

USE AND PROMOTION OF FOLK & TRIBAL ART IN ADVERTISING AND SOCIAL AWARENESS

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Abstract

India being a domain of more than 2,500 tribes and ethnic groups, which comprises of large part of India's cultural diversity is engraved in the varied art forms of the country's earliest people. Folk and Tribal art of India is the heritage of India, which have been passed down from generation to generation, and are still carrying out in different regions of the country. Being culturally diversified and varying in nature, these art forms have developed over the years, few being untouched by modernization and few accommodating to new painting techniques. The traditional folk and tribal art forms are the inheritance of the craft communities. These communities are facing challenges to survive due to modernization and lack of recognition about traditional art forms. Though government is making lot of efforts to revive them and bringing back their lost glory. Even with the outbreak of pandemic in the country folk artists suffered a lot. Many artists from different regions of the country used their traditional art forms spreading awareness on Covid-19. In today's world with the expansion of media and advertising many advertisers are also using these varied art forms to promote them through the promotion of their products and services. They are trying to revive these art forms by giving them modern approach. By using these traditional art forms they are also promoting the artisans of these communities. The purpose of this research is that how brands are helping to raise folk and tribal art communities and their artisans by using them in their ad campaigns with contemporary approach. Some brands have used these folk arts in their ad campaigns to promote them through their products and also some part from the sale will go for the development of these communities in return of their offering to the glorifying heritage of traditional India. The secondary method of data collection has been used. In which online survey and published material has been data for study. This research will reveal the effectiveness of advertising and media in promoting traditional tribal and folk art forms.

Key Words: Folk and tribal art, Madhubani art, Warli art, Traditional, Heritage, Government, Covid, Social awareness, Logo, Brand, Advertising, Promotion.

INTRODUCTION

India, which has always been known for its diversity, makes it unique in the whole world. It is a home to the various socio-cultural groups based on race, religion, language, etc. The 28 states and 8 union territories of India have their own unique culture and traditional practices. Every region with its own style and pattern is known as folk art. Endless geographically diversified features like rivers and mountains contributed to a lot of tribes under the subcontinent each practicing their own exclusive culture and tradition. These tribes develop various art forms that were majorly the portrayal of their day-to-day activities or

the depiction of the pious texts, this is known as tribal art. Handed down from generation to generation, Indian folk and tribal art is still alive in many parts of the country. They are traditional, rich, simple and colorful enough to express about country's rich heritage. The folk paintings of India show exclusively colorful and vibrant designs having religious and mystical elements. Amongst most renowned folk paintings of India are: Warli paintings of Gujrat and Maharashtra; Madhubani paintings of Bihar; Saura are found in Odisha, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra; Tanjore art forms of Rajasthan, Gujrat and Bengal; Rajasthani miniature painting; Patachitra from the state of Odisha; the Nirmal paintings of Andhra Pradesh; etc. However, folk art is not just bounded to paintings but also used in pottery, house decorations, ornaments, cloths making, etc. Indian folk art and potteries are also very popular around the globe. Apart from these, various regional dance forms like, Bhangra of Punjab, Dandiya of Gujrat, Bihu of Assam, etc. are also very popular.

GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO PROMOTE FOLK INDIA

The Government of India has made and also making lot of efforts to preserve and promote these art forms which are ineffaceable part of India's rich culture. One can see various traditional art forms on walls, on vehicles like trains, auto rickshaws, truck, etc. in different cities or regions of the country to refresh them in the memory of the people. All the 9 coaches of Bihar Sampark Kranti, are embellished with traditional Mithila (madhubani) art work.



Source: Sharma, Aayush. *Indian Railways Take Folk Art to Places*, Saumya Bansal, 8 Sept. 2018, mediaindia.eu/culture/indian-railways-take-folk-art-to-places/8.

Madhubani is a very famous folk art of Mithila region Bihar. It's a painting style, which is done by using fingers, matchsticks, twigs, brushes and nib-pens. The primary motifs of this art are plants and animals. The purpose of using Mithila

art on train is to use the entire network of train to promote the art across the country. 45 artisans including 43 women local artists, painted the coaches for over a month.

This initiative not only showcased the talents of local artists but also generated recognition amongst passengers. The color scheme used is very bright and visibly captivating. Usually colors for Madhubani painting is obtained from plants and other natural pigments are also used by artists to paint.



Source: Sharma, Aayush. *Indian Railways Take Folk Art to Places*, Saumya Bansal, 8 Sept. 2018, mediaindia.eu/culture/indian-railways-take-folk-art-to-places/8.

Apart from trains, Indian Railways is also using Madhubani art for painting its railway stations. Across several railway stations in Bihar, one can see scenes from Ramayana and Mahabharata painted on walls with Mithila art. Impression of rituals or festivals like Chhat Puja, rural and social life in the region and folk dance can also be seen in the form of paintings.

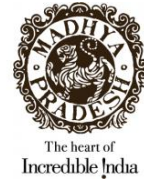
Taking inspiration from this initiative, traditional paintings have also been painted in many other railway stations of the country. For example, traditional art has been painted in Titwala station near Mumbai in Maharashtra by local artists and paintings showing Lord Ram and Sita's wedding has been done in Raja Ki Mandi station near Agra in Uttar Pradesh.

¹Many state tourism logos are also folk and tribal art inspired:

Rajasthan Tourism: Padharo Mhare Desh (Welcome to my land) The logo is the embodiment of state's culture and tradition. One can see the depiction of desert, camel and Rajasthani culture in the logo. The slogan- Padharo Mhare Desh, also gives the essence of culture.



Madhya Pradesh Tourism: The Heart of Incredible India Known as “Land of Tigers”. “Tiger” in the logo illustrates the 5 well-known tiger reserves in the state – Bandhavgarh, Kanha, Panna, Pench and Satpura. The tiger also has some cultural motifs around it.



Gujarat Tourism: Vibrant Gujarat The logo depicts the honor of Gujarat “LION” – *dekho dekho kaun aya “Gujarat ka sher aya”!!* Gir Forest is the charm of Gujarat and the main tourist attraction. Asian Lions are found only in Gujarat in India. Besides Lion, logo has traditional motif and the colors depicting the essence of state.



PROMOTION OF FOLK ART FOR SOCIAL AWARENESS

During pandemic when the world and everyone was suffering, the artists used folk art to spread the awareness of Covid-19. Artists from different parts of the country used various conventional art forms and depicted their viewpoint on the lockdown and spread the knowledge on pandemic. Artists revamped all the genres from cloth-based phad frames in Rajasthan to pattachitra in Odisha to communicate the message across.

The master artist of phad paintings from Bhilwara, Kalyan Joshi, rather than making paintings on the routine stories of Devnarayanji (avatar of Lord Vishnu) made paintings on new subject, i.e. coronavirus. He depicted the entire story of coronavirus from its starting in China to its spread in the country. Using radiant hues and bold strokes he depicted the entire storytelling in phad.



²Kalyan Joshi’s phad painting depicting the story of coronavirus

The artist portrayed the suffering of people by showing them in isolation, their life in quarantine and showed Prime Minister Narendra Modi giving direction to the populace on social distancing and usage of masks.



³A phad painting on lockdown and PM Modi on TV

Apindra Swain, a pattachitra artist from Odisha, knitted awareness messages on Covid-19 on cloth-based scroll paintings in pattachitra. Painting shows a traditionally dressed woman wearing mask and washing hands in a beautifully decorated washbasin. Artist also collaborated with postal department and drew postcards and stamps with messages on social distancing.



⁴Keeping the virus at bay with masks and washing hands – a pattachitra painting by Apindra Swain

PROMOTION OF FOLK ART IN ADVERTISING

Advertisers are also using these art forms to promote their products and services. By using these art forms advertisers are capturing their customer's interest by appealing them through media to buy products and services by giving them a desi touch. The aim of every advertisement is to influence the thought process of their audiences or consumers and advertising being persuasive in nature tries to hit the traditional sentiment of the consumers that is inherited in them to buy particular product.

For example, SPACES launched their two campaigns celebrating traditional Indian Art Forms in 2017. SPACES, the brand of home textile company Welspun India, launched their campaigns on '*Rangana Collection*' which was festive collection and '*Thoughtful Living*'. The collection showcasing magnificent Indian traditional textile art forms from different states of India. Two digital films exquisitely conceptualized by Ogiilvy were also launched, supporting the launch of the new Rangana collection. SPACES' new collection commemorates India's different traditional art forms, from *Patola* to *Meenakari*, *Phulkari* to *Paithani*, etc. and was boosted across 600+ cinema screens and almost on all digital platforms. Each film illustrates the forte of a specific region.



Source: "SPACES' Rangana Campaign Brings Alive India's Traditional Craft Forms." *exchange4media*, www.exchange4media.com/advertising-news/spaces-rangana-campaign-brings-alive-indias-traditional-craft-forms-93003.html.

Regarding the campaign,⁵**Manjari Upadhye, CEO & Head of Domestic Business, Welspun India**, mentioned, "SPACES as a brand stands for thoughtfulness through its designs and the innovative products. Through the Rangana collection, we are celebrating the traditional Indian art form. Our new campaign brings out the essence of the new collection in a beautiful way with the underlying message of thoughtfulness. It is important to revive the traditional

Indian art form and create awareness amongst consumers, which is why SPACES has taken this initiative of giving back to the society through the creation and subsequent sale of Rangana.”

“SPACES celebrates traditional art forms prevalent in every part of the country through its Rangana collection of bed linen. What better way, to showcase and celebrate these designs, than by complementing them with folk lullaby one hears in bedrooms in every nook and corner of the country. Rangana is also a true example of SPACES actually living its philosophy of thoughtful living, as proceeds from its sale go to the artists," says, **Zenobia Pithawalla, Senior Executive Creative Director, Ogilvy**

Having acquired an overwhelming response from their consumers, SPACES launched the Rangana collection again in 2019, with some variations. Brand being known for its thoughtful designs, the collection is the epitome of varied art forms from diverse culture of each region of India. During the festivities post September, Onam, Durga Pooja, Dussehra and Diwali, where people purchase home décor items to embellish their houses and also to gift others. The collection personifies six art forms – Ajrakh, Madhubani, Gulrana, Vallam, Debjani & Patachitra that knit in the bona fide folk legacy and bringing essence of festivity, culture, rituals and beliefs to life. The collection has such designs, which are crafted in a modern way to draw the attention of the millennial consumer. SPACES is a brand that believes in being thoughtful, they contribute a certain percentage of sales from their Rangana collection to the craftsman’s community. The funds were used to boost and motivate the development of these communities.

The campaign starts with two digital films conceptualized by Ogilvy, depicting Indian art forms translated into stunning bedsheets. In the first film, a woman sitting on the bed trying ring from a beautiful Gulrana jewellery box. She leaves the room when the doorbell rings, leaving the box behind on the plain bedsheet. In the next scene, it shows how the intricate Gulrana design on the box shimmers and starts spreading all across the bedsheet making it very beautiful and colorful.



Source: Athray, Srerem, director. *SPACES Launches Campaign Celebrating Traditional Indian Art Forms*. *Adgully.com - Latest News on Advertising, Marketing, Media, Digital & More*, www.adgully.com/spaces-launches-campaign-celebrating-traditional-indian-art-forms-88888.html.

Madhubani - the famous art form of Bihar can be seen in the second film. The film begins in a village with a painted mud wall with beautiful Madhubani scene, which comes to life after water spilt on the painted lion where two women and a monkey were being chased by a lion. At the growl of the lion, the leaves in the painting fly onto the cream color bedsheet that is drying adjacent to the wall making a beautiful madhubani pattern on the bedsheet.

Another example, Coca Cola launched “Come Home on Deepawali” campaign in 2010, featuring Warli Art form. The campaign honors the 400-year-old ancient Warli art and appreciates the audacity of today’s youth and a recollection of the varied lifestyle of the Warli tribe of Western India. The campaign not only offers participants a chance to earn a free trip back home to any part of the country but also is believed to further popularize and promote this unique Indian art form.

The campaign captured the mood of the festival and also the emotions and desires of the youth to remain close to their roots and family as they walk out in search of new opportunities. As youngsters often have to step out of their houses to take part and conduce to nation’s development, this Coca Cola’s Diwali campaign with Warli characters showcase the celebrations, new beginning and the spirit of inseparableness.

Nitin Anand Dabholkar a Maharashtra based Warli artist, make such creative use of Warli characters in the campaign, which truly boost the message. Conceptualized by Prasoon Joshi, Ashish Chakravarty, Tirtha Ghosh and Nakul Sharma from McCann Erickson and directed by Dibakar Banerjee of Freshwater Films. In-addition to mass media, the 360-degree communication initiative to

include roll out of out-of-home (OOH) media, radio, internet and on-ground activation.

According to Warli artist Nitin Anand Dabholkar, “I feel very proud to have created these designs. This project, in particular has given me immense happiness and satisfaction since it gives the Warli art form the credit that has been long overdue. Coca-Cola India’s persistent endeavor to revive the ancient art form enthused me to take up this assignment. I thank Coca-Cola India for not just for giving me this wonderful opportunity but also undertaking this unique initiative to celebrate the country’s cultural prowess by reviving one of its oldest tribal art form.”



Source: Nakulify, director. *Coke Diwali Warli Art*. YouTube, YouTube, 18 July 2012, www.youtube.com/watch?v=60a0hoDzcoY.

Prasoon Joshi, Executive Chairman, McCann Erickson Worldgroup India further said about the campaign, "The tribal Warli art has been used to generate positive emotion, energy and celebratory mood during the festive season. To express the theme of home coming, the art has been used in the creative expression to create animated characters in the campaign, which symbolizes our connection to our roots and stands for the positive paths created by Coca-Cola for the fulfillment of the journey. Brand Coca-Cola has always believed in celebrating togetherness and this is what we are trying to communicate through this campaign."

Using these traditional art forms in their campaigns brands is actually reviving our ancient art forms and rich Indian heritage. Also, they are trying to give it back to the society by facilitating to the escalation of the artisan’s community.

OBJECTIVE

Objective of this study is to understand the importance of Indian culture and its various art forms and how they are being used on vehicles, walls, in logos and by

various brands to promote them with their products by giving them a contemporary touch to grab the attention of their audiences and also to remind people about their roots and Indian culture.

METHODOLOGY

Scholar has used secondary resources and books.

CONCLUSION

These varied Folk and tribal art forms originating from different parts of the country has always been our rich cultural heritage. Emerging as an impression of celebrations and customs, this art form has been an essential part of culture and tradition. These art forms have been passing from one generation to the other for many centuries. But now they were losing its glory because of modernization and constant evolution of new art techniques. Therefore Indian government and other organizations are making constant efforts in revival and progression of these tribal and folk art and artists of these communities. Various art forms can be seen on walls, vehicles, etc. Bihar Sampark Kranti has been fully painted by local artisans in Madhubani, to promote the art form in the country. Various state tourism logos also depict their tradition. Even during Covid-19 to spread the awareness among people government of various cities like Rajasthan, Odisha, etc. have used their traditional art forms. Understanding the common behavior of rural clan, and to create awareness among them government launched the Covid-19 awareness campaign in their own traditional art form. Brands are also using traditional art forms to promote them along with their products and services by giving them modern approach. SPACES used different art forms in their bedsheets and Coca Cola used Warli art in its ad campaign promoting art and artisan both. SPACES have used these traditional art forms with contemporary weaving on bed, bath, and coordinates. Through their ad campaigns they aimed to revive these ancient art forms and India's rich cultural heritage and also diverging consumers minds towards these traditional art forms and re-instilling their glory.

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