

## An overview traditional phad artisans of Rajasthan

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Received: 08.12.2011; Accepted: 05.04.2012

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■ **ABSTRACT** : Indian paintings can be referred to as the mirror of India's fascinating history from the ancient times. In India, there is a great variety of folk and tribal art. Phad paintings belong to the state of Rajasthan in India. The present work is an outcome of the preliminary survey being conducted to get information about the Phad artisans at Udaipur (Shahpura, district of Bhilwara).

■ **KEY WORDS** : Phad painting, Painting, Phad artisans

■ **HOW TO CITE THIS PAPER** : Rajvanshi, Rupali and Srivastava, Meenu (2012). An overview traditional phad artisans of Rajasthan. *Asian J. Home Sci.*, 7 (1) : 185-188.

Some of the major styles of these art forms are known as: Phad from Rajasthan, Warli from Maharashtra, Chittara from Karnataka, Patua from west Bengal and Madhubani from Bihar.

Rajasthan has covered a niche for itself in the area of paintings. From this, Rajasthani Phad painting something is unique and appealing in its own way. Phad paintings portray the longstanding custom of inheritance from one generation to another. Phad painting is made on a fabric. It is a visual accompaniment to a ceremony involving the singing and recitation of the deeds of folk hero-deties in Rajasthan and done by family of painters of Bhilwara.

The present study was conducted on Phad artisan at Udaipur (Shahpura, district of Bhilwara). This research was based on basic practices of Phad artisans. A sample of 30 respondents were purposively selected for the present study for getting information using personal interview method. The collected data were analyzed for percentage and frequency.

The results are summarized below according to objectives of the study:

### General information of miniature artisan :

The study was conducted in Bhilwara city as the Phad painters were mainly confined to Shahpura, district of Bhilwara.

### Age :

The data collected (Table 1) on age of respondents revealed that majority of respondents (70%) belonged to 50-70 years age group.

**Table 1 : Distribution of respondents according to age (n=30)**

Sr.No.	Age (years)	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	30-35	21	70
2.	50-70	9	30

### Caste :

It was found that all the respondents were Hindu and belonged to Joshi family.

### Education :

The data pertaining to education revealed that all the respondents were well educated and half of the respondents were graduates while nearly 30 per cent respondents were post graduates (Table 2).

**Table 2 : Distribution of respondents according to education (n=30)**

Sr.No.	Education	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	Senior secondary	6	20
2.	Graduation	15	50
3.	Post graduation	9	30

**Income :**

Table 3 shows that half of respondents belonged to income group of Rs. 6000-8000 per month while nearly 20 per cent respondents belonged to Rs. 4000-6000 per month and rest 30 per cent respondents were under the range of Rs. to 8000-10,000 per month income .

**Table 3 : Distribution of respondents according to income (n=30)**

Sr.No.	Income	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	4000-6000	6	20
2.	6000-8000	15	50
3.	8000-10,000	9	30

**Family type :**

It was found that all the respondents belonged to the joint family.

**Mode of learning :**

All the respondents said that Phad making was their ancestral work while interviewing the respondents, it was observed that they had not undergone any special training to learn this art and all the skills of profession had been acquired from their family members like fathers, elder brothers and each artist trains himself by the method of learning by doing.

Thus, it can be concluded that it is craft practiced by family members and taught to next generation that means it is a professional where son is trained in the hands of elder member of family.

**Other places where this famous painting is being made :**

It was found that Raipur and Chittorgarh are other places, where this work is being carried out.

**Awareness of Phad :**

It was found that cent per cent respondents were aware of the true Phad meaning *i.e.* to read.

**Difference between Phad and Phad painting :**

Table 4 depicts the distribution of respondents according to difference between Phad and Phad painting. It was observed that 30 per cent respondents revealed that there is no difference between Phad and Phad painting except its size. Phad is 16

**Table 4 : Knowledge of the Phad painters regarding difference between Phad and Phad painting (n=30)**

Sr. No.	Difference	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	No difference	9	30
2.	Phad mean-to read Phad painting is a story telling art	6	20
3.	Phad painting is a scroll painting	9	30
4.	Phad is 16 feet long and Phad painting in any size	6	20

feet long while Phad painting can be of any size. However, 20 per cent respondents revealed that Phad means- to read and Phad painting is a short story telling art. Remaining 30 per cent respondents revealed that Phad painting is a scroll painting.

**Historical importance of Phad painting :**

Phad illustrates mostly two popular epic traditions of Rajasthan. There are Phads for other deities, but these are rare. Phads of Ram dev Ji, Rajput hero and saint from Marwar who opposed caste discrimination, can be found, is revered by Bhambis, Meghwals, Chamars and other belonging to the schedule caste, but the most popular one is about Pabuji Rathore, a Rajput chieftain, whose elder brothers rule at Kolu. He is venerated as an incarnation of Lord Rama's brother Lakshman by Rebari camel headers.

The second story is about the twenty four brothers (Bagrawat) and Lord Dev. They are popular among the cattle-keeper, farmers and rural craftsmen who generally live in the eastern part of Rajasthan Development is an incarnation of Lord Vishnu and this story parallels to Krishna's story many ways. Devnarayan probably lived in the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D., Pabuji in 14<sup>th</sup> century and Ramdevji in the 15<sup>th</sup> century A.D. They all are 'cattle heroes', rescued the community's cattle and are collectively known as 'Bhomiya'. Only some Bhomiya became powerful Gods and their culture development as epic and network of shrines.

**Technique of Phad painting :**

It was observed that cent per cent of respondents revealed free hand sketching in Phad painting.

Chippa draws the initial sketch (chaknadena) on a coarse and starched white cloth with a non-permanent yellow colour. After that, the faces and the figures are painted with a saffron colour (munda banana). The colours are applied in the following sequence- green, brown, vermilion, sky blue and finally black.

**Colours used in Phad painting :**

Cent per cent respondents reported that six colour are used in Phad painting (*i.e.* yellow, green, blue, orange, brown and red). In Phad painting, primarily only vegetable colours and minerals colours were used which remained fast and fresh for along duration. Though, in present time, synthetic colours have also gained prominence.

Pigments are ground by hand and mixed with water and gum, light yellow (pilla, hartal) is made from yellow orpiment, which will fade away over time. It is used to sketch all the figures and structures. The orange (mundo barno) or saffron (kesriya) colour used to paint faces and flesh is made by mixing red lead oxide (sindur) with same yellow powder (orpinat hartal) available in the market. Green (hara) is made from verdigris (jangal), acetate of copper. Brown (geru) is purchased

from the market in powder form. Vermilion (hinglu, lal) is produced by pulverizing chunks of cinnabar (mercury sulfide). Some times it is mixed with red oxide with red oxide (sindur) to cut costs. Black (kala, syahi) is used to outline the detail of all figures. It is either by burning coconut (indigo) and is commercially available.

#### Consumers of Phad painting :

Table 5 shows that 60 per cent respondents reported that foreigners were main consumers of Phad painting and remaining 40 per cent respondents, were of opinion that both the local people and the foreigners were their consumers.

Sr. No	Type of consumer	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	Foreigners	18	60
2.	Local	-	-
3.	Both	12	40

#### Common size of Phad painting :

Cent per cent of respondents reported that the common size of Devnarayan painting was 35 feet long and 15 feet wide while the painting size of Pabuji was reported by respondents, were 15 feet long and 5 feet wide.

#### Clothes used in Phad painting :

Table 6 reveals that respondents mainly used the cotton, khadi cloth, silk as per required. Near about 80 per cent respondents used the cotton (ordinary) cloth and the rest 20 per cent used silk and cotton both. Pure silk fabric was not used by any of the respondents.

Sr.No.	Clothes	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Cotton	24	80
2.	Silk	-	-
3.	Silk and cotton both	6	20
4.	Any other	-	-

#### Mode of procurement of fabric :

It was found that more than half of the respondents procured fabric from local market, while 30 per cent respondents got these fabrics from merchant, middle man and 20 per cent respondents got these clothes along with order (Table 7).

Sr. No.	Place/source	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	Local market	15	50
2.	From merchant, middle man	9	30
3.	Along with order	6	20

#### Quantity of cloth purchased :

It was found from the data of Table 8 that majority (50 %) of respondents brought these clothes as per requirement followed by 40 per cent respondents who brought these clothes in bulk and then used as per requirement. Only few respondents (10 %) were in category of both.

Sr. No.	Quantity of cloth purchased	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	As per requirement	15	50
2.	In bulk	12	40
3.	Both	3	10

#### Themes used in Phad painting :

It was found that cent per cent respondents revealed that the main theme of these painting is the depiction of local deities and their stories and legends of local rulers.

#### Motifs used in Phad painting :

Cent per cent respondents revealed that in the Phad painting's six main motifs were used. These motifs were related to Pabuji or Devnarayan life style. These are horse, bhala, elephant, naag, trees women-men figures etc.

#### Sources of motifs and themes :

It was observed that a good number of respondents (60 %) found these motifs and theme from old Phad or other Phad (Table 9).

Sr.No.	Sources	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	Historic literature	3	10
2.	Old Phad/ other Phad	18	60
3.	Own imagination	9	30

#### Selection of motifs and themes :

Table 10 depicts that most of the respondents (60 %) elected the design as per their own choice followed by customer demand as reported by 30 per cent respondents.

Sr. No.	Selection criteria of design	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	Self decision	18	60
2.	As per customer demand	9	30
3.	As per design given by wholesaler	3	10

#### Time required for completion of Phads :

It was found that many types of paintings were made by the Phad but two types of paintings were mostly famous

as Pabuji and Devnarayan.

Cent per cent respondents revealed that the time required for completion of one Pabuji painting ranged from 15-20 days and the painting Devnarayan took approximately one month time. Other miniature painting took around 1-3 days time.

#### Taking help from other :

It can be clearly seen from Table 11 that 60 per cent of respondents reported that they took help of other family members in Phad paintings. Further, it can be seen that 40 per cent took help from family members while 20 per cent of respondents took help from both *i.e.* family members as well as from their fellow workers.

**Table 11: Distribution of respondent regarding taking help of other in Phad making (n=30)**

Sr. No	Help taken	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Help take from other family members	18	60
2.	Only from family members	12	40
3.	Fellow worker and family members both	6	20

#### Mode of procurement of order :

It is evident from Table 12 that half of the respondents reported that they got orders from the dealers and rest half had direct contact with customers.

**Table 12: Mode of procurement of orders (n=30)**

Sr.No.	Order	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Industrial	-	-
2.	Dealers	15	50
3.	Organization	-	-
4.	Direct contact with consumers	15	50

#### Marketing of products :

Table 13 shows that 60 per cent respondents marketed the products at their own shop and rest 40 per cents old the product through retailers.

**Table 13: Distribution of respondents according to marketing of products (n=30)**

Sr.No.	Marketing through	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Retailer	12	40
2.	Wholesaler	-	-
3.	At their own shop	18	60

#### Inspiration behind the creation of Phad painting :

It was found that 80 per cent respondents were inspired by the family occupation and rest 20 per cent respondents were self inspired and took it as hobby (Table 14).

**Table 14: Distribution of respondents regarding the inspiration behind the creation of Phad painting (n=30)**

Sr.No	Inspiration	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Family	24	80
2.	Hobby	6	20

#### Problem faced by the Phad artisans :

It is evident from Table 15 that 20 per cent respondents faced the problem in raw material procurement. However, 40 per cent respondents faced problem in marketing of their paintings. Remaining 40 per cent respondents revealed that local market demand was not too good.

**Table 15: Distribution of respondents according to problem faced by the artisans (n=30)**

Sr.No.	Problem faced	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Raw material procurement	6	20
2.	Marketing	12	40
3.	Lack of demand	12	40

During the course of investigation, it was also observed that many consumers admired the Phad craft and showed keen interest on having some novelty in the presentation of design ideas. Hence, there is need to provide exposure of these Phad artisans in various traditional craft fairs and to generate new ideas for product development through appropriate training programme.

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