

Traditional Bamboo Mat Weaving of North Godavari: Cultural Documentation and the Role of Media Promotion



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Submission: December 05, 2025; **Published:** December 19, 2025

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Abstract

The East, West, South, North Godavari regions of Andhra Pradesh are known for their cool breezes, lush forests, and natural beauty. These landscapes nurture a vibrant tradition of bamboo craftsmanship, visible across the villages of Papikondalu, Tekuru, Shivapuram, Polavaram, and many surrounding areas. In these regions, generations of artisans have created diverse and intricate bamboo artworks. However, with rapid changes in the digital age, the survival of these skilled craftsmen and their traditional practices is increasingly at risk. Traditional bamboo craft represents one of India's most extraordinary artistic heritages, yet many of these practices are gradually fading. This research aims to preserve and promote the cultural legacy of bamboo artisans by documenting their knowledge, skills, and creative processes for future generations. Across India especially in Andhra Pradesh many artisan families continue to uphold their ancestral craftsmanship. Among them, the bamboo mat weavers of Jangareddigudem and nearby regions practice a rare and culturally rich art form. Their handmade products reach towns and metropolitan cities, sustaining both livelihood and heritage. This paper, explores how traditional craftsmanship can be revitalized through modern design and technology. The study documents the materials, tools, design processes, and weaving techniques employed by artisans across villages such as North Godavari regions of Andhra Pradesh of Jangareddigudem, Buttaigudem, Bathapuram, Marukuntapalem, Ankampalem, Kannapuram, P. Ankampalem, Jeelugumalli, Taduvai, and Guruvayugundam. Bothhappagudem, kannapuram, tekuru, sivapuram, laxmangudem, achiyapalem, Dippakayalapadu Tallapudi, polavaram, through field visits and in-depth interviews, the research identifies the artisans' skills, challenges, and aspirations. As a pilot study, it highlights opportunities for innovation and proposes ways to bridge traditional bamboo artistry with contemporary technological practices, ensuring its relevance, sustainability, and transmission to future generations.

Keywords: Craft Innovation; Bamboo Mat Craft; Jangareddigudem; Bamboo Weaving; Indigenous Knowledge

Introduction

This craft is one of the most significant traditional practices in India. Since ancient times, it has existed as an integral part of our cultural and artistic heritage. However, despite its long history, the craft has not received adequate recognition. Under the Make in India initiative, this craft community also deserves focused promotion and support. Just like many other handicrafts with rich historical backgrounds, this craft reflects strong social and cultural influences. To sustain its relevance and empower the artisans, there is a need to modernize its design and production techniques in line with current market trends. Therefore, this craft should be given due consideration and encouraged for future development. India has a great cultural tradition and

is famous for its fine arts and craft traditions; it is great for gaining world renown. Because India consists of so many fine arts forms, one of the most attractive is wood art. The number of toys constructed the Kondapalli, Etikoppaka, Bobbili, Nuziveedu Veena, Rajaumanundry, Koyyalaudem, Tatiyakulagudem, Marla gudem, Buttaigudem, Bonupalli, Tirupathi, Srikalahsti, Railway Koduru, Tanuku, several local regions of various districts in the state of Andhra Pradesh, India.

The wood carving sculptures in this village maintain a unique place of style and aesthetics that have always had a beautiful texture and the heritage of Indian handicraft culture. These

handicraft arts are very ancient, cultural crafts of high quality, and the materials used are lightweight colours and small weights for wood toy products. My research study focuses on various craft forms. History, study, raw materials, the making process of these art forms, a lifestyle of artisans and woodcarvers, innovative ideas, knowledge sharing, the artisans present situation, marketing products, analysing, and the carving of the process demonstrate the relevance of the wooden toys and wood products in the propagation of the handicrafts.

Statement of the Problem

The artistic skills, income sources, and creative expressions of rural bamboo artisans are slowly disappearing due to rapid industrial and digital advancements. Their traditional crafts rich in cultural value and unique design remain largely undocumented and under-recognised. Without proper preservation and global exposure, palm, grass, and bamboo crafts risk becoming mere memories displayed like artefacts, rather than living traditions. Therefore, there is an urgent need to document these art forms to safeguard the artisans' dreams, protect cultural heritage, and help future generations rediscover their roots.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to document traditional bamboo craft practices, understand the challenges faced by rural artisans, analyses their materials and weaving methods, and explore how modern technology can support innovation. It also seeks to suggest strategies for preserving and promoting these endangered craft traditions for future generations.

Methodology

The study is used primary and secondary data and the study was adopted descriptive design.

Review of Literature

Dr. Muppidi Rambabu's work covers a wide range of Indian handicrafts, focusing on the cultural value, traditional knowledge systems, and contemporary relevance of many craft forms across India. His research highlights the importance and uniqueness of traditional crafts, which continue to inspire modern character design, product development, and creative practices through historical and visual references. The study includes detailed documentation of crafts such as Kondapalli toys, Etikoppaka lacquerware, and various other regional art forms, examining artisan livelihoods, production techniques, traditional design methods, and the role of sustainable interventions in preserving these crafts for future generations [1].

Dr. Muppidi Rambabu's work in *Study on Fashion Accessories Design: Sustainability, Art, Craft, and Design* offer an in-depth exploration of the evolving field of fashion accessories. The book examines the discipline through the integrated perspectives of sustainability, traditional crafts, and contemporary design

practices. It emphasizes how eco-friendly materials, handcrafted techniques, and cultural artistry can be effectively incorporated into modern accessory design. The study also presents case examples, artisan-driven innovations, and design methodologies that encourage responsible and ethical production. This work stands as a valuable resource for students, designers, scholars, and researchers interested in sustainable fashion, craft revival, and creative accessory development [2].

Dr. Muppidi Rambabu's work, *The Present Scenario of Pagati Veshalu: Study on Coastal Andhra Pradesh*, examines the contemporary condition of Pagati Veshalu, a traditional folk performance art unique to the region. The study highlights its cultural significance, the evolution of performance practices, and the livelihood challenges faced by the artists. It underscores the urgent need for preservation, documentation, awareness initiatives, and sustainable support to safeguard this fading cultural heritage [3].

Dr. Muppidi Rambabu's work explores the traditional bamboo craft practices of tribal basket makers in the Jangareddigudem region, with a focus on their design processes, working methods, and cultural perspectives. The study highlights the community's sustainable techniques and rich indigenous knowledge systems, while also emphasizing the potential for developing modern accessory designs inspired by these long-standing craft traditions [4].

Ms. K. Kavya's work examines the rich tradition of Kondapalli toys, focusing on the materials, religious themes, and artistic expressions that define this iconic wooden craft. The study highlights the unique carving techniques, cultural symbolism, and traditional practices that bring these handcrafted toys "to life," showcasing their historical, cultural, and artistic significance [5].

Importance of Basket Weaving Craft

Basket weaving is a vital traditional craft that primarily uses bamboo. In many villages, farmers depend on these bamboo baskets to carry crops and grains, especially during the winter and summer harvesting seasons. The craft begins with cutting bamboo into strips of different widths, which are then thinned, split, and shaped into flat layers. These strips are carefully arranged in a circular pattern to form the base. With alternate weaving techniques, artisans gradually build the sides and give the basket its final shape. This age-old practice not only reflects exceptional skill and precision but also plays an important role in supporting rural livelihoods and preserving an eco-friendly cultural heritage.

Trend in Interior Eco-Friendly Modification

Eco-friendly interior trends focus on using natural materials, sustainable products, and traditional crafts to create healthy, aesthetic living spaces. Bamboo weaving, recycled elements, and handcrafted décor are becoming popular for their low environmental impact and timeless beauty.

Table 1: Materials and Their Purpose of Use.

SL	Materials	Purpose
1	Bamboo culms	Raw bamboo used for preparing strips.
2	Bamboo strips	Cut in various widths and thicknesses for weaving.
3	Sharp knife	Used for dividing bamboo into strips of different sizes.
4	Cutting blade	Used for cutting small, thin bamboo strips.
5	Peeling tool	Helps in thinning and smoothing bamboo strips.
6	Water	Used to soften bamboo for easier bending and weaving.
7	Wooden measuring scale	For measuring bamboo strips in different sizes.
8	Marking pencil/chalk	For marking measurements and cutting points.
9	Rope or thread	Optional; used for stiffening joints and binding edges.

Table 2: Various bamboo craft products with name, measurement, and use.

SL	Name of product	Measurement /Feet's	Use
1	Bamboo Side Wall Mat	3 × 6 / 4 × 8ft	Home interiors, cottages, wall décor, eco-friendly wall panels.
2	Bamboo Floor Mat	2ft × 4ft / 3ft × 5ft	Flooring, sitting areas, yoga/meditation mats.
3	Table Mat / Placemat	12 × 18 x 18	Dining tables, heat protection, décor.
4	Window/Room Partition Blind	4ft × 6ft / 5ft × 7ft	Light control, privacy, room partition.
5	Bamboo Storage Basket	2 × 2 × 5ft	Storing vegetables, clothes, household items.
6	Bamboo Laundry Basket	6 x 2x 7ft	Clothes storage, laundry collection.
7	Bamboo Fruit / Flower Basket	10 x 12 x 18 inches	Serving fruits, displaying flowers, gifting.
8	Bamboo Lampshade	10 x 14 in height	Home lighting, decorative hanging or table lamps.
9	Bamboo Pen Stand	4 x3x 6 inches	Holding pens, stationery, desk organizer.
10	Bamboo Tray	Small: 10 in × 14 in, Large: 12 in × 18 in	Serving food, tea, or display tray.

Encourage Media Coverage for Bamboo Craft

Media coverage plays a vital role in promoting bamboo craft and showcasing the skills of traditional artisans. By highlighting their work through newspapers, television, digital platforms, and social media, we can create awareness, attract buyers, and inspire youth to value this eco-friendly craft. Strong media support helps revive dying traditions, increases market demand, and motivates artisans to continue their craft with pride and confidence.

Process of Bamboo Basket Weaving

Bamboo side wall mat weaving begins by selecting mature bamboo and cutting it into uniform strips. The strips are peeled, thinned, and soaked in water for flexibility. Vertical warp strips are arranged on a frame, and horizontal weft strips are woven through using the over-under technique. The weave is tightened regularly, patterns are created, and edges are bound with thicker strips. Finally, the mat is dried and finished for durability.



Figure 1: Final product with interior display designed in interaction with artisan Shri Chanda Srinu, bamboo mat weaving artisan from Andhra Pradesh.



Figure 2: Bamboo Side Wall Mat: Small 6 x 7, Medium 7 x 9, Big 10 x 8 feet.



Figure 3: Artisan preparation.



Figure 4: Products and author interacting with the community.



Figure 5: In-progress drying and application of eco-friendly natural colours in the bamboo mat weaving process.

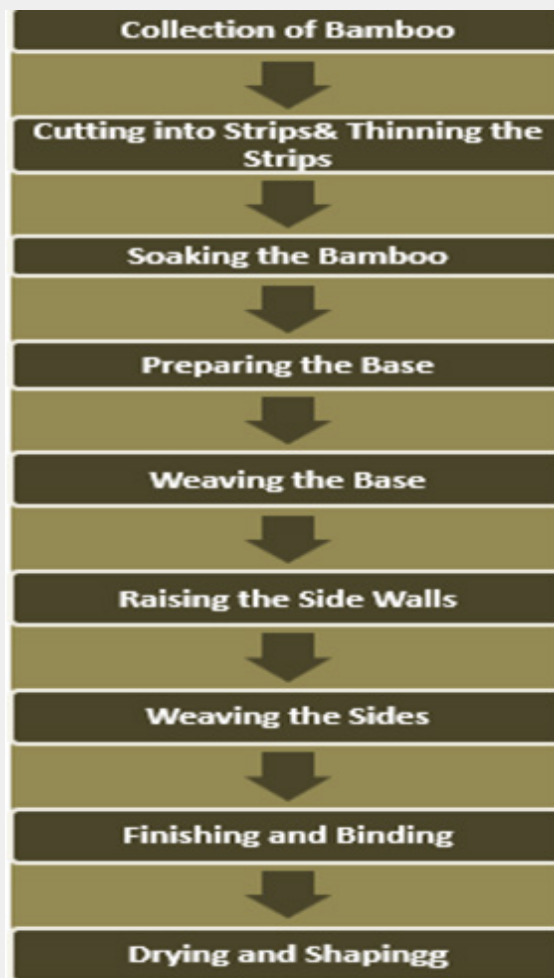


Figure 6: Bamboo Weaving Mat Product Making Process.



Figure 7: Bamboo Weaving Mat: Community Interaction between the author, researcher, designer, artisan, and local community members from a regional perspective.

Bamboo Weaving Mats Interior Use

Bamboo weaving mats are widely used in interiors for decorative purposes and to enhance the aesthetic appeal of

rooms. Their natural texture, eco-friendly quality, and handcrafted patterns make them ideal for wall panels, ceilings, partitions, and home décor accents.



Figure 8: Arranging trials, running checks, and giving the finishing touch to the final outcome of Bamboo Weaving Mats.

Artisan Interviews

Chanda Srinivas – Bamboo Mat and Basket Weaving Artisan

Chanda Srinivas is a skilled bamboo mat and basket weaving artisan known for creating functional products in a variety of shapes and sizes. His bamboo baskets are widely used in rural communities for storing grains, keeping household supplements, and carrying produce in the fields. Mat weaving itself is a vital traditional craft that relies on locally available bamboo. In many villages, farmers depend on such baskets to transport crops and grains, especially during the winter and summer harvesting seasons. The making process begins with cutting bamboo into strips of different widths, which are then thinned, split, and shaped into flat, flexible layers. These strips are arranged in a circular pattern to form the base, after which alternate weaving techniques are used to gradually build the sides and complete the structure.

This age-old craft, practiced by artisans like Chanda Srinivas, reflects exceptional skill and precision while supporting rural livelihoods. It also helps preserve an eco-friendly, culturally rich tradition that has been passed down through generations. We belong to Medara artisan community in Jangareddigudem. Our forefathers practiced this craft, and I learned it after completing my 10th class while supporting my parents. I now create baskets

and mats innovatively. My children study in the local school and learn this craft after school. This rotating skill keeps our family happy.

Natural Colour Usage in Bamboo Mat Weaving

In traditional bamboo mat weaving, artisans commonly use natural colour tones such as green, green-red combinations, and yellow-dyed strings. These colours are often applied not only within the woven structure but also as painted columns and accents on the surface of the finished mat. The artisans demonstrate a strong sense of aesthetic balance, working with primary and secondary colours along with mixed-method colouring techniques that enhance visual appeal. This thoughtful use of colour significantly contributes to the marketability of the products, as attractive combinations naturally draw customer attention and support better commercial outcomes.

a. Sirigiri Mangarao, senior artisan, said: Our family continues to live in this area by doing this work without worry. My grandfather and my father now earn a living by doing the same work. Around 350 families in this area are doing the same work. We will continue to work on the same project. How many years have passed in my life, but we have never been in a higher position?

b. Pala Kota Moshey, senior artisan, said: Provide market facilities to all of us. The government recognizes us

clearly. Scholarships for my children Professionally for us. Artist pension awards for those who are talented in the families of our intellectuals Age-changing art for the old woman Give career and old-age pensions separately. Make our lives better. How long will it take us to do this work? Our lives will be better. Whose recognition Artist ID cards are not available; please arrange.

c. Chanda Srinu artisan bamboo craft Said: Our family fore fathers time to be worked in this field only, artisan bamboo craft sector very famous design products and craft and accessories things, now days nobody not purchasing our products our products also very old fashion goods now demand in plastic and plaster of parries and fiber products liking more. last decade of my father and before fore father in that time is very demand and very use full entire products in this sector now a days what happened people are sustainable products not asking, Eco polluted products side attracted and liking. but our products very good sustainable products, no polluted and very useful only.

Even home utility products very like, decorative products very liking, furniture and all, sofa, balcony, hall decoration accessories products more likening flower age, photo bream, baskets, caring bock's, carrying bags now demand only little children's toys and gilders, some interior decoration items, tables, wooden chairs, examination pads, stools, spoons, mats, baskets heavily demand, and so many things. my request only government will provide some design-oriented classes workshops, fellowship programmed it will be better to growth our knowledge and recognized our products, how to develop marketing domestics and national and international things it will better for more. now a days entire things changed no handmade everything ready made only we have to change our proportion to change jobs like building works or any business, very tight position to move in this bamboo craft works and business.

d. Pathakota Ramana, senior artisan, said: We are working, but we don't have a proper income. For the product we make, create a central plant in terms of promotion activity. Show us the new technology. Skill-update programs, workshops, training centers, etc. Give new knowledge to all of us, and expect good things. Give us training. We can make products and give them to society. If my income is being exported to Eluru, Vijayawada, and Hyderabad, but we are staying through mediation, if we all give identity cards, health cards, pension cards, etc. to our families, the financial situation will be a little better.

Domestic Product Design Will Support

Domestic product design will support local artisans, strengthen traditional crafts, and reduce dependence on imported goods. By developing innovative, home-grown products using indigenous materials like bamboo, leather, and natural fibres, domestic design

encourages sustainability, boosts rural livelihoods, and promotes "Make in India." This approach not only revives traditional skills but also creates modern, functional, and eco-friendly products that uplift both the craft community and the national economy.

Conclusion

Encouraging bamboo craft is essential for preserving traditional skills and supporting rural artisans. By promoting bamboo weaving in modern interiors, we not only revive a valuable craft form but also inspire sustainable design practices. Motivating artisans, creating new market opportunities, and integrating bamboo products into contemporary lifestyles will ensure the revival and long-term survival of this eco-friendly and culturally rich craft tradition. Result of sustainable living: Encouraging bamboo craft is a powerful step toward environmental protection and sustainable living. Bamboo is a fast-growing, renewable material that helps reduce deforestation and carbon footprint. By reviving traditional bamboo weaving, we promote eco-friendly products and reduce plastic use in interiors. Motivating artisans and supporting this green craft will not only preserve cultural heritage but also contribute to a cleaner, healthier environment for future generations.

a. Tradition to Invention of Technology: Authors and team will play role of work stands at the bridge between age-old tradition and modern technological innovation. His philosophy reflects how traditional Indian crafts can be transformed through research, design thinking, CAD/CAM applications, and sustainable methods. By documenting, digitizing, and redesigning indigenous crafts, he converts heritage knowledge into contemporary technological inventions, motivating artisans, inspiring students, and creating new possibilities where culture, creativity, and technology meet.

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DOI: [10.19080/CTFTE.2025.09.555772](https://doi.org/10.19080/CTFTE.2025.09.555772)

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