A Socio-cultural study of the *Chitari* community in Cuncolim, Goa

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DECLARATION BY STUDENT

I hereby declare that the data presented in this Dissertation report entitled, "The Socio-Cultural Study of The Chitari Community in Cuncolim, Goa" is based on the results of investigations carried out by me in the Sociology Programme at the D.D. Kosambi School of Social Sciences and Behavioural Studies, Goa University under the supervision of Dr. Mozinha Fernandes and the same has not been submitted elsewhere for the award of a degree or diploma by me. Further, I understand that Goa University or its authorities will not be responsible for the correctness of observations / experimental or other findings given the dissertation.

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Date: 19/04/2024

Place: Goa University

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This is to certify that the dissertation report "The Socio-Cultural Study of The Chitari Community in Cuncolim, Goa" is a bonafide work carried out by Ms. Kaniksha Ulhas Naik, under my supervision in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Master's degree in the discipline of Sociology at D.D. Kosambi School of Social Sciences and Behavioural Studies, Goa University.

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Preface

Chitari community has been practicing the chitari art since decades in Demani Cuncolim, and being the resident of Cuncolim I did not knew anything about the chitari community and wanted to know about them. I choose this topic because I have always been fascinated by the *chitari* art and the *chitari* community. Also, I have always been interested in studying traditional art forms and cultures of different communities.

In my study, titled 'A Socio-cultural study of the Chitari community in Cuncolim, Goa', I have tried to seek answers to different questions regarding chitari art and the chitari community. In my study I have covered what *chitari* art is all about like what are the themes and what are the changes in those themes. This study talks about socio demographic profile of the chitari community and their socio-cultural practice. In the end the study explores the reasons behind the decline in the traditional art form of the chitari community. There are not many studies about the chitari community. Today there is a need to do research in this area to find out about the chitari community and the challenges faced by the chitari community.

Acknowledgment

I want to say a big thank you to all the people who helped me with my dissertation. First of all, I want to thank God for giving me the strength and wisdom to complete this work. I am thankful to the most important person in my research, my guide Dr. Mozinha Fernandes who has been my mentor and saviour and because of whom my research was possible. Ma'am Mozinha patiently listened to my ideas, corrected my mistakes, and encouraged me when things got tough. I extend my sincere gratitude to Prof. Ganesha Somayaji, Dean of DDKSSSBS, for his guidance and encouragement. I also want to thank all my teachers who shared their knowledge and expertise with me. Their guidance helped shape my understanding of the subject. I would like to thank the staff at the Goa University library who were incredibly helpful. They helped me find the resources I needed for which I am grateful to them.

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CONTENT

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

CHAPTER I:

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

India is a living example of the diversity of human heritage, with its different cultures and customs. Indian culture is a mix of traditional practices and contemporary influences, encompassing various beliefs, customs, languages, and artistic expressions. With a millennium-long history, Indian culture is influenced by a wide range of dynasties, religions, and ethnic groups. Art is when people use their creativity to make things that express their thoughts and feelings. It can be anything that looks nice, but it's also about how it's made, not just something that happens magically. Art shows beauty in different ways like paintings, music, stories, and more. It lets people be themselves and understand the world better by making pleasing things to look at or experience. At the heart of Indian culture lies an extensive array of folk art forms, each embodying the essence of its region, community, and history. These folk arts, shaped by generations of artisans and craftsmen, reflect the soul of India's rural landscape, encompassing a wide spectrum of expressions, from music, dance, and storytelling to pottery, textiles, and painting. (Sharma, 2015)

Goa, a sunny coastal paradise in India, is not just about beaches. It's a place bursting with vibrant culture and incredible art. The culture in Goa is like a colorful mix of traditions from the past and the contemporary era. One will find a little bit of everything here: lively festivals, good food, and music and dance. Skilled artists here create beautiful things like furniture, delicate lacework, and shell crafts. Each piece tells a story and keeps old traditions alive while blending in new ideas. Skilled artisans

and craftsmen bring Goa's art to life. These dedicated individuals infuse passion and expertise into every piece they create, ensuring that the cultural heritage of Goa thrives and evolves.

Cuncolim, situated in the South Goa, has a history that spans pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial eras. The *Chitari* community in Cuncolim presents an interesting blend of heritage and artistic skill. Their name derives from the Sanskrit word "*Chitra*," meaning "painting," signifying their historical association with intricate traditional art forms. The *Chitari* community is different because they have families from both the local area and other places like Maharashtra and Karnataka, from where people have moved. This mix of backgrounds makes them special. Their unique cultural identity has been molded by centuries of history, interaction, and adaptation. In Cuncolim, the *Chitaris* of Demani are well-known for their artistic talent. *Chitari* artisans skilfully create detailed images that narrate tales from mythology, local folklore, and historical events. Intricate line work, vibrant colors, and the use of natural pigments make *Chitari* paintings visually appealing. These artworks not only entertain but also educate and transmit cultural values (Dessai, 2022). The *Chitari* community makes different wooden items like *Paat*, *Chavai*, *Devare*, *Advoli*, *Latfale*, wooden toys and wooden fruits. These objects are evidence of their creativity. The artisans incorporate intricate carvings, floral patterns, and traditional motifs into their creations. Each piece carries a piece of their cultural identity (Dessai, 2022). The craftspeople from Cuncolim bring wood to life by carving and painting it. They make toys and gifts that have made people from Cuncolim happy for many generations, as well as people from nearby and far away villages.

Demani also goes by the name of an artisan's ward because of *Chitari* (Dessai, 2022). Inheritances of talent from their predecessors have been retained by about 15 *Chitari* families. The Gandhian perspective on development resonates deeply with the ethos and practices of the *Chitari* community in Cuncolim, Goa. Their historical engagement in cottage industries, such as traditional dyeing and weaving practices, reflects Gandhiji's advocacy for village-oriented industries. Every home either has a resident craftsman or a tiny workshop where skilled artisans breathe life into the wood and create superb and exquisite wooden objects. The *Chitari* community's dedication to preserving and promoting cottage industries mirrors Gandhi's vision of encouraging local craftsmanship and self-reliance.

Group of artisans the *Chitari* are renowned for producing modern gifts and other useful items, as well as wooden children's toys, infant cradles, *matoli* (During Ganesh Chaturthi, the idol of lord Ganesh is covered by a wooden frame that is loaded with seasonal and wild produce. The term '*matoli*' refers to this canopy), pat that Hindus use to sit on the ground, *devare* to hold idols and other items. The ancient customs of painting the *taranga* (flags that are used during the *shigmo* festival) and repairing temple *rathas* (chariots) have been upheld and perpetuated by the *Chitari*. In the temple, the *Chitari*s are given a unique spot (Das, 2019).

1.2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

If the relationship between the desired knowledge and the existing knowledge is not explored, the quest for knowledge cannot produce meaningful results. Therefore, the literature review is crucial to any research project. It offers comprehensive information on the topic and also forms a clear idea about the different aspects of the study's methodologies and procedures. This leads to the development of a strong basis that will

offer solid theoretical knowledge for the study's logical representation and critical analysis. Here, an effort has been made to examine the relevant literature for the current research.

Art is the expression of human creativity, encompassing any form of creation or activity that communicates thoughts, feelings, or ideas. It involves making something visually appealing, but it's more than just appearances—it's about the process and the effort put into it, not magic but a methodical act. Art is about revealing beauty, whether in the form of visual art, music, literature, or any other medium. It's a way of showcasing individualism and exploring the fundamental principles of nature through beautiful forms that serve human purposes. Art improves identity and social interactions. According to the study, engaging in the arts increases people's consciousness and sense of self, as well as their "collective confidence and connectedness." Social relationships are the foundation of the human brain's evolution, thus for humanity to flourish, we must enhance social development by utilizing the arts to promote understanding, empathy, and dialogue. According to the author in the structure of society, artists are uniquely positioned to explain difficult concepts to the general public and encourage action. It takes art to inspire, question, agitate, and empower people—all the factors needed to bring about social change. (Furniss, 2018)

According to Jones, when we examine the relationship between people and art through an anthropological lens, we uncover deeper layers of significance. Art objects, ranging from paintings to sculptures, textiles, and masks, carry within them symbolic meanings that go beyond their aesthetic appeal. These meanings are often deeply rooted in the cultural context from which they emerge. For instance, a painting may not only depict a scene or a person but could also symbolize cultural values, beliefs, or historical events. Similarly, sculptures may not only represent physical forms but may also

embody spiritual or religious concepts. Textiles and masks, too, often serve as vessels for cultural symbolism, playing integral roles in rituals, ceremonies, and everyday life. By understanding the symbolic meanings embedded within art objects, we gain insight into the beliefs, practices, and identities of the cultures that produce them. In this way, art becomes not just a form of creative expression but also a means through which societies communicate and preserve their cultural heritage. (Jones, n.d, as cited in Marrais & Robb, 2013)

Art is like a mirror reflecting who we are and what we believe. Artists use different ways to show how they feel or what's happening around them, like painting, music, or storytelling. Through art, we can see how people lived in the past and what they thought about. Sometimes, art also helps us think differently about society and make changes for the better. (Jangid, 2022)

Art, similar to Utopias, is envisioned as a harbinger of the future. The researcher posits that through its imaginative nature, art not only reflects present or past circumstances but prefigures possible future realities. This conceptualization aligns art within the sociology of the imaginary, focusing on the diverse forms of human imagination across societies. (Burke, 1971)

According to Sanchez (1993), art is a vital aspect of human life. He discussed it in relation to the core ideas of Marxist ideas. He talks about how creating art raises an artist's unique ability to humanize anything. Furthermore, their inventions tend to create new realities in addition to reflecting reality.

Francastel in his work challenges the prevailing notion of art, especially Renaissance art, as a mere reflection of reality. He posits art as similar to language—a system of signs conveying meanings unique to individual societies. Paintings are similar to written texts, demanding interpretation rather than serving as direct

representations of reality. Society shapes art as much as art reflects societal changes. Francastel emphasizes the communal aspect of art, suggesting that the 'system of signs' and world-views within art are products of collective social construction. He argues that behind shifts in artistic representations lie corresponding social transformations. (Burke, 1971)

Varma (2018), talks about how art and culture reflect society, even from ancient times when people used cave drawings to express themselves. It highlights the importance of folk art in India, which connects people to their heritage and traditions. Different regions in India have their unique folk art forms, like painting, sculpture, embroidery, and toys, passed down through generations. Unfortunately, some of these art forms are disappearing, like puppetry and certain types of embroidery. However, popular ones like Warli and Madhubani have potential in the international market due to their traditional yet modern appeal. These folk art motifs often feature symbols like deities, nature, and customs, and are sometimes adapted into merchandise for a global audience. The text also mentions Ritu Kumar, a famous fashion designer, who incorporates traditional Indian motifs into her modern designs, blending the old with the new.

Both contemporary and traditional Indian art exhibit a strong sense of design. The origins of these historic Indian artworks date to prehistoric societies that existed in the third millennium BC. Indian arts like paintings, sculptures, ceramics, and textile arts are examples of traditional Indian art. Since India is the birthplace of several major world faiths, such as Buddhism, Islam, and Hinduism, the majority of traditional Indian art is either political or religious. (Meyer, 2022)

Traditional Indian painting, deeply rooted in cultural heritage, has persevered across millennia due to its association with religious and social contexts. Researcher

have also talked about art forms originating from the Ajanta cave temple complex and subsequent manuscript traditions which served as foundational elements, fostering cultural continuity despite historical disruptions. (Yamini, 2018)

The artistic diversity and cultural significance of tribal folk art are showcased across various mediums and distinct regional styles. This diversity, exemplified by artworks such as Madhubani and Patachitra paintings, exemplifies the multifaceted cultural expressions prevalent in India. These artworks serve as cultural markers, embodying regional identities and societal values (Sharma, 2015).

Ghosh and Banerjee (2019), in 'Traditional Folk Art Community And Urban transformation,' illuminate the evolving scenario for folk communities reliant on folk art in the face of urbanization. These communities, deeply rooted in livelihoods connected to folk art, experience profound transformations due to urban shifts. The article delves into the challenges these communities face as their once-traditional lifestyles adapt to changing urban contexts, impacting their practices and livelihoods.

Speaking with Pictures provides an innovative look at folk art's use of visual storytelling. Through an investigation of folk art's figurative modes and their integration with mythological ideas, it highlights the art form's interaction with modernity. The book examines folk art as a modern phenomenon that fits into a complex visual culture and finds that a "new" form or medium best captures the "essence" of tradition.

Indian folk paintings are traditional artworks that have been passed down through generations in India. They come in many styles, like Madhubani, Kalamkari, Warli, and more, each with its techniques and colors. These paintings represent the diverse cultures of India and are unique in their ways. Some are at risk of disappearing, but efforts are being made to revive them. Some popular ones, like Madhubani and

Warli, are becoming popular again and are being used on different things like jewelry, clothes, and pottery. These paintings, which used to be on walls, are now found on various products, giving them a modern twist while still keeping their traditional symbols and meanings. Traditional folk paintings, showcasing religious and mythological stories using natural materials like soil, cow dung, leaves, and charcoal, have influenced various modern fashion trends. This art, known for its authenticity and uniqueness, has evolved into contemporary forms, blending tradition with modernity. (Bharathi & Ambily, 2018)

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The challenges faced by folk communities reliant on traditional art forms amid urbanization highlight the evolving dynamics within these cultural practices. As urban landscapes transform, these communities grapple with the preservation of their cultural heritage. Their traditional livelihoods, deeply intertwined with folk art, undergo substantial alterations, necessitating adaptation to maintain cultural continuity amidst changing urban contexts. (Ghosh & Banerjee, 2019)

Handicrafts in India are products made by hand or with simple tools, employing many artisans. These crafts have cultural and artistic value and are important for the economy. India has a rich history of craftsmanship, seen in ancient artifacts and temple carvings. The government supports this industry for its employment potential. Handicrafts cover various materials like wood, metal, and textiles, with popular items including brassware, ceramics, and carpets. Different Indian states have unique

handicrafts reflecting their culture and traditions. (Debbarma, 2019)

Important information about crafts, both nationally and regionally, is provided by Saraf (1985) in her book Indian Crafts: Development and Potential. "Craft is not a product; craft is a system," is the concept and philosophy of craft that the author has delicately and brilliantly expressed. It is insufficient to raise the earnings and working circumstances of the artisans, but their talent must be preserved, honored, and treasured; this legacy must be carried on with honor. This book provides a detailed explanation of significant handicrafts from several Indian states and union territories, as well as a socioeconomic profile of the craftspeople who practice them.

According to Mohi-ud-din et al (2014), our Indian community and culture are uniquely expressed via handicrafts. A sizable portion of people live directly or indirectly from handicrafts. It produces foreign exchange profits and jobs, both of which are essential for economic expansion and the improvement of the rural economy. It is important to understand the dynamic variables that influence the rise and fall of craft from the perspective of a whole way of life rather than just a limited one. To ensure the best possible investigation of this handcrafted sector, the government ought to offer incentives as well as support. The state and federal governments need to act to raise the pay and enhance the working conditions for those engaged in the handcrafted industry, including craftsmen.

"The Glory of Indian Handicrafts," provided a comprehensive overview of the principal crafts practiced throughout India. She has discussed nearly every kind of handicraft made in the various villages across the nation, including woven textiles, hand-painted fabrics, hand printing, embroidery, carpets and floor coverings, wood, leather, ivory, basketry, mat weaving, bamboo and cane work, toys and dolls, folk paintings, metal objects, jewelry, stone, pottery, glass, and theatre crafts. The author

emphasizes the value of handicrafts as a social component and a holdover from the past that provides variety to an otherwise boring environment. But contemporary industrialization has buried them, turning them into commodities to be bought and sold. (Chattopadhyay, 1985)

Chattopadhyay (1980) discussed the history of "Master craftsmanship" and stressed how this idea initially emerged and developed. The rise of crafts in society was an indication of the development of awareness as well as humanism's rise. It represented humanity's attempt to infuse charm and elegance into a typically hard and uninteresting human existence. The author has mentioned that to clarify the actual worth of handicrafts, in addition to being a lovely legacy, handicrafts are important because we must live with them, use them, touch them, feel them, and have close contact with them so that their beauty enhances our lives.

Khan and Amir (2013) investigated the impact of Uttar Pradesh craftsmen's handcraft marketing techniques. The writers have explained the significance of handicrafts by stating that the mythological, religious, social, historical, and artistic expressions found in these crafts represent the best aspects of Indian heritage while fusing beauty with usefulness. The writers have highlighted the distinctive quality of handicrafts, which is that similar handicrafts made in other locations frequently differ from one another in terms of style, color scheme, craftsmanship, and originality.

According to Subrahmanian (2006), artisanal goods created for religious purposes are becoming more and more valuable in the marketplace. Numerous such Indian handicrafts are renowned for their rich aesthetic content and the world values and appreciates decorative nature. "For instance, the artists who created patta chitra and applique work specifically for religious ceremonies at Puri, Orissa's Lord Jagannath temple honed their skills to become internationally recognized craftsmen." Regional

specialties are also gaining popularity in both domestic and foreign markets. Examples of these include the Madhubani paintings of Bihar, the Kalighat paintings of West Bengal, and several eye-catching metal crafts, stone carvings, and wood carvings from Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh.

Shastri and Pretty (2018), delve into a strategic vision aimed at connecting urban and rural sectors by preserving and revitalizing India's craft sector through the creation of an artisan village. Their primary objective is to unite diverse artisan crafts across the country into a community that celebrates and sustains India's rich heritage, providing a space for practice, teaching, and cultural demonstration.

Gopish (2019) looked into the problems facing the production and sale of handmade items, particularly focusing on woodcraft. The study, titled "Production and Marketing Challenges of Handicraft: Products with Special Reference to Wood Craft," found that the main issues in Kashmir's woodcraft industry include artisans' lack of higher education and a lack of proper recognition for the region's handicrafts. Gopish concluded that handicrafts aren't seen as a proper business but rather as a tradition or family occupation.

There is an art form linked with every corner of India, from the Tanjore paintings of the South to the Mithila paintings of the North, and from *Pattachitra* in the East to Warli in the West. *Pattachitra*, which dates back to the 12th century in Orissa, is one of the oldest art forms in the region. The word "*Patta*" means "cloth," while "*Chitra*" means "picture." Even today, every household in the little Orissan village of Raghurajpur has at least one member who works in the arts, making the village a refuge for *Pattachitras*. Usually, the central focus of a *pattachitra* is Lord Jagannath, who is thought to be an incarnation of Lord Krishna. The tale of Radha-Krishna, passages from the two well-known Indian epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, and other themes

are also included. The use of vegetable and mineral colors by *chitrakars*, or traditional *pattachitra* artisans, is a distinctive characteristic. (Gupta, 2023)

The Warlis are one of the main tribes in the western state of Maharashtra, and they are the creators of Warli art. Dating back to the 10th century A.D., this art form was first found in the early 1970s. Like the paintings seen in prehistoric caves, Warli paintings are simple images painted inside hut walls. The everyday lives of the tribe are typically shown in these works of art, along with representations of the sun, moon, rain, and other elements of nature. Typically, mythological or religious characters are conspicuously absent. The primary motif in all Warli art is their Mother Goddess, Palaghat, who is revered as a fertility symbol. (Gupta, 2023)

Gupta (2023), also talks about the ancient art style known as Thanjavur (Tanjore) paintings flourished in Tamil Nadu's Thanjavur during the 16th and 18th centuries. A Thanjavur painting is a vibrant panel painting with a deity serving as the composition's central focus that is created on a wooden plank. The figure of the deity is usually surrounded by a curtain or an arch, and its eyes are usually almond-shaped. The gilded and gem-set method used in Thanjavur paintings is distinguished by the use of shimmering stones and gold leaves. Even though the art form has changed over time, those who like art still enjoy it, and its authentically Indian style serves as an inspiration to many other artists.

Badiger (2023), discussed a traditional folk art known as *chittara* originated in the Indian state of Karnataka. The distinctive artwork known as '*chittara*,' which is made with natural colors, is typically painted on the walls of festivals, ceremonies, and other special events. homes, temples, and additional public structures. It has a tight connection to the religious and cultural customs of the Karnataka people. Flowers, animals, and other natural features are frequently included in *Chittara* paintings, which

are primarily influenced by nature. Choosing colors is usually the first step in the creation of *Chittara* art. Natural items like flowers, fruits, and vegetables are crushed up and combined with water to form the paint that is used in the painting. A customary art form that is handed down from generation to generation is *chittara* art.

Bhat (2014) provides a brief overview of Chittara art. He explains the definition of the *Chittara* art form as well as its origins. In addition to depicting life rites, auspicious ceremonies, and geometric patterns with symbolic meaning, the art form calls for a specific grasp of ratios and proportions, which the Deewaru community has been expertly utilizing. It is argued that, in the current commercialized world, art is an activity with aesthetic and sociocultural significance rather than a career. Observing the paintings, one can see that they are composed of environmentally friendly natural materials and symbols that correspond to their actual surroundings.

Craft traditions, exemplified by wooden toy-making by chitari in Sawantwadi, portray the socio-economic significance of these artistic practices. These crafts not only contribute to the regional economy but also sustain livelihoods while preserving cultural heritage. The eco-friendly nature of these toys further underscores their significance as culturally rich and environmentally conscious artifacts. (Contributor, 2017)

The historical significance of Ganjifa art provides a valuable parallel to *Chitari* art's origins and evolution. Originating from the Moghul empire, Ganjifa art evolved with Hindu themes and reached the *Chitari* community. This historical trajectory offers insights into the cultural transmission and evolution of art forms within specific communities. (Migrator, 2015)

Goan *chitari* art dates back over three centuries, to the time of the Vijayanagara Empire's artisans. In addition to its distinctive craftsmanship, it stands out for its vivid

red and yellow colors as well as its straightforward, airy designs. Numerous toys and objects, like the well-known board game Tabul Fale, are made with this art form. (Das, 2017)

A narrative of challenges faced by *Chitari* artists emerges from the literature. Limited governmental support compounds the struggle for the revival of this heritage craft, underscoring the difficulties inherent in sustaining such cultural practices. The ongoing fight for the rebirth of *Chitari* art reflects the arduous journey and efforts toward preserving cultural heritage in the face of adversity. (Migrator, 2015)

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND QUESTION

The traditional art form of the *Chitari* community in Cuncolim, Goa, known for its intricate artisanal threads, stands at a critical juncture. Despite its rich cultural significance, this age-old craft is facing challenges that threaten its survival and sustainability. Factors such as shifting demographics, diminishing interest among younger generations, and limited market exposure pose significant hurdles. This dissertation aims to delve into these issues, providing a comprehensive analysis and offering strategic recommendations to safeguard and promote the *chitari* art of Cuncolim for future generations.

The following are the research questions of the study:

What are the cultural practices of the *Chitari* community?

What are the changes in the traditional *chitari* art?

What challenges do the *Chitari* artisans in Cuncolim face in terms of skill preservation, market access, and socio-economic sustainability in the contemporary era?

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims:

to know the socio-demographical profile of the *Chitari* community

to document the traditional art form of the *Chitari* community

to study the socio-cultural practices of the *Chitari* community.

1.5 METHODOLOGY AND METHODS OF THE STUDY

In this research, the qualitative research method will be used to accurately document the required information on the *Chitari* community. Ethnography is a qualitative method that was used in this study. The researcher used primary and secondary sources to collect data. The primary sources of data were collected by visiting the research area. The secondary sources of data were collected from books, articles, blogs, and videos. To collect data, methods like interviews, case studies, and observation were used.

Interviews with participants were carried out using a purposive sampling technique. This allowed the researcher to target people with valuable information or experiences related to what is being studied. Unstructured interviews were conducted to get more in depth information about the study. Participant observation was utilized to gain insights into the socio-cultural lives of the Chitari community in Cuncolim, Goa.

1.6 DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH AREA

The settlement of Cuncolim is located in South Goa's Salcete district. This region, rich in culture, history, and natural beauty, offers a unique blend of traditional Goan life and modern developments. It is a part of the network of settlements known as Assolna, Velim, and Cuncolim and it has its own municipal council. The name Cuncolim was taken from the settlement's previous name, *Kumkumahalli,* which indicated a village where *kumkum* or vermilion was made. Cuncolim is nestled in the Salcete taluka (sub-

district) of South Goa.

Its geographical coordinates are approximately 15.2225° N latitude and 73.9889° E longitude. The area is characterized by lush greenery, hills, and a mix of landscapes that include agricultural fields, coconut groves, and small water bodies. One of the key elements of Cuncolim's history is its role in the anti-colonial resistance against the Portuguese. The infamous Cuncolim Revolt of 1583, known as the Cuncolim Massacre, where a group of villagers fought against Portuguese oppression, is a significant event in Goan history. This event is remembered annually through cultural events and rituals.

The culture of Cuncolim is deeply rooted in its traditional customs, festivals, and religious practices. The local population largely comprises Konkani-speaking Hindus and Catholics, contributing to the diverse cultural landscape. Festivals like *Shigmo* and the famous umbrella festival is celebrated with traditional rituals. The people of Cuncolim live in harmony and togetherness, and both Christians and Hindus celebrate feasts and *zatras* with the same zeal.

The architectural heritage of Cuncolim includes ancient temples, churches, and traditional Portuguese-style houses. The *Shri Shantadurga* Temple, dedicated to the goddess of peace, and the Church of St. Alex, known for its unique design and religious significance, are prominent landmarks. Cuncolim stands as a miniature of Goan heritage, blending history, culture, and natural beauty while navigating the complexities of modern-day development. Its resilience and commitment to preserving its unique identity make it a fascinating subject for study and exploration.

Demani is a village located in Cuncolim Goa. The village is known for its traditional *Chitari* art. The local culture is deeply rooted in Goan traditions, and one

can experience the warm hospitality of the residents. It's home to a mix of Hindu, Muslim, and Christian households, contributing to the cultural diversity of the area.

CHAPTER II:

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE CHITARI COMMUNITY

2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Cuncolim is a town in South Goa, India. It's governed by a Municipal Council that's made up of 10 different wards representing different parts of town. Every 5 years they have elections to choose representatives for each ward. According to the last census in 2011, about 4,070 families were living in Cuncolim. The total population was around 16,623 people. Slightly more females at 8,699 than males at 7,924. For every 1,000 guys, there were about 1,098 girls. Children constitute 9% of the total population. Around 1,570 kids. Of those, there were 831 boys and 739 girls. The child sex ratio was a little lower at 889 girls for every 1,000 boys. In Cuncolim, there are more females than males. (Cuncolim Town Population Census 2011, 2022)

There are a total of 10 wards in Cuncolim, Demani is the 9 ward with a population of 589. The *Chitari* community in Cuncolim, Goa, comprises approximately 15 families, constituting a significant portion of the local population. Analysis of age distribution reveals a balanced demographic composition in Demani, with approximately 176 children (aged 0-14), 354 adults (aged 15-59), and 57 elderly individuals (aged 60 and above) within the community. The gender ratio within the *Chitari* community is relatively balanced, with a slight male predominance. (Cuncolim Town Population Census 2011, 2022)

2.2 LITERACY LEVEL

The literacy rate in Cuncolim is quite high at 90.8%, surpassing the average literacy rate of 87.6% for the South Goa district. The male literacy rate is 94.46%, while the female literacy rate is 87.47%. This indicates a strong educational foundation within the town of Cuncolim. In Demani, approximately 412 individuals have completed primary education, 118 have completed secondary education, and 59 have pursued higher education. Educational levels among the *Chitari* community vary according to the different age groups. The *Chitari* community has varying levels of education among different age groups. Among those above 65 years of age, most are illiterate. The age group between 40 and 60 has completed primary education, with some having completed higher secondary education. Those below 40 years old have mostly completed their graduation. Over the years, access to education has significantly improved within the community, resulting in an overall increase in literacy levels. The younger generation is particularly well-educated, with many children pursuing higher education and becoming highly qualified.

Table 2.1: Literacy rate of Cuncolim

Sex	Cuncolim	Goa
Female	87.47%	84.66%
Male	94.46%	92.65%
Total	90.77%	88.7%

Source: https://www.censusindia.co.in/towns/cuncolim-population-south-goa-goa-803250

2.3 EMPLOYMENT

Regarding employment, out of the total population, 5,598 individuals are engaged in work activities. The majority, 83.9%, are involved in main work, such as a teacher, government or private employee, doctor, or engineer which constitutes employment or earning for more than six months. The remaining 16.1% are involved in marginal activities, providing a livelihood for less than six months. Specifically, in terms of occupation, 82 individuals are cultivators or co-owners, while 122 are agricultural labourers. This indicates a significant portion of the workforce is engaged in agricultural activities, highlighting the importance of this sector in the town's economy.

The *Chitari* community in Cuncolim, Goa, engages in a variety of economic activities, ranging from traditional occupations like *Chitari* art and wood carving to modern jobs like working in hotels, and hospitals, some people teach in schools or colleges, and some work in banks and for the government, and some of them have their shops like grocery. In addition to traditional occupations, many members of the *Chitari* community also pursue modern jobs and employment opportunities. For example, they work in sectors such as education, healthcare, hospitality, and administration. Some *Chitari* individuals work as teachers, nurses, government employees, or entrepreneurs, contributing to the diverse economic landscape of Cuncolim. Household income levels among the *Chitari* community differ. While some households have achieved economic stability through successful work of *chitari* art and artifacts and other employment opportunities, others face financial challenges due to limited access to resources and economic opportunities for instance one of the respondents said that it is sometimes difficult to get wood because of environmental rules for instance cutting of trees from

government area is banned. For this offense, there are penalties and Six months imprisonment. Also, he shared that they sometimes have to take loans to buy raw materials and then it gets difficult to pay loans because of low income. Income levels within the *Chitari* community vary depending on factors such as occupation, education, and access to economic resources. While skilled artisans and professionals may earn moderate to high incomes, others experience lower income levels. For now, only five *chitari* families are continuing this work.

Table 2.2: Working population of Cuncolim

	Total	Male	Female
Main workers	4,697	3,488	1,209
Cultivators	82	65	17
Agricultural labourer	122	79	43
Household Industries	159	127	32
Other workers	4,334	3,217	1,117
Marginal workers	901	572	329
Non-working	11,025	3,864	7,161

Source: https://www.censusindia.co.in/towns/cuncolim-population-south-goa-goa-803250

2.4 FAMILY STRUCTURE

The *Chitari* community has close relationships with each other. They stick together and help one another out, making their community strong and united. Extended family networks play a vital role among *Chitari* in providing social support, sharing resources, and fostering a sense of solidarity among community members. Social gatherings, religious ceremonies, and community events serve as platforms for strengthening these

bonds and reinforcing social norms and values. There are more joint families than nuclear families in the *chitari* community which is a unique trait in today's modern society. In the *chitari* community, the families are male-dominant families. Most of the decision in the family is taken by the male member who is the head of the family, but along with the men, women too have rights in decision-making through this, we can say that there is no gender discrimination among males and females in *Chitari* houses. Marriage rates within the *Chitari* community are relatively high, and Divorce rates are low, reflecting the stability of family relationships within the community.

2.5 RELIGION AND FESTIVALS

 Religiously, the majority of the population in Cuncolim identifies as Hindu, accounting for 50.42% of the total population, followed by Muslims at 11.82%. This diversity adds to the cultural part of the town. People from the Demani ward have a mixture of Hindus, Muslims as well as Christians. The *chitaris* belong to the Hindu religion. They worship a deity known as '*Mahalasa Narayani*' the temple of this deity is situated in Mardol Ponda, which is their '*kuldevi*' (clan deity). Along with this they also worship '*Shanta Durga Kunkolikarin*' in Fatorpa. Festivals like Eid, Christmas, Ganesh Chaturthi, Diwali, *Shigmo Utsav*, and Umbrella festival are celebrated with great enthusiasm with community members coming together to participate in traditional rituals, music, dance, and feasting. The interesting thing that one could note is the essence of syncretism, within the hearts of each individual i.e. at the time of the festival; people belonging to other communities do become part of their happiness.

2.6 *CHITARI* COMMUNITY

Art is found in every culture and is a way for people to express themselves creatively. In Goa, there is an art called *Chitari* art, created by the *Chitari* community. In the village of Demani, they make traditional cutting boards called *advoli*, but they also craft other items like wooden fruits and furniture. The *Chitari* families have lived in the village of Cuncolim for the past 300 years, preserving their art and culture. The *Chitari* families are experts at color work.

The term "*Chitari*" is derived from the Sanskrit words "*Chitra*" meaning picture or painting and "*kar*" meaning maker, due to the community's historical work and expertise in art and decoration. Originally from Goa, India, the *Chitari* population resides in certain areas of Karnataka and Goa states. In Goa's Bori-Shiroda village lies a temple dedicated to the Chitari community and their patron deity. In Karnataka, most *Chitaris* reside in Kumta city in the Karwar district. Those living in Karwar specialize in carving, while the *Chitari* artists based in Goa and Savantwadi in Maharashtra are renowned for their skills in color work and painting. Some *Chitari* populations can also be found in Shirashi and Honawar in Karnataka.

The migration patterns of the *Chitari* community have been influenced by historical events, economic opportunities, and social factors. While some *Chitari* families have been living in Goa for generations, others have migrated to different parts of India or neighboring regions over time. Factors such as trade, commerce, and employment opportunities have played significant roles in shaping migration patterns within the community. Some people from the *Chitari* community are moving out from Cuncolim for better opportunities and other reasons also like they have bought new

houses or built new houses outside Cuncolim. Through this, we can note that there is migration by the *Chitari* community.

The *Chitari* community's heritage of culture is a combination of native Goan customs and influences from other cultures. Their beliefs, language, and food all shape their cultural identity. *Chitari* celebrations, customs, and ceremonies serve as significant indicators of social unity and identity by showcasing the community's cultural past. The chitari people speak the Konkani language. Some of them also communicate in Kannada as some of their families live in Karnataka. Their traditional cuisine is meals like fish curry, rice, and delicacies based on coconut. *Dhalo*, *fugdi*, and *ghumat* are examples of music and dance styles they practice. These performances are held in with celebrations and social events. In some parts of Goa, some people do not know the chitaris by their name rather know the chitari community as Demani '*lok*' (people) which is the place where they reside. Demani is famous for the artisans and the village is also known as an artisanal village.

Figure: 2.3: Map of Cuncolim

Source: http://www.maplandia.com/india/goa/south-goa/cuncolim/

CHAPTER III:

TRADITIONAL CHITARI ART

3.1 ORIGIN OF *CHITARI* ART

The traditional painting style known as "*chitari* art" is distinguished by its elaborate patterns and bright colors. It has been passed down through generations of people, preserving the rich cultural history of the areas in which it is most prevalent. The foundations of *Chitari* art are deeply rooted in Goa's cultural heritage. In the olden days, there were no dining tables or chairs in households, during that time people were doing all their chores sitting on the floor. The floors were mostly of mud and different types of material items like *Paat* were used for sitting on the floor. To make the *Paat* more attractive some craftsmen did painting and carving on them. The tradition of painting and carved *paats* work continues in Demani, Cuncolim Goa. The craftsmen are known as '*Chitari*'. The word chitari has been derived from the Sanskrit term "Chitra," which means picture or painting. Earlier in Goa, the practice of '*Vojem*' was an essential part of Hindu weddings, and the items that were given in *Vojem* were made by the *chitari* community. Wooden items like *paat*, *advoli*, and other wooden items included in *vojem* were made by the *Chitari* community people. *Vojem* is a practice of the bride's family gifting artifacts, sweets, and fruits to the groom's family. The fruits included in vojem are Bananas. The sweets included in Vojem are Besan Ladu. However, the eatables were not prepared by the *chitari* community. In earlier times, Goa, Maharashtra, and Karnataka have all been linked to *Chitari* art, with each region adding its stylistic components to the art.

The oral histories regarding the origins of *Chitari* art and the settlement of the *Chitari* community in Cuncolim, Goa. The first story is that the Chitari people were from Bori, Ponda in Goa. Some Chitari families moved to Sawant Wadi in Maharashtra during the Portuguese colonial era and they settled down in Sawant wadi today they started making wooden fruits there as there was more demand for the wooden fruits, and slowly and gradually they started a small cottage industry of toy making and also they passed this art to other communities of Sawant wadi and till today these cottage industries are operating. While these families traveled to Maharashtra, others traveled to Karnataka. In Karnataka, they call the *chitari* art *Chittara* art in their language. After a while, some of these community members moved to Cuncolim, Goa, their new home, bringing with them the *Chitari* art tradition. They settled in Cuncolim and have continued to practice and preserve the art form ever since they came.

The second oral story implies that the *Chitari* people are originally from Karnataka. Their family moved to Cuncolim in Goa several generations ago. They found a welcoming area and ideal surroundings for their creations of art here. Through *Chitari* art, they contributed to the local artistic culture and gradually blended into Goan society while preserving their unique cultural identity. Even though they came from different places, the *Chitari* people now call Cuncolim their home. They keep making their *chitari* art, adding to the culture of the area.

The wooden toys, baby cradles, *matoli* (wooden canopy) for Ganesh Chaturthi, floor mats used by Hindus for sitting, *devare* for idol keeping, and modern presents and other useful products are among the widely recognized creations of *Chitari* artisans. The ancient customs of painting and maintaining temple *rathas*, or chariots, as well as restoring the *toranga*, have been upheld and continued by *Chitaris*. They also make *advoli* (traditional cutting board, used for grating coconuts and cleaning fish).

Picture 3.1: *Matoli* made by *Chitari* artisan

Source: Respondent

Picture 3.2: *Advoli* made by *Chitari* artisans

Source: Researcher

Picture 3.3: Devaro made by chitari artisans

Source: Researcher

Picture 3.4: *Palakhi*

Source: Respondent

3.2 WOODEN TOYS

Cuncolim, was the birthplace of the vocal-for-locals many years ago villagers used to prepare handmade items at home and sell them in the village like small floor mats, bamboo baskets, and other household items. Demani used to be well-known for its wooden toys, which were in high demand along with other carved wooden items. These items are *Chavai, Nakshi Paat, and Devare.* In the *Chitari's Chitrashala* (workshop), many kinds of toys are made. The workshop produces everything from a wooden teether for babies to customized wooden walkers for developing infants taking their first steps. Other items include wooden doors, *Advoli, Latphale*, wooden show peace and Buddha statue. Today making of wooden toys is almost stopped due to no demand.

Picture 3.5: *Tabul Phale* a wooden board game made by *chitari* artisan

Source: Respondent

Picture 3.6: *Chitari* artisan Painting the logs of cradle

Source: Goa's Colourful Secret - The Chitari Art . (n.d.).

https://www.soultravelling.in/blog/local-goan-folk-art/

3.3 WOODEN FRUITS

Wooden fruits are also part of *chitari* art. People decorate their homes during Ganesh Chaturthi, and in a decorated place, the Ganapati idol is set beneath a wooden board called a matoli. The *Chitaris* are the ones that prepare this *Matoli*. The *Chitaris* have skilfully crafted a variety of wooden fruits that surround the *Matoli*. The wooden fruits are so well crafted that, unless they are closely examined or felt with the touch, one would assume they are real fruits. The *Chitaris* are masters at preparing distinct kinds of fruits, including jackfruit, cashews, plantains, coconuts, and mangos. There are two sets of fruits one has 27 fruits, and the other has 60 fruits. These fruits were given in vojem.

3.4 METHOD OF PREPARING WOODEN FRUITS

Pangara, a type of bush wood or Jackfruit, is used by *Chitaris* to produce wooden fruits. This wood weighs very less. The tree is cut and then soaked for 24 hours to solidify it.

The job of shaping the fruit is done by two artists; one creates the shape, while the other applies the final touches. After that, the fruits are sun-dried. Following approximately a week of drying, the fruit is painted. The fruit's roughness is eliminated with the primer coating, and the holes, and cracks, vanish. The polishing stage comes next. Five coats of polish are applied over two to three months. The fruits are then colored after this. At last, gum is used to attach the parts to the wooden fruits. For example, a wooden cashew fruit and its seed are made separately and in the end, the parts of the cashew that is the fruit and the seed are attached with the help of gum. However, not all the *chitari* families prepare the wooden fruits, today only one *chitari* family is making the wooden fruits.

Picture 3.7: Wooden Fruits

Source: Goa's Colourful Secret - The Chitari Art. (n.d.).

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3.5 PREPARATION OF WOODEN *PAAT*

Traditionally, Hindu religious ceremonies and mealtimes were spent with people seated on wooden planks. Such *Paats* are expertly made by the *Chitaris*. Several colors are used for coloring the planks, also known as pats. These *Paats* are made with either mango-tree plank or jackfruit-tree wood. The logs are sliced in sawmills as per the required thickness, then these planks are marked and cut into the size of the *paat*, then it is polished and prepared and later painted or engraved, here both processes are done by hand by a skilled artisan In *chitari* art vibrant colors like red, yellow, green, and blue are used to make the chitari art more attractive. In the paint they mix '*Dik*' (gum), it helps the paint to stick better and look brighter. The gum holds the paint together and makes it last longer. They make two types of *paat* painted and carved. Today they do not buy the big wood logs but directly they purchase wooden planks which makes their work easier. Due to this they do not have to soak the wood for 24 hours, which saves their preparation time.

Picture 3.8: Wooden *Paat*

Source: Researcher

Picture 3.9: Chitari artisan Painting the wooden *Paat*

Source: Fernandes. (2015). Traditional Occupations Of Goa. The Word Publications.

Picture 3.10: *Nakashi* (carved) *chitari paat*

Source: Researcher

Picture 3.11: Flowers painted by *chitari* artisan on wooden *paat*

Source: Respondent

3.6 TECHNIQUES AND MATERIALS USED FOR *CHITARI* ART

Chitari artists use special methods and materials that have been passed down through generations to create these beautiful designs. Artisans practicing *Chitari* art employ a range of techniques to create their masterpieces. These include:

Freehand Drawing: Using freehand drawing techniques, artists sometimes start by immediately sketching complex designs onto the surface. This makes it possible for the design process to be creative and flexible.

Stencil Method: Another common technique involves the use of stencils to create repetitive patterns or motifs. Stencils help ensure consistency and precision in the artwork, particularly for complex designs. A tool that makes it easier to apply a specific design to a surface is a stencil. Basic stencil designs might include geometric patterns and flowers. Stenciling is the process of repeating a design through a cut-out shape. Not all the chitari artists from Cuncolim use this method, only a few do.

Fill and Blend: Following the design's outline, skilled artists carefully apply bright colors to the shapes, combining colors to create depth and dimension. To get the desired outcome, this painstaking process needs talent and expertise.

Detailing: *Chitari* artists are careful in their attention to detail, highlighting and polishing their work to further improve its overall visual attractiveness. What distinguishes and attracts *Chitari* art so much is its precise attention to detail.

Traditional materials like natural colors, wood, brushes, and metal tools, play a crucial role in *Chitari* art, contributing to its unique texture and character. Earlier Chitari artists often utilized natural colors from plants like Indigo, Turmeric, Madder, saffron, and other organic materials. These colors produced rich, earthy tones that were characteristic of *Chitari* art and these were valued for their eco-friendly properties. Today they use different colors with chemicals. Artists use a variety of brushes, ranging from fine-tipped brushes for intricate detailing to broader brushes for filling in larger areas. Artists use palettes to mix and blend colors. The beauty and appeal of *Chitari* art are mostly derived from the materials and techniques employed. The *Chitari* artists create attractive works of art by skillfully using these materials and ancient techniques.

Picture 3.12: Paint used by *chitari* artisan

Source: *Goa's Colourful Secret - The Chitari Art* . (n.d.).

https://www.soultravelling.in/blog/local-goan-folk-art/

3.7 THEMES IN *CHITARI* ART

We honor our deities and mythology, as well as our environment, nature, flora, and fauna, and we express our feelings, emotions, and thoughts via many traditional art forms in India (Kaur,2022). Like other Indian art forms, *Chitari* art also has a variety of themes, each carrying its own significance and cultural meaning. The themes in *chitari* art are nature, religious symbols, geometric patterns, rituals and festivals, and

daily life. Today only three of the themes are been followed by the *chitaris* in Cuncolim. These themes include:

Nature: Elements like flowers, leaves, and birds are commonly depicted in chitari art, it reflects the artist's connection with the natural world.

Religious and Spiritual: Chitari art often features symbols related to Hindu mythology, such as gods and goddesses, and sacred symbols like the lotus and Om, these motifs convey spiritual beliefs and traditions.

Geometric Patterns: Including circles, squares, and triangles, are a hallmark of Chitari art. These patterns symbolize unity, harmony, and balance, reflecting the interconnectedness of all things.

3.8 CULTURAL MEANINGS IN *CHITARI* ART

Lotus-: The lotus flower symbolizes purity, enlightenment, and spiritual growth in Hinduism. In Chitari art, the lotus motif is often used to represent divine beauty.

Peacock-: The peacock is a symbol of grace and beauty. In Chitari art, peacock themes are commonly used to symbolize prosperity and good fortune.

Elephant-: Elephants are valued animals in Indian mythology, symbolizing wisdom, strength. In Chitari art, elephant motifs represent power, protection, and prosperity.

Parrot-: Parrots hold cultural significance in Hindu mythology. Green Parrots are often associated with the goddess Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity. Also, Parrots are the depiction of nature.

The motifs and symbols present in *Chitari* art can be seen as socially constructed representations that convey shared meanings within a cultural context.

Through the interaction between artists, consumers, and communities, these symbols acquire significance and contribute to the construction of cultural identity and social unity. For example, the depiction of deities in *Chitari* paintings not only serves aesthetic purposes but also reinforces religious beliefs and values within the community. However, today not all the symbols are painted in *chitari* art, mostly one can see the Lotus and Parrots drawn on wooden Paat.

3.9 EVOLUTION OF THEMES

Chitari art in Cuncolim, Goa, has undergone an evolution in themes over the years. During the Portuguese colonial period, Cuncolim experienced a cultural exchange that influenced the themes of *Chitari* art. During the Portuguese rule, they had to change the themes as the Portuguese were not allowing the *chitari* to paint the Hindu gods and goddesses as at that time in Cuncolim the conversion was taking place. Due to this, there was a change in the *chitari* art. Before the colonial rule, chitari art was based on themes like Hindu mythological themes, including those from the Ramayana and Mahabharata, or representations of gods and goddesses, such as *Ganapati, Krishna, Shiva*, and *Durga*, are often painted by the *Chitari* community. Due to conversion, this theme was stopped by the Portuguese. However, *chitari* kept one element of Hindu mythological theme, that is the symbol of Parrot, which signifies two different themes that is nature and Hindu mythology. During that time the Portuguese did not have proper knowledge of Hindu mythology in Hinduism parrot is considered to be associated with the goddess Laksmi. The Portuguese thought the symbol of Parrot only symbolized the nature theme and for which they did not have any objection to the symbol of the Parrot, however, the *chitari* community continued painting the Parrot to keep one small element of Hindu mythology in the themes of chitari art.

3.10 TRANSITION IN *CHITARI* ART

Over time, there have been changes and transitions in *Chitari* art. There are several factors responsible for the changes and transition in chitari art factors as cultural shift and modernisation. There are changes in the material and techniques of *chitari* art. While the traditional *chitari* art was painted using natural color, modern artists use acrylic paint and other synthetic materials. Traditional techniques, involving hand-painting unique designs on wood, have evolved with the introduction of digital tools and machinery. Only three *Chitari* families crave the Paat with hands and the remaining families have switched to modern types of machinery. Traditional *Chitari* art often depicted mythological themes, religious motifs, and scenes from epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata. But today these themes are not been followed, in the present time only the nature theme is present in *chitari* art.

One *chitari* family has started making and selling other items with the *chitari* art. Other products include show peace, sofas, doors, and statues. Earlier *chitari* community sold their products by giving them in a shop, going to fairs, or in their stall which they used to put in front of their work shop near the main highway so that people could see and buy the chitari products. However, now they have made their social media accounts to promote and sell their art. One can note that there have been changes in the commercialization aspect from early till now. One family has also opened an art gallery where he has made a gallery of paintings with other decorative items, buddha statues, and *chitari* art.

Also, many wooden products of *chitari* art are not made any more by the *chitari* community. Items like wooden fruits, wooden toys, wooden walkers, wooden teethers for kids, and wooden games are not prepared by most of the *chitari* families. As there

is not much demand for it. This is one of the main changes in the *chitari* art. Today *chitari* art is changing due to globalisation. People do not buy traditional products due to which the *chitari* also make some small changes in the art.

3.11 CASE STUDIES OF FIVE *CHITARI* FAMILIES

Case study one:

The *Chitari* family has been practicing their traditional art form for generations, dating back several decades. There are four members in the family: Mr. and Mrs. Chitari and their two children. Initially, the entire family was involved in *Chitari* work, but over time, the younger generation started pursuing their careers in another field. Mrs. *Chitari* has also started doing part-time job. Currently, only Mr. *Chitari* is involved in *Chitari* art. They are facing challenges in continuing the art. They find it hard to afford the expensive raw materials, often needing to take loans and getting into debt. Moreover, not many people buy traditional *Chitari* art anymore. Despite their dedication, the family is considering discontinuing the art form within the next few years due to these challenges.

Case study two:

The second family has seven members. One grandmother, her two sons, and the wife of the second son as the wife of the first son is no more, and three children. Both the brothers are involved in *chitari* art and their mother sits in the stall in front of their house to sell the *chitari* art. Something the elder son also helps in the painting of the *chitari* art. This family is passionate about their work and takes pride in their traditional art form but they are facing challenges to continue the work. They face financial difficulties due to the high cost of raw materials and declining demand for traditional *Chitari* art. They also express concerns about the future of the art form and are

contemplating discontinuing it soon. Usha *Chitari* said, "Our grandchildren don't want to make these traditional handicrafts. They are more interested in alternative profitable career paths. It gets harder to maintain the traditional medium when there is less of a market for artifacts, fewer artisans, and increasing wood prices. No one plays wooden games or enjoys traditional art these days.

Case study three:

The third family comprises six members. Husband and wife, their two children, and the grandfather. Similar to the other families, the *Chitari* tradition has been passed down through generations in this family. This family believes that this art form will come to an end in a few years. Mr. And Mrs. *Chitari* both are involved in the work. They shared that their children are not interested in the work so he will be the last person from his family to continue the art. The respondent also shared that it is a seasonal occupation and off-season it gets difficult for them to earn money.

Suresh *Chitari's* fascination with *Chitari* art began when he was a little boy and saw the vibrant murals all around him in his hamlet. With the guidance of his father, who is an artist as well, Suresh started learning art, cutting stencils, blending paints, and so on. Inspired by his community, Ramesh persevered in the *chitari* art regardless of challenges including limited resources and declining interest in traditional arts. For instance, he has taken a loan from the bank to run his business the chitari art. It is difficult for him to pay the loan as there is not much profit today. Nowadays Suresh *Chitari* has some labourers to work in his workshop, so giving them a salary, and then buying raw materials, and also saving some money for his family gets difficult because of the low income from the *chitari* art. He now teaches his knowledge to young people through workshops, bringing back their passion for *Chitari* art. Ramesh's colorful

paintings celebrating Goa's creative chitari heritage can be found in his workshop, shops, temples, and private residences. He is dedicated to making sure *Chitari* art flourishes and leaves a beautiful and culturally proud legacy.

Case study four:

This family is a joint family comprising eight members. Out of which seven members are involved in the *chitari* work. They have been practicing this for hundreds of years, the tradition has passed down through generations. Unlike the previous families, they are determined to continue the tradition for as long as they can. They view *Chitari* art as an integral part of their culture and are committed to preserving it. To adapt to changing times, they have opened an art gallery where they sell other items like doors, Buddha Statues, Paintings, different wooden showpieces, and idols of Hindu gods, alongside *Chitari* art. They have also invested in new machines to improve efficiency and quality. They have employed labourers to help them.

Case study five:

There are five members in the family: Mr. and Mrs. *Chitari* their two children and their grandmother. Currently, only Mr. *Chitari* practices Chitari work. Also, Mrs. *Chitari* and his mother help him with painting. They are dedicated to continuing the tradition. They believe in preserving their cultural heritage through *Chitari* art and are exploring innovative strategies to ensure its sustainability. Although they want to continue the tradition, they are also facing challenges like financial issues. Govind *Chitari* said, 'With time, it becomes increasingly challenging. People are unwilling to purchase, and our kids are unwilling to study. It's also hard to find the wood. An art form such as this must be safeguarded or it will eventually vanish and be forgotten.' The intricate details of the labor that goes into this craft are what truly distinguish it. The artists begin by

obtaining the wood, cutting, shaping, and sandpapering it. The more skilled artists are then permitted to paint and engrave designs on the completed piece.

Picture 3.13: *Chitari* shop outside their house

Source: Researcher

Picture 3.14: Stall by *Chitari* on the highway
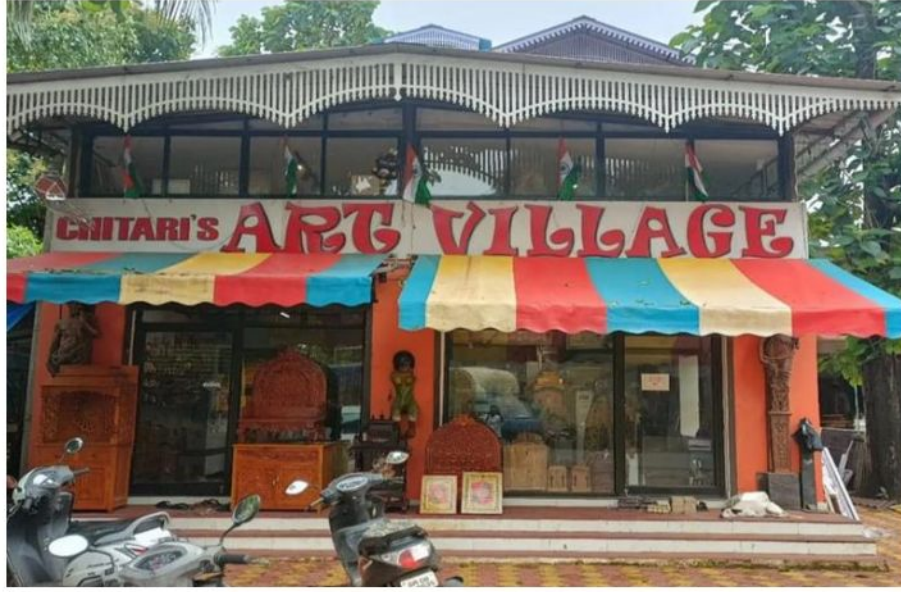
Source: Researcher

Picture 3.15: *Chitari* Art Gallery

Source: Researcher

Picture 3.16: *Chitari* house and workshop

Source: Researcher

Picture 3.17: *Chitari* art gallery and workshop

Source: Researcher

3.12 TRADITIONAL SONGS OF *CHITARI* COMMUNITY

These songs are *Chitari* community were sung during any family function and during festivals like Ganesh Chaturthi and *Shigmo* festival. However now the traditional songs are not sung. These songs are collected from elderly lady aged above 80 years, who used to reside in Demani, now she has migrated to Maharashtra. Following are the traditional *Chitari* songs.

Song 1

"Chitārīnchyā gāvāt, saṅgītāncha mēḷāv,

In the village of Chitari, where music blends,

Premācha raṅg ghēūna, ānandāt ubhaṅ zhālaṁ.

Hē gāvā chitārīnchyā, ānandācha dharāvaṁ,

Premācha raṅg ghēūna, saṅgītāncha   The village of the chitari people is

mēḷāv."   filled with happiness.

With the color of love, the environment   With the color of love, the music gets

is filled with happiness.   people together.

The song praises the essence of life in the *Chitari* community. It depicts the feeling of the village where music mixes to represent how people are connected and share experiences. The song's lyrics highlight the values of happiness and love and colorful depictions of life.

Song 2

"Chitārīnchyā gāvāt, nirmāṇ hotaṁ   In the village, trust is built among the

viśvās,   chitari people

Premācha raṅg ghēūna, chitracha   With the color of love, all chitari

saṁvās.   community people get together

Jīvanācha uddīpaka, chitārīnchyā   The motivator of life, among the

dhvaja,   chitari community, is their art

                                             Village of happiness, knowledge of lov

Ānandācha gāva, premācha jñāna."

This song celebrates the core values and beliefs within the *Chitari* community. It describes how faith love and art are important parts of the *Chitari* of life in the village of *Chitari*, emphasizing the importance of unity and harmony.

Song 3

"Chitarīṉcya gharat, uddaṇḍa
chitrakalecha dhuṇḍ,

In the house of chitari community,
there is rise of chitari creative art

Premācha raṅga ghēūna, ānandāca
jīvana sundara baṇḍ."

With the color of love, the life of
happiness is beautiful

This song says that, in the *chitari* household, the *chitari* art is everywhere and they celebrate the art with immense joy and pride. This song emphasizes how art and love bring color and joy to their existence.

CHAPTER IV:

SOCIO-CULTURAL PRACTICES OF *CHITARI* COMMUNITY

4.1 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL PRACTICES

Communities share certain behaviors, rituals, and traditions that we call sociocultural practices. Things like how we greet each other, celebrate important events, and live our everyday lives are examples. These customs help define who we are and connect us to our past. Communities are shaped and strengthened by the social and cultural things they do. For a community to develop a shared sense of identity, culture is important. It provides a foundation to understand where we come from and our shared experiences. Engaging in festivals, rituals, and customs helps people feel part of their community's past. Cultural practices promote unity by bringing people together. Participating in joint cultural events creates a sense of belonging and solidarity among community members. Members can understand each other because of shared language, symbols, and customs.

There is more evidence that culture affects people's daily lives and behaviors. Culture is part of our environment that humans created, and it impacts how our lives unfold. According to one person, culture includes all the non-biological behavior patterns in a society, such as art, social activities, religion, and strategies for managing the environment. The *Chitari* community follows several social and cultural traditions rooted in their historical and cultural beliefs.

4.1.1 Language

Language is really important because it allows people to communicate and understand each other. It's how we share thoughts, feelings, and knowledge. It would be hard to talk and make friends if we couldn't speak or understand each other. Language also helps us learn about history and culture because it passes stories and customs from one generation to the next. So, language plays a key role in our daily lives, whether it's for reading, learning, or talking with friends and family.

The native language of the *Chitari* community is Konkani, which is widely spoken in Goa. When talking at home, everyone used their native language. Interestingly, some people could also speak Kannada. This is because some *Chitaris* have family ties to Karnataka. But Konkani is still the most common language among *Chitaris*, although a few family members speak Kannada too. Mostly the older generation and some women in the *Chitari* households speak Konkani and Kannada.

4.1.2 Dressing

Our choice of clothing and personal style provides information about our identity, culture, and possible origins. Many people attach significance to their unique sense of style and talk about its social significance. A sari is worn by some *Chitari* women mostly the older generation. The sari is draped in the traditional Goan style, which involves pleating and tucking. Salwar Suits are also worn by some women. Women in the younger age dress in traditional and Western styles, such as Kurta, dresses, jeans, and tops. Daily, the males dress in long or short pants and shirts on certain occasions, they wear traditional kurtas and occasionally Western suits. The respondents explain that their kids wore a variety of outfits, from jeans and tops to short dresses, but only a

small percentage of them supported their kids' wearing of more contemporary attire like miniskirts and short dresses.

4.1.3 Food Habits

Another wonderful feature of each culture is its cuisine. Food types, variations, and specialties become symbols of culture and identity. Like many Goans, rice is a staple food in *Chitari* households. The *Chitari* people eat rice as a primary diet, usually paired with fish, which is available on the Goan coast. Many households in *Chitari* enjoy common meals like fried fish or fish curry. The wide use of coconut in a variety of forms is another characteristic of *Chitari* cuisine. Grated coconut is a common ingredient used in food to give it a unique flavor and texture. Fish curry with coconut milk and coconut *ladoos* are two examples of curries and desserts made with coconut. *Chitari* meals often consist of rice, fish, and a combination of vegetables. As some of their family members are from Karnataka one can see the influence of that in their food as well, for example, one might find dishes like bisi bele bath (a spicy rice dish) or ragi mudde (finger millet dumplings) on their menu. During the festivals of Navratri, Ganesh Chaturthi, local festivals, and Diwali, strictly pure vegetarian food is eaten.

4.2 LIFE CYCLE RITUALS

4.2.1 Rituals and ceremonies during birth

One of the birth ceremonies is called "*Baraso*,". It is conducted for a male or female newborn, on the twelfth day following the child's birth. One of the respondents shared that if this particular ritual is not held on the twelfth day of the newborn, then it is directly performed after completing one month, before that they cannot perform this particular ceremony. It is an occasion for celebrating the child that has arrived in the new world, bringing joy and happiness to the family. Traditional food is prepared, puja

takes place and the child is put in the special wooden cradle made by *chitaris*. There are differences seen while distributing sweets, i.e., distribution of 'Jalebi' if the newly born is a girl child and distribution of 'Peda' if it is a boy. The whole family along with relatives and neighbors sing and celebrate.

Traditional Songs sung during *Barso* (naming ceremony)

Song 1

"Palana sajavila sajavila phulani	Cradle decorated, decorated with flowers
Daar ani khidkya sajavilya toranani	Doors and windows are decorated with arches
Aaj ghari barasa, barasa ga rajacha	Today is naming ceremony of my prince at home
Tyala jholuvya milun saarya jani	let all the people swing him gently
Gaali tyachya khali, khali kashi padli	On his cheeks how did he even get the dimple
Majya sonyala geli satvayi hasvuni	Possibly an angel made him smile
Haathacha muthi ga, muthi ka mitlelya	Why is he grabbing his fists
Tyachya muthith ga Sonya chandichi nani"	Gold and silver coins are in it

The song paints a picture of celebration, love, and happiness in the traditional setting during the naming ceremony. The song talks about a scene during a naming ceremony where a person has decorated their home with flowers and hung a beautiful '*Torana*' (a decorative arch) at the door, then it says that today is the naming

ceremony of the prince. Let us all cradle him gently. God is showering his blessings on the newborn. People have gathered together, singing joyfully.

In the middle of this joyous atmosphere, there is talk about a girl who has blushed and smiled with happiness. Her cheeks have turned red, and she's smiling like the moon. There's a reference to holding hands, feeling the warmth and connection between them.

Song 2

"Bala jo jo re	baby you sleep
Krishna majha jo jo re	My Krishna you sleep
Aai babancha ladka jo jo re	Mom and Dad's beloved sleep
Kiti Sundar majha bal jo jo re"	How beautiful is my baby you slee

This song expresses admiration for a child, possibly addressing the child as "*Bala*" (meaning child) and "Krishna" (referring to the Hindu deity). The lyrics mention the child's parents' affection and emphasize the child's beauty by comparing them to the moon. Overall, it appears to be a celebration of the beauty and innocence of a child.

Picture 4.1: *Chitari* art Cradle, used during naming ceremony

Source: Respondent

4.2.2 The Marriage Ceremony

Marriage is a recognized relationship between a man and a woman that is governed by various laws, customs, and beliefs. It holds significant importance in society and is conducted worldwide. The marriage rituals vary depending on the location and religion. It is a universal social structure that exists in every society at every developmental level. According to Lowie, marriage is a permanent bond between permissible mates, and it is closely related to the family institution. The purpose of marriage is to achieve social, psychological, biological, and religious goals. Each marriage ceremony has unique customs and traditions, which vary throughout the world. Different states and religions have their customs for conducting marriage ceremonies. The *Chitari* community conducts both love and arranged marriages, although in the past arranged marriages

were more common. The *Chitari* community has different rituals and ceremonies for the wedding.

4.2.3 Uttar Ceremony

Before marriage in the *chitari* community, there is a ceremony that takes place that is "*Uttar*" (*tilak* ceremony) All the family members from the boy's side along with some neighbors go to the girl's place to perform this ceremony. For '*Uttar*' both families talk about marriage like they decide the wedding date and '*Muhoort*' refers to the auspicious time for the wedding. Once the date and time are fixed, then both families talk about their clan deity, the clan deity of *Chitari* is the goddess, *Mahalasa Narayani*. Then the tilak is applied to the groom and the bride. Following this, both families exchange gifts with family members such as aunt and uncle, the parents of the bride and groom, as well as their siblings. In the end, they also discuss the gold for the bride for the wedding, then sweets are distributed to the family members.

4.2.4 Haldi Ceremony

Before the wedding, there is a special ceremony called the Haldi ceremony. In this ritual, a paste made from turmeric, sandalwood, and other auspicious ingredients is applied to the bride and groom's skin to cleanse and purify them before the wedding day. Family members take turns applying the Haldi paste to the couple's face, hands, and feet while singing traditional songs and blessings for a happy and prosperous marriage. At the bride's house, the first ritual for Haldi is done by the *Mama* (mother's brother) by putting '*Chuddo*' which means the bride wears green glass bangles.

On the day of the Haldi in the morning a puja is performed by a priest, the bride/ groom along with their parents perform the puja. If they don't have their parents then any of their close relatives sits in the puja. The puja takes almost one hour and after

this, the Haldi is applied to the bride and groom. First, Haldi has to be applied to the groom and after that, the same Haldi which is applied to the groom is brought to the bride's house by some of the groom's family members. Once the Haldi is brought, it is applied to the bride. After this ritual is done, the bride and groom are made to sit in a square of threads decorated by mango leaves, and then the Mama (Mother's brother) puts water on them five times. After this, they take a bath and get ready. Afterward, all the relatives, neighbors, friends, and family members apply tilak for the bride and the groom and give gifts to all three of them. The following song is sung for this haldi ceremony

Ya go ya ami hald daluya	Let us go and mix the haldi
Halad daltana ami gane gauya	And while mixing the haldi let sing songs
Ami nachu gauya	And dance and sing
Ya go ya ami hald daluya	Everybody lets go and mix the haldi
Halad dalanacha maan aahe maushi cha	First Aunt (mother's sister) will mix haldi,
Gane gayacha maan aahe mamicha	Let us sing a song as Aunt (mother's sister-in-law) wants to sing
Ya go ya ami halad lauya	Let us go and mix the haldi
Chala go sakhano halad lauya	Everybody lets go and mix the haldi
Aatyabai ali rusun basali	Atyabai (father's sister) got upset and came
Manachi halad kaku ne lauli	Aunt (wife of the uncle) applied haldi on behalf of father's sister
Ya go sakhano halad lauya	Everybody let us go and put Haldi
Aayichya doni doulyat pani	Tears came in both eyes of the mother
Bhawandani lawali halad gali	All the cousins applied haldi on the cheeks

This song says that the rain has fallen and the drops have grown a small crop of haldi which is compared to a pearl. It is mentioned in the song that turmeric is brightening the face. It is believed that the haldi ceremony is performed to prevent evil spirits from harming the bride and groom. Haldis's bright yellow color is very auspicious. The song signifies the cleansing and purifying of the skin and body before their marriage. This song marks the beginning of the wedding ceremony. This song marks the beginning of the wedding ceremony.

4.2.5 Pre Marriage Ritual

On the day of the marriage in the morning, there is a ritual called '*Limb utarovap*' which means taking off the Najar (evil eyes) from the groom and the bride. This particular ritual is done by five women singing a song while performing the ritual, in this ritual, the groom and bride sit on the limb, a limb is a bamboo log, then the five women hold a cloth in front of them and starts singing and performing the ritual. After this one widow is called, she comes and breaks a coconut and applies that water on the eyes of the bride and the groom. Later on, the banana leaf things like jaggary, flowers, thread, and kajal. Sindhoor, coconut, and rice are kept, and these things are given to that widow. At the end of this ritual bride and groom take a bath and get ready for their marriage.

4.2.6 Marriage

Marriage is an important event in the *Chitari* community, marked by elaborate rituals and ceremonies. The bride and groom exchange vows in the presence of family and friends, with the blessings of elders. The ceremony in the *chitari* community typically includes traditional customs such as the exchange of garlands, and the tying of the sacred thread (*mangal sutra*), and the bride and groom take seven rounds of the sacred fire (*Agni*) and make seven promises. After all the rituals are done, the wedding

reception takes place. After the wedding ceremony, the bride goes to the groom's house. There is a 'Grihpravesh' ceremony that takes place where the bride is welcomed, in this ritual the bride has to take *Ukhana* before entering the house, *Ukhana* means a saying in which the groom's name should be mentioned by the bride. Once the bride performs this ritual, she has to keep her legs in the water of Sindhoor and enter the house. After this, both bride and groom take blessing of the God.

4.2.7 Changes in the Marriage Patterns

The dynamics of society also have an impact on social institutions like marriage. In the *Chitari* community in Goa, marriage ceremonies have undergone some changes over time. Traditionally, these ceremonies were deeply rooted in Hindu customs and rituals. However, with the influence of modernization and globalization, some aspects of the ceremonies have changed. One noticeable change is the way the ceremonies are conducted. While traditional customs are still respected and followed, there is a trend of change. This includes shorter ceremonies with fewer elaborate rituals, for example, some people prefer an intimate wedding with their loved ones. One of the respondents from the *chitari* community had a very intimate wedding.

There is a change in the process of mate selection. In the past, parents would typically choose a spouse, with little or no input from the girl. Due to several factors including growing female education, urbanization, and economic independence, adults of marriageable age make their own decisions regarding marriage. Before the marriage, girl and boy meet each other to understand each other's viewpoints. Also, there are changes in the dowry system over time in the *chitari* community. Earlier dowry was a compulsion but in today's society, it is not compulsory.

Another change observed in *Chitari* marriage ceremonies is the introduction of separate mehendi and Sangeet functions. In the past, these events were not typically part of *Chitari* wedding customs. However, influenced by trends from other cultures and regions, some families have begun incorporating these celebrations into their wedding festivities. The mehendi function involves applying henna design to the bride's hands and feet, while the Sangeet is an event filled with music, dance, and performances by family and friends. It's important to note that while these changes are becoming more common, not all families within the *Chitari* community choose to adopt them. Some families prefer traditional customs and ceremonies, while others embrace the opportunity to incorporate new elements into their celebrations.

4.2.8 Death Rituals and Ceremonies

On the day of the death of the person, after washing the body with holy water, the deceased's toes are tied together and their palms are raised in a position of prayer. The body remains at home until cremation, which occurs within 24 hours. On the cremation day, an arrangement of wood is made by people where the deceased body is kept and carried to the place where the further rituals of the deceased body take place. If the deceased had been a married woman whose husband was alive, she was bathed, put 'Sindoor' for forehead, and was made ready as a married bride. Friends and family gather to offer sympathy. Once the cremation is done, the whole house is cleaned and holy water is sprinkled in the entire house. For the next three days, the family of the deceased has to eat only '*Pez*' (cooked rice along with the water). On the third day, the '*Asthi*' that is the ashes of the dead are collected. For some days garlic, onion, and spices are not used in cooking and very simple food is eaten for eleven days. Till the twelfth day, they follow '*Sutaka*' which means they cannot light Diya in front of God, and they cannot practice any religious ritual till the twelfth day.

4.2.9 Eleven Day Ritual

On the eleventh day some family members, mostly male members go to Harvalem temple in Sanquelim, North Goa, which is a Lord *Rudreshwar* temple, to immerse the '*Asthi*' (ashes of the dead) of the deceased in the water. The ashes are taken in a *Kalash*. The ashes of the dead have to be taken directly from the house to Harvalem. They should not stop on the way as it is considered as inauspicious. The *Chitari* community takes the *Asthi* to Harvalem because there is a place where four rivers meet together. It is believed that the *Asthi* should be immersed in the water where four rivers meet. The ritual is done by the priest, he prepares three rice balls and does a puja. After the puja, the person who lit the pyre immerses the *Asthi* (ash) in the water and after this, the person takes a dip in the river.

Then the rice is kept for the crows to come and eat, it has to be eaten by a crow. It is believed that if the crow does not eat the rice, then the puja has not been successful and the dead person is not happy and in peace. After offering the rice to the crow and once the crow eats that, the person again takes a dip in the river. The offerings are only made to a crow. It is believed that the dead person comes in the form of a crow. Once all the rituals are done, they come back, and once they come another puja is held in the house, this puja is called eleven days *Hawan* or Homa, it refers to a ritual wherein offerings of rumda sticks (rumda is a tree), are made into a consecrated fire. After the completion of the rituals, holy water prepared from mixing honey, milk, and cow urine is sprinkled in the entire house. This is done to remove the impurities from the house. There are notions of pollution associated with the dead which are purified by the ritual of sprinkling holy water.

4.2.10 Twelfth Day Ritual

On the twelfth day, all kinds of good food is prepared from Vegetarian to non-vegetarian for example vegetable curry, fish curry, fried fish, chicken, sweet, and so on. All the family members come in the remembrance of the deceased. On this day one person is invited for lunch on behalf of the deceased person. It could be a male or a female to give offerings like fruits, coconut and clothes, on the remembrance of the deceased, ensuring comfort in their afterlife. Before the offerings are made some food is kept outside the house for the crow. It, is believed the deceased person comes in the form of crow. After this ritual all the family members and the person have food.

All the remaining food has to be thrown out of the house before sunset, as the food is specially prepared for the twelfth day ritual to offer in the name of the deceased and once the ritual is done the family members cannot consume the food for the dinner as this has been followed by their ancestors, it is a ritual which is there among the *chitari* community. After the lunch, all the family members give gifts to the person who is called to take the offerings in the name of the deceased, mostly these gifts include clothes and money. At the end of the day after all the rituals, holy water is sprinkled all over the house. After the twelfth day on the thirteenth day, they light Diya in front of God.

4.3 RELIGIOUS RITUALS AND FESTIVALS

Festive occasions, rituals, and social customs are daily activities that shape the lives of communities. They are essential because, whether they are done in public or privately, they are strongly associated with noteworthy events and serve to reinforce the identity of those who practice them as a community or society. Even though not everyone engages in them, social practices influence daily life and are known to all community

members. Social practices, rituals, and celebrations heavily rely on community participation. These traditions are especially impacted by processes like migration, individualization, the widespread of formal education, and globalization.

The *Chitari* community celebrate festivals like Ganesh Chaturthi, during this time their art is in full demand as the Hindu household needs chitari art and artifacts during Ganesh Chaturthi. During this festival, all the *chitari* members come together and celebrate it. Diwali is also celebrated by them. Another festival is Gudi Padwa (the new year of Hindus). Other festivals like Gulal (Holi), Raksha Bandhan, Makar Sankranti, and other are also celebrated by the *chitaris*.

4.3.1 Role of *Chitari* Art in *Sotreo* festival of Cuncolim

During the *Sotreo* of Cuncolim festival, twelve *Vangods*, also known as "*Ganvkar*," walk and dance while carrying *Sotreo* meaning umbrellas. They are created especially for this event and are kept within the temple's virtual storefront. They have vibrant decorations and are fairly large, measuring almost seven feet in length. As the procession moves toward its annual destination, participants throw vermillion powder at one another. The fourth day of the Holi festival marks the Satryo procession. Exactly twelve residents, claiming ancestral ties to the ancient twelve shareholders, participate in a palanquin carrying the figure of the Shantadurga on this day, which begins at the temple in Fatorpa. The musicians play instruments while they dance.

Following the traditional route, the procession arrives at the old location of the *Shantadurga* temple in Cuncolim, approximately 4 kilometers away from the current temple in Fatorpa. On the way, people greet the goddess with offerings like flowers, coconut, and saree. Some people offer gold, near the village shrines and chapels. Then in a place called Talay Bhat procession stops for a while and there is a platform that

surrounds a tree, the locals both Hindus and Christians offer bananas, coconuts, and betel leaves as offerings throughout the procession. These items are auctioned afterward. The goddess gets many offerings that is the reason they auction some of these offerings and anyone can bid the auction.

The *Chitari* community from Cuncolim plays a significant role in the *Sotreo* or Umbrella Festival of Cuncolim. They are traditionally responsible for creating and decorating the beautiful umbrellas that are central to the festival. The colorful decoration and designs of these umbrellas showcase the *Chitari* community's artistic skill and cultural legacy. They paint red color on the wooden log or pillar of the umbrella which is seven feet tall. The designs on wooden pillars vary every year like flowers or basic drawings depending on the *chitari* artist. The umbrellas are prepared and painted in the temple premises. The *chitari* artists buy the raw materials required for the preparation of the umbrellas. They start the work almost two weeks before the festival. Only one *Chitari* family is responsible for preparing the umbrella, as earlier the ancestors of this family had got the contract of making the *sotreo* by the temple committee and since then only this family has made the *sotreo* from the temple committee and since then only this family is making the *sotreo*. They participate in the procession but do not carry the *satryo* as they do not belong to the *Vangods*. However, during the satryo procession when it reaches at Demani *Chitaris* offer flowers and coconut to the Goddess *Shantadurga*, and they also perform the aarti.

Picture 4.2: *Sotreo* festival of Cuncolim

Source: Researcher

Picture 4.3: Wooden pillars of *sotreo* painted by *chitari*

source: Respondent

Picture 4.4: Upper part of *sotreo*

Source: Respondent

Picture 4.5: *Sotreo*

Source: Respondent

Picture 4.6: *Chitari* artisan decorating the *sotreo*

Source: Respondent

4.4 DAILY RITUALS AND PRACTICES

Every day the morning of the *chitari* people starts with their morning prayers. First, they take a shower and then light Diya (lamp) in front of their God. After this, they put water for the Tulsi plant, which is considered to be very auspicious among Hindus. After all the morning rituals they start their work. They also do not wear footwear in their houses as they believe it brings negative energy into the house and also in their workplace where they paint chitari art. In the evening around 7 o'clock, they do the evening Puja (prayer) after the prayer they again light a Diya (lamp) in front of the Tulsi plant this evening puja is mostly done by the women of the house, and the morning Puja is done by the male member of the *chitari*. It has been done like this since earlier, but now in some *chitari* houses both the morning and evening Puja are done by both males and females. They have very strong religious beliefs.

Another interesting ritual is, on Wednesday or Sunday, the male member of the family offers a *"Vido"* (which means two bananas, one betel nut, and flowers, betel leaf) to the *Rakhandar* or *Rakhno* (the village protector) at the main entrance of the Village. Some people also offer liquor, bread, or dry fish and blankets to him. They practice this particular ritual because they feel that the *Rakhandar* is always protecting them.

CHAPTER V:

CONCLUSION

The *Chitari* community is a remarkable example of the diversity and depth of Goan Hindu traditions because of its sociocultural customs. The *Chitari* people represent customs and beliefs that define their identity and history, from language to attire, food choices to life cycle rituals, and religious rites to everyday activities. Families of *Chitari* are essential to the preservation and transmission of these customs from one generation to the next. They preserve their ancestors' cultural heritage via language, customs, and celebrations, which strengthens the ties that bind family and community. Furthermore, their artistic abilities are highly valued contributions to the Hindu cultural expression in Goa, especially in crafts like ceremonial umbrella production and *Chitari* art. The *Chitari* families play a significant role in contributing to the Hindu community in Goa through their rich tradition of craftsmanship and art.

The *Chitari* people are very important in the Hindu communities in Goa. They make special things like *paat* and *latphale*, which are wooden items. These items are used in a tradition called *vjom*, which is given to every Hindu bride when she gets married. This tradition is very important in Hindu weddings. Additionally, during festivals like Ganesh Chaturthi, Hindu families need many products made by *Chitari* artisans, example the *paat*, wooden fruits, and *matoli*. These items are important for decorating and worshipping during the festival. As the *Chitari* community makes these special items that are needed for important events like weddings and festivals, they are considered as important people for other Hindu communities in Goa.

Despite the invaluable contributions of the *Chitari* families to the culture of Goa, there has been a noticeable decline in the preservation and practice of their

traditional art forms. The *Chitari* community's traditional art and crafts are at decline for several reasons. One significant factor is the changing preferences of people. Nowadays, many individuals prefer modern items over traditional wooden ones like those made by the *Chitari* community. This shift in preference has led to a decrease in demand for *Chitari* products, affecting their livelihoods.

Moreover, the younger generation is not continuing the *Chitari* art form. Many young people are not interested in learning the skills needed to create these traditional items, which has led to the decline of the *chitari* art. The knowledge and expertise of *Chitari* artisans are not being passed down to future generations which results in the decline of the chitari art. The lack of government support also poses the challenges faced by the *Chitari* community. Without adequate financial assistance or resources, *Chitari* artisans struggle to sustain their craft and livelihood. This lack of support further contributes to the decline of the tradition.

The fading of Chitari art is a concern as it poses a threat to the cultural heritage it embodies. Therefore, it is necessary to take proactive measures towards the protection and promotion of this age-old craft form. Ensuring the survival of Chitari art for upcoming generations is crucial. Financial assistance, raising awareness about the cultural value of Chitari art, and encouraging partnerships between artists, museums, and galleries are some effective ways to support the revival of this art form. Workshops, exhibitions, and training programs can also be funded to preserve Chitari art. The chitari community is eager to share their knowledge and skills with everyone.

In conclusion, the *Chitari* families hold a special place in the cultural heritage of Goa, with their artistic expressions serving as evidence to the rich traditions and

craftsmanship of the region. It is crucial to preserve and promote Chitari art despite the obstacles that threaten the survival of their ancient artistic traditions. By recognizing and supporting the efforts of *Chitari* artisans, we can ensure that this unique art form continues to flourish and improve the culture of Goa, for the upcoming generations. This qualitative research is one such attempt that has documented the chitari art and its relevance to the people of Goa.

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GLOSSARY

Asthi	Ashes of the dead
Advoli	Wooden cutting board used, on which a person can sit and cut vegetables or fish and grate coconut
Baraso	Naming ceremony
Chitra	Painting
Chitrakars	Painters
Chitrashala	Painting Workshop
Devare	A wooden temple for the house
Dik	Gum
Diya	Lamp
Kuldevi	Clan deity
Latfale	Wooden item, used for making *Chapati*
Limb	Bamboo lag used for a pre wedding ritual
Lok	People
Mangal sutra	Holy thread worn by the bride during the wedding
Matoli	Wooden Canopy, used during Ganesh Chaturthi
Muhoort	Auspicious time
Nakashi	Carved
Paat	Wooden plank used to sit on the floor
Pez	Rice cooked with water

Patha	Cloth
Rathas	Chariot
Rakhno or *Rakhandar*	Protector of the village
Shigmo	Festival during which people sing traditional songs, dance, and worship
Sutaka	Days where mourning is kept for twelve days after a person is dead
Toranga	Flag types used during the *shigmo* festival
Tabul phale	Wooden chess game
Uttar	A ceremony which is held to decide the time and date for the wedding
Vojem	A basket filled with different items like clothes, sweets, fruits, and wooden items. This is gifted to the bride by the family after the wedding
Vido	Vido is a kind of offering which contains items like bananas, flowers, and kajal, which is kept on betel leaf, and along with it people light a *diya*, which is kept on the entrance of the village for the *Rakhno* (village protector)
Zatra	Fair of the Hindu deity