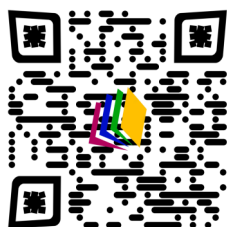




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### Research Article



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## **Contribution of Raghurajpur Village Artisans for the Growth of Art in Odisha**

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### **ABSTRACT:**

The aim of the paper is to present the art work of artisans of the Rathurajpur village of Puri district. It is focusing on categories and mechanism of artwork of artisans. The village is recognized as craft and heritage village by the government of India and government of Odisha. Art work on Patachitra painting is famous at the national and international level. It attracts tourists, academicians and researchers to visit the village. The village has a unique feature that artisans prepare the raw materials for art work and do marketing for art work in the village. Patachitra painting, ganjapa, stonework, palm leaf work, glass work, wooden work, stone carving work are being done by the artisans. A particular caste, Chitrakara, is traditionally assigned to prepare patachitra work for Lord Jagannath during the car festival and other occasions. The village is famous at the national and international level for its magnificent art work and the art works are promoted by a NGO named as 'Parampara'. The livelihood of the villagers is fully depending on artwork. Even women and children support for the development of art work. Thus, the artisans of the village contribute to the growth of art and culture in Odisha.

**KEY WORDS:** Patachitra, Ganjapa, Car Festival, Parampara, Chitrakara

### **Introduction**

Odisha is a coastal based state situated in the eastern part of the India and it is surrounded by the Bay of Bengal in the east, Chhatisgarh state and Jharkhand state in the west, West Bengal state in the northern and Andhrapradesh in the south. Odisha is placed in a rich position for its art, culture, tourism and appliqué work. It is getting national and international awards for the people who devote their time for the growth of the art and culture. Basically, the Jagannath culture of Odisha is the centre of all and it is appreciated and accepted by the people in India and abroad. It is the socio-cultural life of all Odias. People of Odisha are concerned with Jagannath culture, festivals, rituals and other religious activities. Patachitra painting is linked with the culture of Odisha. It is a traditional painting of Odisha which is

used in the service of the Lord Jagannth temple at the time of rituals and festivals. These festivals are the Snannpurnima, Anasara Pati, Rathayatra (Car festival), Dola Yatra, etc. The Raghurajpur village of Puri district is famous for patachitra work and the chitrakar caste of the village is closely associated with these works. The paintings are based on the different mythological stories, which includes Ganesh birth circle, Dasabatara, Rasalila etc. Now the artisans of the village are engaged in other different paintings works, such as palm leaf painting, tasar painting, wood painting, stonework, paper mask, glass work etc. for the livelihood and employment purpose.

### Objectives

The chief objective of the research paper is to present the nature, involvement and livelihood of the artisans in the village of Raghurajpur. Besides that there are some objectives on which the study is based upon. These are as such,

- To present brief profile of the village
- To present the categories of art work performed by the artisans
- To present the mechanism of the artwork
- To present the growth of the work

### Methodology

The scholar has adopted empirical method with a pre-designed question. The artisans are interacted and they are asked questions to reach and finding the solution of the research questions. Besides that, general people from non artisans are being asked questions. The scholar has collected data from both primary and secondary sources.

### Raghurajpur Village

Raghurajpur village is a unique and prominent one in its art activities at the international and national level. The village is coming under the Gram

Panhayat of Malatipatpur of Puri district in the state of Odisha. The village is considered as a heritage village in the state of Odisha by the Government. It is situated near at Chandanpur chhak at a distance of fifty k.m. from state capital Bhubaneswar and Twelve k.m. from Puri district headquarter. The village entry point is identical having a remarkable gate. The internal part of village is quite pleasure because of its beauties and display of different art work by the artisans.



*(The entry gate and village of the village)*

The houses of the village are situated in both of the sides from entry to end. In the middle part of the village many temples are increasing the attraction of the visitors. These temples are Bhagabat Tangi, Radhamohan, Gopinath Raghunath, Laxminarayan, Gouranga and the Bhuasani. The village comprised of around one hundred fifty families having many castes. There are many educational institution like Anganwadi Kendra, Primary school, high school are found in the village.

The prominent role played by the NGO, 'Parampara' a noted NGO plays prominent role in increasing the dignity of the artwork of the village in Odisha State and outside. The tradition of Guru-

Shishya parmapara are being developed soundly by which the learning process continues in generation wise. The village finds less number of high educated persons due to the adoption of painting profession. Besides the visual art, Raghurajpur village is identified in the field of performing art, in the name of 'Gotipua Dance, Odissi Dance'. Guru Kelu Charan Mohapatra, a noted Odissi dance performer, was a great son of the village. Maa Dasabhuja Gotipua Odissi Dance institute is functioning with able support of Guru Maguni Charan Das. The performer of the dance belongs to age between 10 to 18 years and they earned name and fame at national and international level.

Among the castes, mostly, Chitrakar families do work on Patachitra painting which is used for the puja work at Lord Jagannath. Besides the Chitrakar artisans, persons of other castes, Gouda, Khandayat, Badhei, are engaged in the painting work for the purpose of business.

### Visual Art

However, the artisans of the village Raghurajpur involved with Patachitra, Tassar painting, Palm leaf carving, Stone or marble carving, Ganjapa playing cards, Paper mask making, Wood carving, toy making etc.

### Patachitra

The patachitra painting has of its importance in Odisha since long years back. Out of different places, Raghurajpur village is unique in developing patachita artwork. The caste 'Chitrakar' has been working in this work from the beginning. The art work is linked with Jagannath culture. The patachitra is used at the time of 'Snana Purnima' in the lunar month of Jyestha in Odia, May-June in English. Snana Purnima is one of the ritual celebrations of Lord Jagannath. It is organized by 'Sebayat' of

Lord Jagannath. During this time, three 'Patis' painted by the Chitrakar artisans are required. These are used at the temple of Lord Jagannath. Even at the other occasion of the Lord Jagannath, 'Rathayatra' (Car Festival), these chitrakar artisans are also needed to present colourful painting on the three chariots. Besides that, the patachitra works are highly demanded by the people at the outside of the temple. It is found that, an American lady researcher, Mrs. H. Zealey, visited to Raghurajpur village and gave a new horizon to the artisans of the patachitra. By the time, the patachitra works get momentum to attract visitors, tourists, researchers.



*(Patachitra painting works)*

### Mechanism

The artisans of the village use old cotton saris and make them into two layers. They prepare by smearing with the mixture of cow dung and black earth. After drying in sun rays, white coating is applied, thereafter, the cloth is flatted in cemented floor and then a coating of a gum made from tamarind seed powder is applied on the fabric. A thinned layer of cloth is pasted on first layer and another layer of gum is applied. Fabric is then allowed to dry in sunlight. Such pre-arrangement works are done during the summer to get sun rays heavily.

A soft white stone powder is rubbed on the dried



fabric with the help of cotton puff. After drying the fabric, it is taken off the floor and cut into required sizes. The individual pieces are polished on both side of surface. After finishing the entire process, the real patta comes into picture on which artisans put their skills in drawing painting as per requirement.



*(Artisans work their workshop)*

The experienced chitrakaras do not use the pencil to make the sketches, but the young painters first draw the sketches with the help of pencil. First stage is (Dhadimara) demarcation of the borders, with the help of scale, in past string is used to make lines in the border. The second stage is Tipana or sketching, which starts with head, then torso and legs are added, the next stage is Hingula or red background is most commonly used in pattachitra paintings.

### **Palm leaf painting**

Palm leaf painting is another achievement of artists of Raghurajpur village. It is the very oldest form of

art but its growth is declining in comparison to patachitra. It is due the nature of less market demand. However, some families are still involved in such activities.



*(Plam leaf painting works)*

### **Mechanism**

The palm leaf painting is made from palm leaves. The leaves of palm are very strong in the sense that it is not easily destroyed by the rainwater. The artisans collect the leaves and make into small pieces. They keep these palm leaf in a systematic way by which the leaf remains flat and straight. On the dried leaf the artisans start process painting in giving different colours. They use ink or alternatively blend of charcoal collected from burnt coconut shells, turmeric and oil for well defined colours. Then they use in every subdued tone, vegetable and mineral colours for painting upon drying the panels of leaves. The palm leaves are



folded and unfolded to keep paintings inside for the purpose to show the customers. In the last part they stitch the leaf and make a separate bundle or a volume. The artisans meticulously preserve the palm leaves after thorough boiled with neem leaves and turmeric for the purpose to protect from insects. The themes of ancient Indian mythology, folk tales' epics, are displayed in the artwork of artisans. In present context, it is found that machinery digital printing is applied on palm leaf painting to produce more number of products without delay.

### Ganjapa Cards



(Ganjapa Cards)

Ganjapa card is one type of art which links to pattachitra painting. It is developed by the women members of the family. Male artists assist them in

drawing figures and making different forms on the cards. The themes cover from the ideological phenomenon from the Hindu puranas, sastras etc. these ganjapa cards have demand for playing cards.

### Other art works

#### Stone carving

Some families of the village prepare stone related work. Though stone work is made at different part of Odisha, yet it is found here where the tourists and customers purchase. In real sense, it has less significance in comparison to patachitra and other works. The artisans make the stone into small pieces as per requirement. With the help of iron instruments the shapes of the picture are being done.



(An Artisan is involved with the stonework)

#### Wood and Tassar painting

Wood is used for preparing deities of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Shbhadra along with



temple design. Many people do develop woodwork on Lord Jagannath with putting good colour combination for the marketing purpose. The bigger size of woodwork is taken by the artisans on basis of advance order. A chisel is used as tool for cutting, making sharp and shinning the artwork.



*(Wood and Tassar Painting work displayed)*

### Glass painting

The artisans collect used bottles and wash it very carefully. They brush the coulour into the glass and draw the pictures, animals, trees and other aspects. They use different colours and different brush to get the finishing work. The visitors purchase the bottle to keep decorating the house. Basically, women and children of the family involve with this sort of activities. Even students prefer this work as their leisure or part time work.



*(Glass painting work is displayed)*

### Paper mask and coconut painting

Paper mask and coconut items are done by the artisans as the supporting items to meet the extra requirement of the visitors. These are made with the combination of paper, chemicals and other materials.







*(Paper mask and coconut painting is displayed)*

## Conclusion

The Indian national Trust for art and culture Heritage (INTACH) marks and identifies this village as the first heritage village and crafts village in 2020 in the state of Odisha. The artisans of Raghurajpur have been contributing a great effort for the sustainability of art and culture in Odisha. This village is considered as an ideal village by the government of Odisha due to its memorable art activities. It has become a tourist hub where researchers, academicians, students, volunteers and general people from interstate and other state visit. The village attracts foreigners for its art activities. The unique aspect is that the artisans prepare the art work and sell in their village at their own house. The entry point of the house is used for the selling purpose and the adjacent part of the house is used for workshop or training room for the artisans. The next part is used for their family living. People visit the village and purchase as per their choices. Almost all the families do such habit and continue art activities as the source of livelihood. Some articles are sold by the help of cooperatives and NGO persons. But the patachitra work of chitrakar caste is used for the Jagannath temple and marketing purpose as well. Many of the artists are

awarded at national and state level for their creative work and achievement. However, such work has of its own importance for which the village Raghurajpur has been contributing for the growth of art and culture of the Odisha.



*(Artisans are selling the artwork in their house)*

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