

A Strategic Approach to Revitalizing Sawantwadi Wooden Toys Through the Synthesis of Traditional Craftsmanship and Contemporary Design Innovation

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Abstract— The current research focuses on the revival of the traditional handicrafts of Sawantwadi toys of Maharashtra, India through contemporary product design. It attempts to identify the viability of the products by analyzing their usage, sources of stress for users, and preferences in relation to various products. The research adopted an exploratory approach by analyzing existing literature and employing qualitative data gathering methods such as surveys. Modern humans experience high levels of stress, and most attempt to relieve themselves through phone use and television viewing. Few individuals are familiar with the traditional Sawantwadi toys however they prefer eco-friendly products and those that are handmade. Hence, a product in the form of a colorful spinning toy was designed. It combines the style of Sawantwadi wooden toys with some simple things that make it fun to play with. The study shows that when you mix craftsmanship with new design it can make these products more useful and appealing. It also says that the design how easy it is to use and the overall experience need to be improved so that more people will like them. Overall, the study says that with some design we can bring back old crafts like Sawantwadi wooden toys and help people today while also being kind, to the earth.

Index Terms— Sawantwadi Wooden Toys, Traditional Handicrafts, Craft Revival, Contemporary Product Design, User Experience, Eco-friendly Products, Sustainable Design, and Cultural Heritage.

I. INTRODUCTION

Sawantwadi wooden toy coming from Maharashtra state in India. This is a part of craftsmanship and it is made by using hand skill and natural color. These toys show the culture and skill of the people who make

them. For a time, Sawant wadi wooden toys were a part of daily life, especially for kids playing and in local markets. (1) In recent years, this traditional craft has been getting weaker. There are toys available everywhere which has made people less interested in buying handmade Sawant wadi wooden toys as a result, people who make Sawantwadi toys are struggling to make a living. The craft of making Sawantwadi wooden toys might disappear, which is really sad because these toys are so unique and special (1)(5)

This project is about finding ways to make Sawantwadi wooden toys popular again. We want to keep making Sawantwadi toys so that people can enjoy them for a long time. The main thing we want to do with this project is help the people who make Sawantwadi toys. We also want to keep the skill of making Sawantwadi toys alive. We want Sawantwadi wooden toys to be something that people have in their life every day and understand what they expect from them. We want to keep the spirit of Sawantwadi toys alive and also make them more useful and fun for kids. The new designs will make sure the Sawantwadi wooden toys are safe, help kids learn, and keep them engaged (4)

This way, we can connect the craft of making Sawantwadi toys with design. We really want to help the craft survive by making it relevant to people's lives. By making Sawant wadi toys that are useful and desirable, we hope to support the people who make them. It is our wish that this tradition be passed on to the future generations to come so that they can continue to play with the Sawantwadi wooden toys. The ultimate objective of this project is to assist the makers of these toys to sustain the craft. Sawantwadi

wooden toys form a significant part of our culture and heritage.

II. HISTORY

Sawantwadi wooden toys have existed since the 18th century when the Sawant Bhosale ruling royal family encouraged the production of these toys. In addition to the production of lacquerware and wooden toys, the Chitari tribe also participated in the development of other art forms such as Ganjifa playing cards. Their name is derived from the Marathi word 'chitra' which means painting.

The toys are mainly associated with local festivals like the Ganesh festival and they can also be used by children. They are simple toys that stimulate the imagination and creativity of the child while using materials that are environmentally friendly.

However, in modern society, the toys are faced with stiff competition due to the existence of plastic toys produced outside India at cheaper prices. Lack of resources, design innovation, and funding have hindered the sustainability of these toys.

NO	Specifications	Sawantwadi toys
1	Location	Dist. Sindhudurg (Maharashtra)
2	Community	Chitari or Chitrakar (communities migrated from Karwada and settled in Sawantwadi)
3	Material	Wood from pangira and mango tree, flat shaped solid wood
4	Methods	chiseling, carving, sanding
5	Coloring process	Oil based colors, color powder is mixed with wood primer and applied on the toy using brush
6	Traditional Products	Wooden fruits, Bullock cart and various animals, etc.

Table 1 Specifications of Sawantwadi toys (Self)

III. RESEARCH GAP

Even though there is considerable research on traditional crafts and sustainable toys, very few studies explore how these toys can be redesigned for modern use. Most existing research focuses on preservation, documentation, and marketing, but does not fully address how traditional toys can fit into the everyday lives of today's users, particularly young adults. In addition, traditional wooden toys are mostly limited to children's play. There is very little research on transforming them into functional products, such as

stress-relief or desk-based objects, that can be used by a wider audience. This highlights a clear gap in applying user-centered design approaches to traditional crafts. This research therefore aims to bridge this gap by reimagining Sawantwadi wooden toys as modern, functional products while retaining their cultural essence

IV. OBJECTIVE

1. To analyze user preferences, behavior, and expectations related to toys and stress-relief products among children and young adults.
2. To design and develop a contemporary wooden stress-relief product inspired by Sawantwadi toys that meets the needs of modern users.



Fig No. 1: Know All About the Timeless Art of Sawant wadi Wooden Handcraft



Fig No. 2: Sawantwadi Traditional Handmade Toys

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based on a qualitative research approach. The data for this research has been collected mainly from secondary sources such as books, research journals, article and online resources related to Sawantwadi wooden toys and traditional Indian crafts. Some information is also gathered by studying the work and practices of local artisans especially the Chitari community who have played an important role in preserving and developing this craft over time. This research aims at analyzing the history, background, cultural importance, and current issues of the wooden toys of Sawantwadi along with the impacts of changing tastes and market conditions on this craft tradition.

The study uses descriptive and analytical approaches in order to understand the evolution of these toys and determine areas for design interventions. Moreover, this research also contributes to the creation of a new product based on traditional design practices.

VI. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rane & Khaneja (2025) the Indian handicrafts are an integral part of Indian culture which helps in maintaining and promoting their own cultural identity as well as sustaining the economy of the local people. Sawantwadi wooden toys is one such type of craft, wherein toys are created using locally available material and wood-based paints. These wooden toys are not only culturally significant but are also believed to be eco-friendly when compared with other plastic toys.

Aykan (2024) wooden toys are safer and sustainable for the health of the children as compared to plastic toys. However, plastic toys have been dominating in the market because of their low prices and availability Rane and Khaneja (2025) Further analysis can be done about problems that traditional toys industries face. As per their research, artisans face problems like lack of demand, limited range of products, no design updates, and limited market access. Moreover, the taste for these traditional toys is decreasing because of the change in preference of young people.

Gumulya and Gunawan (2023) suggest as a way to revitalize traditional crafts Through the combination of tradition and design; it is feasible to achieve better usability and appeal. However, the major concern of

their research is not the functional value of these products in the current age but instead the aspect of sustainability and design approach. The idea of how to evolve traditional Pattachitra art into the modern world

VII. MATERIALS

Material	Properties	Purpose in Product
Pine Wood	Lightweight, easy to shape, smooth finish	Final spinner body
Cardboard	Lightweight, easy to cut, low cost	Prototype development
Wooden Stick	Natural, light, allows manual rotation	Central axis for spinning
Acrylic Colors	Bright, fast-drying	Layered colour design
Lacquer	Glossy, protective coating	Final finishing

Table No. 2 Material (Self)

Methods

Step	Process	Description
1	Craft Study	Study of Sawantwadi toy patterns, colors, and techniques
2	User Research	Understanding stress-relief behavior and user needs
3	Ideation	Developing layered colour spinner concepts through sketches
4	Concept Selection	Finalizing concentric layered design
5	Material Selection	Choosing cardboard for prototype and wood for final model
6	Prototype Making	Cutting and layering cardboard using adhesive
7	Axis Setup	Creating a center hole and inserting a wooden stick
8	Finishing	Sanding, painting, and applying polish
9	Testing	Checking spin balance, usability, and comfort

Table No. 3 Method (Self)

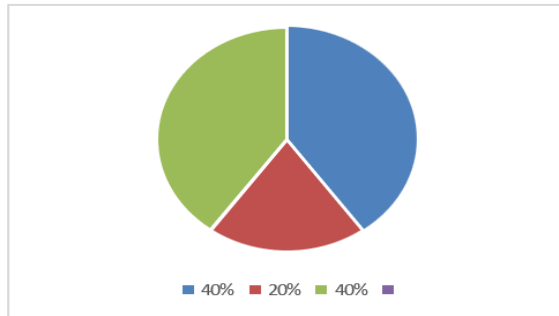


Fig No. 3: Procedure of making (Self)

Sample Questionnaire

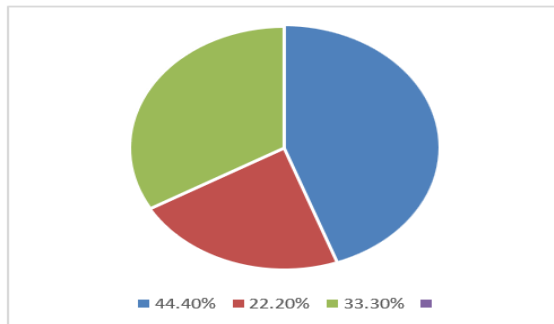
1) What do you know about traditional Sawantwadi wooden toys?

- I) I am familiar with them
- II) I have heard about them but don't know much
- III) I am not aware of them



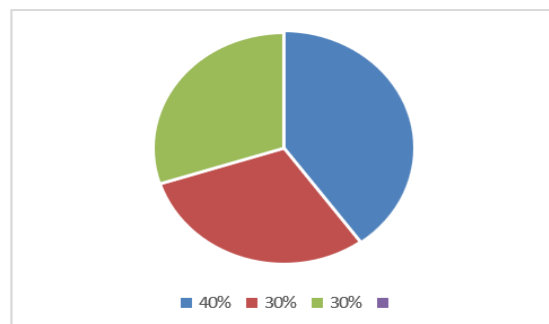
2) How do you usually deal with stress in your daily life?

- I) Listening to music
- II) Using stress-relief products
- III) Taking rest/breaks



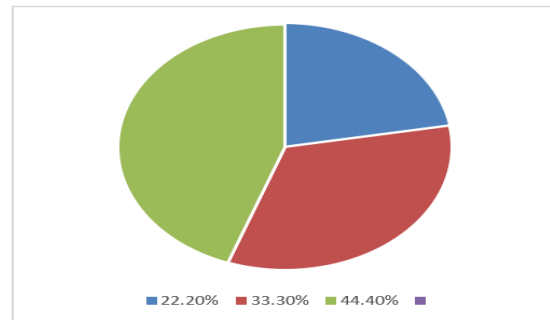
3) What type of products do you prefer for relaxation or focus?

- I) Physical objects (toys, fidget items)
- II) Digital solutions (apps, games)
- III) Activities (exercise, drawing, etc.)



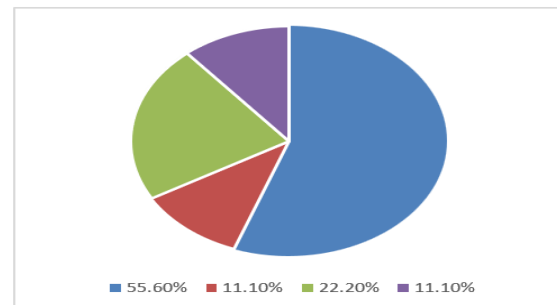
4) What is your opinion about using a spinning object as a stress-relief tool?

- I) It can be helpful
- II) It may help sometimes
- III) I am not sur



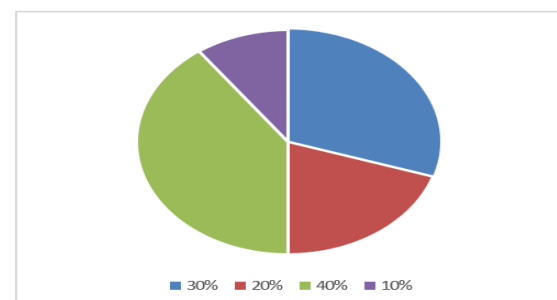
5) How do you feel about eco-friendly wooden products compared to plastic ones?

- I) I prefer wooden products
- II) Both are okay
- III) I prefer plastic products
- IV) I don't mind either



6) What improvements would you suggest for a wooden spinning toy?

- I) Better design/appearance
- II) Smoother spinning
- III) More comfortable to hold
- IV) More colourful/attractive



VIII. RESULTS

The data for this study was collected using a questionnaire with some open-ended questions that had set options. Ten people answered the survey. We looked at their answers to find things and ideas about what people know how they deal with stress and what they like about products. What we found out is that most people do not know much about Sawantwadi toys. A few people really know about this craft while some people have heard of it and others have no idea what it is. When it comes to dealing with stress people said they do things like listen to music use their phones and take breaks. Not many people said they use things that they can hold to help with stress which means people do not usually use these things every day. We asked people what they like to do to relax. Many people like things they can do on their phones or activities. Some people like things they can hold like toys or things to play with. Some people think a spinning toy could help with stress because it moves around in a circle. Other people are not sure if it would really help. People generally like products made from wood that're good for the earth. Many people like these products more than ones because they are safe and better, for the planet. People had some ideas to make these products better like making them look nicer spin more smoothly and be easier to use. This shows that people care about how things work and how they look when they decide if they like a product or not.



Fig No. 4: Final product (Self)

IX. DISCUSSION

The study results show some points for making wooden toys like Sawantwadi toys. First people do not know much about toys so we need to promote them

more and mix them with modern things. People are very stressed which means we need to design products that help them relax in their lives. But people like to relax using methods so we need to make physical products that are more fun and interactive to change their behavior. Some people like spinning objects but others do not. This means we need to improve the design make it more comfortable to use and make the experience better to make it more effective and appealing. People like eco- materials, which supports using wood instead of plastic. This would be very useful for reviving arts such as the Sawantwadi toys. Users emphasize the importance of the appearance of the product, smooth operation, and comfort, all important factors in the design process. By considering these aspects in the design process, the product would appeal to the users. In general, this research proves that a combination of craftsmanship and contemporary design with the needs of users can make it possible to revive Sawantwadi wooden toys and design functional and meaningful products.

X. CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates how necessary it is to revive the traditional craftsmanship through the incorporation of contemporary designs. It was discovered that the current generation is highly stressed and interested in eco-friendly products but lacks information on traditional crafts. The creation of a wooden spinning toy helps to investigate how old craftsmanship can be applied to satisfy modern-day requirements. The toy has a high potential for helping individuals de-stress and can further be improved by enhancing its design, usability, and user interaction. This research highlights that by combining cultural values and contemporary functions, the legacy of traditional crafts can be sustained in the future.

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