

Creativity, Skill, and Intelligence as Understood by Tradition Rooted Craftspersons

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Abstract : Creativity is understood as an intersubjective phenomenon shaped by socio-cultural values and economic forces. Creativity as a means to achieve progress is a very modern concept, driven by a global capitalist market economy. The dominant urban, often first-world articulations of creativity, overshadow the rural, local and cultural notions of people in the developing nations. Artisanal practices of making grounded in preindustrial and pre-capitalist contexts hold varying cultural and region-specific concepts and standards for ascribing creativity to a person or product, or process. These notions reflect the underlying philosophy that constitutes their worldview. The process of colonization through western education has blurred or overlapped some of these key philosophical concepts. This article adopts a post-colonial stance to understand the perceptions of skill, intelligence and creativity among tradition rooted textile craft practitioners of Kutch, Gujarat in India. The artisans, while negotiating their space in the contemporary markets, are making efforts to include the modern categories of art, craft, and design in their worldview. The paper will first review theories of creativity that throw light on the link between skill, intelligence and creativity. Then the paper will use secondary research and data from interviews to share crafts person notions of skill, creativity and intelligence and their interrelationship.

Keywords : traditional craft, textile, creativity, skill, intelligence

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