

12

Rural Handicraft Business Models: A Study on Pattachitra (Scroll Painting)

Nilanjan Ray, Dillip Kumar Das and Indranil Muttsuddi

This chapter discusses *pattachitra* (scroll painting) a traditional handicraft business in West Bengal, India. This business represents a time-honored artistic tradition in India, particularly in the region of West Bengal, where many *patuas* (scroll painters) reside, especially in the Midnapore and Bankura districts. These artisans face significant challenges in marketing their intricate artwork due to a lack of designated venues or retail outlets for exhibition and sale. The impact of globalization has further compounded the difficulties, threatening the continuation of their scroll painting practices. This research focuses on sustainable business development strategies, such as Artisans to Businessman (A2B), Artisans to Tourists (A2T), Artisans to Intermediaries (A2I), and Government to Artisans (G2A). The rural handicraft sector represents a rich tapestry of cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and artisanal skills. It plays a crucial role in preserving age-old traditions while contributing to the socio-economic development of rural communities. Among the numerous handicraft forms in India, pattachitra stands out for its intricate designs, mythological themes, and unique aesthetics. Rooted in ancient religious narratives, pattachitra has evolved from a sacred art form into a commercial enterprise, thereby creating unique business models for rural artisans. This chapter explores the development and challenges of rural handicraft business models, with a specific focus on the Pattachitra art form.

Introduction

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the economic potential embedded within rural handicrafts, not just as cultural artifacts but as viable business opportunities. Rural handicrafts represent the artistic heritage and skill of communities, often passed down through generations. With globalization and