

# Connecting the Dots: Interlinking Crafts and Culture in Design Education

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## Abstract

Knowledge of Culture and History is a very important component that can influence Design and it is from our past that we can learn and create for the present and the future. The question facing Design educators today is how to align the present generation of millennials with the sensitivity and appreciation of our rich cultural heritage. The paper is focused on the Future of Design Education, by stressing the need for the knowledge of Culture and Crafts as an integral part of Design Education that will help the Designers of tomorrow to be prepared for the Future. According to the authors, simply sitting in the classroom or searching online cannot help students learn about Culture and Heritage. To experience a culture, one has to go out into the field, dirty their hands, and gather first-hand experiences. This will, in turn, lead to a better understanding of the issues and challenges that present themselves to a Designer in the course of their Design journey.

This paper examines ways in which these qualities and skills/knowledge can be nurtured and weaved together in Design education with a specific example - a case study of an Interior Design course in India. Based on the literature study and their findings from the case study student assignments and their feedback/reflection on assignments, the authors believe that Design Education should aim at sensitizing students about their cultural heritage and provide them with avenues and exposure to explore their cultural and contextual backgrounds as they are the future custodians of their culture.

**Keywords:** Crafts, Culture, Design, Design Education, Heritage

## 1 Introduction

*“A people without the knowledge of their history, origin, and culture is like a tree without roots”. -Marcus Garvey*

In India, Traditional & Indigenous crafts have been an inherent part of the process of ‘making’. Such processes are organic and involve traditional knowledge of socio-cultural and religious influences, climate response, geography, local materials, and the context in which they are situated. All this collective wisdom has been handed over from one generation to the next as a legacy. “Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” (Tyler, 1870 as cited by Avruch, K., 1998). “

As cultural heritage has a very important role in forming national identity, therefore the tangible and intangible aspects of this cultural heritage must be preserved and nurtured, and this can be achieved by incorporating the respect and understanding of cultural heritage in Design Education.

“Education in a broad sense improves the capabilities of individuals and the capacity of institutions, and becomes a catalyst for the closely interrelated economic, social, cultural, and demographic changes that become defined as national development.” (Adams, D., 2002).

Culture and education are inseparable and yet complementary with multiple points of interaction. Culture paves the way for education while education is responsible for flavoring the cultural values in life. Therefore, both can be interwoven in various ways. The ultimate goal of any education system is to develop holistic individuals. The National Education Policy 2020 for Higher Education envisages the promotion of Indian arts and culture, and this is important not only for the nation but also for the individual.

A 21st-century student is a millennial and a digital native, with access to more information than ever before. Cultural awareness and expression are among the major competencies for millennials, to provide them with a sense of their identity, and belonging, as well as an appreciation of other cultures and identities.

Sustainability in the preservation of cultural heritage through education should be encouraged. It is a way of how tangible and intangible cultural heritage can be safeguarded. This will give rise to sensitive designers, who will possess empathy towards culture, traditions, people, and users. It is from our past that we learn and create for the present and the future. “The design creates culture. Culture shapes values. Values determine the future” (Robert L. Peters, President Ico-D, 2001-2003). Similarly, culture also shapes Design. A study of the traditional cultures indicates that Culture and Traditional Design are interlinked, with each complimenting the other. They are both influenced by and influence each other, mirroring and echoing while also acting as sounding boards for each other.

Therefore, the authors feel that knowledge of culture and history can be a very important factor that can influence design. Design bolstered by tradition can oversee the transitions from the past to contemporary values. Therefore, the changes wrought by Globalization are not confrontational with the past; instead, they can be integrated with the past to help perpetuate traditional ideas and sensibilities and prepare them for a new world. Thus, the future can be shaped by the past.

As we hurtle towards a more technology-driven modern world, leaving behind our heritage in oblivion, it becomes imperative to take stock of the value of heritage and find ways to keep the traditional knowledge alive especially with the younger generation, with education playing a very important role in keeping the culture and values intact.

This paper looks at ways for incorporating culture and understanding of crafts and traditions in design education from an Indian perspective by taking an Indian Design College as a case study.

## **2 Background**

“Whoever wishes to foresee the future must consult the past; for human events ever resemble those of preceding times. This arises from the fact that they are produced by men who ever have been, and ever will be, animated by the same passions, and thus they necessarily have the same result.” (Machiavelli, N., 2017).

India is a land with a rich heritage of craft traditions, and it is these traditions and associated knowledge and skills that form the cultural identity of her people. A sizeable chunk of India’s rural population subsists on crafts as a source of earning, with the crafts sector as the second-largest unorganized sector in India. Based on literature reviews, the data suggests that there are around 7 million artisans in India (unofficial figures estimate 200 million), and these artisans form the non-farm rural economy (Jena, P.K., 2010). Traditional crafts and hand skills are a historical connection to the heritage and culture of a people. In the modern era, crafts have been seen as a product that is decorative and is objectified into something that is a reminder of ancient memories but the craft is not just a product, it is a construct, a conglomerate of the tangible and intangible heritage of a people and their culture.

The United Nations agency UNESCO defines Culture as the “set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions, and beliefs”. It is seen that culture has an important place in the psyche of a community it is a reflection of their identity and their histories, thus forming a composite whole that has many facets: social customs and mores, religious practices, language, food, shared histories and memories. India has a vast storehouse of traditional crafts, and almost each one of these crafts comes with a deeply embedded sense of history, inherent stories, motifs, myths, and rituals.

Cultural awareness and expression are among the major competencies considered important to develop in students, to provide them with a sense of identity, belonging, as well as an appreciation of other cultures and identities. Through the development of a strong sense and knowledge of their own culture, cultural backgrounds, and traditions, the younger generations can build a positive cultural identity and self-esteem. Thus, cultural awareness and expression are important contributors, both for individuals as well as for society. Cultural traits and patterns are transmitted from generation to generation, and this is an ongoing process. At the same time, culture is also dynamic, and it evolves and adapts to the stimuli from what is happening around us. The decline of crafts as seen in today’s scenario has many reasons, one of which is globalization. According to Laila Tyabji, (2017), one of the reasons is due to the saturation of ideas, not a saturation of demands. According to Darlie O Koshy, Crafts are an important source and form the foundation for bringing innovations in modern design. Koshy links Craft to a river that flows into the design, and carries with it, culture and emotions (Koshy, D., 2017). Integrating crafts and culture in design education can help in filling this gap.

Design as a formal discipline has emerged after the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century, an era that has been dominated by modernist thought and ideas. Therefore, traditional art and craft have not been considered worthy of inclusion in Design and design research. The Euro-centric models have thus colored inquiries in design and design education and relegated a majority of traditional crafts under the umbrella of Ethnic.

However, an increasing call for an understanding of issues related to diversity in today’s world has also triggered a need for re-examining the Euro-centric ideas and being more inclusive of the indigenous knowledge and skills. According to Alain Findeli (2001), the twenty-first-century design must “open up the scope of inquiry”.

Cultural heritage has a very important role in forming national identity, therefore the tangible and intangible aspects of this cultural heritage must be preserved and nurtured, and this can be achieved by incorporating the respect and understanding of cultural heritage in Design Education. **Further inclusion of Craft and Culture education in design curriculums can lead to enhanced creativity, better communication, the spirit of collaboration, problem-solving and resilience, qualities** that are expected to be possessed by a student of design education and future employees and design practitioners who can think local and act globally at the same time.

### **3 Culture, Design, and Education Inter-Relationship**

Education is conceived as a systematic effort to maintain a culture. In a technical sense education is the process by which society through school, colleges, universities, and other institutions deliberately transmits its cultural heritage, accumulated knowledge, values, and skills from one generation to another. Education act as an instrument of cultural change as well social change. In addition to providing knowledge and learning, education enriches culture, spirit, values, and everything that characterizes us as human beings.

The International Indigenous Design Charter asks designers to ensure that the representation of Indigenous cultures does the following: reflects their cultural values and respects their customary laws; protects and respects the environment and honors the values of Indigenous cultures; is an authentic reflection of Indigenous knowledge; empowers Indigenous peoples: past, present, and future; and, positively impacts Indigenous peoples who are both the subject and producers of the story: past, present, and future.

A culture-based education is defined by the Assembly of Alaska Native Educators (1998) as one which reflects, validates, and promotes the values, world views, and languages that form the culture of a community. As cultural heritage has a very important role in forming national identity, therefore the tangible and intangible aspects of this cultural heritage must be preserved and nurtured, and this can be achieved by incorporating the respect and understanding of cultural heritage in Design Education.

The field of Design is located at the crossroads of technology, business, society, culture, and people. We need designers who can lead us to a better society, designers who can bring together the disciplines of technology, business, society, government, and culture. (Norman, D., 2019).

This awareness about Culture and traditional crafts, especially in design education, engenders opportunities for growth and revival of our rich cultural heritage and traditions, and this further allows students to explore their milieu and its antecedents, and ultimately fosters creativity. Culture, therefore, plays an important role in education.

## **4 Design Education in India**

Design Education, also known as creative education, is the teaching of theory and application in the design of products, services, and environments, and it involves problem-solving by applying prior knowledge, practical methods, and native intelligence to solve the problems. Design education includes courses like Design Thinking, Experience Design, Interior Design, Communication Design, and Product Design.

In the report 'Future of Design Education in India' published by the British Council in partnership with India Design Council in 2016, design education in India is identified as a valuable asset to be nurtured, because it is a vital component in the economic development and social wellbeing of the country. Parker, I., (2013) identifies a shift in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century design education from client-driven projects towards a more reflective 'issue-based' design education that strives for more socially inclusive, locally/glocally/globally relevant solutions. She further emphasizes on it becoming increasingly important for design education to include political, social, economic, and ecological discourses in a collaborative and trans/multidisciplinary way to enable a conceptual understanding of issues at stake as well as 'intangibles' like values, social responsibilities, culture, empathy, humility, and local/global relevance.

Design education is a complex process that involves inculcating skills of creativity and design knowledge in students, allowing them to become design practitioners who create designs and products that cater to the needs of the users/consumers. However, this process must also be balanced with engendering empathy and respect towards the actual creator/maker, society, and our culture in general.

Understanding one's roots and learning through action should be an integral part of the curriculum for Design education.

### **4.1 Impact of Globalization on Design Education**

The modern education system that is prevalent today is primarily influenced by Western ideas, and the post-Industrialization thought process has come to dictate the educational process,

much to the detriment of indigenous knowledge, traditional lifestyles, and cultures. Globalization is the prevailing force today, and it is impossible to not be influenced by it in the march for progress, but this suppresses cultural heritage. The authors believe that it is necessary to move with the times but keeping the cultural identities intact through ways and means to adapt to a globalized worldview, tempered with respecting and placing value on the traditional cultures can be a way to achieve this balance. Such measures to make Globalization more inclusive of traditional cultures can lead to a richer experience where the modern coexists in harmony with tradition. Design Education is one important means by which this can be achieved.

Design, like any other facet of the act of creating/producing, evolves with time, getting influenced by whatever is happening around us. Advances in technology being an important part of Globalization, have a great impact on Design too. With Globalization generating newer market demands and producers/manufacturers and economies finding ways to cater to these demands, the Design community has also been partly responsible for catering to and supporting these burgeoning demands. More and more developing and under-developed nations are trying to emulate the Western ways of life, as these are seen as aspirational, but in this process, these nations are abandoning their traditional ways of life that had served them well in the past. Therefore, these market-driven exigencies ultimately affect Design, and by corollary, Design Education as well.

Culture and craft play an important role in education and particularly in design education. At all levels of education, the essence of culture should be imparted to students to make them aware of their roots.

#### **4.2 Why it is important for India in the present Scenario of globalization to know about Culture, Traditions, and Crafts incorporated into design Education?**

Interweaving culture in design education can be reinforced by engaging students directly with crafts, culture, history, background research, and analysis so that the students can gain a deep understanding and awareness of their roots. This further inculcates knowledge of the deep sensitivity and tenuous bonds between a craft and its practitioner, and how the lifestyle of the craftsmen of a particular community is linked to, and directly influenced by the craft itself.

Such interactions with culture and crafts can provide the students with first-hand experiences and further enable them to develop skills and understanding that will help them to explore and experiment with materials, techniques, and technologies, and this will lead to creating better self-awareness and critical thought processes.

As mentioned by Purnima Rai (2016, pp. 27-28), in the present era of technology where everything is mechanized and digitized, India is fortunate that there is an unparalleled resource of hand skills that gives us a distinct edge over any other country in the world.

This rich storehouse provides an opportunity area for young designers to tap into and create newer synergies. The authors believe that the inclusion of Craft education in design curriculums can lead to enhanced creativity, better communication, the spirit of collaboration, problem-solving, and resilience, qualities that are expected to be possessed by employees.

During an interview (conducted by authors) on 5 July 2019, Usha Nehru Patel, a design educationist, Dean IIAD, New Delhi, stated that she strongly feels that being aware of their heritage and culture is very important for the present generation, thus exposure to culture in design courses is essential for the students to develop a clearer understanding of their milieu and background. Usha also feels that this gives rise to an interesting dichotomy; if one needs to have one's own identity, one needs to have something different and original. In the global

context this means something that nobody else knows, but only they have an experience of. How a student reacts (embraces or rejects) the cultural aspect would depend on the individual, but design institutes must provide exposure to traditional crafts and culture to the students. This exposure brings a newer dimension to the whole cultural ethos, with everyone bringing in their original bits, their own understanding of their embedded culture to the table. Usha believes that exposure to crafts is important, and it is not only just exposure to craft techniques or material but also deeply rooted beliefs and a way of life. Another facet discussed was that while keeping the culture intact is not possible since it is not static, it has to evolve and redefine itself. In this process, some of the old ways would be still embedded in the new.

During a discussion on 5 July 2019 with Pankaj Narain, a practicing designer and academician mentioned that Globalization has had both positive and negative effects as. The good part has been that it has led to a boost in the economy, which has translated into increased opportunities for designers and craftsmen alike but the biggest fear is the dilution or even loss of culture. This is an effect of the current generation getting attracted to things foreign and ending up losing touch with their own cultures due to the availability of too many choices and an overload of distraction. During the interview, it emerged that in his experience, not every student would be interested in crafts and culture, and only a few would genuinely be keen on pursuing more knowledge about crafts and culture.

The approach followed by Pankaj means that the craftsman is brought to the classroom as well as students going out in the field to crafts clusters and getting their hands dirty, thus gaining a better understanding of these crafts. Thus, empathy is created in the mind of the students toward crafts and culture. He feels that despite waning interest today, providing a platform to students to explore culture and heritage is still very important.

According to Darlie Koshy (2017, pp. 1-4), crafts provide a differential advantage to design by providing sense & sensitivity. With values, stories, and aesthetics all embedded within them, crafts can provide a connection to the heart, unlike any other expression. As crafts have both tangible and intangible aspects, they provide a sense of realism and continuity in a globalized world, where a single, standard identity is slowly emerging, with everyone striving to conform to this global identity.

## **5 Incorporating Cultures and Crafts in Design Education (A Case Study)**

The curriculum of the Post Graduate Diploma in Interior Design & Styling department in the School of Design, Pearl Academy attempts to address the issues and possible ways forward for students to develop an understanding of the cultural and crafts aspect, and this is done through assignments and design projects that teach self-awareness, empathy, cultural awareness, and ultimately a global view. The projects are hypothetical, and the project brief includes research, case studies, design, and documentation.

### **5.1 Semester 1: Familiar to Unfamiliar: Project 1**

The cultural and self-awareness aspect is introduced to the students in semester 1 under the Interior Theory Module. In this module, 2 projects / assignments are assigned and completed during 10 weeks. Each assignment/project builds upon the learning established in the previous project. Projects also progressively increase in size and complexity.

The first project is very personal, focusing on the individual student's family history-where each student reflects on their family culture, background, history, rituals, and traditions followed in their family. The teaching and learning strategies in this assignment are based on learning through one's self-experiences and the experiences of their peers. The students are

encouraged to discuss their own experiences of their family culture, and this is designed to encourage cultural awareness.

They talk about their family tree and family backgrounds, their surnames, and how surnames generally are markers of community, traditional family occupations, region of origin, etc. As a first step, the students gather information from their family members through interviews; discussions, etc., and after data collection shares their stories with the class in the form of a piece of reflective writing followed by a presentation to the class. The students also reflect on the interior design/space planning aspects of their own house. For example How spaces were used in their own houses as per their family culture; the concept of purity and impurity in the kitchen or entire house; family shrines and sacred space within the household.

The project is important for the student to become aware of the history that has made them who they are, to realize that there is so much similarity yet a lot of differences in the way spaces are used in each other's families (for example, most Gujarati families will have a culture of removing shoes outside their house near the entrance). In many cases, the students also discover that their family traditions are no longer practiced nowadays due to living in modern houses /dwellings designed keeping in mind global trends. This process of inquiry and exchange of ideas helps students to identify practices unique to a culture/community, and sometimes there are situations where similarities are also seen in diverse cultures. This sharing of cultural practices and family traditions by the students in a studio setting creates a lively exchange of ideas and thus leads to increased awareness of each other's culture.

## 5.2 Semester 1: Familiar to Unfamiliar: Project 2

The second project in the module is a group project under the name Design project 1 where the students move to an unfamiliar context i.e. a semi-urban scenario/setup. They are asked to do background research to understand the location/area and then they are taken to the site where each group is assigned one area or scenario and asked to collect data related to background, history, and culture from past to present. The students observe in detail how people are interacting with the space, and with each other, and understand the culture and context. For research and data collection, various tools are used: interviews, surveys, recordings, sketches, etc. After detailed research for 2 days, students are asked to present a visual scenario of the present culture/trend/pattern. After the second day, the students work in their studios and brainstorm on opportunity areas for design – they must go back to the background data collected and the scenario to understand the problem /design opportunity in terms of contextual; cultural, and social influences. In their final presentation to the class, the students present their design solutions and explain how these solutions will benefit the users, the location and the context, and all the stakeholders.



Figure 1. Students work as part of Project 2: Familiar to Unfamiliar, Scenario Building for Chandani Chowk, Delhi.



### Figure 2. Students in groups presenting Project 2

The faculties try to ensure that this design project is done in the older parts of the city (Delhi) where some cultural aspects are still alive and where modernity is rubbing shoulders with tradition.

## 5.3 Semester 2: Craft in Interiors

This project is designed to engender interaction between design students and craftsmen for design and product development for the contemporary Interiors market. The objectives of this project are: To encourage students to engage with traditional craftsmen; To create areas of shared opportunities for the designers and the craftsmen, within a collaborative process; To foster a two-way learning process along with the spirit of cooperation; To develop a sense of empathy in the students towards the act of creating/making and the maker.

After giving basic input on crafts, the meaning of crafts, and Indian crafts, the students have explained the importance of crafts in the globalized world, this also includes interaction with designers who are already working in the crafts sector. Students are made aware of ‘crafting of the spaces’, incorporating crafts- surface making crafts and surface finished crafts in interior spaces. Crafts of all kinds: architectural, functional, decorative are used to enhance and accent these places, which are incorporated on walls, ceilings, floors, furniture, paneling/partitions, etc.

The students are asked to choose a craft that they would like to work on and do background research on the chosen craft and its context, a community practicing the craft, to the present status, and then identify a craftsman with whom they can work to develop a product (with the application of craft on a contemporary product that can be used in modern interiors)

This module not only helps the students in terms of understanding how design intervention works, but the craftsmen also benefit by getting new ideas for products. As part of an informal survey conducted by the students with their chosen craftsman, it was found that these new products did have acceptance and value in the market. This collaboration develops more confidence in both the students and the craftsmen.



**Figure 3: Space Divider with Chamba Rumal Craft (Designer + Craftsmen). Figure 4: Space Divider with Phulkari Craft from Punjab in Contemporary way (Designer + Craftsmen).**



**Figure 5: Interior Products developed using different crafts by Students of PG Program (Designer + Craftsmen).**

Figures 3 to 5 showcase different Interior Products Developed as part of Craft Techniques for Interiors (Designer + Craftsmen) using different crafts from India. These



products are designed by semester 2 students of the PG Interior Design & Styling course at Pearl Academy.

#### 5.4 Semester 3: Hospitality Project - Boutique Hotel

Building on the learnings from the earlier semester, where the students are sensitized towards the understanding of craft and culture in a broader sense:(after incorporating craft in products, another aspect of incorporating craft in ‘crafting of spaces’ is introduced), In this semester the students work on hospitality space - a boutique hotel, and are given a choice to select one from two typologies, i.e. Contemporary or Heritage. They develop their understanding about the culture of that region (here culture plays a vital role that dictates the design, and the demographics, climatic response, geographic considerations, local materials, motifs, patterns, colors, styles, crafts, etc. all form part of that cultural context).



Figure 9: Mood board and Interior Images for “PadharoMarheDes”- Heritage Boutique Hotel on the concept of celebrating a different aspect of Jodhpur’s varied culture and exquisite beauty.



Figure 10: Mood board and Interior Images for “Arria”- Heritage Boutique Hotel with the concept of celebrating Blue Pottery of Rajasthan, India.

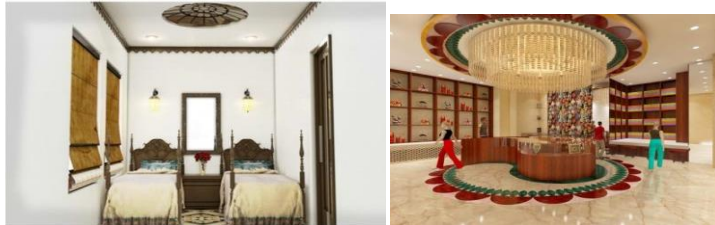
The students study how traditional crafts and techniques, and indigenous processes of construction are used to the best advantage and can also be contemporized without losing their essence. The study of old buildings and their interiors as case studies like *Neemrana fort resort*, *Tijara fort resort*, etc., can give us a glimpse of crafts that imbue such habitats with their characteristic regional and cultural flavor, which are missing from modern buildings.

#### 5.5 Semester 4: Final Project - Thesis

In the last semester of the course, the students work on a project of their choice, and it can be based on any Interiors related topic or space to design. As part of the thesis project, some students tend to choose topics that are related to Indian culture and its application in Interiors.

It has been seen that exposure to culture in the earlier semesters, does whet the appetites of some students towards the cultural and heritage aspects, and some projects that emerge from this are focused on heritage and culture issues. A few examples:

- The Central Maharani (A Luxury Train that showcases the cultural heritage of Central India).
- Centre for Craft Development and Training, Nalbari, Assam, India.
- Experience Centre for handicrafts of Varanasi, Experience cum Research Centre for Traditional Surface crafts of India at Varanasi for handicrafts of that region.



**Figure 11: Interior of a Luxury Train depicting crafts, textiles, and culture of Madhya Pradesh, India in Interior elements like upholstery, furniture, etc.**

**Figure 12: Experience Centre for Surface Crafts of Varanasi, India showcasing regional crafts & culture**



**Figure 13: Centre for Craft Development and Training, Nalbari, Assam, India.**

As part of these projects, students undergo detailed research that involves studying the cultural and historical aspects relevant to the topic of their study. In the two-year PG course, an attempt has been made to make students connected with an aspect of culture to sensitize them towards our rich heritage and cultural background.

## **5.6 Reflection on Student Assignments and their Feedback**

Feedback and reflections were collected from the students who have taken up these assignments as part of their PG Interior Design course at Pearl Academy. As per feedback collected, students felt that these assignments and projects helped to explore ways in which traditional crafts and cultural heritage can be incorporated into the present-day built environments, forming an evolutionary response to the changing times, and maintaining their own cultural identity in the face of the onslaught from globalization and not just following a bland aesthetic that eschews all individuality. Students also learn about the unfamiliar culture and how culture can be incorporated into a public space. Students learned about the application of traditional crafts and local materials in their traditional essence or contemporized. Students not only developed knowledge and understanding of crafts and culture they also got the opportunity to work with the craftsman and simultaneously question/research on many points related to the past. All these assignments not only helped them to understand their roots, and cultural backgrounds but also helped them to develop empathy, empathy towards their culture, and empathy towards others. All these qualities are important for a design student and a practicing designer.

**Observation by authors/faculties:** Since the introduction of Culture and Crafts in the Interior Design curriculum, year-on-year interest by the student is incrementally noticeable, and more

and more students are taking up crafts and culture-based projects. Students are becoming sensitive about their culture and heritage and have started appreciating the crafts and culture of our country. Some of them are able to make a difference between handmade and machine-made. Craft-based projects are winning national and international awards in competitions like AYDA 2021, Pune Design Award 2020, 2022, and many more. Also noticeable is an increased level of interest in crafts and culture-based entrepreneurship endeavors by students after their completion of the course.

## **6 Conclusion**

The authors strongly feel that understanding one's roots, and learning through action must be an integral part of the curriculum for Design education. Ingold, T., (2013) recommends that engaging with materials as well as the process of making will result in a better understanding of the whole idea of 'making' or creating something. The authors of the paper feel that this concept is what lies at the heart of Design Education: this whole idea of engagement with the design process and learning through it. Incorporating knowledge and experience of culture and crafts in to design education curriculum will help the new generation to get connected with our rich cultural past, which will further help the students to think in new directions and will become a source for sustenance for our traditional crafts and culture before they become a thing of the past. Awareness and respect for culture, one's own as well as others, leads to fostering tolerance and harmony in society and helps in embracing diversity. However, awareness alone is not enough to sustain crafts and culture. Embedding it in design education will lead to social, cultural, and economic upliftment. As a designer practicing in India, one cannot be unmindful of the knowledge and experience of working with India's craft, culture, and heritage.

As the younger generation is rapidly embracing modern technology and is increasingly being influenced by globalization, the indigenous and traditional technologies and skills are almost being forgotten and shall soon disappear for want of any patrons. According to the authors, simply sitting in the classroom or searching online cannot help students learn about Culture and Heritage. To experience a culture, one has to go out into the field, dirty their hands, and gather first-hand experiences. This will, in turn, lead to a better understanding of the issues and challenges that present themselves to a Designer in the course of their Design journey.

Within the context of design education, the knowledge of crafts and culture supports personal, social, moral, spiritual, cultural, and creative development, and enables learners to engage with and explore visual, tactile, and other sensory experiences and also makes them learn how to recognize and communicate ideas and meanings. These opportunities enable them to work with traditional and new media so that they develop confidence, competence, imagination, and creativity. These opportunities can be integrated into the curriculum as simple to complex assignments/projects, exploring from familiar to unfamiliar scenarios. Through these opportunities, they learn to appreciate their culture, history, and to understand the contexts in which they were made. Experiences in craft, culture, and design enable them to learn how to reflect critically on their own and others' work. They learn to think and act as makers, and designers, working creatively and intelligently. They develop an appreciation of crafts, their culture, their antecedents as critical consumers and audiences while increasing their understanding of the role of Design in the creative and cultural industries that shape and enrich their lives.

Unless crafts and culture are embedded in design education, sensitizing the present generation and taking our rich cultural heritage forward will be challenging. Culture and Crafts cannot be learned/ studied through books or manuals. Therefore, there has to be a design pedagogy that slowly imparts this intangible knowledge in a design program through various means.

The authors suggest that Design Education should aim for the following:

- To create a balanced curriculum that includes the vast repertoire of traditional knowledge that exists with the craftsmen.
- To develop empathy and respect in the minds of the students for culture, crafts, and crafts practitioners. This can be achieved by interacting and collaborating with the craftsmen.
- To create design practitioners who can think local and act globally at the same time
- To create and shape designers who can think beyond stereotypical expectations of industrial design.

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