doesn't have an organized scheme to support obtaining or upgrading of skills. The 12th Five Year Plan's idea for the handicraft area comprises formation of worldwide competitive handicrafts and delivery of sustainable living chances to the artisans through pioneering product concepts, better merchandise quality and utilization of technology whereas conserving traditional art.

India has a great history and inheritance of arts and crafts; the traditional Indian community economy has been self-supporting and self-providing for decades. Artisans are the support of India's non-farm rural economy, the distinguished facet about these rural artisans is that they belong from the disorderly sector. As per the outcome of work power survey on employment and unemployment directed in 2011-12 by National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), the amount of assessed employed person were 47.41 crore of which 82.7% of staff (39.14 crore) was in unorganized area (Banik, 2017). Jadhav (2013) concluded that notwithstanding efforts being occupied, matters such as absence of application of strategies and attentiveness on the macro standpoint have finished the efficiency of the efforts, offering tiny or

no outcomes. Post the evaluation of the present state of the Indian artisans, there ascends a necessity for enhancing the skills of this workforce. The current national strategies also sustenance this thought. This workforce that forms a foremost portion of the unorganized area has great employ potential that needs to be appointed.

Yadav (2012) indicated that the difficulties of rural art, that is, the rural artisans like ceramists, weavers, carpenters, blacksmiths, shoemakers, and so on., are fronting numerous complications and difficulties nowadays. The significance of their artwork is declining in their respective communities and contiguous villages. The excellence of their production is falling and they have to deal with excessive competition with the engineering sophisticated goods. Main factors which are accountable to their failure in this respect can be: illiteracy of artisans: Frequently rural artisans are still illiterate or uneducated; some of them are not educated up to the matric grade. Their illiteracy also plays a vital influence which disposed of their family jobs. Because they are not alert of the many strategies and policies of marketing and many artisans programs organized by the state and center administration. Other problems are: non-availability of raw material; income level of rural artisans; use of old and obsolete machinery and equipment; lack of financial assistance; seasonal demand of their products; no means of transportation and communication and shift of rural customers towards the industrial products.

Application by developing countries of technical assistance plans (e.g., design training) to enhance artisans' skills and inspiration grades is not new. Seemingly, such plans were failed at introducing an unconventional design domain to motivate artisans to develop progressive thoughts (Suzuki 2005). Differences in the nature of artistic perception, which effect artisans' design thinking procedures, may have helped to program disaster. A conventional mindset was obvious from gaps related with in-depth cognitive grades of artisans and designers during the initial phases of notion generation (Nagai, Junaidy and Ihsan. 2012).

Frater (2019) indicated that the idea of the design education program is to assess traditional craft as

cultural inheritance, to take traditional information as a pre-requisite and offer what is understood as advanced or specialized education directly to artisans. The aim is to allow artisans to rise their capacity by using their strength—creativity—as well as work. Concurrently, by bringing artisans in contact with modern markets and training them to modernize within traditions, they are also sustained. The intent is that through education artisans get respect as well as revenue. Underlying this idea is the confidence that money-profit, scaling up, etc., is not the final aim.

KalaRaksha

Kala Raksha Vidhyalaya is a public communal enterprise, originated on handicrafts worker's initiative in 1993 in Kutch, Gujarat, India. KalaRaksha presently works with a thousand artisans from fifteen townships to create some of the most attractive hand-embroidered and patch-worked textile goods, Kala Raksha Vidhyalaya, a Design School for Traditional Artisans, is a project assumed by Kala Raksha Trust to encourage education of traditional artisans. The Vidhyalaya is a long-term answer to guarantee sustainability of craft as livelihood. It attempts to empower artisans from around the area of Kutch, which is disposed to the drought, earthquake and hurricane.

Objectives

The paper deals with the overall socio-economic impact of Kala Raksha Vidhyalaya (KRV) on the professional life of Kutch Artisans who graduated from KRV. The idea is to understand the socio-economic impact of a design school in a rural area that focuses on preserving, promoting and sustaining traditional arts and crafts of a community or geography and, at the same time presenting the practice as a source of stable and healthy livelihood opportunity. Hence the objective of the paper is *to assess the impact of Kala Raksha Vidhyalaya on the overall development of artisans who graduated from the rural design school. Moreover, the paper also attempts to provide an implementable model for rural design schooling.*

Research Methodology

The study involved both quantitative and qualitative studies for primary research. A structured questionnaire interview schedule was designed, where 56 respondents (artisan graduates) participated for assessing the impact of KRV on the artisans and their livelihood. Convenience sampling was used for collecting the data due to remoteness and availability of each respondent. A semi

structured interview schedule was designed for understanding the functioning of various aspects of KRV and the challenges it faced over the period of its existence. The veteran artisans, director and employees along with veteran development workers were interviewed for the same.

The newspaper articles, memoirs and, research papers were used for collecting data for secondary research.

Data Analysis

Age Group	No. of Participants (N)
18 and below	6
18-24	12
24-30	8
30-40	10
40-50	10
50 and above	10
Gender	
Male	27
Female	29

Table 1: Demographics of respondents

The research conducted witnessed an equal number of respondents from both the gender. While, there were more participation from age group 18-24 (12) and 30 and above (30 combined). With a sample of 56, the numbers signified the diversity of participants that KRV catered in Kutch.

Employment Status		
Type of Employment	N (Pre KRV)	N (Post KRV)
Employed	22	26
Self Employed	16	30
Not Employed	18	0
Priority of Work		
Primary (Full Time)	30	45
Secondary (Part Time)	8	11

Table 2: Employment status post and pre KRV

It was surprising to see that there were 18 unemployed artisans who become employed post graduation from KRV. Moreover, there was an increase in taking arts and crafts as a primary work post KRV graduation among artisans.

Percent Change in Income from Arts and Crafts		
Percent of Income from Arts and Crafts	N (Pre KRV)	N (Post KRV)
20 and below	11	7
20-40	3	1
40-60	3	6
60-80	5	3
80-100	18	23
Perceptual Income Comparison with Other Artisans		
Change (Decreased)	12	3
Change (Increased)	6	42
No Change	38	11

Table 3: Income and associated comparisons

It was observed that the artisan graduates were happy with the income status post graduation. Nearly, 45 respondents witnessed an increase in the total income while 3 found that their income decreased. The reason was they were recent graduates and had their own startups where they made an investment.

Output (Learning and Skills)	
Factors	Average Rating (out of 5)
Integrity	4.04
Understanding	3.93
Teamwork	4.10
Trust	4.19
Crisis Management	3.69
Solidarity	3.68
Understanding	3.84
Networking	3.58
Reputation	4.02
Competitiveness	3.80

Table 4: Learning during the design programme at KRV

It was observed that all the 56 respondents experienced a great set of learning post graduation from KRV. They highly rated learning and skills like integrity, teamwork, trust building and reputation made in the sector. While, other factors measured above average signifying KRV as an agent of wholesome development of these artisans.

Perception of KRV Graduation with Respect to Design Education	
Statements and Affirmations	Average (out of
I feel more literate about my work as compared to other artisans (non KRV)	4.58
I am confident in imparting knowledge to other fellow artisans	4.62
I carry myself as a respectable artisans in a society	4.25
I am more aware of my indigenous occupation	3.98
I would like to send my children/ relatives to KRV	4.39
I exhibit my work more often in various forums	3.60
I have better understanding of colours after graduating from KRV	4.44
I am capable of dealing with themes of various kinds	4.60
I am more innovative with my designs	4.32
I am more aware of contemporary market and channels	3.93
I am more aware of channels of distribution	3.57
I am more aware of customers preferences	4.05
I can present my product in a better way	4.04
I have learnt to merchandise my handicraft more effectively	3.89

Table 5: Perception of KRV Graduation with Respect to Design Education

The 56 graduates surveyed highly rated literacy of the handicrafts, knowledge transfer, market orientation and product presentation while at the same time preferred sending their kids and relatives engaged in handicrafts to KRV. Moreover, other factors like orientation of various employment opportunities, knowledge creation etc. received an above average rating.

Findings

The study concluded that all the artisans who are either self-employed or employed by an employer in the handicrafts have attained the required design and management (market) knowledge after graduating from KRV. They see themselves as a respectable artisan in the society and can built their own designs and work on various kinds of themes.

The integrity, trust, understanding amongst their co-workers have sky rocketed due to KRV's sessions which puzzled out understanding colours, identifying and researching market trends, analyzing customers, communication, presentation, and more.

The artisans (majorly men) have also understood about the markets and have to knowledge of target audience and to which segment of the market they are catering with their crafts. However, majority of women artisans on one side benefitted from the course with knowledge

and employment but on the other side, could not independently (self-employment) march towards market with their brands and initiatives.

Conclusion

KRV has definitely made an original contribution to the understanding of the relational role of design, market and management practice as part of practicing traditional arts and crafts. The indigenous concept of rural design schooling supports the bigger sphere of rural community development of villages of Kutch. Though the focus has been on preserving the traditional arts and crafts, KRV conveniently crafts a path for artisans of Kutch to enter the business space and pursue their art as a fulltime profession. KRV's effort has made other organization and even the government to introduce art-led initiatives as a commonplace in rural development strategies. The effects of design education in rural community, particularly beyond economic development, have received attention in social and technical space in

Kutch. However, there is a need to introduce a more sustainable model for sustaining a fund driven model of KRV. A Swastika based model for providing a sustainable structure to such rural design schooling has been presented as a suggestion in the recommendation section.

Recommendations

A rural design school will face multiple complexities

when operating in a complex rural setting. Hence, it is important to consider certain factors that can help them establish a robust model of rural design schooling. Swastika Model of Rural Design Schooling (SMRDS) is an attempt to present one such model that tackles the rural dynamics with respect to education oriented arts and crafts focused interventions. The model has emerged from observation that were made during the stay at KRV where we focused on understanding the functioning and associated failures and problems of the school.

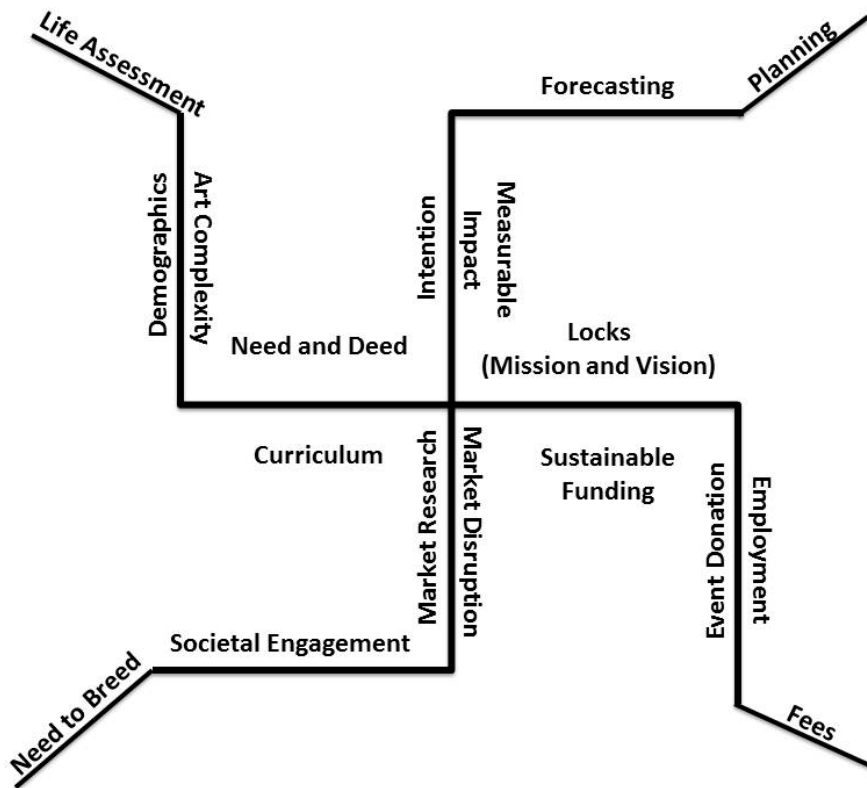


Figure 1: Swastika Model of Rural Design Schooling (SMRDS)

The Swastika based model depicts four important quadrant of establishing a rural design school. The first quadrant talks about **Need and Deed**. The focus is one understanding the why such model is needed in the community and what activities facilities such activities. It further stems to **Demographics** (the ability to understand various characteristics of the group), **Art Complexity** (the ability to comprehend diversity of arts and crafts and striking a union between them), **Life Assessment** (understanding the importance of the

respect art in the community) and **Intention** (introspecting own organization to find out why we want to do it).

The second quadrant is **Locks (Mission and Vision)** which signifies the way impact of the schooling is perceived and

how it is measured and monitored on regular basis. It further stems into Measurable Impact (the ability to define measures of impact intended), Forecasting (the

ability to understand the future of the respective arts and crafts sector) and Planning (the ability to create long term and short term plans, which stems from forecast).

The third quadrant focuses on the **Curriculum and Infrastructure** which is the most important part of the whole model. The focus here is on designing a curriculum that is market driven and serves to the needs of the society. Moreover, the infrastructure has to be accessible and state of art, enlisting all the facilities to promote a learning and conducive environment. It further stems into Market Research (the ability to understand the market and incorporate all the relevant courses. It also focuses the ability to understand the dynamics of the respective arts and crafts sector and incorporate the same), Societal Engagement (the ability to understand the societal dynamics of the artisans and ensuring that the curriculum resorts to these dynamics for better acceptance) and **Need to Breed** (the ability to market this curriculum as a need to artisans and their community and make it as inclusive as possible).

The fourth quadrant is **Sustainable Funding** which is the backbone of the whole project. The focus here is to establish a robust funding model which partly relies on donors and partly on the revenue potency of the school. It further stems into Market Disruption (the ability to interpret the market for the arts and crafts and accordingly framing a proposition to big players to invest in the school), Event Donation (the ability to organize events with famous design schools where you can approach prospective patrons), Employment (the ability to convince various designers to employ these artisans after graduation and earning a small percent of it) and the last resort is to establish a minimal fees for the artisans who wishes to study.

The model revolves around the core philosophy of ideating to establishing a rural design school in any part of the India and the world accounting for all the dynamics. However, a detailed study needs to be conducted to understand the impact and functioning of the model.

Limitations

- The research incorporated convenience sampling to survey artisan graduates due to time and resource constraints.
- The responses received were the best outcome of the respondents keeping in mind his/her limited proficiency.
- The study couldn't capture a comparative analysis of graduate artisans with non-graduate artisans. The comparative study can serve as the future scope of research on KRV.
- The SMRDS model proposed in the paper is a simulation done with KRV and can be incorporated to establish similar schools. However, the model needs to go through a rigorous set of experimentation which serves as the current limitation of the same.

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