

Mapping of Surviving Cultural Products A Case Study of Village *Chakkaral* District Gujrat

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Abstract:

This paper aims to investigate causes and underlying factors that are involved in the survival of the specific cultural products in village Chakkaral district Gujrat. The primary data was collected by interviewing the thirty female residents of the village age thirty and above from lower, middle and upper social class by means of using stratified random sampling. The results achieved from the research show that income level, social pressure, values attachment could be listed as leading factors in the process of survival of the products in the case of Chakkaral.

Key words: Cultural products, artifacts, survival, social class

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Introduction

Culture is not only the tangible elements and artifacts rather include the native people's interpretations and how they use these elements; normally people of a culture interpret the things in a same way. According to the UNESCO (2009) the tangible things that are used by the people of a specific culture are embodied with the cultural aesthetics, known as the cultural products of that area. Yeo et al (2011) take cultural products as the emotional tools that raise the feelings of native it could also be said the ambassadors of a certain culture.

Looking at the current scenario it is obvious that most of the cultural products are losing their extensive use as the process of diffusion is increasing in the developing and advanced countries. But yet people remain closely in touch with their original shape of cultural products and normally it is believed that the changes in these products decrease its cultural weight (UNCTAD 1979). People use their cultural products as their ancestors used to use these products. They keep their parents' memories alive by using those products.

In most of traditional societies, like many of African societies the forces to accept and bring change are weak this much that they have very little openness to experience and change in such communities inhabitants are bound to resist change especially in value system of that culture. A book titled as "On the Theory of Social Change: How Economic Growth Begins" (1967) states that the societies create sanctions against people who bring change; such sanctions may include shame etc. that falls on individuals who try to affect the system.

Natives are quite emotional and possessive in reference to their culture. Daghfous and his companions (1999) also conducted a study on the values attachment with the certain cultural products and concluded that the process of adoption actually reflects an individual's level attachment to a product. People who feel attached to the cultural products often consume

the product for a longer time period. It is also often observed that people who are less educated and less interactive to the outer world are more linked to their culture and cultural products. They are mostly less adoptive towards variations and change as they think to be variant could shake product's significance (Daghfous et al, 1999).

People also remain less responsive towards the change in some situation where people stay unconnected with the latest happenings around the world. The ignorance becomes useful in the stability of the cultural products. As per Lopez and Garcia (2002) views people from older ages feel relax with the products they have been using from their birth and are less likely to adopt alternative as they have to give extra effort to operate them. In the same way the role of education and media could be forget. The people who are more educated they have batter information about the latest happenings of world and they have most probably a larger social circle, that also help them in replacement of the cultural products.

Keeping in view the entire above situation the researcher was keen to investigate the factor involved in receding of the utility of indigenous products in *Chakkaral* village district Gujrat. The city Gujrat is famous for ceramics, while it is having a specific bazaar for clay pots and products. The locale is only few kilometer away from the main city so it has a diverse population regarding age, occupations and education level. So it was most suitable locale to investigate about the present status of cultural products of that area.

Objectives

Keeping in view the problem and its prevalence in the society, the following objectives were developed and this study intends to:

I. To enlist and shortlist the cultural products of locale

The first aim of the study was to explore all the cultural products of the area that had been used for the last few decades. The products of the locale were enlisted by keeping in view the predefined criteria along the help of natives and notables. Then a random sample from the enlisted products was chosen so that the detailed information could be ensured as all the products were not possible to study in the given time.

II. To investigate the reasons behind the survived cultural products

This objective deals with the socio-cultural and economic factors that urge people to adopt the specific cultural products. These factors are actually the underlying reasons of survival and sustainability of cultural goods in a locale. These variables were identified and their impact on common messes was seen under this objective.

By keeping in view the definitions of African Union (2006), UNCTAD (1979) and AHPADA (1997) on cultural products a criteria was established to identify these products that is as under:

- i. The products which are manufactured by the local people or by surrounding area
- ii. Some feelings and emotions that are attached to the them
- iii. Traditional ways are used to prepare it and less technology is used
- iv. A large number of people are familiar to the product

Methodology

Methodology involves the selection of particular techniques and methods used for the collection of data and it is understood that

the scientific validity of a research is based on the effectiveness of the methodology. To the fulfillment of the objectives of the research, stratified random sampling were used to identify the respondents as it separates people into a group of identical features. The sample size for the research was thirty female respondents while female respondents of age thirty and above from lower, middle and upper social class were the aim to study. Taking females as a unit of analysis was beneficial for me in a sense, as they were more engage with household cultural products as compare to men moreover females from age are in the center of both new and old generation so they have a well understanding and have more interaction with both generations. In the same way, researcher enlisted the cultural products of area with the help of residents of the locale, notables of the village and researcher's personal evaluation too. The products were chosen by keeping in view the defined criteria. In the next step fourteen products were randomly selected from the enlisted products of the locale to gather a quantity of data on them. The sample of products was chosen because the products were in large number and difficult to study all thoroughly.

To have lot of important information and understanding of the meanings between the lines were gathered by using informal and formal interview tool. Participant observation was used to get closer to the people and made them feel comfortable, in order to get required information moreover, it helped to understand the common symbolic means of communication, norms and values of the locale. A detailed history of the person was achieved by asking various questions and verifying the information by cross-questioning to get a reliable data in case study method.

Empirical Findings and Discussion

The data gathered from the field of research was analyzed and categorized the important underlying pull and push factors that are helping in the survival of the cultural products. The study helped to document the impact of different factors in the utility of certain cultural products while the reasons that are supporting many cultural products to survive yet were also be attention on. Before proceeding to the key findings of the research in is essential to have a look on the sample of cultural products those were selected to get better understanding. The table will help the reader to have a better understanding about the products and their usage.

Table 1: Cultural products, their description and use

S#	Cultural products	Description of the product	Respondent use	
			Regular use	Occasionally use
1	<i>Paiti&baksa</i>	Kind of trunk container made of iron along with a lead and lock used for storage	100% respondents were using this on daily bases	
2	<i>Chaaaj</i>	A handcraft made of small sticks used to clean impurities from grains.	80% use it	
3	<i>Pannda</i>	A traditional seasonal sweet-dish made to get warmth and taste.	66.7%	6.7%
4	<i>Naalla</i>	A kind of long woolen belt used for tying the trouser around waist. Men in locale were using the more.	60%	30%
5	<i>Pranda</i>	A hair accessory having three strings is used to tie hair in a braid. Commonly available in black color.	53.3%	13.3%
6	<i>Matikachulha</i>	A handmade clay stove used for cooking along with wood as fuel	43.3%	16.7%
7	<i>Kaanali</i>	A heavy clay plate used for preparing the flour	43.3 use it regularly	
8	<i>Toopa</i>	A round shape iron pot used for as a measuring scale has a capacity of 2 kg.	23.4%	45.7%
9	<i>Darri</i>	Type of lighter blanket used for floor sitting and sleeping.	23.3%	30%

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10	<i>Matikihandi</i>	A round shape clay pot use for cooking food in it	23.3%	10%
11	<i>Gothli</i>	Handmade washable purse made of cloth with a string on the top to tie it.	16.7%	10%
12	<i>Satoo</i>	Power form of barley grains used with the cool homemade brown sugar's drink.	13.3%	16.7%
13	<i>Warri</i>	A spherical spouted clay water vessel used for cleaning and religious activities	No respondent was using this at present	
14	<i>Chat walapankha</i>	A traditional manual handmade ceiling fan made of cloth, wood and accessories long with a long rope to operate it	No respondent was using this at present	

The current study created an understanding of the cultural products and the factors that are urging people to stay in-touch with the existing cultural products. To achieve these objectives various anthropological techniques such as rapport building, sampling, interview guide, photography, key informants and secondary data were used. The following table is summarizing the factors that are making the local products survived. Table gives a bird view of the social, cultural and economic factors that play vital role in the sustainability of the cultural products. The table is organized keeping in view the percentages of responses the factors that are identified by more respondents are placed on top of the table.

Table 2: Factors of survival

Factors involve in the survival of the products	Explanation of the factor
Change is money oriented	25% of respondents had less economic power to adopt the alternatives and change.
Social pressure	22% talked about unseen social pressure that is compelling to stick with the cultural product.
values attached to the product	16% viewed that social, cultural, religious and emotional values attach to the cultural product stuck people with it.
Easy and comfortable	13% respondents feel more comfortable in using the products they have been using from the binging.
Cultural icon	10% argued that some culture products are the representation of a specific culture and change in it

	changes the cultural identity.
Feasible with the environment	7% use cultural products as these items persist for a longer period and keep pace with the changing environment.
Personal choice	5% respondents follow the consumption trends according to their own choice
Do not have alternatives	2% of People claimed that they are connected with some of the products that have not affordable alternatives yet.

The results show that almost all the cultural products are prevailing in the locale at different levels regarding their use. People are using these products with changes in their colors, designs and shapes along with their alternatives but none of them had lost its use except the *Chat walapankha*. It has lost its utility in the locale as the alternative electric appliances have replaced it. One of the main reasons in the usage of this product was the no availability of electricity in the locale as after the arrival people moved to the more easy ways.

Change needs money so many of people stick to their cultural heritage, as they are economically less capable to adopt advancement. This factor cannot be ignored as it is quite important 25% of respondents claimed that they stay connected with the things even if they want to change. Cultural products as made on local level are easy to afford and less complication is involved in its use and can be changed whenever needed while situation is diverse in the use of advance products. So in-short the economic factors also play an important role in the adaptation of advancement. 29% people are claimed income can be said a factor playing significant role in the consumption of cultural goods. Many products that are relatively expensive are surviving in the families regularly that are economically stronger as they afford it easily. So income is crucial in both survival and replacement of the cultural products.

Living around in village know each other right from the birth so whenever they observe the change in the life style of others, they keep an eye on their activities and make comments as well so all these things also favor the utility of the products

that have being in their use from a longer period. 22% respondents identified that whenever they wanted to adopt change and new trends they had to face the comments of other natives that shake their confidence and comfort level so they stayed away from change.

People who are yet in touch with the cultural products usually have the ethnocentric approach and feel quite possessive towards them. The social, cultural, economic and religious values are often attached to the cultural commodities that resist accepting change. 16% people stated that they cannot change these products as their parents and forefathers also used them and they feel a unique kind of affiliation with them. They also believe that these similar patterns can tie them, increase their strength and solidarity. They feel a sense of belongingness with the use of specific native products.

Natives, being users of local products, become expert of their usage. Being less complicated in use they feel comfort and ease to use it and feel benefit from it. As less technology is involved in them so all age of people can use them without any harm however the advance products need proper knowledge and process to handle them. So 13% respondents from older ages feel locale products easy in use and less adoptive towards change. People from older ages are not omnivorous in the consumption while they stick to the specific tastes and patterns as discussed by Virtanen.

Culture is the identity of any nation. The people of the locale have a unique culture that is different from the other surrounded areas. 10% of them had great liking for their custom and traditions were not ready to shed them off. They are highly ethnocentric about their culture and these products are the symbolic representation of their culture. Wherever these products are seen a whole culture comes to the screen of mind and gives a soothing effect. To them replacing these product means replacing their culture with the others so called

modern cultures. Change and adoption within the cultural boundaries were acceptable for them.

Seven percent of respondents claimed that the products they are still connected with as these products are still feasible with the changing environment. Selection of a good cannot be completed without the personal choice along with family members. 5% of respondents claimed that they stick to the cultural products as they like them personally. Sometime people replace or stick to a specific commodity just because either his/her family members have the opposite choice than his/her. Importance of personal likeness was also examined in the locale as was identified by Chan and Goldthorpe (2010). While varying in consumption pattern of cultural products was also examined among the residents of *Chakkaral*. While 2% of respondents talking about the reasons of survival said that they do not have affordable alternatives.

Conclusion

All the above discussed findings show that change is all time happening phenomenon as it occurs in all stages of life. Looking on the history, makes it clear that changes occurred in all societies. While in the current study, it can be concluded that modifications in material, color and shape of production occurred while the utility of cultural products remained more or less same. No product has totally vanished from the locale whereas modification in designs, color and usage were experienced in the research area.

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