

## **Enhancing Socio-Economic and Cultural Sustainability of Warli Tribal Communities through Art, Tourism, and Entrepreneurship**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This research delves into how the Warli tribal people of Palghar, Maharashtra, can tap into its indigenous art, culture, and ecological knowledge to promote sustainable socio-economic growth. Warli painting derived from ritual and everyday life has moved beyond its original setting to emerge as a potential socio-economic booster of rural livelihood, tourism, and enterprise. Although globally acclaimed, the Warli community remains socially and economically marginalized, has limited infrastructure, and is vulnerable to cultural commodification. The study, through qualitative field research in the form of semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and participant ethnographic immersion, captures lived experiences of Warli artisans, women, and youth focusing on challenges and opportunities both for cultural preservation and income generation.*

*The results indicate that art, tourism, and entrepreneurship are an interconnected system: Warli art gives the livelihood base, community-based tourism raises visibility and earning, and entrepreneurship guarantees long-term sustainability through training, collective marketing, and innovation. Women become key custodians of tradition but are structurally disadvantaged in leadership and market access, highlighting the imperative of gender-inclusive interventions. Proposed solutions are cooperative tourism models, GI tagging, capacity-building hubs, and digital platforms to strike a balance between authenticity and innovation.*

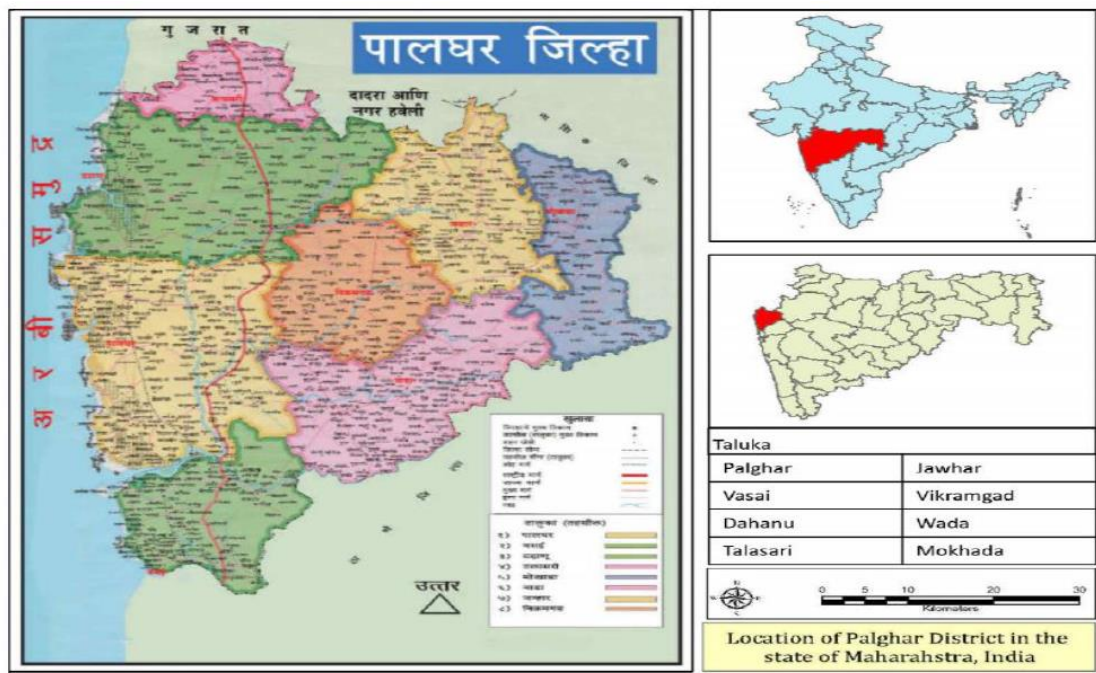
*By combining economic empowerment with cultural preservation, the research places Warli art as a living legacy rather than a visual tradition and locates it as a viable resource for sustainable development. It adds to larger discussions of indigenous development, demonstrating how local agency, participatory governance, and cultural sovereignty can make marginalized groups active stakeholders in India's rural transformation.*

**Keywords:** Warli Art, Cultural sustainability, Tribal livelihoods, Rural entrepreneurship, Community tourism, Tribal art

### 1. Introduction

The Warli, one of Maharashtra’s most iconic tribal communities, embody a tradition where art is more than visual expression it is a living archive of their social, ecological, and spiritual worldview. Their paintings, made of simple geometric forms, capture the rhythm of everyday life, rituals, and relationships with nature, turning walls into narratives that connect generations. In recent decades, however, this cultural practice has begun to transcend its ritualistic setting to become an emerging pathway for livelihood, tourism, and rural entrepreneurship. This shift reflects not only the resilience of the community but also the growing recognition of indigenous art as a catalyst for sustainable development.

Figure 1: Palghar district Map<sup>1</sup>



The Warli tribal community, native to the North Sahyadri Range in Maharashtra’s Palghar district, is the custodian of one of India’s most iconic indigenous art forms Warli Painting<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Government of Maharashtra, District Palghar. (2025, August 14). *Map of Palghar district*. District Palghar, National Informatics Centre, Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Government of India. Retrieved from <https://palghar.gov.in/en/map-of-district/>

Originating in Maharashtra, Warli painting is a style of tribal art mostly created by the tribal people from the North Sahyadri Range in Maharashtra, India, encompassing cities such as Dahanu, Talasari, Jawhar, Palghar, Mokhada, and Vikramgad<sup>3</sup> of Palghar district. According to Yashodhara Dalmia, the tradition of Warli painting can be traced back as far as 2,500–3,000 BCE, based on its stylistic resemblance to prehistoric cave paintings (Dalmia, *The Painted World of the Warlis*). While mural and floor paintings were historically created to decorate homes and mark rituals, a major transformation occurred in the early 1970s when Jivya Soma Mashe began painting beyond ritual contexts. As documented by Sahapedia and the MAP Academy Encyclopedia of Art, Mashe pioneered the practice of transferring Warli art onto paper and canvas, which brought it national and international recognition and marked its entry into the sphere of contemporary art.

This art form is more than a visual expression; it is a narrative of daily life, spiritual beliefs<sup>4</sup>, and ecological consciousness, told through simple yet rudimentary wall paintings using a very basic graphic vocabulary. Much like the Aboriginal<sup>5</sup> rock painting of Australia, Warli art uses basic symbols: a circle, a triangle, and a square. The circle and triangle come from their observation of nature, the circle representing the sun and the moon, the triangle derived from mountains and pointed trees.

The Warli people, renowned for their iconic tribal painting tradition, embody a rich cultural heritage that reflects their deep connection with nature and community life. Despite its widespread fame<sup>1</sup>, the tribe continues to remain deeply excluded and deprived, grappling with massive socio-economic challenges. Subsistence agriculture and seasonal labor are the primary source of income for most families, who often face challenges such as low literacy, limited access to markets and small land holdings. Even as modernity progresses, the Warli community faces cultural erosion, with emerging livelihood strategies diminishing opportunities to practice

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<sup>2</sup> UNDP. (2022). *Reviving the Warli Art Form: A livelihood and cultural revival initiative*. United Nations Development Programme. <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-09/Reviving%20the%20Warli%20Art%20Form%20Report.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Shinde, D., & Patil, R. (2023). *An ethnographic research among Warli tribe and Warli artisans of Maharashtra*. Academia.edu. <https://www.academia.edu/83052740>

<sup>4</sup> VIVA IMR. (2022). *Cultural and economic potential of Warli art in Palghar: A rural tourism perspective*. [https://vivaimr.org/pdf/Archives\\_research/Paper2\\_Grishma-9-22.pdf](https://vivaimr.org/pdf/Archives_research/Paper2_Grishma-9-22.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Kadale, S., Patil, B., & Jadhav, V. (2016). *A study of socio-economic profile of Warli tribal farmers*. ResearchGate. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312067327>

their traditions, while younger generations increasingly migrate to cities in search of employment.

This research aims to explore the cultural value and significance of Warli art as a means of promoting sustainable development initiatives within Warli communities, while seeking to develop an integrated framework that connects art preservation, community-based tourism, and entrepreneurship. The study is geographically focused on Dahanu Taluka in Palghar, which is densely populated by the Warli tribe and has served as the research area for this study. It attempts to propose practicable strategies that are economically viable, culturally respectful, and environmentally sustainable.

## **2. Literature Review**

Cultural heritage preservation coupled with an increase in livelihood choices and approaches toward equal rights to have a direct impact on the sustenance of the tribals. A wide array of pioneering research and field experimentation is forging a growing agreement among academics and field practitioners. Indigenous knowledge systems especially native art such as Warli painting, which is seen as a prime transformative medium can positively impact tribal settlements by fostering community empowerment and socio-economic resilience.

### **2.1 Warli Art and Cultural Sustainability**

Warli art is not simply an exercise in decoration or aesthetics, says Patil (2023). It is a "living cultural tradition" that reflects "spiritual belief, ecological wisdom and collective memory" that the Warli people have participated in for thousands of years. For Shinde and Patil<sup>6</sup>, a Warli painting is part of the process of making Warli paintings, the cycle of life that includes working in agriculture, religious ceremonies and social arrangements. This body art represents the conventions of how tradition is maintained and transferred to future generations and how it is read culturally. It is not just art; it is a cultural narrative and a way in which cultural identity is created<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Patil, R. (2023). *Preservation of cultural identity through tribal art*. VIVA IMR Research Journal. [https://vivaimr.org/pdf/Archives\\_research/Paper2\\_Grishma-9-22.pdf](https://vivaimr.org/pdf/Archives_research/Paper2_Grishma-9-22.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Shinde, D., & Patil, R. (2023). *An ethnographic research among Warli tribe and Warli artisans of Maharashtra*. Academia.edu. <https://www.academia.edu/83052740>

**Figure 2: Warli Art by Nikita Mundekar, an emerging artist whose work blends detail with storytelling, capturing the essence of human experience and inviting viewers into a journey of introspection and discovery.**



However, the situation poses a paradox. While the growing market interest in Warli art offers economic possibilities, it can also convert this practice into a sacred culture of commerce, says UNDP (2022). To prevent the adverse effects of this tension, scholars propose that models which maintain artistic authenticity can still embrace interpretation. This can take the form of exhibitions of selected works, education programs, or the creation of a community eco-museum integrated with the authorship and power of Warli. Scholars such as Jyotindra Jain, an eminent art and cultural historian of Indian folk traditions, Stella Kramrisch, who emphasized the symbolic depth of Indian art, and Arjun Appadurai, who has written extensively on cultural flows and authenticity, have all underscored the importance of safeguarding indigenous traditions while engaging with contemporary platforms.

## **2.2 Tribal entrepreneurship and Livelihoods**

The majority of the Warli households are dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods, which is highly precarious due to the monsoon-dependent nature of agriculture, the small size of lands cultivated by Warli households, and due to a lack of access to institutional support (Kadale et al., 2016)<sup>8</sup>. However, over the last decade or so, in addition to being dependent on agriculture, the

<sup>8</sup> Kadale, S., Patil, B., & Jadhav, V. (2016). *A study of socio-economic profile of Warli tribal farmers*. ResearchGate. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312067327>

tribal artisans, especially women, are now being promoted for micro-enterprise development by various targeted initiatives, including Project Udyam (NITI Aayog, 2023)<sup>9</sup>. These initiatives envisage converting their traditional skills into sustainable sources of income generation through entrepreneurship training, digital marketing, and collective branding.

The implementation, however, remains uneven and constrained due to limited awareness, cultural hesitancy and policy fragmentation among others. “Tribal communities are driven by reverence for nature that overlaps with SDG (Sustainable Development Goals focusing on conservation of environment, life on land and climate action) values and practices. Customized capacity building programs anchored in socio – cultural dynamics of Warli tribes is the need of the hour.” (Kulkarni, 2019)<sup>10</sup>. The paper echoes the precision on the involvement of Warli women which will achieve the intended objective due to their roles as the primary bearer and transmitter of the art form. The Warlis are essentially matrilineal and hence achieving holistic development would encompass empowerment of the woman through inclusive decision-making and economic leadership for inclusive decision making.

### **2.3 Community-based and rural tourism**

Community-based and rural tourism are ways of generating Tourism in the Warli heartlands of Palghar, such as Dahanu and Jawhar, which are blessed with natural beauty and rich tribal heritage. Mr. Rane (2022)<sup>11</sup> highlighted that root-level-based community participation in developing Tourism can be a boon for both economically & culturally. In the recent past, initiatives such as tribal Community-based and rural tourism emerged as ways of generating tourism in the Warli heartlands of Palghar, such as Dahanu and Jawhar, which are blessed with natural beauty and rich tribal heritage. Community-based tourism emphasizes active participation and ownership by local residents, ensuring that the benefits of tourism flow directly into the community. Mr. Rane (2022) highlighted that root-level community participation in developing tourism can be a boon both economically and culturally. In the recent past, initiatives

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<sup>9</sup> NITI Aayog. (2023). *Enhancing the income of tribal households through Project Udyam*. Aspirational Districts Programme. <https://abp.championsofchange.gov.in/content/1499enhancing-the-income-of-tribal-households-through-project-uddyam>

<sup>10</sup> Kulkarni, Y. (2019). *Business economics: Special focus on tribal entrepreneurship and economic planning*. SDSM College. [https://sdsmcollege.in/web\\_admin/upload/naac/11-1%202019%20Yogesh%20Kulkarni%20Business%20Economics.pdf](https://sdsmcollege.in/web_admin/upload/naac/11-1%202019%20Yogesh%20Kulkarni%20Business%20Economics.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Rane, A. (2022). *Feasibility of development of rural tourism in Palghar district, Maharashtra*. ResearchGate. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361458776\\_FEASIBILITY\\_OF\\_DEVELOPMENT\\_OF\\_RURAL\\_TOURISM\\_IN\\_PALGHAR\\_DISTRICT\\_MAHARASHTRA](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361458776_FEASIBILITY_OF_DEVELOPMENT_OF_RURAL_TOURISM_IN_PALGHAR_DISTRICT_MAHARASHTRA)

such as tribal homestays and guided art tours have shown promising results. However, issues such as poor road conditions, lack of sanitation, and inadequate digital connectivity continue to hinder tourism development in these regions.

The VIVA IMR (2022)<sup>12</sup> report highlights the role that youth and women can play in tourism and how capacity building and training of the youth and women to fulfill the roles in the different parts of tourism, such as hospitality, guiding, and even cultural programming. The UNDP (2022) also talks about integrating storytelling, dance, and Warli art with tourism, which not only gives the visitors a chance to explore how the people live in the community but also, in a way, integrates them into the community, creating an immersive engagement.

### **3. Research Questions**

The research aims to examine the following:

1. How does economic empowerment through Warli art relate to the cultural authenticity of the Warli community?
  - a. Objective: To analyze the relationship between income generation from Warli art and the preservation of cultural authenticity.
2. What are the key challenges and opportunities for promoting community-based tourism in the Warli-inhabited regions of Palghar?
  - a. Objective: To identify challenges such as infrastructure gaps and marketing limitations, and opportunities like festivals, workshops, and homestay tourism.
3. What is the role of entrepreneurship training, policy support, and local cultural initiatives in creating sustainable livelihood opportunities for the Warli community?
  - a. Objective: To examine how skill development, supportive policies, and grassroots initiatives can create sustainable livelihoods while preserving cultural heritage.

This study is confined to the Warli community in Palghar district of Maharashtra and examines in detail the interface between tribal art, grassroots entrepreneurship, and rural tourism. Beyond its specific focus, the research contributes to existing literature by foregrounding how indigenous art can serve not only as a cultural resource but also as an economic driver within sustainable development frameworks. It extends scholarly debates by integrating art preservation,

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<sup>12</sup> VIVA IMR. (2022). *Cultural and economic potential of Warli art in Palghar*. [https://vivaimr.org/pdf/Archives\\_research/Paper2\\_Grishma-9-22.pdf](https://vivaimr.org/pdf/Archives_research/Paper2_Grishma-9-22.pdf)

entrepreneurship, and tourism into a single analytical framework, offering insights into how cultural practices can be mobilized for both livelihood generation and heritage conservation.

#### **4. Research Framework**

This research was carried out specifically through art, tourism, and entrepreneurial activities to explore sustainable models for the development of the Warli Tribe Community. The study adopted a qualitative and participatory approach, prioritizing to human values, and providing the community members with the opportunity to voice their perspectives and share their lived realities. The methodology is inclusive, respectful, and action-oriented, aiming to generate collective awareness and engagement within the community in the areas under study.

The research is exploratory in nature and seeks to identify the opportunities and challenges which the Warli art and associated tourism offers for the livelihood generation to the Warli community. To achieve the research objectives, the study has used an ethnographic and case study-based research design, as the study requires in-depth understanding of the Warli community and their cultural practices, economic conditions and livelihood experiences.

This study will introduce several interdisciplinary frameworks to understand the totality of intra-active dynamics between art-economy-cultural preservation:

1. Cultural Economy Theory (Throsby, 2001)<sup>13</sup>, which conceptualizes cultural expressions like Warli art as both heritage and as an economic resource.
2. Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG, 2015)<sup>14</sup> particularly SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production etc.
3. Participatory Tourism Models which emphasize community led planning, equitable benefit-sharing, sensitivity etc.

While existing literature sheds light on individual aspects of Warli art promotion, livelihood enhancement, and rural tourism<sup>15</sup>, there remains a clear gap in integrated models that holistically

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<sup>13</sup> Throsby, D. (2001). *Economics and Culture*. Cambridge University Press.

<sup>14</sup> United Nations. (2015). *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

<sup>15</sup> Scheyvens, R. (1999). *Ecotourism and the empowerment of local communities*. *Tourism Management*, 20(2), 245–249. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177\(98\)00069-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177(98)00069-7)

address all three dimensions. Notably, few studies prioritize community narratives, especially those of women, or apply ethnographic methods to assess long-term cultural and economic impact. This research seeks to fill these gaps by conducting immersive fieldwork and proposing development frameworks that are both contextually grounded and community informed.

## **5. Data Collection Methods & Ethical Considerations**

The research was conducted in the Dahanu Taluka in Palghar district of Maharashtra, which has a high Warli population. The main stakeholder for this study includes Warli artisans (practicing traditional and commercial), community elders and *panchs* of different villages, women involved in art production and product generating activities, youth involved in tourism and entrepreneurship, government officials, NGO workers, people running other projects like Project Udyam.

The research conducted on Warlis seeks to explore sustainable models for community development through art, tourism, and entrepreneurship. It highlights how these domains, when integrated, can generate livelihood opportunities while preserving cultural heritage. By positioning Warli art not merely as a traditional practice but as a dynamic resource for economic and social empowerment, the study demonstrates its potential to contribute to broader debates on rural transformation and indigenous development.

A variety of research tools were used to collect primary data. Semi-structured interviews were conducted among 30 respondents to collect demographic, economic, social and cultural information about the villages of Dahanu. The themes discussed in the interviews were cultural practices, income generation, perception of tourism, gender role and institution support. These interviews provided rich, personal accounts about their life, challenges and hopes for the future.

The study also conducted focus group discussions (FGDs) among women artisans, youth, and local tourism volunteers. Through discussions, respondents were able to share their experiences collectively. This helped explore the collective needs of the community, extending beyond individual subjectivities.

Living within the villages for 10 to 12 days created further opportunities to observe everyday life as it unfolded. Festivals, artistic practices, market exchanges, and small-scale tourism interactions were experienced alongside the community and culture. This immersion offered experiences that extended beyond verbal expression.

In addition to field research, this study also engaged in secondary analysis of the data received through documents, both official and unofficial. Some of the reading included relevant policy papers, reports from non-governmental organizations, relevant research done by other people,

and UNDP and VIVA IMR. These sources helped to contextualize the narratives with a much wider institutional and developmental framework, allowing for the identification of possible areas of development and enhancement, as well as areas of excellence.

Finally, with the community's approval, documentation was collected in the form of photographs, oral histories, and storytelling sessions. These materials aided in improving the research in addition to conserving the intangible heritage for the next generation by being able to preserve its proper form either digitally or through a museum.

This research has been undertaken adhering to the ethical principles that respect the dignity, privacy, and typical community of Warli. Throughout this study, the core value of ethical responsibility was upheld. All participants were made aware of the objective and potential outcome of the research and participation is voluntary. No activity entailed the exploitation of personal or indigenous knowledge and cultural values. If a participant requested anonymity, their personal data, such as gender or occupation, was kept anonymous or hidden. As a result of the principle of reciprocity, community level participants were provided with feedback of the research through various means which were easily comprehensible. Most importantly, providing the community with feedback proves our commitment toward building local capacity and supporting home-grown initiatives through this work.

The qualitative data was coded into themes in accordance with the principles of grounded theory, and not through any predetermined questions, or instrument. These themes were extracted from narrative accounts given by the participants themselves, and in alignment with the research questions. Major domains of inquiry for the analysis were: the relationship between cultural practice and economic agency; community perception of tourism and entrepreneurship; gender in relation to livelihood and cultural transmission; and institutional support and policy frameworks. The driver of the research was participant voices to capture the "lived" experiences of the Warli, as an antithesis to prescribed solutions for Warli people in developing areas such as regional development policies or tourism planning or cultural preservation.

## **6. Research Findings**

The findings of this study have been categorized in terms of both quantitative and qualitative insights and presented below. To ensure the study retains its grounded approach, the findings of the study have been contextualized against the community's existential reality.

### **6.1 Profile of Respondents**

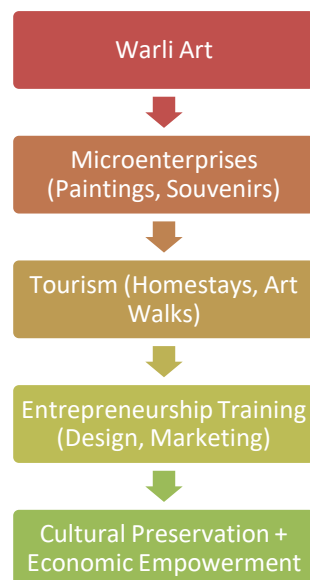
The study included 14 respondents aged 17 to 56 years, representing both Warli and non-Warli communities across villages including Vavji, Gholwad, Dahanu, Brahmangao, Bahare, Ganjad,

Talasari, and Bapugaon. Education levels ranged from primary schooling (7th–10th) to postgraduate and college degrees (FYBCA, BA, BSW, Graduation, TYBSC, SYBSC). Younger respondents were mainly students, while older participants were engaged in agriculture, Warli painting, bamboo art, skill development training, or hospitality-related work. Gender representation was balanced, with active participation from both male and female respondents.

### 6.2 Economic Dimensions: Art and Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Livelihoods

Empowerment as an economic dimension is fundamental for making the Warli tribal people's livelihood sustainable, as these indigenous people depend on agriculture, daily wage labor, and traditional crafts for livelihood. However, these livelihood opportunities are generally insecure because of their seasonal nature. Therefore, creating livelihood options based on art industries such as micro-enterprises and entrepreneurship offers a sustainable way to enable the Warli tribal community to improve their socio status in the long term.

**Figure 3. Warli Livelihood Ecosystem Flow.**



Author's own illustration, based on field data and secondary sources (2025)<sup>16</sup>

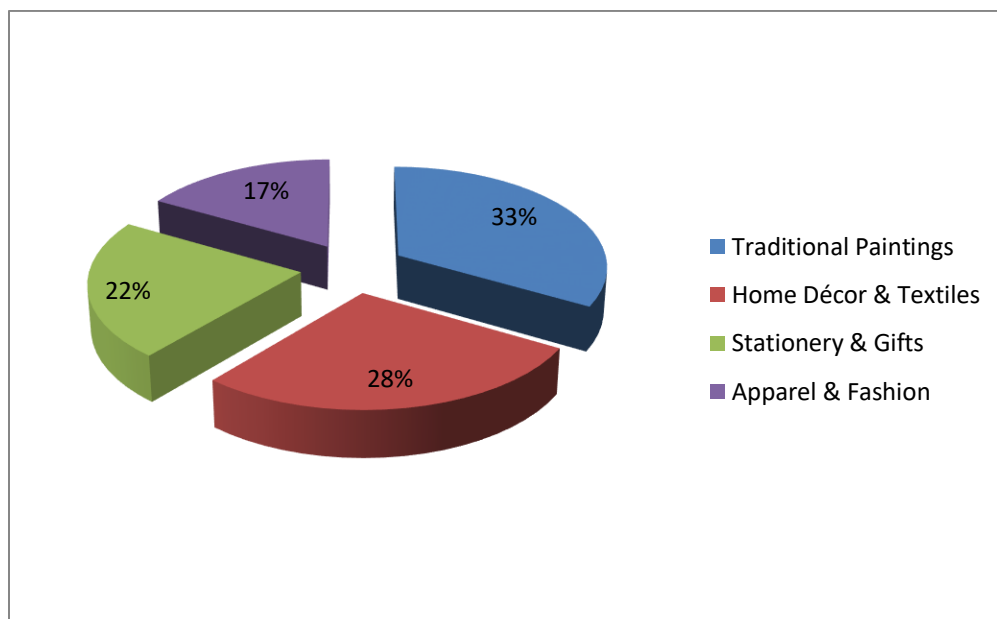
Agriculture in the Warli land, Palghar, and farming on marginal land is the only traditional livelihood of most of the families in the Warli community. Most of the Warli households in Palghar are subsistence farmers and they work on Marginal land having low productivity in

<sup>16</sup> Author. (2025). *Warli Livelihood Ecosystem Flow* [Figure]. Author's own illustration, based on field data and secondary sources.

terms of agriculture due to erratic rainfall and poor extension services. A study by Kadale et al. (2016)<sup>17</sup> has stated that the farmers in the area are most vulnerable and had very few resources to invest in modern technologies or other sources of income. Thus, Warli Art emerged as a cultural and economic asset with no competition.

The transformation of the Warli painting from personal endeavor into micro-enterprises has opened up the opportunity for income diversification and micro level interventions providing direct benefit to women and youths. By translating this art form into marketable products, the commercialization of Warli painting provides an opportunity for income diversification, particularly for women and youth. Several initiatives like Project Udyam, under the Aspirational Districts Program (NITI Aayog, 2023), are now formalizing the creation of art-based micro-enterprises by providing training, market linkages, and access to finance. Artisans are now producing a range of products – paintings, textiles, decor, and eco-friendly souvenirs – not just restricted to conventional Warli painting but reinterpreted to appeal to a larger audience. These enterprises, however, face challenges such as limited digital literacy and e-commerce exposure, inconsistent access to raw material and packaging, and the absence of formal cooperative structures to enable collective bargaining.

**Figure 4: Warli art product categories bifurcated as per the survey done by the author.**



<sup>17</sup> Kadale, S., Patil, B., & Jadhav, V. (2016). *A Study of Socio-Economic Profile of Warli Tribal Farmers*. ResearchGate. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312067327\\_A\\_Study\\_of\\_Socio-Economic\\_Profile\\_of\\_Warli\\_Tribal\\_Farmers](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312067327_A_Study_of_Socio-Economic_Profile_of_Warli_Tribal_Farmers)

Capacity building and skill development initiatives are fundamental when it comes to what really must happen for Warli Artisan to not only produce the livelihoods but also to sustain it in the changing market. Sustainable livelihood enhancement is not only about supporting product creation but building an ecosystem around it. Training programs for Warli artisans should focus on entrepreneurship, design innovation, financial literacy, and digital marketing. Such initiatives would enable artisans to better understand markets, commodities, and their rights in a globalized economy. Importantly, the training modules must integrate the community's rich traditional knowledge with modern business tools, thereby equipping Warli entrepreneurs to generate sustainable livelihoods." (Kulkarni, L, 2019). Producer groups and Self-Help Groups (SHGs), especially women-led, have done well in credit linkage, improving income stability and capacity building, and bargaining power. There are many Warli villages where these structures are underutilized due to logistical gaps and a lack of institutional handholding.

Moreover, branding as well as market linkages plays a pivotal role in extending the reach of Warli Art. The crux of Warli culture is preserved through the branding the Warli art in a matter that is acceptable to both the customer and the market. In the long run, the strategy for the economy could be branding of Warli art in an authentic way while expanding its market reach. This can be achieved by creating geographic indicators (GI tags), e-commerce platforms, as well as curating state and national level exhibitions to increase its visibility and sales (VIVA IMR, 2022<sup>18</sup>; UNDP, 2022<sup>19</sup>). Some of the actions that Warli artists have initiated include art festivals, government expos, and online art platforms to showcase their artwork. However, without adequate logistical and marketing infrastructure, many artisans still heavily rely on the intermediaries who exploit pricing gaps. To tackle this, the research recommends strategies such as:

1. Setting up a collective, artist-run organization that controls pricing and quality, and addresses the lack of brand identity
2. Developing a digital platform for D2C (direct to consumer) sales

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<sup>18</sup> VIVA IMR. (2022). *Cultural and economic potential of Warli art in Palghar: A rural tourism perspective*. [https://vivaimr.org/pdf/Archives\\_research/Paper2\\_Grishma-9-22.pdf](https://vivaimr.org/pdf/Archives_research/Paper2_Grishma-9-22.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> UNDP. (2022). *Reviving the Warli Art Form: A livelihood and cultural revival initiative*. United Nations Development Programme. <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-09/Reviving%20the%20Warli%20Art%20Form%20Report.pdf>

3. Tapping into the government schemes such as Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP)<sup>20</sup>, Tribal Sub-Plans<sup>21</sup>, etc. that develop, promote, and enable MSME.

Lastly, the role of gender in the sustainability of Warli art is significant as women are the main preservers and transmitters of the tradition. The role of Warli women as custodians of tradition is so important that any plan should contemplate women. The Palghar block has a few SHGs with a woman member who can be implicated in longer-term entrepreneurship planning. It would be useful to actively consider the involvement of women in training and policy conversations and in the decision-making bodies of producer groups, offering child-care facilities and also organizing logistic support (during training or travel to markets).

A woman's integrated entry into a market chain strengthens her household economy and could mean that Warli art is more likely to be passed on to the next generation.

### **6.3 Tourism Development: Community-Led Models for Cultural and Economic Revitalization**

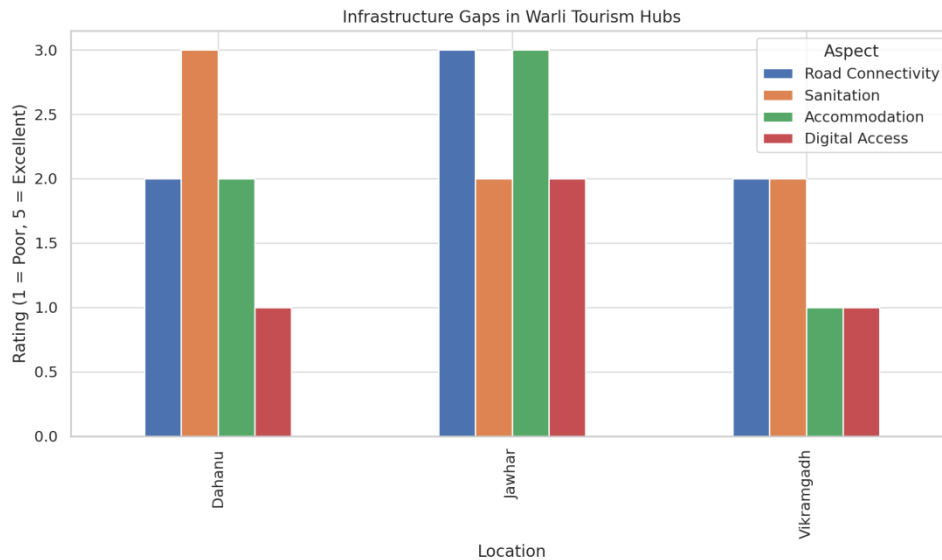
If global tourism is developed thoughtfully integrating inclusive planning that reflects the aspirations and needs of marginalized communities then it holds the potential to become a transformative force for indigenous populations such as the Warli community of Palghar, elevating them as key stakeholders rather than passive beneficiaries. Tourism can serve as a sustainable source of revenue, a platform to showcase Warli art and culture, and a means of achieving rightful recognition and compensation for their contributions. However, the vision that local villagers hold, particularly for tourists to appreciate their cultural landmarks, such as the Mahalaxmi Temple, and the natural beauty of the region, can only be realized through extensive planning, inclusive policy frameworks, and the development of adequate infrastructure. Without these foundational efforts, the desired outcomes for the Warli community may remain aspirational rather than achievable.

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<sup>20</sup> Government of India. (2023). *Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP)*. Ministry of MSME. <https://msme.gov.in>

<sup>21</sup> Tribal Sub-Plan Strategy. (n.d.). Ministry of Tribal Affairs. <https://tribal.nic.in>

**Figure 4: Infrastructure gaps in the Warli Tourism Hubs**



Community-based cultural tourism is a means of integration of Warli heritage into sustainable development initiatives by positioning art, rituals, and village life as the central attractions. If promoted properly, this district, especially Dahanu and Jawhar, has potential for community-driven tourism as it has coastlines, hills, and features different tribal cultures as described above, early experiments with tribal homestays, guided village walks, Warli art demonstrations, and the like. In studies like Rane (2022)<sup>22</sup> and SDSUV (2023)<sup>23</sup>, it was found that the tourists were not just interested in a free ride, but appreciated these initiatives, provided they were not served as passive hosts but were enabled to play the role of guides, storytellers, Warli performers, and entrepreneurs. For instance, the UNDP-supported Warli Revival Program (2022)<sup>24</sup>, run by villagers, places emphasis on embedding components of culture in tourism projects. Visiting tourists can participate in workshops, see rituals, understand the philosophy behind Warli art, etc.

<sup>22</sup> Rane, A. (2022). *Feasibility of Development of Rural Tourism in Palghar District, Maharashtra*. ResearchGate. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361458776\\_FEASIBILITY\\_OF\\_DEVELOPMENT\\_OF\\_RURAL\\_TOURISM\\_IN\\_PALGHAR\\_DISTRICT\\_MAHARASHTRA](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361458776_FEASIBILITY_OF_DEVELOPMENT_OF_RURAL_TOURISM_IN_PALGHAR_DISTRICT_MAHARASHTRA)

<sup>23</sup> SDSUV Journal. (2023). *Sustainable tourism and local economic development: A case study of Palghar district*. SDSUV Journal of Commerce and Management. [https://sdsuv.co.in/commerce\\_journal/Research%20Paper%201-3.pdf](https://sdsuv.co.in/commerce_journal/Research%20Paper%201-3.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> UNDP. (2022). *Reviving the Warli Art Form: A Livelihood and Cultural Revival Initiative*. United Nations Development Programme. <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-09/Reviving%20the%20Warli%20Art%20Form%20Report.pdf>

Thus, when embedded in participatory frameworks, such initiatives help make every tourist visit and respectful exchange and meaningful to both the host and the guest.

Despite strong potential, tourism growth in Palghar faces the following structural barriers:

1. Poor road connectivity in tribal areas limits tourist flow and increases transport costs;
2. Sanitation and accommodation facilities are either lacking or of inconsistent quality;
3. Digital connectivity is patchy, limiting online bookings and visibility.

The research recommends targeted investments in:

1. Developing model tribal villages with improved sanitation, eco-friendly accommodations, and signage.
2. Creating mobile-friendly digital platforms that map experiences (art tours, local guides, homestays).
3. Offering microloans or subsidies for home upgrades to meet basic hospitality standards.

These improvements must be undertaken with community consultation to avoid overdevelopment or cultural dilution.

Capacity building and local participation are critical to prevent tourism models from being extractive and to instead ensure the inclusion of artists, youth, and women into the process. Cultural tourism's success is conditional to the host community's readiness and motivation. Not only is capacity building necessary in hospitality industry ingestion and tourism management programs, but training should cross over intercultural communication and self-presentation. Specifically, programs should train locals in the following areas:

1. Soft skills training for young people, such as guiding, customer service, and the like
2. For women, workshops in areas such as homestay management, local cuisine tourism, artisanal tourism, and the like
3. Sensitivity workshops for guests and hosts on cultural issues, stressing mutual respect and learning
4. Even low-cost, short-duration training modules—conducted, for example, by NGOs and institutions such as VIVA IMR (2022)—have demonstrated growing community confidence and involvement.

In addition, it is important to monitor the socio-cultural and environmental impacts of tourism on society to safeguard their traditions and to prevent over-commercializing Warli art and also to protect the ecological balance of the place. While tourism can bring economic benefits, it also introduces risks such as cultural commodification, seasonal income dependency, and strain on local resources. Thus, monitoring mechanisms are crucial to evaluate their impact on:

1. Traditional practices and social norms
2. Gender roles and youth aspirations
3. Environmental sustainability (especially with increased footfall in forested areas)

It would be crucial for governing bodies of the districts and cultural development organizations to make efforts to understand how the local people are feeling, how the influx of money is affecting them, how visitors from out of town are behaving, and how the overall situation is changing over the years by closely monitoring the area year after year.

Comparative learning and replicability from other indigenous communities are important to those engaged in Warli tourism as they are not the only community engaged in such tourism and there are other models existing with other communities, which need to be internalized into the Warli tourism model while retaining cultural authenticity. Tourism models in other tribal belts, such as Santhal art villages in Jharkhand or Bhil art in Madhya Pradesh, offer useful lessons. These cases show that:

1. Co-operative tourism models ensure equitable benefit sharing
2. Partnerships with academic institutions help with documentation and visitor education
3. Festival tourism, like harvest or art fairs, boosts seasonal income and cultural celebration

Integrating such practices in Palghar, tailored to the Warli ethos, can elevate the district as a flagship for tribal cultural tourism in Maharashtra.

## **7. Research Insights**

### **Infrastructural Gaps**

Poor roads, transport, sanitation, and irregular internet access limit the ability of artisans to reach markets or host visitors. As one-woman artist noted, "Earlier we only painted for our homes and marriages, but now we want to show it to other roads and transport are needed if people are to come here." Cultural commodification is another concern, as another respondent emphasized:

“Warli art is not just for selling it tells our stories.” Without careful management, sacred traditions risk being reduced to mere commercial commodities.

### **Policy Fragmentation**

Limited accessibility and lack of uniformity in government policies weaken institutions that support tourism. Many artisans rely on intermediaries, NGO-facilitated events, or ad-hoc government initiatives, which reduce community control over tourism and cultural enterprise.

### **Gender Injustices**

Despite women being primary custodians of Warli art, their roles in leadership and decision-making are undervalued. As one participant explained, “Women are the ones doing the paintings, but when it comes to decisions, men are called.” This gap highlights the urgent need to recognize women’s leadership in cultural and tourism initiatives.

### **Participatory Approaches**

Sustainable development requires that the actual community owners of Warli art be central in policy design, implementation, and benefit-sharing. Younger artisans expressed concern that, “The work requires a lot of hard work, and it is difficult to sell to outsiders.” Without platforms for participation, art and tourism enterprises remain undervalued. A bottom-up model that includes women, youth, and elders in decision-making is essential for intergenerational equity and cultural sustainability.

There is a view that the case of the Warli, especially when art and ecology are mentioned in contexts of community identity, is potentially a widely replicated model for tribal communities, especially in India. However, the coverage of replication will depend on various fronts, as categorically mentioned by Kulkarni (2019) in his analysis of tribal entrepreneurship challenges and replication barriers. This includes strong local institutions and cultural organizations independent of government, participation of key line departments of government, NGOs, and academia, and systematic documentation on digital platforms to enable intergenerational learning.

Artisans interviewed shared optimism that if supported with tourism and institutional training, Warli could become a replicable model like efforts they heard of in other tribal belts. Their reflections align with the potential of models such as the proposed Warli Art and Culture Museum, Eco Museum initiatives, and digital storytelling platforms could serve as blueprints for similar efforts in regions like Bastar (Chhattisgarh), Bhil villages (Madhya Pradesh), or Santiniketan (West Bengal).

Notes from field visits also underscore this possibility: the enthusiasm of younger women and men actively participating in workshops illustrates an intergenerational continuity that is essential for sustaining and adapting the model. This suggests that the Warli case, when adequately institutionalized and supported, can inspire similar community-driven frameworks across India's diverse tribal landscapes.

**Figure 6: Field interaction with Warli women artisans in Palghar: discussing the transition of Warli art from ritual practice to a sustainable livelihood, as women showcase their paintings during a community workshop.**



## **8. Preserving Warli Identity through Tradition, Innovation, and Transmission**

### **1. Cooperative Tourism Models:**

Community-based tourism models can be developed to ensure equity in tourism operations and benefit sharing, as seen in Bhil art villages in Madhya Pradesh. Partnerships with academic institutions could help document culture and train tourists before visits, similar to practices in Santhal art villages in Jharkhand. Festival-based tourism, such as harvest festivals or art fairs, may also serve as opportunities for generating temporary but significant income while

celebrating tribal culture. Practices adopted in regions like Palghar can be adapted and customized to align with the ethos of the Warli worldview.

## **2. Traditional Techniques and Ritual Significance:**

The techniques that Warli painters use today largely preserve traditional practices, such as working with square brushes and natural pigments like brick red, rice paste, and white pigments. Warli art continues to hold ritual significance, often associated with life-cycle events such as marriage, and depicts human life in balance with nature through simple geometric forms. As Shinde and Patil (2023) note, these images are symbolic rather than decorative, conveying intricate relationships between humans, animals, plants, and spirits.

## **3. Documentation and Curation:**

A systematic approach is needed to record Warli art in its traditional, transitional, and contemporary forms. The proposed Warli Art and Culture Museum in Palghar could function not just as a heritage archive but also as an interactive learning space. Initiatives may include live artmaking, school workshops, and exhibitions combining traditional and evolving styles. Digital archiving (UNDP, 2022), eco-museums, mobile exhibitions, and augmented reality experiences could help preserve oral narratives, community rituals, and techniques while connecting Warli artists to global audiences without uprooting them from their environment.

## **4. Art Education, Workshops, and Cultural Programs:**

Integrating Warli motifs and storytelling into school curricula, especially in tribal regions, can strengthen cultural roots and foster cross-cultural appreciation. Complementary initiatives may include seasonal workshops by community artists, festivals celebrating tribal art and rituals, and traveling exhibitions offering participatory experiences. Such measures would ensure that Warli art is understood not as static museum artifacts but as a living and adaptive tradition.

## **5. Women as Custodians and Innovators:**

Traditionally, women have been central to the creation and transmission of Warli art, yet they remain marginalized in recognition and leadership. Field insights (e.g., Kadale et al., 2016) show that while women produce most artworks, they often lack control over pricing and market access. Empowering women requires recognizing their contributions through fair-trade certifications, involving them in leadership of cooperatives and festival planning, and supporting them with training, childcare, and digital access. Women's participation is critical for the survival of Warli art both as a cultural practice and as a livelihood.

**Figure 5: Women doing Warli Art<sup>25</sup>**



#### **6. Cultural Integrity and Innovation:**

Preserving Warli art does not mean resisting all change. Community-led innovation can revitalize interest, attract wider audiences, and expand incomes without diluting authenticity. Opportunities include collaborations with contemporary designers, eco-friendly product lines using Warli motifs ethically, and artist-in-residence programs for knowledge exchange. Crucially, such initiatives must safeguard community agency, ensuring the Warli decide how their culture is represented, adapted, and shared.

#### **7. Future Research and Digital Preservation:**

Further studies should examine the role of digital platforms in preserving and marketing tribal art, documenting oral traditions and intergenerational stories, and exploring hybrid models such as virtual exhibits, cultural festivals, and mobile learning modules to ensure youth engagement and long-term safeguarding of Warli heritage.

Warli art, as a living tradition, occupies a dual space in the community: it is both a cultural practice deeply rooted in ritual and an emerging avenue for economic empowerment. Historically, Warli painting was practiced primarily within households and for ceremonial occasions, such as weddings, harvest festivals, or local rituals. However, field visits across Vavji, Gholwad, Dahanu, Brahmangao, Bahare, Ganjad, Talasari, and Bapugaon revealed a significant

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<sup>25</sup> Dhaatri - A Resource Centre for Women and Children [@DhaatriC]. (2023, August 9). *Warli Art is not just a painting, it is a religious ceremony for the Warli Tribe of Palghar & Dahanu districts of Maharashtra...* [Tweet]. X (formerly Twitter). <https://twitter.com/DhaatriC/status/1689185272300810240>

shift in its function. Respondents consistently highlighted that the art is gradually transcending ritualistic boundaries to become a viable source of livelihood.

As one-woman Warli artist explained, “Earlier we only painted for our homes and marriages, but now we want to show it to others—roads and transport are needed if people are to come here.”

Similarly, another respondent emphasized that festivals and weddings have provided initial platforms for exposure, but there is an urgent need for structured avenues for collective marketing. A respondent from Ganjad added that exhibitions and email-based orders have begun to supplement income, highlighting the role of both local and wider networks in commercializing Warli art.

Tourism plays a pivotal role in amplifying this cultural and economic transformation. When integrated thoughtfully, tourism allows artisans to share stories, preserve traditions, and gain recognition, while simultaneously creating financial opportunities. As one elder respondent emphasized,

“When people come and see the art, they also hear our stories, it makes us feel valued.”

This reflects a broader trend observed across respondents, including several from Talasari, who indicated that workshops, local exhibitions, and homestays have become spaces where visitors engage with both the artwork and the cultural context it embodies. These interactions not only create economic value but also foster cultural pride and awareness, ensuring that the art’s meaning is communicated alongside its aesthetic appeal.

The role of entrepreneurship in this ecosystem is equally significant. Many young artisans noted that engagement with tourism and art-based enterprises offers pathways beyond subsistence agriculture, creating opportunities for skill development, financial independence, and intergenerational knowledge transfer. Training in artistic techniques, marketing, and digital outreach—though limited and uneven—emerges as a key enabler for sustainability. Respondents highlighted challenges such as lack of online visibility, irregular market access, and marketing know-how. As one woman artist mentioned, while her art travels across India through exhibitions, online demand remains limited because people seek an authentic “real feel” of Warli culture.

Field observations and interviews also underscore the critical role of women and youth. Women, traditionally the primary custodians of Warli art, are increasingly taking entrepreneurial initiatives. Respondents highlighted that women’s participation in festivals, exhibitions, and workshops is rising, yet decision-making power in marketing and institutional engagements often remains limited. As one artisan noted, “Women are the ones doing the paintings, but when it comes to decisions, men are called.”

This indicates a gap between production and leadership that needs to be addressed to ensure equitable economic empowerment. Youth participation, on the other hand, brings energy, digital literacy, and innovative approaches, which are essential for sustaining art practices and integrating them into contemporary markets.

The convergence of art, tourism, and entrepreneurship forms a holistic ecosystem with multiple interdependent benefits:

1. **Art as Livelihood:** By converting a cultural practice into a source of income, artisans can seek to preserve the art itself while securing economic stability. Respondents highlighted that consistent demand through festivals, exhibitions, and workshops has provided regular income streams.
2. **Tourism as a Platform:** Tourism brings both visibility and financial inflow. Respondents emphasized that tourists' interest in Warli art encourages them to maintain traditional practices and provides a tangible connection between culture and economy. Festivals like the Chikoo Festival in Dahanu serve as both marketplaces and cultural stages.
3. **Entrepreneurship as Sustainability:** Entrepreneurial engagement ensures long-term viability. Younger artisans view tourism-linked enterprises not merely as a short-term opportunity but as a pathway to build resilient livelihoods. As one young artisan reflected, "Earning from art has helped preserve culture and opened new ways to think beyond farming."

This synergy has broader social and cultural implications. By integrating women and youth into market-driven models, the community strengthens individual agency, promotes intergenerational learning, and fosters inclusive growth. The ecosystem also ensures that cultural and ecological integrity is maintained, as artisans consciously link their work to traditional knowledge, natural materials, and local narratives. Respondents repeatedly highlighted that commercialization is not purely about selling; it is about sharing stories, rituals, and the essence of Warli life.

The field data also highlights challenges and areas for improvement, which are integral to understanding the dynamics of this ecosystem. Key issues include limited infrastructure for tourism, insufficient marketing support, and gaps in digital literacy. Many respondents pointed out that without improved roads, homestays, and platforms for collective marketing, the full potential of Warli art as a livelihood tool remains unrealized.

## **9. Policy and Institutional Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the study recommends the following measures:

1. Establish a district-level Warli Development Board to integrate art, tourism, and enterprise.
2. Provide targeted support for Warli women entrepreneurs, including brand promotion under schemes like PRAGATI.
3. Create Skill Development Hubs offering training in art, digital marketing, and tourism.
4. Secure GI tagging for Warli art and integrate it into school curricula.
5. Develop monitoring mechanisms to assess the cultural, economic, and environmental impacts of tourism.

These measures would strengthen economic inclusion while safeguarding the Warli community's cultural sovereignty.

Since the potential of digital platforms in the preservation and marketing of tribal art is yet to be explored in depth, the role of the same in the prospects indigenous legacy is an area of further studies. Further studies can be explored:

1. The role of digital platforms in preserving and marketing tribal art
2. Intergenerational shifts in cultural practices and aspirations
3. Comparative analysis with tribal tourism models across India and South Asia

Digital archiving is important; the explanations of why this is true are provided on UNDP and Rural India Online. Oral traditions need to be saved, artistic techniques are important, and intergenerational stories are important, too. They do not explain if these are effective in saving the Warli heritage, whether they are effective at getting people engaged, or supporting youth engagement. Maybe hybrid cultural festivals, virtual exhibits, and mobile learning modules would be useful pieces of research to be done in the future.

## **10. Conclusion**

This research shows that the way to sustainable development lies in empowerment through cultural agencies. What we mean by this is not through assimilation, but through the cultural and support agency of their art. This means that when Warli art is honored and supported through the lenses of tourism and market enterprises, it can serve as a model for rural transformation. By

preserving their own culture, Warli art and customs, and thereby merging them with their 21st-century needs, the Warli paintings can build better futures for themselves.

Multiple stakeholders are needed to establish a viable model. This may include the government, academic institutions, market intermediaries, NGOs, and cultural practitioners. However, what is significant is that the Warlis' must stay at the center of each of these stakeholder initiatives. This is particularly crucial because of the fear of cultural commodification, where traditional art forms are exploited by external actors and the benefits do not go back to the communities that create them. The Warlis' must be enabled to own their knowledge systems, creative agency, and the power to define terms of engagement. However, art alone cannot address the structural challenges they face continued dependence on subsistence agriculture, erratic monsoons, fragmented lands, and inadequate infrastructure such as roads, sanitation, healthcare, and education. Warli art and entrepreneurship should therefore be viewed as part of a holistic development strategy rather than isolated solutions. Equally vital is gender inclusion: while women remain custodians of Warli traditions, their leadership in decision-making is limited. Providing targeted training, financial literacy, and support systems can ensure their central role in sustaining livelihoods.

Tourism, though promising through homestays, guided art demonstrations, and cultural storytelling, must be carefully managed to avoid over-commercialization and unequal benefit distribution. Community ownership, cooperative models, and safeguards are crucial for meaningful participation. Meanwhile, despite government programs like PMEGP and Tribal Sub-Plans, bureaucratic hurdles and lack of awareness prevent most artisans from accessing benefits. Bridging this gap requires NGOs, academic institutions, and local bodies to support capacity building and simplify processes.

At the same time, study has its limitations. The findings are based on fieldwork conducted within the Warli community in Palghar district and are not generalizable beyond this cultural and geographic context. Furthermore, the research does not attempt to critique national welfare policies or extend its scope to other tribal communities in India.

Nonetheless, this research contributes to the existing literature by foregrounding how indigenous art can function as both a cultural resource and an economic driver within sustainable development frameworks. By honoring the Warli's heritage while enabling adaptation to contemporary contexts, sustainable development can move beyond abstract ideals and become a lived reality for one of India's most iconic indigenous communities.

The synthesis of art, tourism, and entrepreneurship as a framework has tremendous potential for the conservation of the Warli tribe, as evident in the Palghar region. This grounded theory study

with adequate literature provides insight and a comprehensive understanding of developmental models that are informed by identity and local agency, contributing to development that is both tangible and sustainable.

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## Appendix



*Figure 7: Field interaction with Warli women artisans in Palghar: discussing the transition of Warli art from ritual practice to a sustainable livelihood, as women showcase their paintings during a community workshop.*



*Figure 8: Participatory Warli Art Workshop — Students engage in hands-on learning of traditional Warli painting techniques, fostering cultural transmission and experiential education within community-based art initiatives.*



*Figure 9: Community-Based Warli Art Workshop — Participants collaboratively engage in fabric-based Warli painting, illustrating the integration of traditional art practices into contemporary skill-building and livelihood enhancement initiatives.*



Figure 10: Traditional Art Exhibition — Visitors engage with Warli-inspired artworks in a curated indoor setting, reflecting efforts in cultural documentation, public outreach, and heritage education.

## Livelihood and Warli Art

### Warli Participants Included in the Study (with Informed Consent):

- **Rakesh Raghudalvi (20, Vavji):** Lives in a Warli community and learned Warli art in school. His family earns from agriculture and Warli art. Although his income remained stable over the last five years, he has received training in art, business, and digital marketing. He sells art during weddings and festivals but struggles with marketing. He supports collective marketing and believes Warli art helps preserve culture.
- **Dipesh Bujad (19, Gholwad):** Earns through Gram Panchayat work and family Warli art. He has received training in art and business but has limited exposure to government schemes. He sells his work locally through his stall and recognizes that earning from art supports cultural preservation.

- **Niyukti Zafiya (17, Brahmangao):** Family income comes from both banking and Warli art. Her income has improved over five years due to art. Trained in art, she sells locally and at Chikoo Festival, highlighting marketing challenges. She supports workshops, collective marketing, and believes art helps preserve culture.
- **Anita Sunil Dalavi (36, Bahare):** A farmer and Warli artist, she relies mainly on agriculture. She has received training, faces market challenges, and advocates collective marketing and economic incentives to sustain Warli art.
- **Kishore Mhase (40, Ganjad):** Earns from agriculture and Warli painting. His income has grown due to Warli art. Learned art from family, he sells through exhibitions and emails, highlighting the need for more contacts and regular orders. He supports workshops, collective marketing, and a Warli museum.
- **Serena Medha (44, Talasari):** Works as a Warli painter and sells artwork all over India through exhibitions. She has received training, is aware of schemes, but has not benefitted. Marketing challenges exist, especially online. She is open to collective marketing and believes art preserves culture.
- **Smita Khebala (45, Talasari):** Practices Warli art alongside farming. Income has improved due to painting. Sells through exhibitions, festivals, and schools. Faces challenges in marketing and online presence. Supports collective marketing and believes in art's role in cultural preservation.
- **Kusum Kharpade (50, Talasari):** Warli painter with stable income from art. She sells at exhibitions, faces marketing issues, and is interested in collective marketing. She interacts with tourists and emphasizes art in cultural preservation.
- **Vishal Hengadi (30, Bapugaon):** Warli artist whose income has recently grown. Sells at festivals and exhibitions, facing marketing issues. Willing to host tourists and provide local cultural experiences.

**Non-Warli Community Members (with Informed Consent):**

- **Nitin Patil (51, Dahanu):** Trainer in skill development, family earns through Warli art. Sells locally at festivals, and exhibitions. Advocates collective marketing, workshops, and a museum. Notes commercialization but highlights youth learning traditional forms.
- **Kanchan Surti (45, Gholwad) and Jagdish Surti (52, Gholwad):** Bamboo artists with recent income growth. Sell at festivals, interact with tourists, but face challenges in travel and marketing. Support collective marketing.

- **Jayprakash Ramchandra Bari (56, Gholwad) and Archana Bari (50, Gholwad):** Non-Warli members earning from agriculture and hospitality. Aware of tourism potential, willing to host visitors, and offer experiences like honey, dams, and beaches. They emphasize infrastructure improvements, showcasing cultural activities, and training for tourism.