

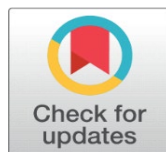
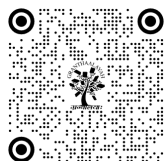
THE ROLE OF SOUVENIR MARKETING IN SUSTAINING HANDMADE CRAFTSMANSHIP

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ABSTRACT

Globalization poses a threat to heritage values rooted in culture and the environment. As societies worldwide adapt to global trends and increasingly common lifestyles, traditional cultural elements have declined, relegating cultural artifacts to antiquity. Research indicates that these artifacts are prospective souvenirs for today's consumer market if their original meanings and aesthetics are revitalized. As a case in point, this study focuses on Batto Bai dolls, an indigenous craft, exploring how they could be transformed into souvenirs to enrich tourism experiences. Drawing upon the Heritage Tourism Development Model, the research assesses factors conducive to successfully commodifying Batto Bai dolls as souvenirs. This approach enhances tourism, safeguards indigenous crafts, and fosters entrepreneurial endeavors. The study highlights the potential synergy between cultural preservation, economic empowerment, and tourism development, underscoring the significant economic benefits of successfully commodifying Batto Bai dolls as souvenirs in an era of rapid change.

Keywords: Souvenir Marketing, Craftsmanship, Handmade

1. INTRODUCTION

For a long time, souvenirs have played a pivotal role in every tour (Kong & Chang, 2012; Schulman, 2005). Studies show that tourists view buying souvenirs as a key part of their travel experience (Su et al., 2024). One of the key reasons is having a tangible memento of the travel experience (Kim & Littrell, 1999; Swanson, 2004; Wu et al., 2022). Many tourists travel from the destination with distinct souvenirs, reflecting their experiences based on their identity and knowledge of the destination (Lupu et al., 2024; Swanson & Timothy, 2012). Souvenirs range from handicrafts

reflecting local culture and customs to mass-produced products (Light et al., 2024). However, they are particularly drawn to souvenirs that embody the intangible Indigenous cultural heritage of the destination, often with religious or spiritual connotations (Zhu et al., 2023). The multifaceted role of a souvenir is underscored by its function as a practical object, an intermediary between cultures, people, and places, fetishized items, cultural tuners, artwork, and the manifestation of skilled handcraft (Pabian et al., 2020). Souvenirs, such as toys and dolls, have the power to evoke nostalgic memories of childhood and may hold more significance than the present (Swanson & Timothy, 2012).

Souvenirs, especially handicrafts, are crucial in preserving and safeguarding significant cultural heritage throughout various countries (Qiu et al., 2024; Yang et al., 2018). The values associated with handicrafts emerge from the intricate interplay between cultural and environmental systems (Zhu et al., 2023). The handicraft sector, also renowned for its significant contributions to income generation and employment, has garnered global recognition as a potent tool for poverty alleviation (Abisuga-Oyekunle & Fillis, 2017; Jones et al., 2012). However, despite the long-standing acknowledgment of the handicraft industry's importance, it has weathered formidable challenges, primarily from industrialization and globalization (Scrase, 2003), along with transformative lifestyle shifts (Olalere, 2019). After industrialization, artisans struggled to compete against well-established industrial units, often compelled to sell their meticulously crafted products at reduced prices (Yang et al., 2018). Lifestyle changes have caused the perception of many handicrafts as outdated and antiquated (Zhu et al., 2023). However, handicrafts have often been involved in commercialization debates (Mathisen, 2020). Hence, the question arises: How do souvenirs, particularly those embodying Indigenous cultural heritage that contribute to cultural preservation, adapt to economic and industrial challenges?

Considering these changing dynamics, it becomes essential to conduct a comprehensive examination of souvenirs, as advocated by Husa (2020), mainly focusing on the use of regional handicrafts to represent and preserve cultural heritage (Zhu et al., 2023). The increasing concern about souvenirs and cultural heritage has led to many studies on this topic (Light et al., 2024). However, few review articles discuss their inevitable connection and the process of transforming cultural heritage resources into souvenirs. Although souvenirs play a significant part in cultural tourism, there is a lack of academic research on their impact on promoting and sustaining local culture (Qiu et al., 2024). In this context, the authors in this study investigate the challenges faced by the handicraft industry in the context of industrialization, globalization, and lifestyle changes. Moreover, the study explores transforming cultural heritage resources into commercial souvenirs. The study offers significant insights into the preservation of cultural heritage and educates younger generations about their cultural roots, enabling them to develop a distinct understanding of local identity (Balermipas & Manola, 2020; Olalere, 2019).

To illustrate, the study examined the Batto Bai dolls, handmade cloth dolls utilized in local ceremonies, to demonstrate how their eventual commercialization as souvenirs can boost both local pride and tourism in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh, India. Traditionally, these dolls have been used for various purposes, including ornamental adornments, amusing toys, and marionettes. However, in recent times, the dolls' significance has shifted from a ceremonial object to a decorative piece for the home or a considerate present.

2. SIGNIFICANCE OF SOUVENIRS IN TOURISM

Tourism and souvenirs are perceived to be inherently linked (Swanson & Horridge, 2006). Collecting items across diverse forms of tourism stands out as a consistent, popular, and widespread behavior among all tourists (Harris & Magrizos, 2023). Tourists desire to carry back souvenirs of their experience to remember and validate the unique nature of the place they visited (Li, 2023; Light et al., 2024). According to Kong & Chang (2012), small decorative items with historical significance or novelty value are commonly sold as souvenirs. The term "souvenir," originating from the French verb meaning "to remember," signifies the pivotal role of these items in preserving cherished memories (Swanson & Timothy, 2012; Wilkins, 2011). Alternatively, some literature posits that "souvenir" is rooted in the Latin word 'subvenire,' translating to 'come to mind' (Kızılcık & Birdir, 2023). Souvenirs are tangible products that remind tourists of their travel experiences, embodying symbols of cultural interaction (Kızılcık & Birdir, 2023; Qiu et al., 2024). Termed as the 'messenger of the extraordinary,' souvenirs remind of special moments and life events (Yuan et al., 2022). Souvenirs, ranging from rugs and paintings to T-shirts and caps, exhibit a diverse spectrum (Kızılcık & Birdir, 2023; Wilkins, 2011).

Originally a French verb meaning "to remember," souvenir in English "represents an object through which something is remembered" (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). The term "souvenir" refers to any commercially made or bought item intended to serve as a memento of a travel experience (Kim & Littrell, 1999; Swanson, 2004; Wu et al., 2022). Tourists purchase a variety of souvenirs, including rugs, paintings, T-shirts, and caps (Wilkins, 2011). The relationship between souvenirs and local culture is inextricably linked, with locally produced handicrafts reflecting traditions, promoting authenticity, and bridging cultural divides (Qiu et al., 2024). Hence, souvenirs can take many forms, including works of art, ethnic arts and crafts, and other tourist merchandise (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). Souvenir shops include not only general merchandise stores but also those selling gifts, handicrafts, antiques, food, clothing, and accessories (Swanson, 2004).

Pabian et al. (2020) define souvenirs from a sociological perspective "as commodities having certain meanings and functions that the tourist anticipates gaining by purchasing them, according to a sociological perspective." These objects are not only products but also carriers of cultural connotations, reflecting local culture's essence and uniqueness, attracting buyers (Qiu et al., 2024). For marketers, souvenirs must satisfy target market preferences and be profitable for retailers (Swanson, 2004). However, souvenirs purchased by tourists serve more than just commercial or financial purposes (Lin & Mao, 2015). From a tourist's perspective, souvenirs are tangible representations of an apparently intangible and transitory experience (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). Hence, souvenirs are a great way to memorialize a tour or event for future reference or to relive happy memories from a trip you already took (Swanson, 2004; Wilkins, 2011). In addition to acquiring souvenirs, tourists can purchase many non-souvenir things, such as clothing and durable goods (Kim & Littrell, 1999). Hence, all souvenirs can be classified as tourist purchases, but not all can be classified as souvenirs.

Souvenir shops have long been an integral element of the travel industry, and their continued success is crucial to the retail sector in many popular tourist destinations (Swanson & Horridge, 2006). It is widely believed that souvenirs are in high demand because tourists are thinking of creating a niche market that requires targeted, specialized manufacture (Horner, 1993; Mathisen, 2020). Souvenirs hold

significant economic value for retailers near or near tourist destinations (Light et al., 2024; Swanson, 2004). Through souvenir-giving and receiving rituals, travelers can convey feelings of pride, admiration, and prestige (Snepenger et al., 2003). Occasionally, the purchase of souvenirs by tourists is a good indicator of whether or not they will return to a given destination (Lin & Mao, 2015). Souvenirs for tourists have become increasingly popular as the tourism sector has expanded, and this, in turn, has had a significant impact on the souvenir market (Wu et al., 2022).

However, in addition to serving as a remembrance of the tour, the souvenir also represents the destination's local culture and heritage (Husa, 2020). A souvenir also serves as a memorable reminder of a destination's distinctive culture and traditional values (Kong & Chang, 2012). Early studies on souvenirs focused on the development of handicrafts and ethnic art as tourist items, with a focus on the changing forms and purposes of traditional arts (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). Research shows that tourists prefer to buy regional arts and crafts and local specialty products as souvenirs instead of non-regional arts and crafts like paintings, stuffed animals or toys, and ornaments (Wilkins, 2011). Moreover, tourists prefer souvenirs with distinctive craftsmanship, exemplary quality, aesthetic appeal, cultural and historical authenticity, and functional utility (Pabian et al., 2020).

3. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a qualitative case study research design (Kızılıçık & Birdir, 2023), to understand the phenomenon from a craftsman's perspective, focusing on subjective meaning and personal experience (Duan et al., 2023). A case study uses thorough and in-depth data from a limited number of systems (cases), multiple sources (such as observations, face-to-face interviews, documents, and reports), and categories to describe the case to examine phenomena across time (Creswell, 2007). The case study focused on the development of Batto Bai's dolls and the doll manufacturing process, which was drawn from source material gathered during three field study trips to Batto Bai's residence.

Figure 1



Figure 1 Batto Bai Dolls (Gudda Gudiya)

Batto Bai dolls have a rich history in Gwalior, dating back generations (Fig. 1). They are named after Batto Bai, an extraordinary craftswoman who began this

tradition. The study utilizes semi-structured on-site interviews conducted with Kalpana Parihar, the daughter-in-law of Batto Bai, an esteemed artisan specializing in creating Batto Bai dolls. The interview was conducted in Hindi, the predominant local language of Gwalior, to obtain an appropriate response. The interviews were transcribed and translated into English for study purposes. The interviews were designed to achieve several key objectives. Firstly, they sought to uncover the rich inheritance of Batto Bai's dolls, delving into their historical and cultural significance, particularly within the context of Gwalior and the surrounding regions.

Furthermore, the interviews aimed to provide insights into the intricate production process of these traditional dolls. Questions were posed regarding the selection of designs, patterns, and any notable changes in the range of products over time. Additionally, the inquiry explored contemporary trends shaping the production of Batto Bai's dolls, shedding light on their evolution from traditional crafts to souvenir production. Through the interview, the research illustrates the dynamic and evolving nature of traditional Batto Bai dolls, showcasing how they transition into souvenir creation.

4. THE HERITAGE OF BATTO BAI DOLLS

The technique of making dolls and toys is one of the most cherished traditions in many cultures, and it has been diligently transmitted across successive generations. Among these cherished creations are the esteemed Batto Bai dolls, a hallmark handicraft hailing from the vibrant city of Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh, India (Fig. 2). Named after its ingenious maker, Batto Bai, this doll craft embodies intricate artistry and deep-rooted tradition. Today, the craft is kept alive by its third-generation practitioner Kalpana, who is the torchbearer of this cherished tradition, preserving and innovating the craft in Gwalior. According to her,

"Batto Bai dolls have a rich history in Gwalior, dating back generations. They are named after Batto Bai, an extraordinary craftswoman who began this tradition."

Passed through generations, this craft carries profound cultural and religious significance, offering a captivating blend of toy-making, textile art, and paper craft. The dolls represent more than inanimate objects; they symbolize marital bonds, with young girls ceremoniously marrying them during *Akshaya Tritiya* or *Akha Teej*. The women members of her family mainly practice Batto Bai's doll craft. She mentions,

"These dolls are not just toys; they are an integral part of our cultural heritage. They have been used for decoration, play, and as symbols of our traditions during festivals like Gangaur, Akha Teej, and Hartalika Teej. They represent our connection to the past and our artistic traditions."

5. CRAFTSMANSHIP AND TRADITION

Batto Bai dolls are typically fashioned using rags, wood powder, and bamboo materials. The dolls are exclusively sold in pairs, a tradition deeply rooted in the concept of "*Gudda-Guddiya*" (Fig. 2) Unmarried women enthusiastically purchase these dolls during *Akshaya Tritiya*, *Akha Teej*, and festivals like *Gangaur* and *Hartalika Teej*. They perform a figurative marriage ceremony at home to symbolize their desire for future marriage, which often culminates in actual marriage.

Figure 2



Figure 2 Different Batto Bai Dolls (Gudda Gudiya)

This tradition extends across the Bundelkhand region and areas of Madhya Pradesh near the Rajasthan border, known as "*Putra-putariya*" in some regions and "*Gudda Gudiya*" in others. After the marriage rituals with the dolls, girls abandon them by the side of the tree. However, over time, the usage of these dolls has transformed, shifting from being symbolic objects used in rituals to becoming home decor and thoughtful gifts.

6. DESIGN AND PRODUCT

The dolls themselves are a testament to sustainability and creativity. They are predominantly constructed from recycled clothes, rags, paper, clay, cotton, wires, silver paint, traditional fabric, wood powder, bamboo sticks, and eco-friendly handmade glue (Fig. 3). Their lightweight, soft, and edgeless design ensures the safety and enjoyment of children. She proudly mentions,

"The use of recycled materials reduces waste and adds a distinctive charm to each doll. Our lightweight and soft designs ensure children's safety and enjoyment while adhering to eco-friendly principles."

Figure 3



Figure 3 Batto Bai Dolls in Making

Male and Female dolls have the same basic structure; the facial characteristics and clothing distinguish them. *Gudda* (male doll) wears a *pagdi* or turban with a *pataka* and *kurta* set, as well as a *tilak*. *Gudiya* (female doll) wears a *ghagra choli* outfit and has a *bindi* and *sindoor* on her forehead. In both dolls, the *ghagra* or skirt is identical. In the past, saris and lehenga cholis were dyed using natural pigments and adorned with vibrant paper embellishments. Their expressive faces are painted with natural colors and kumkum, utilizing tools such as *tili* (thin wooden sticks) and brushes. The male doll appears taller than the female one as the turban adds an extra inch. Male and female dolls are always color-coordinated, and clothes are made of three colors. She describes the doll-making process as,

"Making Batto Bai dolls is a labor-intensive craft. We use materials like rags, wood powder, and bamboo. The process involves intricate handwork and creativity. We carefully mold these materials into dolls, ensuring they reflect the cultural aspects of our region, such as clothing inspired by Maharaja and Maharani of Gwalior."

Figure 4



Figure 4 Finished Dolls Ready to be Packed and Sold in the Market.

The expressions and costumes of these dolls draw inspiration from real-life instances, mirroring tradition and culture (Fig. 4). The dolls' attire, inspired by the kings and queens of the Scindia dynasty, the royal family of Gwalior, exhibits a unique blend of cultural influences, including the distinct Maratha-style boat-shaped turbans. From the depiction of eyes to the mustache, all are represented in the image of the rulers of Gwalior. The Gotta Patti work and the curled mustache are examples of Marwari culture's influence on the technique. The dolls are made in traditional color palettes such as red, green, yellow, golden, and silver. These hues are also associated with the traditional colors of Hindu weddings. However, there are a few changes in the color palette and fabric used for the clothing in the latest designs. She further mentions,

"The male doll, Gudda, wears a pagdi or turban with a pataka and kurta set, along with a tilak, resembling the traditional attire of the kings. On the other hand, Gudiya, the female doll, adorns a ghagra choli outfit with a bindi and sindoor on her forehead, representing the royal queens."

The dolls come in pairs in four sizes ranging from a few inches to nearly 2 feet. Larger dolls with more details are comparatively expensive and are mostly used for

decoration or playing purposes. The price range for dolls varies according to the size and detailing, with smaller dolls being in high demand during festive seasons. Apart from the traditional practice of making a pair of dolls, contemporary variations and products have emerged that utilize the traditional skillset and more or less similar materials and tools yet address the needs of the contemporary market. She describes the relevance of sizes as,

“The different sizes of Batto Bai dolls cater to various preferences and purposes. Smaller dolls are in high demand during festive seasons and are perfect for gifting. In contrast, larger dolls, often with more intricate details, are ideal for decoration or as collectibles.”

Dolls are customized for wedding gifts for the guests. Few dolls are made for black magic purposes, too. During Mahalakshmi Pooja, the doll's torso is marketed separately as "Mahalakshmi ke Hath" or Goddess's hand. This was also produced in response to a request. Historically connected with the Dussehra celebration, the horse was recently added to the new product list. The horse is sold with the doll pair and is advertised as a "Dulhe ka Ghoda," or the bridegroom's horse. These horses are sold either with the doll pair or separately.

Figure 5

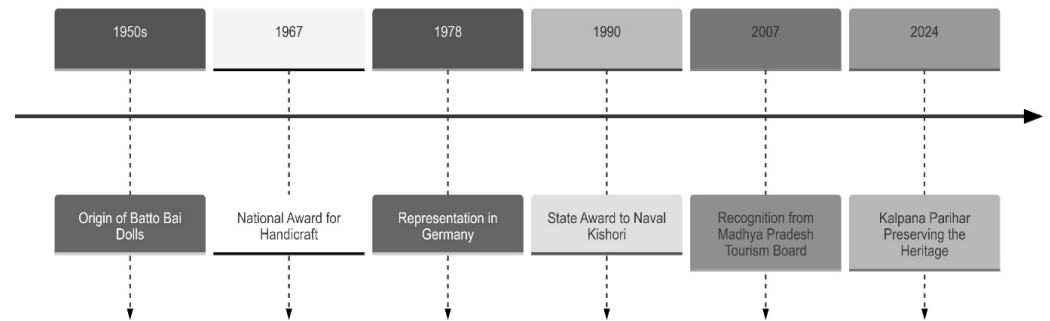


Figure 5 Batto Bai Doll Craft Timeline

7. RECOGNITION AND EVOLUTION

Batto Bai achieved national and international acclaim for her exceptional design and intricate detailing. In 1967, she was honored with the National Award for Handicraft. The Scindia royal family, particularly Rajmata Vijaya Raje Scindia, played a pivotal role in championing Batto Bai's work, even extending invitations for demonstrations to foreign delegates (Fig. 6). Training workshops and opportunities for artisans were made possible through the Scindia Foundation. Her residence became a must-visit location for foreign dignitaries visiting Gwalior, with her dolls being cherished gifts from the Scindia family. In 1978, Batto Bai and seven other National Awardee Artists represented India in Germany, showcasing their exceptional work, and the dolls sold out rapidly. Kalpna, while showcasing the national award, explains,

“The Scindia royal family, particularly Rajmata Vijaya Raje Scindia, played a pivotal role in supporting and promoting Batto Bai's craft. They often invited her to showcase her skills to foreign delegates, further enhancing the craft's reputation.”

After Batto Bai's passing in 1991, the craft flourished under the guidance of Naval Kishori, Batto Bai's daughter-in-law. She was also awarded the State Award from the Madhya Pradesh Government in 1990 for making Batto Bai dolls. Naval Kishori also made life-size dolls of Batto Bai for the wedding of Chitrangada Raje

Scindia, the daughter of Madherao Scindia and the sister of India's current Minister of Civil Aviation, Jyotiraditya Scindia. Dolls were installed at the wedding mandap's entrance and at the entrance to welcome their prestigious guests. During that time, these dolls were also readily available at local shops. Batto Bai dolls encapsulate the essence of Gwalior's cultural heritage and craftsmanship. They are a testament to tradition, innovation, and resilience in changing times. Over time, the design evolved slightly, adapting to changing cultural trends while preserving the craft's essence. She further mentions,

"She continued the craft's legacy, and also created life-size dolls of 6 feet for a prominent wedding of Rajmata's daughter in Scindia Palace, further showcasing the craft's cultural importance."

Figure 6



Figure 6 Replica of Batto Bai Doll on a Square in Gwalior

In 2007, Bharat Singh Parihar, Batto Bai's grandson, married Kalpana Parihar, who learned the craft and began practicing it alongside Naval Kishori. Later, the craft of Batto Bai dolls received a significant boost when it gained recognition from Madhya Pradesh Tourism, earning a place in its annual calendar. Additionally, the municipal corporation of Gwalior has installed the pairs of Batto bai's dolls on a square, signifying the importance of handicrafts (Fig. 7). She goes into detail,

"Recognition from Madhya Pradesh Tourism, including Batto Bai dolls in its annual calendar, significantly boosted their popularity. It introduced our craft to a broader audience and created a sense of pride among locals."

However, evolving material culture and the availability of more lifelike and detailed dolls with Western aesthetics have recently impacted the demand for Batto Bai dolls. Recognized and supported by government and non-government organizations, this craft continues to evolve under the stewardship of Kalpana Parihar, who has introduced contemporary elements to the dolls while preserving their cultural and artistic integrity. As these dolls charm enthusiasts and collectors alike, they stand as a testament to the enduring power of traditional crafts in the modern world. She mentions,

"As the current practitioner, I've strived to preserve the traditional essence of Batto Bai dolls while infusing contemporary elements...We have introduced subtle changes in color palettes and fabrics to cater to evolving tastes."

8. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Batto Bai's dolls, a precious heritage, confront the peril of obsolescence in an era marked by globalization and rapid economic transformations. Recognizing the importance of protecting such cultural heritage is vital for communities, as underscored by various researchers (Yang et al., 2018). Preserving this heritage not only safeguards the identity of the local communities of Gwalior but also bestows economic advantages and other intangible values (Rogerson, 2010).

Paradoxically, while numerous studies have been conducted on the preservation of tangible heritage, such as monuments (Arumugam et al., 2023; Hou & Chan, 2017; Perry & Galletly, 1984; Rolfe & Windle, 2003), research on the conservation of intangible cultural heritage inherent in traditional arts and crafts remains conspicuously limited (Yang et al., 2018). The intangible heritage, such as Batto Bai's dolls, characterized by their elusive nature, poses unique challenges; the techniques and skills defy easy interaction or touch, even with various means. This inherent "untouchability" of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) complicates its demonstration in real-life contexts, rendering its preservation a formidable task (Yang et al., 2018). Furthermore, as emphasized by scholars, the lack of a defined custodial institution exacerbates the susceptibility of traditional crafting methods.

The rapid transformation of lifestyles and evolving consumer preferences catalyzed a gradual decline in the market for handicraft products (Olalere, 2019). As industrial alternatives grew sophisticated, traditional handicrafts began to cede their appeal among consumers (Yang et al., 2018). She concerns,

"We are facing several challenges that threaten the survival of this traditional craft. One major issue is changing consumer preferences. In the modern era, people often prefer mass-produced toys with advanced features, which our dolls may lack."

Consequently, artisans, constrained by economic realities, left their crafts behind and migrated to urban centers to pursue alternative livelihoods (Abisuga-Oyekunle & Fillis, 2017). This migration exodus, in turn, has led to the fading of numerous traditional crafting skills and techniques as fewer young individuals express interest in preserving these time-honored traditions (Yang et al., 2018). While industrial products gained ascendancy due to their material durability and cost-effectiveness, handicrafts gradually receded from the societal landscape (Barrère, 2014). Kalpna highlights,

"Crafting Batto Bai dolls demands skill and dedication. Unfortunately, fewer individuals today possess these skills and are willing to invest the time required."

Hence, the heritage encapsulated within the realm of handicrafts finds itself in peril, and this sector demands concerted attention to safeguarding inherited skills and knowledge. To accomplish this, it is imperative to systematically categorize, thoroughly comprehend, and address the multifaceted challenges confronting the handicraft heritage. Failure to do so may consign this cherished local heritage to the annals of history in the future.

Souvenir manufacturers put a lot of thought into how to represent their heritage in their artifacts best, expecting that buyers will associate them with specific places or people (Husa, 2020). This sometimes involves changing the artifact's shape or purpose to better appeal to a wider audience (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). Comparably, smaller Batto Bai dolls are popular for festivals and

giftings, while larger dolls with more elaborate detailing are great for decorating or collecting.

9. HERITAGE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Arumugam et al. (2023) highlight various factors that influence heritage tourism development through their heritage tourism development model. It provides a holistic understanding of the dynamics when heritage and culture converge with tourism. The study adapted the model to explain how marketing and promotional efforts, brand value, artifacts' reputation, and tourist experiences all play a role in the souvenirization of Batto Bai's doll (handicrafts) (Fig. 7). In essence, it underscores the profound and transformative role of doll's heritage in the ever-evolving landscape of global tourism.

Figure 7

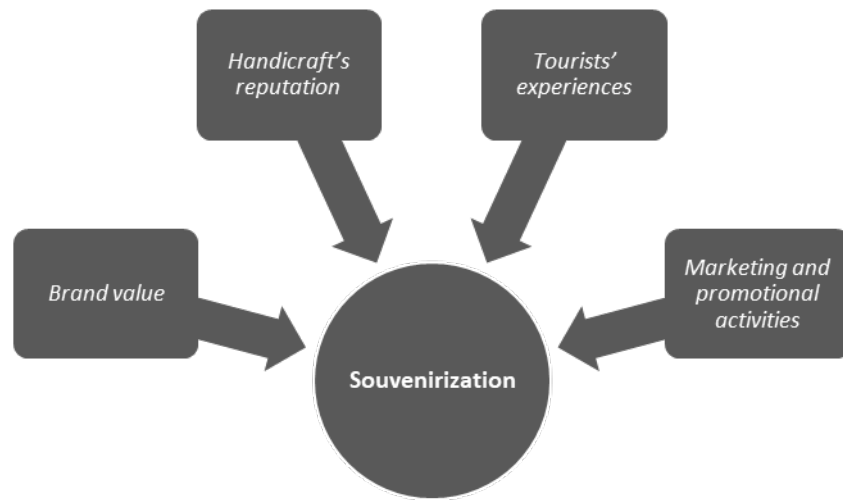


Figure 7 Souvenir Development Model
Adapted (Arumugam et al., 2023)

10. BRAND VALUE

Building a strong brand for Batto Bai's dolls can make them instantly recognizable. Perceived authenticity, brand identity, and brand value greatly influence tourists' buying decisions, emphasizing the significance of harmonizing souvenir displays with authentic cultural narratives (Qiu et al., 2024). The value of a souvenir depends not only on its utility and practicality but also on how significant it is to the recipient (Pabian et al., 2020). However, building brand value for Batto Bai's dolls requires a multifaceted approach, combining cultural preservation, modernization, and effective marketing strategies to make them more appealing and accessible to tourists. Batto Bai's dolls hold brand value due to their historical and cultural significance. However, marketers must engage in educational campaigns and promotional events to introduce them to a broader audience. One reason for this effort is the lack of awareness, as the dolls do not currently appeal to a wide demographic. Kalpna accentuates,

"...lack of exposure means many people are unaware of our dolls and their cultural significance. It affects the demand for our handmade dolls."

The dolls' brand value contributes to their desirability as souvenirs, drawing tourists to engage with this cultural heritage. Ethnic tourists would prefer Batto Bai dolls as souvenirs because of their aesthetic qualities and their portability. Tourists with strong ethnic, arts, and people orientations consider tourism a chance to develop personally and seek authenticity in a destination and its locals (Kim & Littrell, 1999).

Recognized as precious cultural treasures, these handmade dolls possess a unique identity that resonates with heritage-conscious travelers. Such distinctive branding would amplify their attraction as souvenirs. Hence, Product aesthetics and originality should be highlighted in tourism advertising, in-store displays, and retail sales associates' interactions with tourists (Kim & Littrell, 1999; Wu et al., 2022)

11. ARTEFACTS'S REPUTATION

The reputation of artifacts plays a substantial role in attracting tourists interested in heritage and cultural experiences. Souvenirs are a tangible representation of the local culture and serve as a channel for disseminating regional heritage (Wu et al., 2022). Souvenirs are the preferred merchandise mix for marketers since they must satisfy target market preferences while being profitable for the business (Swanson, 2004). Tourists prefer to purchase souvenirs with superior craftsmanship and homogenized materials (Wu et al., 2022). Kalpna mentions,

"Batto Bai dolls represent the resilience of traditional crafts in a changing world. While they face challenges from modern alternatives, they continue to charm enthusiasts and collectors alike."

Customers' final purchasing decisions for souvenirs depend on their relative importance on various product features (Swanson & Horridge, 2006). The purchase of souvenirs by tourists indicates whether they will return to a given destination (Lin & Mao, 2015). Gwalior's reputation as a custodian of traditional craftsmanship is instrumental in driving tourism focused on Batto Bai's dolls. Moreover, these dolls could be marketed as totality souvenirs. Commercial products with strong brand marketing or powerful visual images are examples of totality souvenirs since they symbolize tourists' thoughts about the destination, their identities, and their traveling experience (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). A positive reputation for Batto Bai's dolls as a heritage-rich indigenous handicraft suggests that tourists would eagerly engage in cultural exploration.

12. TOURISTS' EXPERIENCES

A tourist's purchase of a souvenir memorializes or preserves in time an experience that is difficult to put into words (Swanson, 2004). Swanson & Timothy (2012) mentions that souvenir shopping is a major part of the tour experience and a source of excitement for travelers. The souvenir serves as both a cultural "entry" or "re-entry" expense and a tangible remembrance of the tour, which is shared with loved ones but kept as a lasting reminder of the tour itself (Swanson, 2004). In other words, buying souvenirs can improve and lengthen the traveling experience (Wu et al., 2022).

Creating enjoyable shopping environments for tourists while introducing them to local cultures is the best way to enhance their experience (Kim & Littrell, 1999). Visitors to a destination should take the time to learn about its history, culture, and traditions to deepen their connection with and appreciation of the local community

(Arumugam et al., 2023). Currently, many visitors view Batto Bai's dolls as mere handmade products, unaware of their deeper cultural significance. Interaction with Batto Bai's doll maker could become much more than just purchases for tourists. Positive interactions between tourists and the maker would foster a deep connection with the dolls and the local culture, making them cherished souvenirs. Such an emotional connection could foster a desire among tourists to carry home a tangible piece of cultural heritage as a souvenir.

13. MARKETING AND PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Arumugam et al. (2023) underscore the significance of effective marketing and promotional strategies. Such efforts are also instrumental in highlighting Batto Bai's dolls' cultural and artistic richness. Marketers must commoditize souvenirs' intangible meanings and turn them into consumable products for destination merchants to sell (Mathisen, 2020; Swanson & Timothy, 2012). Marketing campaigns help create awareness among tourists, making these souvenirs an attractive choice (Kong & Chang, 2012). Currently, sales and display are confined to traditional and government-organized trade fairs or craft markets. Kalpna emphasizes,

“Traditional dolls like ours don't have large advertising budgets or tie-ins with popular media franchises. We rely on word-of-mouth and local craft fairs to promote our work.”

However, the doll makers and stakeholders need to connect heritage and tourism in a way that popularizes Batto Bai's as souvenirs, helping the business grow. Additionally, promoting Batto bai's dolls as souvenirs in various local cultural events like Tansen Music Festivals and the Gwalior trade fair will enhance the visibility of the handicraft. By strategically showcasing the cultural significance of Batto Bai's dolls, makers could make them more appealing to tourists. The doll maker needs to decide to cater to the specific requirements of a niche market rather than try to please everyone. Targeting ethnic tourists could be one such strategy. Studies suggest that ethnic tourists exhibited positive sentiments towards the aesthetic characteristics and portability of purchasing souvenirs (Swanson & Horridge, 2006)

Digital marketing for tourist souvenirs can get more people interested, and showing digital social media can help tourists understand the cultural aspects of souvenirs (Wu et al., 2022). Nowadays, making the most of social media's benefits for marketing to tourists by showcasing and promoting souvenirs is becoming crucial (Szymkowiak et al., 2021). While digital marketing and social media can be valuable tools for promoting souvenirs, it's essential to consider that Kalpana is not equally tech-literate. She faces challenges in handling all the digital aspects of marketing. Therefore, a balanced approach that combines digital marketing with more traditional methods to reach a wider audience may be necessary. This approach can ensure that the cultural aspects of these souvenirs are effectively communicated to tourists while considering the skills and resources available to the artisan.

14. CONCLUSION

Culture, at its core, encompasses attitudes, beliefs, ideas, values, and how individuals navigate their customary patterns of behavior or lifestyle. These cultural manifestations manifest in artifacts, artworks, and various cultural creations (Zhu et al., 2023). Consequently, as posited by Carson et al. (2009), the development of

heritage items designed for consumption by travelers emerges as a strategic approach to pique tourist interest and encourage exploration of less frequented destinations. Souvenirs serve as enduring reminders, consistently evoking memories of a particular destination (Su et al., 2024; Swanson & Timothy, 2012). The study used the Heritage tourism development model to explain how marketing, promotional efforts, brand value, artifact reputation, and visitor experiences affect Batto Bai's doll souvenirization. It emphasizes that the Batto Bai doll heritage has the potential for an enormous and transformational impact on tourism.

Preserving the dying art of Batto Bai's dolls is of paramount importance. These exquisite dolls represent not only the rich cultural heritage of Gwalior but also the artistic prowess of its craftsmen. Thus, transforming the heritage values of Batto Bai's dolls into higher-value alternatives as souvenirs that match contemporary demands with enhanced global product identity and a better consumer experience is crucial to preserving them. Protecting Batto Bai's dolls is more than simply preserving a dying art form; it's also about preserving the cultural heritage and ensuring future generations may enjoy and marvel at these extraordinary works of art. For Batto Bai dolls, the narrative of souvenirs presents a significant opportunity to strengthen its presence in the local and global landscape. The study advocates that a handicraft's reputation can be improved by developing souvenirs and increasing tourism and brand recognition. Promoting Batto Bai dolls at local or nearby activities, attractions, events, and fairs could also increase demand, thereby preserving local culture and handicrafts for future generations. However, further research could explore how commercialization impacts traditional crafts like Batto Bai's dolls' quality, authenticity, and cultural value.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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