

**14 years of Design and Business Education:
Artisan Graduate Reflections
Judy Frater**

From start to end there has been so much change... If we tell it ourselves, it will be very different, with emotion. If you tell it, it will be a story~ Sulemanbhai Umar Faruk Khatri, Bandhani artist, evaluation interview 2019

I have written extensively from my perspective on the program of design and business management education that I began for artisans in Kutch. But how do graduates of the programs evaluate their experiences of education?

This essay shares the impact of the program on artisan graduates and their communities as articulated by graduates during videotaped interviews that were part of an evaluation conducted by Dr. Priyatej Kotipalli in 2019, reinforced and clarified by quotes from prior discussions with graduates.

The education program began as Kala Raksha Vidhyalaya in 2005, and from 2014 to the present operates as Somaiya Kala Vidya. In 2007, we commissioned an initial impact assessment from Mr. Ashoke Chatterjee, Former Executive Director / Professor / Distinguished Fellow at the National Institute of Design and former President, Crafts Council of India. Mr. Chatterjee is a development consultant with experience in education, crafts and artisan empowerment, design, water and sanitation, livelihood and disability issues. Subsequently, the school conducted assessments in 2010, 2011, and 2012. The latter were largely focused on the impact of the program on livelihood.

After nearly fifteen years, it was apparent that the program had resulted in deeper impacts of social change. Wanting to ascertain how well the program addresses needs and values of the artisan students in addition to their socio-economic status, in 2019 Somaiya Kala Vidya (SKV) commissioned Dr. Priyatej Kotipalli, a cultural economist whose work has focused on the values of craft, to conduct an assessment.

As we planned the assessment, we again consulted Mr. Ashoke Chatterjee. In 2019, he advised,

Before embarking on any assessment exercise, clarity may be needed on what exactly you want to assess...One aspect is to understand value. Another is to have a robust monitoring and evaluation system that tracks change and progress in ways that reflect both value as well as 'development' understood in your terms.

[The study] should include an understanding of progress not only of artisans but of their craft. What value do we place on a craft's progress, innovation, creativity – on artisans gaining confidence and acceptance as

designers? These milestones can and should be measured, but not with mere statistics.

Monitoring and evaluation is certainly possible for creative and 'subjective' pursuits. The first step is to reflect on what changes are important to track... This discipline is becoming important in many sectors, where change is not just about numbers but much more about attitudes and behaviors.

Incorporating this advice, at the outset, we chose to conduct a value-based assessment. The intent was to understand values of the artisan communities, and then to assess change and progress in terms of both the stated goals of the program and those of artisan participants. We wanted the study to assess both tangible and intangible impacts on individuals, their communities, and their traditions.

The study began with interviews of graduates, to elicit their experiences and evaluations in their own candid words. Over 14 years (eight years as Kala Raksha Vidhyalaya and 6 years as Somaiya Kala Vidya) the program has graduated 181 artisans from the design course, and 16 from the post graduate Business and Management for Artisans course. Graduates comprise 47 weavers, 34 Ajrakh printers 2 batik artists, 38 bandhani artists, and 76 embroidery artists. Eighty-two graduates are women and 115 are men.

The SKV administration selected participants who would represent the demographics of graduates, and who would be able to articulate their experiences. Dr. Kotipalli, along with his colleague Ms Deepani Seth, interviewed 15 artisan graduates in an introductory group, and 29 in individual at home in-depth interviews. Of the in-depth interviews, 10 were weavers, 4 were Ajrakh printers, 1 was a batik artist, 6 were bandhani artists, and 8 were embroidery artists. Ten were women and 19 were men.

The interviews were video recorded. A full formal report from Dr. Kotipalli is forthcoming. This essay presents excerpts of the videotaped interviews in the context of the goals of the program curriculum. I selected quotes that expressed sentiments of a majority of interviewees and distilled their shared experiences. I organized them in thematically, to present a coherent assessment of key goals of the program in graduates' own words.

Values and Goals of Traditional Artisans

It is important to understand that values and goals evolve with experience. In 2018, I asked a group of weavers if their goals had changed because of design and business education?

Prakashbhai Naran Siju laughed. "Before the course, we had no goals!" he said.

"Previously there were no choices," Dahyalalbhai Atmaram Kudecha explained.

The goal of the program as I designed it was to draw on the traditional identity of Kutch artisans to create an alternative to the industrial model of large-scale production, power and wealth as the path to recognition. I wanted to educate artisans to become artisan designers, individuals who earn recognition as well as an attractive livelihood through their creativity.

But there is a basic dilemma of education. The reality is that we often don't know what we don't know. So, it was important to address artisan needs both as they perceived them and as I did. That required an in-depth understanding of artisan cultures.

The evaluation study began by eliciting the history and evolution of the traditions from which artisan students came. The older graduates understood the integrated character of their traditions, which illuminated the situation at the time of beginning the design education program in 2005 and some values inherent to craft and artisan practitioners.

As artisan design graduates describe:

Maldharis gave us local sheep wool. We spun and wove and gave them cloth. If there was a wedding, we wanted to make it nice for the bride. We felt it was ours too. That was our traditional work
Ramjibhai Hira Maheshwari, Weaver (age 44)

Village sheep and goat herders would wear woolen blankets all year. But people thought no city person would wear such heavy things. So, at that time they introduced shawls inspired by the traditional blankets. Slowly we got new materials. Acrylic came in 1982 or 1984. When acrylic came my grandfather had only worked locally. He didn't get a market, and our work folded. So, while we once had 20 looms, my father had to go and work for another Master weaver. It wasn't because of acrylic. It was because the market completely changed.
Puroshottambhai Premji Siju, Weaver (age 37)

Our work is traditional. We don't know how long it's been going on. It is probably 11 generations, but it could be more. Khatri did all kinds of dyeing at first: bandhani, block print, and batik. But they chose work for the local communities. We worked for Rabaris; we gave up block printing and made bandhani ludis. In Dhamadka they did more Ajrakh because maldharis were there and they gave up bandhani. That was up til the 1960s. After that our grandfather Arab wanted to reach a market where he was known and got better remuneration. So, he went to Mumbai. In the train he met an exporter, Tripathi. Tripathi started innovation in Kutch. He gave 3 designs based on the Rabari ludi. His designer Prabhaven Shah gave orders for export. Export wanted new, bright colors. We had never done those colors. The first bandhani shawls went really well in the market. Our relatives also started working. There

was so much work that Khatri had to teach others. After that, acrylic came. It was cheap, and once it came to the market wool stopped. We worked in wool. By 1993 our work was completely stopped. By 1998, we had slowly revived a bit, but the earthquake of 2001 ruined everything. We had no place to work, no customers. The government encouraged industries and artisans went to work in companies.
Sulemanbhai Umar Faruk Khatri and Azizbhai Alimamad Khatri,
Bandhani Artists (ages 44 and 41)

A New Concept

While training programs had been introduced through government and non-government agencies, I introduced a program of education for artisans. Training is oriented toward attaining a specific goal. Education is more open-ended. It teaches concepts and skills and encourages students to utilize them as they decide. The design education program aimed to encourage individual growth.

Artisans relate how their impressions of the new concepts they observed in ongoing classes aroused them:

After the earthquake many NGOS came to work with crafts. But when I went to demonstrate at Kala Raksha Vidhyalaya's first convocation in 2006 I saw this is a good thing. Many people from outside were also there and it made me think, we work but it's not just work; if we have work, name, and value it's better.

Dahyalalbai Atmaram Kudecha, Weaver

We thought it was great that graduates were walking the fashion show ramp and making their own designs. We had never done anything like that and thought we should go. But we didn't know what it was; we thought they must give designs. We didn't know it would be so professional, with NID faculty. Later we realized that-- and also the value of our embroidery.

Tulsiben Puroshottam Puvar, Suf embroiderer

My son took the design course. I heard him give a presentation after the first session and my heart filled. He had learned about color: schemes, primary, secondary, and he was talking without fear, with confidence. He was completely changed in one class so I was convinced that he would learn a lot.

Khalidbhai Usman Khatri, Ajrakh artist

Addressing Needs as Artisans Perceive Them

The course is open exclusively to working traditional artisans of Kutch. There are no further pre-requisites of age or formal education. To address needs as artisans perceived them, I began by making sure that the program was

accessible to artisan situations, in terms of time, language, funds and experience. Working traditional artisans must work in order to survive. Their time is precious and limited. Yet, they have very well-developed control of a medium. So, the course is one year long, and focused on taking existing knowledge and skills forward. Most artisans can manage two weeks away from work, so the course is structured in intensive 2-week modules spread over the year, taking into account the ritual and work-related schedules of artisan communities. The link between modules is maintained by homework assignments- those which ensure that students can apply what they have learned, and which can be incorporated to support ongoing work. Courses are taught in Gujarati or Hindi. And fees of INR 10,000 are what is considered “affordable” by artisan communities. The post graduate course in business and management that I developed after the first eight years draws on the same concepts.

Graduates note the appropriateness and effectiveness of the courses:

This was a course especially for artisans. In the interview Dr Ismailbhai Khatri was there, and also Judyben, Dahyabhai Kudecha, etc. They asked me questions. The fees were minimal, just RS 10,000.
Akibbhai Ibrahim Khatri, Ajrkah artist

I chose SKV because this course is especially for artisans. When we are in a group together, we can share ideas. We are of all different ages and learn from each other's experience. At urban institutes like NID, the students aren't from this field.
Vahabbhai Haiderali Khatri, Bandhani artist

In our school we just do a few days of sitting at the loom. We teach a lot of theory- what is design, international trends, costing- all aspects of design. Look, if you were going to sit my son or me at a loom what would you teach us? You can teach us what we don't know about design or marketing. Our first class is color, and we only teach aspects of color, how to get color inspiration-- all about color. Then for a day or two students apply it on the loom. Then they do more practical homework. For example, they learn tint and shade on paper, then they learn to apply it in products.
Dahyalalbhai Atmaram Kudecha, Weaver and Design Faculty Emeritus

I liked that we started with tradition. In class we learned which colors other markets will like, and we learned the value of our work. Rabari work is good but elaborate. In class we learned to simplify. Earlier, we would have felt it was incomplete. But we did less work and it looked good.
Sajnuben Pachan Rabari, Rabari embroidery artist

Before, we only used symmetry. After the class we thought of doing other layouts, like starting from a corner. You can use composition to fill a piece with less work. We also changed color. Instead of traditional we used only warm or gray-scale colors. We made changes like this.

Tulsiben Puroshottam Puvar, Suf embroidery artist

Me too. I used to use only symmetry. We learned how to change by using what we learned. We would get homework to make something without symmetry.

Taraben Vijay Puvar, Suf embroidery artist

I got to learn a lot. I was interested and the faculty taught us very well. What other design students learn in four years we learn in one. We artisans already know a lot, so we can learn quickly. The structure is practical. I was 17 and didn't have responsibilities. But a student could do his work, run the home, and take the course. When I graduated I had learned design. But I felt that design is not enough. It is also important to know business. Luckily in 2014 they started a business course and I joined it. We learned whatever was missing in the design course there.

Zakiyaben Adil Khatri, Bandhani artist

In the design course we learned design language, color. In the business course we learned to make our own business. We learned how to do our own exhibition, how we can reach customers. Business means we have to know what customers want and work accordingly.

Tulsiben Puroshottam Puvar, suf embroidery artist

Connecting to the Contemporary Domestic Market

A primary goal of artisans today is to establish stable, successful businesses in better domestic markets. The course is practical, focused on re-establishing a link between maker and user. In the third module, Market Orientation, students learn why they need to innovate, and for whom. Over the year, students learn the basics of design and a design process that is accessible and replicable.

Graduates elucidate how the course taught them to consider and design for a market:

Somaiya Kala Vidya teaches artisans, exhibits their work, and connects them directly to the market, buyers, customers.

Sulemanbhai Umar Faruk Khatri, Bandhani artist

I had been (to Ahmedabad) before. But this time (during the Market Orientation Course) was different. We had learned color schemes and design principles. My vision had changed. I saw schemes, cool, warm, primary colors.

Shakilbhai Qasam Khatri, Batik artist

In concept class, I chose the theme City Ethnic, and gave it the name City Life. We went to Bhuj, and I learned to look. I saw crowds, celebration, buildings. We made an installation. Then I made a theme board; I derived my motifs from this. I wove buildings, a road in front. I showed trees along the road, and lights. I also showed celebration; I showed glasses. And I showed crowds, like traffic jams. I used warm colors in this. For my collection I made saris, stoles and dupattas, and a cape to wear over a sari. They all sold.

Krishnaben Velji Vankar, Weaver

I made a collection inspired by a pinecone. I took this traditional pattern and made it abstract. I didn't change it much or customers won't like it. I put emphasis in the middle. I got the pinecone texture with tassar silk and yarn dyeing. I made a new kind of tassel. You can even change a look by finishing. I thought about which design, why and where customers will wear it. Mostly stoles are symmetrical, but I did this with asymmetrical concepts. Customers can wear it three or four different ways. I learned this in class. You can wear the same piece several ways to highlight black or brown.

Pachanbhai Premji Siju, Weaver

Before, we worked, but without thinking. We did orders as they told us. But (at the school) we began to think, if I'm doing it for you, what do you do? where do you live? We learned that if one person lives in Gujarat and another in Maharashtra, we can't make the same thing. My mind started working.

Mukhtarbhai Jakriya Soneji, Bandhani artist and SKV Faculty

Thinking of the market, I began to use cotton. I began to change colors. I began to make stoles. See, I completely changed colors and design, but I did not leave the traditional.

Ramjibhai Hira Maheshwari, Weaver

Increasing Value

The institutional goal for artisan students is not only that they operate successful craft businesses but also that by using design, they increase value for their work and improve their standard of living- including social and cultural as well as economic status. The program strives to strengthen the vitality and viability of crafts and enable artisan designers to directly reach better domestic markets.

Graduates reflect on value and economic viability:

Only after 2018 did I get customers. Before, didn't have many because my work was a little different. I didn't get much response, that customers

would buy and return. In 2018 I made a collection in class and because of that I also got 3-4 orders.

M. Husenbhai A. Maji Khatri, Bandhani artist

In Kutch, they have been running classes and everyone has started to do good work, so now we get good wages. And see, if we make something from the heart, customers don't ask why we're asking for so much money. Until now, no one has questioned me. They used to ask, this thing goes for this much, why are you asking more? So, now the position in our Kutch is very good.

Poonambhai Arjun Vankar, Weaver

It's changed a lot. Because before, the market was local, and we didn't earn that much. At that time, it was the merchant's price. That's changed. At that time, we were in need; we had to run the home. Now it is my product, my design, my collection. I'm going to name my own price.

Ramjibhai Hirabhai Maheshwari, Weaver

The next time I went to Mumbai I knew I had invested money and a whole year. And my whole family-- with their full support I could make the collection. Because I was young, I didn't have anything, no money. But still I really wanted to go. That was the difference the second time I did an exhibition. That time I had a really good sale, everyone liked my work and they called me again. I sold 50% of my products. I covered my costs and I had a little balance to reinvest.

Monghiben Rana Rabari, Rabari embroidery artist

We learned that if we make a product it is destined for someone. We have to wait for the one whose fate it is. When that customer comes, he will take it. Those who did not study design worry, if I don't sell it, the customer will go to someone else, or the piece will lie in my home. We wait. The one for whom it was made will come and buy it from us.

Khalidbhai Usman Khatri, Ajrakh artist

I had a RS 4000 stole. Someone wanted it for RS 2000. He had a mindset to bargain. I refused. He went looking around for an hour and returned, and then he literally said you didn't call me. He thought I would call him back. But he paid the full RS 4000.

Adilbhai Mustak Khatri, Bandhani artist

Before taking the design course we couldn't save. Now we have savings. We just bought a car with our savings!

Sureshbhai Parbat Vankar, Weaver

If artisans are allowed to become designers, we won't need designers that much. Designers have so many expenses. I think a good designer

earns at least RS 50,000 / mo. If an artisan can become a designer, he can earn that much- RS 50,000.

Azizbhai Alimamad Khatri, Bandhani artist

Building on Tradition

The program is founded on recognition of tradition as invaluable cultural heritage, and a key resource. It teaches design through the lens of appreciating tradition. I enlisted master artisans in Kutch as advisors in order to ensure that whatever we taught would support existing traditions. At the beginning of each year, the advisors begin this process by conducting sessions in which they present and discuss in depth a range of textiles from their shared traditions.

Graduates describe the insights they gained on their traditions:

Today there is a new generation. Until they have studied design they won't know their history- they are just working as their parents did. They don't think at all about whether their children will continue or not. When they go to Somaiya Kala Vidya, the elders come and explain, and they learn about their tradition. After the design course, they understand.

Somaiya Kala Vidya tells them the value of their tradition.

Khalidbhai Usman Khatri, Ajrakh artist

We didn't know about our tradition. After taking the course we learned what our tradition was, the inspiration of old pieces. We realized the value of our own work. For our first homework we had to learn about our traditional motifs. As a group we sat with our elders and asked them the history and meaning of motifs.

Prakashbhai Naran Siju, Weaver

When I started (the course), I had distanced myself from weaving because I had been told it didn't earn anything. But when I took the class and learned the history of weaving and our dhabla blankets, and then made my own samples and sold them I felt proud. I thought this is God's gift. We learned a lot about value in class.

Puroshottambhai Premji Siju, Weaver

Nurturing Self-Esteem

The program endeavors to create a protected space in which there are no absolute rights and wrongs, so that artisan students can creatively explore their unique individual interpretations of shared traditions.

Graduates discuss the effect of their education on self-esteem:

We don't know what skill we have inside. If you put a seed in a beautiful gold or silver box and put it in a cupboard will a tree grow? It needs

earth, water, fertilizer, light. You need the right atmosphere to bring out a skill. We got the whole atmosphere there.
Shakilbhai Qasam Khatri, Batik artist

I was afraid, will my work be appreciated? Somaiya Kala Vidya showed us the market and taught us to get inspiration, make a theme board, get key words. Things done this way will sell. I lost my fear.
Khalidbhai Usman Khatri, Ajrakh artist

It was in my mind that I had only studied to 10th grade. My 5 brothers had all gone to college; one studied law. I lost that sense of inferiority. I feel equal. And I couldn't speak well in presentations. I got over that too.
Rajeshbhai Vishramji Siju, Weaver

I had never talked in front of people or made a presentation. So I felt funny. But watching and practicing I became good at presentation.
Muskanben Arif Khatri, Bandhani artist

I learned how to talk to people. Before I was so shy, I couldn't talk to anyone.
Taraben Vijay Puvar, Suf embroiderer

I got experience. I was there a year, and now I can go anywhere by myself. Before it was difficult to travel by air. It was systematic, luggage, boarding pass. I would get confused. I opened up so much I could manage to travel abroad.
Akibbhai Ibrahim Khatri, Ajrakh artist

Recognition

Personal recognition was an inherent part of the exchange between maker and user in craft traditions. The program aims to reinvent this dynamic in the contemporary context. By acknowledging and valuing design as an inherent aspect of craft traditions, and enhancing design thinking with education, the program intends to equip graduate artisans to situate themselves in a new ecosystem.

Graduates articulate their experience of the importance of recognition:

Designers learn design in four years and then start their own business. But they get their work done through craftsmen. They give money to craftsmen, but their names are never known, who made it. Now, they are giving the names: Junaid made our work.....our work was made by Aslambhai ...our work was made by Basirbhai... Irfanbhai made this...now our names are coming. Before, it wasn't like that.
Junaidbhai Ismailbhai Khatri, Ajrakh artist

Before, we just had to go and work. We didn't think about what we were doing. Later we realized that doing this we could go forward, get a name. People would ask whose work this is and hear "Varshaben's." Before, it wasn't like that. They gave us work and they sold it. Even they didn't know whose work it was. They knew it was an artisan's, but they didn't know the artisan's name.

Varshaben Uttam Bhanani, Suf embroidery artist

Before, we were in their limits. They gave us work and we did it. We had no name, and we didn't get the value for our work. Still, we did it because we didn't have any other work. Now we are known, and our work is valued. That is why we are doing our own work. Before those six classes, I was going to leave my tradition. I thought what is embroidery that we should put so much into it? But then I found a new path in my art. I got confidence that I can do something. Now I know I can be known through it.

Tulsiben Puroshottam Puvar, Suf embroidery artist

Now because of Somaiya Kala Vidya everyone has their own identity
Zakiyaben Adil Khatri, Bandhani artist

This is my logo: JUK Terai. In that is my father's name Jakriya Umar Khatri, and our identity-- we are from Tera (Thirteen Village.) In this, 1 and 3 are important. This is our traditional three dots, called trakan. In this there are one and three: thirteen. Thirteen is everywhere in this. My father got the award in 1983, the first number is one and the last is three. I put thirteen motifs- five below, four above, two on each side. The motif is one and three. That's how I made it.

Mukhtarbhai Jakriya Soneji, Bandhani artist and SKV Faculty

After 2017, after I took the design course, if someone, a customer, comes and wants to know about Ajrakh, people of our village bring them to me. Because they know that studying design, I can explain Ajrakh well. And those artisans who want to get their work to the market send their children to the course because they see I have studied design. There is a lot of benefit, and they see the benefits I've had. Third, if anyone has problems, they come to me for solutions. Before, no one came or asked about me. That's the difference after studying design.

Khalidbhai Usman Khatri, Ajrakh artist

My confidence grew after education. Before I wasn't sure that I could get results from my work. I couldn't do what I wanted; I had to do job work. Now I am confident that I can get results. I have become a role model and that gives others confidence. Even in our society I gained respect. For example, the community asked me to contribute a donation for a mass wedding. Their expectation has grown, meaning I am respected.

Dahyalalbai Atmaram Kudecha, Weaver

The Evolution of Values through Experience

Education ultimately aims to broaden horizons and to enable independence. The program creates educational experiences that illuminate choices, and endeavor to teach students to think and take responsibility for decisions.

Graduates trace their growing understanding of values after studying design:

Artisans have gotten help from the government and loans. But when their thinking changes, they can stand on their own feet.

Azizbhai Alimamad Khatri, Bandhani artist

Everyone has to survive. That's the main point. If they can't survive, no matter how much they enjoy work they will have to find something else. The situation here is that, because of the design education artisans are enjoying their craft plus they are earning very well. This combination works well. But if they get less money like with other weavers, they won't enjoy their work, they will work under duress, and they will never get that heartfelt feeling.

Zakiyaben Adil Khatri, Bandhani artist

My thinking is different. If you make something for RS 100, I think how can I make it better, so it sells for RS 120? That way, the value for craft will increase, and the value for artisans will increase. At first everyone feels it's expensive but once they buy it their thinking changes.

Shakilbhai Qasam Khatri, Batik artist

Money is important. Today without money there is nothing. But there is another side of the coin. Money isn't everything. Where we need money, we need money. But money can't buy everything. We knew that, but because of design education Kutch artisans understand it more.

Dahyalalbai Atmaram Kudecha, Weaver

Fashion is one thing. Today, it's wear and throw. We artisans can't create like that. We can't re-use dye water. Over-production results in wasting water. That is a problem. They have made screen prints of bandhani. At first glance you won't know the difference. But there is something special about bandhani. I make saris for RS 1,000, and dupattas for RS 12,000. The sari I only dye. It's not my work but I have to do it because there is a market. The dupatta is my own design, and I will put my name on this because I made it.

Mukhtarbhai Jakariya Soneji, Bandhani artist and SKV faculty member

In presentations everyone felt the designs I made were very fresh, and that I had taken bandhani to a new level. Because usually bandhani dots

are white and yellow, but I made very colorful dots. So, I feel that I am doing designs that no one had ever seen before. That is how I have grown.

Muskanben Arif Khatri, Bandhani artist

We have to not leave our tradition, but take it forward, bring something new to the tradition.

Krishnaben Velji Vankar, weaver

Impact on the Community

After more than fourteen years of operation of the education program we can now reflect, as Mr. Ashoke Chatterjee urged, on the progress not only of graduates but of their craft and communities.

Design and Business graduates assess change and progress in ways that reflect their evolving values and their understanding of development and success:

When we took the course, Dahyalalbai, I, Prakashbai, Murjibhai, we were motivated. We wanted to take our work forward so that the work would advance, and we would advance. At that level we would be called role models. Like Dahyalalbai: now people see that he took the course, he's been going to America for 4 years, he built a nice house. He's doing so much, people are coming to him, we can see new work. So there are many reasons for the young generation to want to do something, to come (to the school). Now many people --for example, Khalidbhai has his own home, his own workshop and people work for him. Seeing him, more people are motivated to do something. And because of education, block print, bandhani and weaving have reached such a level that "regular" work has stopped. People are getting all types of designs, colors and materials, all variations.

Puroshottambhai Premji Siju, Weaver

Every year some artisans go to Somaiya Kala Vidya. I observed there were four block printers in a class and each one's taste was different. From their own mind one made something new, and another one made something different. They weren't the same. I liked that best. Year after year, each one does something new. Each time something new comes out. I really like this. As much as they work, new work comes out.

Khalidbhai Usman Khatri, Ajrakh artist

(Artisans) have gone in a new direction. That's one thing. They have begun to understand design language. And, they have begun to use design language. That's the difference in them. And the difference for them is they have learned how to present their work so that it gets a USP. Another thing, their work has come online. So that way it has been

recognized. And those people who have boutiques have started buying from them.

Junaidbhai Ismail Khatri, Ajrakh artist

We have brands, our own specialties. Along with that we have different concepts. Before, it was like, suppose there was an exhibition, however many weavers were there would all have the same items- the same designs, the same color combinations- mostly the same. So they were in competition. Now if there are eight of us in exhibition, each has his own specialty.

Prakashbhai Naran Siju, Weaver

So now, suppose Dahyalalbhai, Rajeshbhai, Prakashbhai, all of us who studied design, we leave our work at each other's homes, show our work to each other, see, I made something new, do you have any feedback? It's not like we hide our work. Suppose a customer comes..sometimes they bring a photo maybe of Dahyalalbhai's work, and they say I want this. We tell them the technique is the same. But that is his collection and we give his number, tell them to talk to him. We are clear. And if tomorrow someone wants my work, he will send them to me. And sometimes a customer comes and wants more silk products, I'll send them to Dahyalalbhai and if someone wants wool or cotton stoles, he will send them to me. That is a big benefit of education.

Puroshottambhai Premji Siju, Weaver

The Future, in Artisan Designers' views

Ultimately, we must evaluate the education program in terms of cultural sustainability.

Graduates articulate a keen awareness that craft traditions will continue only if the next generation of artisans practices them:

One challenge is to prepare the next generation- that's a big challenge. I can manage production and all but getting the next generation ready is a big challenge for us.

Ramjibhai Hira Maheshwari, Weaver

To take tradition forward now, women will do embroidery. Women are ready to embroider, but they need to get a good price.

Devalben Pachan Rabari, Rabari embroidery artist

If we do our craft from the heart, with respect, our value will grow in the market; artisans will increase. And if we sincerely work from the heart, the next generation will be able to take the good work that the elders have entrusted to us forward. We'll get a good price, and enough work.

Puroshottambhai Premji Siju, Weaver

We are thinking that in the future more people should know that (carpet weaving) is also a living art of Kutch. Because whatever work there is should not die; we should try to take it forward so it can grow and more people know about it. The same way that we came (to the course) because we were inspired by someone, that way more people are sent here, the next generation... If this institute was not here, the level of craft might be different.

Prakashbhai Naran Siju, Weaver

Before I didn't know anything. I had only studied to 7th grade. And I wasn't known. After that, I did so much. I can tell everyone that I am a BMA graduate. I am doing my own business. We are now recognized, and our art is recognized. People are leaving their art. In the same way, maybe someone can be inspired by me and not leave their art.

Tulsiben Puroshottam Puvar, Suf embroiderer

In our village now many girls think about going to Somaiya Kala Vidya. There aren't many girls so far. After I went, many girls say they want to go too. They say they want to do something new. I feel good about it.

Krishnaben Velji Vankar, Weaver

Conclusion

While the complete and formal impact assessment is still to come from the evaluator Dr. Kotipalli, in recordings of interviews for the assessment, artisan graduates clearly articulate their experience of impact. The education program was designed to benefit artisans, their communities, and their traditions. Respecting this central fact, graduates' own assessments must be taken into account in considering sustainability of craft traditions.

The premise of the design and business-management education program for artisans is to test a new approach. By offering a course specifically for the education of traditional artisans, the SKV institute is envisioned as a long-term solution to the sustainability of craft. The voices of artisans recorded here give us insights into artisans' own assessment of the impact of the program. The program was initiated considering the primary goals of the participants. When artisans first took the course, their goals were tangible and limited: they wanted to increase income and social status. By providing a new concept of education, the program offered a reality alternative to the one that artisan students knew.

After fourteen years, graduates are able to articulate that once basic livelihood is assured, other values inherent in craft traditions emerge. Graduates realize that intangible values such as identity, recognition, independence, and satisfaction are as important- if not more so- than increased income.

Artisan graduate accounts reveal that over the years that the program has operated, values and goals have shifted, not only for graduates but for their communities. The accumulated experiences of 14 years have trickled down as we have consciously encouraged participation of families in year-end reviews, and community members in the gala annual convocation. Young members of artisan communities in particular now have aspirations to be successful in better national and international arenas, and to be recognized. The programs have worked to build communities. Artisan designer leaders understand community as well as personal worth. Graduates articulate increased valuation of shared traditions, their debts and responsibilities to their traditions, and the value of membership in their communities. They have developed a magnanimous sensibility toward community development. The confidence that emerges from artisans' educational experience encourages working with collegial respect rather than competition. It provides a breadth of vision that enables graduates to believe that there is enough livelihood for all if they develop their own individual interpretations of their traditions. The net result is that craft traditions have become a respectable and satisfying profession, building true cultural sustainability.

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