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Economic Crisis of folk Performing Art in times of Global Pandemic

Dr. Bikash Kumar Ghosh

Assistant Professor of Economics,
Kharagpur College, Kharagpur, west Bengal

Abstract

Folk art form creates cultural identity and also creates integrity of individuals and equipping them to meet social challenges. Folk artistes were struggling to keep their art forms alive even before, no thanks to how rapidly the meaning of entertainment and art was changing due to globalization and now with the COVID-19 hit. There are great variations in the performing folk art and culture in West Bengal which is directly linked with socio economic position of rural people. In recent the sudden and radical effect of COVID-19 on the lives of freelance performing artists is compounding dangerous levels of precocity in these occupations and, as a result, there are swifter, deeper and more serious consequences to policy inaction in the coming years. The effect of the crisis of an artist is not only in the form of less public show but it is in their inability to earn as much as before with secondary job.

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Introduction

India is a land of rich culture and heritage. Culture has been identified as a “driver for sustainable development” (UN 2010, UNESCO 2012). Cultural heritage is a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and tradition”. We

know that performing art is one of the most important intangible cultural heritages. From the Vedic era to the medieval period, the performing arts remained an important source of educating the masses. Now, these Indian art forms have become means of entertainment and knowledge for people all over the world.

Folk arts in West Bengal have evolved to become indicators of a nation's tradition, identity and uniqueness. Folklore arts, beliefs, rites and rituals, myths, rural handicrafts etc. are factors that enrich our folk tradition. The different folk art forms maintain their ethnic nature through which they make socialization possible; they regulate them and harmonize them with other communities. Folk art form creates cultural identity and also creates integrity of individuals and equipping them to meet social challenges. Folk artistes were struggling to keep their art forms alive even before, no thanks to how rapidly the meaning of entertainment and art was changing due to globalization and now with the COVID-19 hit, everything has come to a standstill during the epidemic, work, weddings, music and dance concerts, theatres, and while some of them could somehow survive this pandemic, largely it will take some time for the indigenous art forms to get back on their feet.

Significance of this study

Government of India as well as Government of West Bengal has increasingly recognized the importance of the creative art sector to compete in the global market place. A number of factors underscore the connection between economic competitiveness and creativity. Arts and culture can play a major role in community development and redevelopment by creating new jobs as well as fostering an environment and amenities that attract talented young workers; and tourism centered on arts and culture can contribute to state and local economic growth by providing a diversified and sustainable means for creating jobs and attracting revenue. Performing folk art is one of the most