

Blending Tradition and Sustainability for Social Impact: A Case Study of Ohrna's Social Entrepreneurship Model

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Abstract

This paper presents a case study of Ohrna, a social enterprise based in Pune, India, that integrates women's empowerment, cultural preservation, and sustainability into a unified model of social entrepreneurship. Founded by Jhumkee Iyengar in 2018, Ohrna addresses the socio-economic marginalization of rural women by offering free, skill-based training in traditional Indian crafts such as Kantha embroidery, Ikkat weaving, and Bandhani textiles. The enterprise also emphasizes environmental sustainability through the use of biodegradable materials, upcycled packaging, and waste-minimization practices.

Using a qualitative case study approach, the research draws on primary interviews, field observations, and secondary data to examine Ohrna's operational methodology, its triple impact i.e., social, economic, and environmental and the strategic challenges it navigates in scaling its mission. The findings reveal how the enterprise leverages grassroots innovation, community engagement, and design thinking to empower unskilled women, revive endangered craft traditions, and create eco-conscious, marketable products.

Ohrna exemplifies core principles of social entrepreneurship, particularly in its ability to foster inclusive development in under-resourced rural contexts. The discussion situates Ohrna's journey within broader theoretical frameworks (Dees, 1998; Zahra et al., 2009), comparing it with similar craft-based enterprises and highlighting its potential to inform policy, pedagogy, and practice. While the single-case design limits generalizability, the study offers valuable insights into the role of culturally embedded, sustainable enterprises in advancing social transformation.

This paper contributes to the growing literature on sustainable social entrepreneurship and provides a foundation for future comparative research, quantitative impact assessments, and studies on the role of digital platforms in rural enterprise development.

Keywords: Social Impact, Traditional Crafts, Sustainability, Women Empowerment

1. INTRODUCTION

The increasing complexity of global socio-economic and environmental issues has led to a growing interest in **social entrepreneurship** as a transformative approach to development. Unlike conventional business models that focus solely on profit maximization, social entrepreneurship prioritizes **social value creation**, community empowerment, and sustainable impact (Zahra, S. A., Gedajlovic, E., Neubaum, D. O., & Shulman, J. M. (2009)). In particular, **community-based enterprises** in developing countries have demonstrated the capacity to empower marginalized populations, revive traditional knowledge systems, and foster economic resilience (Shabbir & Batool, 2025).

India, with its deep-rooted cultural diversity and stark socio-economic inequalities, presents fertile ground for the emergence of social enterprises that blend **heritage preservation with sustainable livelihoods**. One of the most vulnerable and underserved groups in this context is **rural women**, whose economic participation is often hindered by limited access to education, mobility, and formal employment. Studies suggest that empowering women through entrepreneurship not only improves household incomes but also leads to broader gains in education, health, and social status (Tripathy, Paliwal, & Singh, 2022; Bansal, Garg, & Vasa, 2023).

Alongside women's empowerment, the preservation of **traditional crafts** in India such as hand embroidery, weaving, and eco-friendly textiles has gained urgency, as many of these art forms face extinction due to industrialization and globalization. However, these crafts also present a strategic opportunity for **sustainable social entrepreneurship**, enabling rural artisans to access modern markets while conserving cultural heritage (Pathak & Mukherjee, 2020; Fhiri et al., 2023).

This paper presents a case study of **Ohrna**, a Pune-based social enterprise founded in 2018 by product designer **Jhumkee Iyengar**, which integrates traditional Indian crafts, eco-friendly production, and women's empowerment into a unified model of sustainable development. Through a qualitative lens, this study examines the operational methodology of Ohrna, explores the **social, economic, environmental,**

and cultural impact of its interventions, and evaluates the challenges and strategies employed to sustain and scale its model.

By documenting Ohrna's journey, the research contributes to the growing literature on **sustainable social enterprises**, especially in the **craft-based and women-centered domains**, offering insights into how such initiatives can act as vehicles for systemic change in rural India.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The evolution of social entrepreneurship as a development strategy has gained significant momentum in recent decades, particularly in addressing issues that lie at the intersection of economic marginalization, environmental degradation, and social exclusion. Emerging literature emphasizes that social entrepreneurship serves as a transformative mechanism, capable of bridging the gaps left by state and market failures, especially in rural and underserved communities (Zahra, S. A., Gedajlovic, E., Neubaum, D. O., & Shulman, J. M. (2009). These enterprises do not merely pursue economic value; rather, they integrate innovation, ethics, and mission-driven goals to create sustainable solutions for pressing societal challenges. The success and sustainability of these initiatives often rest upon the ability of entrepreneurs to leverage local social capital, as highlighted by Shabbir and Batool (2025), who assert that community trust, cooperation, and local networks are foundational to establishing resilient social ventures.

The concept of social sustainability, which encompasses equity, empowerment, participation, and social cohesion, forms the philosophical core of many social entrepreneurship initiatives (Kamaludin, 2023). In this context, social entrepreneurship extends beyond the individual entrepreneur to a collective framework where communities are not only beneficiaries but also co-creators of value. As emphasized by Carvalho (2019), social innovation and entrepreneurship together form a powerful duo, enabling inclusive growth through context-specific interventions rooted in cultural and environmental consciousness.

One of the most transformative outcomes of social entrepreneurship has been its contribution to women's empowerment. In regions such as rural India, where patriarchal structures often restrict women's mobility, education, and financial independence, social enterprises have emerged as a promising avenue for gender-inclusive development. Tripathy, Paliwal, and Singh (2022) present compelling evidence that women's social entrepreneurship fosters livelihood innovation and self-reliance, with ripple effects across household well-being, children's education, and community leadership. Through such interventions, women are not only economically empowered but also gain visibility and voice in their socio-cultural settings.

Fazal et al. (2023) support this view by suggesting that value-driven entrepreneurship led by women plays a pivotal role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially those related to gender equality, decent work, and reduced inequalities. The authors apply the Value-Belief-Norm model to demonstrate how intentionality and moral commitment drive sustainability-oriented behavior among women entrepreneurs, particularly in the Global South. These findings reinforce the notion that social enterprises designed around community needs and inclusive participation hold the potential to disrupt cycles of marginalization and economic vulnerability.

Parallel to the discourse on social equity is the increasing integration of environmental sustainability within social entrepreneurship models. Contemporary social enterprises, especially in the artisanal and craft-based sectors, are increasingly adopting sustainable practices that align with global efforts toward climate mitigation and responsible consumption. Fhiri et al. (2021) emphasize that social enterprises serve as critical agents in environmental sustainability by employing biodegradable materials, minimizing waste, and promoting upcycling. Such approaches not only reduce environmental footprints but also respond to the growing demand for ethically sourced and environmentally friendly products in global markets.

Jha and Pande (2024) add that sustainable entrepreneurship, when supported by policy and innovation, enhances national resilience by generating green employment and fostering local economies. The integration of ecological values within social business models is not merely incidental but strategic, especially when enterprises leverage indigenous materials, traditional knowledge, and low-impact production techniques.

India's rich craft heritage provides a unique context for examining the convergence of social entrepreneurship, women's empowerment, and sustainability. Traditional crafts—such as hand embroidery, weaving, and dyeing—are not only cultural assets but also potential economic engines for rural communities. However, these crafts are increasingly endangered due to modernization, urban migration, and the commercialization of handmade goods. Pathak and Mukherjee (2020), in their study

of community-based craft enterprises in Kutch, highlight how entrepreneurial ecosystems that support local artisans can revitalize dying traditions while providing livelihoods to women and youth. By aligning production with contemporary market trends and digital platforms, these enterprises are able to scale impact without losing authenticity.

Similarly, Carvalho (2019) underscores the role of design innovation in re-contextualizing traditional crafts for modern consumers. This strategy allows artisans, particularly women, to participate in higher-value markets without compromising the cultural integrity of their work. Moreover, these enterprises often employ decentralized and home-based production models, which are particularly beneficial for women with caregiving responsibilities and limited mobility.

Bansal, Garg, and Vasa (2023) further assert that successful social enterprises adopt a multi-stage approach—starting with capacity building, followed by small-scale testing, and culminating in market integration. They caution, however, that such models require sustained mentorship, flexible funding, and adaptive strategies to navigate the volatile dynamics of both rural production systems and global consumer demands.

Taken together, the literature strongly supports the notion that social entrepreneurship, when grounded in sustainability and inclusivity, offers a powerful framework for rural development and systemic social change. It creates a triadic impact: economic (through income generation), social (through empowerment and cohesion), and environmental (through low-impact practices). For a country like India, where untapped human potential and cultural heritage coexist with systemic inequalities, such hybrid models are not just innovative—they are imperative.

The case of enterprises like Ohrna, which blend traditional crafts with sustainable materials and inclusive employment practices, exemplifies the theoretical and practical contributions of this body of literature. It reflects how thoughtful entrepreneurship can transform local challenges into global opportunities, while preserving identity, fostering dignity, and promoting holistic development.

3. Objectives

1. To study Ohrna's operational methodology on its integration of women's empowerment, cultural preservation and sustainability.
2. To understand the challenges faced and strategies employed by Ohrna to overcome these challenges effectively

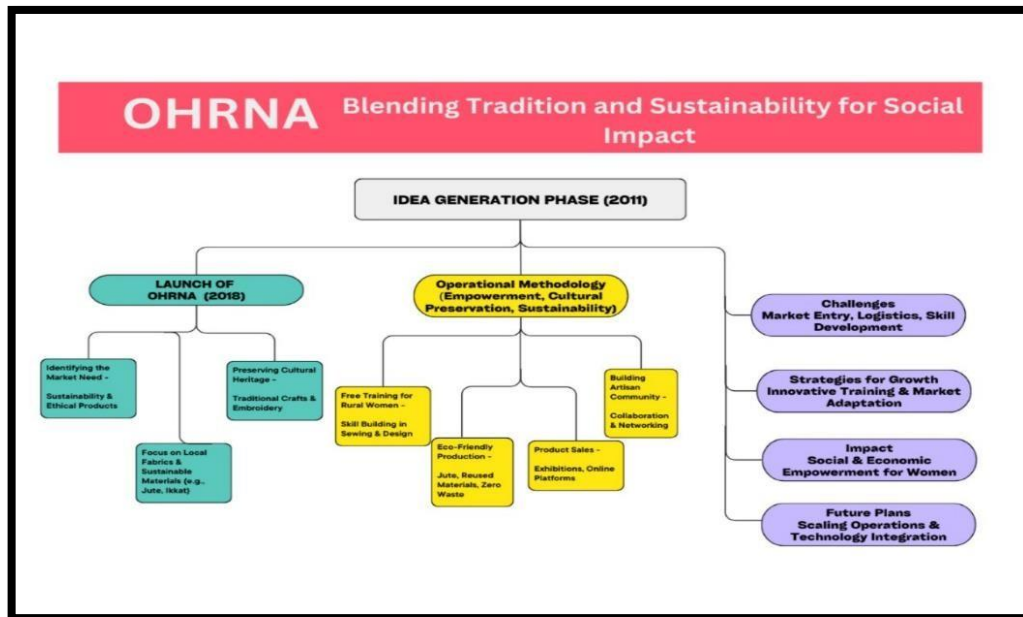
4. METHODOLOGY

- This study follows a **qualitative research approach**.
- Data was collected through a **semi-structured interview** with the founder of Ohrna.
- **Direct observations** were made during visits to artisan training sessions and workspaces.
- **Secondary data** was gathered from Ohrna's official **website, social media platforms, and media articles**.

5. About the Founder - JHUMKEE IYENGAR

Jhumkee Iyengar is the inspiring founder of Ohrna, a social enterprise dedicated to empowering rural women through artisanal skills and sustainable practices. Born and raised in Pune, India, Jhumkee grew up in a nurturing environment that emphasized education and community service, her parents, a scientist and a professor, instilled in her the values of learning and giving back to society. With over 30 years of experience in product design and consulting, Jhumkee has worked in both India and the United States, blending her expertise in design with a passion for social change. Jhumkee founded Ohrna in 2017, motivated by her desire to create opportunities for unskilled women who lacked access to formal education or job prospects. Inspired by her aunt, who had spent years training local women in handicrafts, Jhumkee adopted a similar approach by providing free training and materials to artisans in rural areas. She visits villages to teach essential skills like stitching and design, fostering a sense of community among the women as they learn together. Her dedication to this mission exemplifies how one person's passion can lead to meaningful social impact, proving that it is never too late to pursue one's dreams and make a difference in the world.

6. Case Description – The Ohrna Model



A) Idea generation phase

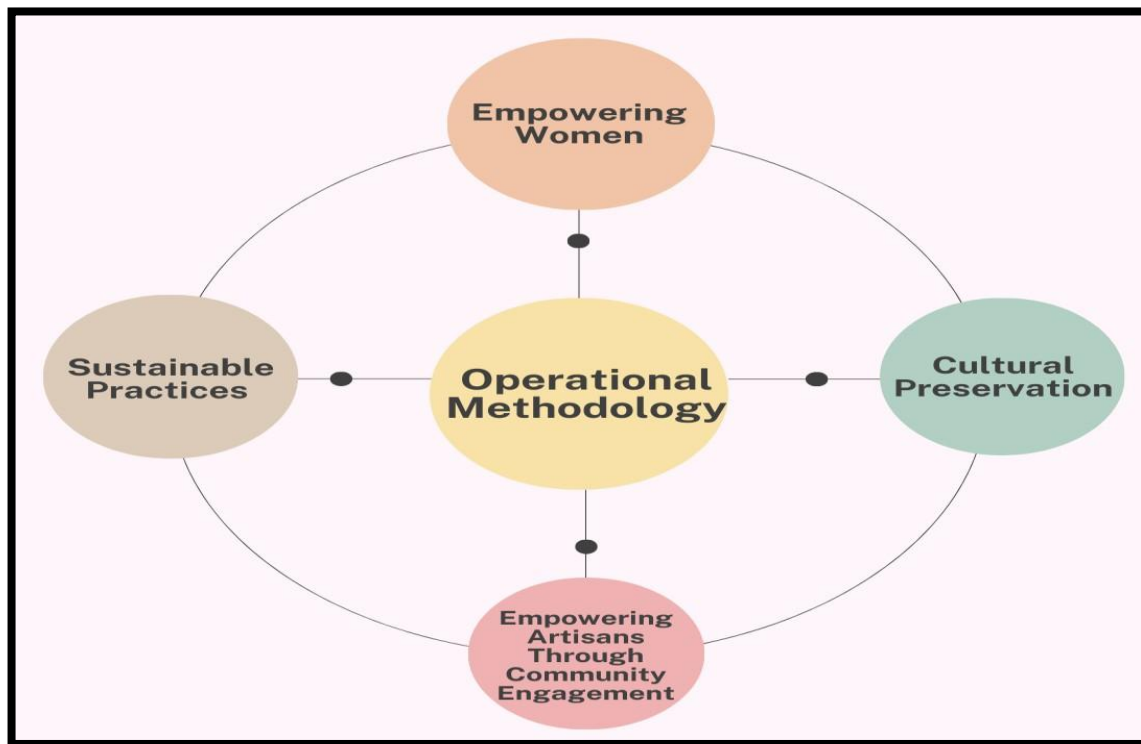
The journey of Ohrna began in 2011, sparked by a transformative experience that Jhumkee Iyengar had while conducting a design workshop for young students in Khandala, a village near Pune. During this workshop, Jhumkee encountered the stark realities faced by women in rural communities. Women over there were bound by societal norms, lacked educational opportunities, and struggled to achieve financial independence. This experience opened her eyes to the immense potential that lay within these women and ignited her passion for creating opportunities for them. Reflecting on her educational journey, Jhumkee felt fortunate to have had access to resources and opportunities that many rural women had never experienced. This realization became the foundation for Ohrna, a social enterprise dedicated to empowering these women through skill development. In 2018, after years of groundwork and contemplation, Jhumkee officially launched Ohrna with the mission of providing training and employment to unskilled women in rural India. Jhumkee's approach was unique; she travelled to nearby villages and conducted training workshops that taught women how to sew and create products. Recognizing the potential of jute, a fibre widely used in India, she decided to focus on crafting sustainable products that could appeal to both domestic and international markets.

Identifying the Market Gap

As Jhumkee Iyengar embarked on her mission to empower rural women, she found herself standing at the crossroads of tradition and modernity. During her explorations, she uncovered a significant gap in the market for Indian traditional craft and sustainable products not only in India but also in the international market. Additionally, the stark economic divide between urban and rural India weighed heavily on her mind, especially the struggles faced by women in these communities. This realization led her to pose a crucial question "How might we equip women in rural India with marketable skills to sell sustainable and traditional Indian handicrafts, this will help to gain financial independence without needing to leave their villages?" This question became the guiding light for Ohrna, her vision of blending traditional craftsmanship with contemporary design.

B) Operational Methodology of Ohrna

Jhumkee's journey was not just about creating a brand, it was about preserving the rich cultural heritage of India while providing opportunities for women who had long been overlooked.



i) Empowering Women

At the heart of Ohrna's operational methodology is the empowerment of women through hands-on training programs. Jhumkee personally visits villages, engaging with women who have never had the chance to learn skills like stitching and design. These training sessions are offered free of charge, along with all necessary materials. This approach not only equips women with valuable skills but also fosters a sense of community as they come together to learn and create. Imagine a group of women gathered in a sunlit room, laughter mingling with the sound of sewing machines. They are learning to stitch beautiful products from eco-friendly materials like jute and organic cotton. Each woman is not just learning a craft, she is gaining confidence and a sense of pride in her work. Many artisans work from home, allowing them to balance family responsibilities while earning an income, a crucial aspect that enhances their financial independence.

ii) Cultural Preservation

Jhumkee's journey was not just about creating a brand, it was about preserving the rich cultural heritage of India while providing opportunities for women who had long been overlooked. She understood that traditional fabrics like ikkat and bandhani were not merely materials but are woven stories of heritage and identity. Ikkat, with its intricate patterns created through a unique dyeing technique, and bandhani, known for its vibrant colours and designs, became the heart of Ohrna's product line. By sourcing these fabrics locally, Jhumkee not only supported artisans from marginalized communities but also fostered pride in their craft. Each piece crafted from these fabrics reduced transportation emissions and supported regional economies, all while promoting environmentally friendly production practices. Moreover, she recognized the importance of traditional embroidery techniques like Kantha and Kasuti. By incorporating these methods into Ohrna's products, she ensured that these age-old crafts would not fade into obscurity. Jhumkee provided free training to artisans, allowing them to connect with their roots while gaining valuable skills. Each product became a canvas for local folklore and traditions, showcasing specific motifs that told stories of their cultural heritage. The collaboration among artisans not only strengthened their bonds but also reinforced their cultural identity. Ohrna creates stunning products that not only appeal to consumers but also help keep traditional crafts alive. Each item crafted tells a story of heritage, skill, and the artisans who pour their hearts into their work.

iii) Sustainability Practices

Sustainability was at the core of Ohrna's manufacturing process. Jhumkee prioritized biodegradable jute as the primary material for her products, reflecting a deep commitment to eco-friendliness. All materials used were free from harmful chemicals, ensuring safety for both artisans and consumers alike. Every product was crafted by trained rural women, preserving traditional techniques while providing them with

meaningful employment. Jhumkee cleverly reused scrap materials to minimize waste and maximize resource efficiency. Even packaging was reimaged; donated sarees were transformed into beautiful reusable pouches that showcased India's textile heritage while promoting upcycling. Jhumkee's philosophy is clear, sustainability should be at the forefront of business practices. By focusing on responsible design principles, Ohrna minimizes its environmental footprint while meeting the growing demand for ethical products.

iv) Empowering Artisans Through Community Engagement

The artisans at Ohrna have opportunities to sell their creations directly at exhibitions and through online platforms. This exposure allows them to interact with customers, receive feedback and gain confidence in their abilities. It's not just about creating jobs; it's about empowering these women to take ownership of their craft and make decisions about their livelihoods. Beyond individual empowerment, Ohrna fosters a strong sense of community among its artisans. They collaborate on projects, support each other in personal challenges, and celebrate each other's successes. This network strengthens their bonds and reinforces their cultural identity, a vital aspect of their journey.

C) Strategy for smooth operations

As Ohrna continues to grow, it exemplifies how businesses can operate sustainably while making meaningful contributions to society. Jhumkee's vision has transformed lives by providing unskilled women with the tools they need to thrive economically while preserving India's rich cultural heritage. Jhumkee developed several effective strategies for smooth functioning of Ohrna, those strategies focused on tailored training methods and market adaptation strategy, ensuring that the organization can thrive while fulfilling its mission.

i) Tailored Training Methods

Jhumkee understood that many of the women at Ohrna have little to no prior experience in crafting, Ohrna designed training workshops specifically tailored to their needs. These workshops are hands-on and practical, allowing participants to learn by doing. Jhumkee often visits villages to conduct these sessions personally, providing materials and teaching techniques step-by-step. Imagine a group of eager women gathered around Jhumkee, their faces lighting up as they learn to create beautiful products from jute and other sustainable materials. Ohrna employs an iterative training process that adapts based on feedback from the artisans. After each workshop, Jhumkee gathers input from the participants about what worked well and what could be improved. This feedback helps refine future training sessions, making them more effective and responsive to the artisans' needs. By documenting the learning process and creating a "Maker's Manual," Ohrna ensures that knowledge is shared and retained, helping artisans develop their skills over time.

ii) Market adaptation Strategy

To enter the market with minimal risk, Ohrna adopted a strategy of launching products in small batches. This approach allowed them to test new designs and gauge customer response before committing to larger production runs. By starting small, Ohrna adjusted based on feedback, ensuring that they meet market demands without overextending themselves financially. Further, the pandemic presented unique challenges and also opportunities for Ohrna i.e. as in Covid it was not possible to sell with traditional selling methods, the enterprise quickly pivoted to leverage online platforms for broader reach, through social media and e-commerce channels, Ohrna connected with customers globally. This not only helped to maintain sales during difficult times but also opened new markets for their products.

D) Challenges encountered and strategies applied

i) Market access challenge

Ms Jhumkee faced an issue of reaching potential customers not in India but also in international markets like the United States. The challenge was significant, but Jhumkee was determined, and it's rightly said where there is will there is a way and here, she participated in programs like NY NOW, which provided her with exposure and learning opportunities. This participation not only helped Ohrna gain visibility but also connected it with wholesale customers, expanding its reach beyond local boundaries.

ii) Supply Chain Challenge

Sourcing sustainable materials and managing shipping for international orders. Initially, managing shipping and handling international orders proved difficult, leading to delays and increased costs. To overcome this issue Jhumkee establishes long-term partnerships with suppliers and shipping companies.

This not only streamlined their operations but also ensured that they could maintain the quality of their products while meeting customer demands.

iii) Skill Development Challenge

One of the most pressing challenges Ohrna faced was the lack of prior skills among the rural women it aimed to empower. Many of these women had little experience in crafting or sewing, which meant that substantial investment in training programs was necessary. To address this, Ohrna developed hands-on workshops tailored specifically for beginners. These workshops focused on practical skills, allowing women to learn at their own pace. Jhumkee dedicated considerable time to working directly with artisans, providing guidance and support as they honed their skills.

iv) Manufacturability and Quality Challenge

As artisans gained confidence and proficiency, Ohrna encountered another challenge, maintaining product quality while ensuring that designs were manufacturable. Ensuring that all products meet high standards is crucial for building a strong brand reputation, however, this can be difficult when working with individuals who are still developing their skills. Striking a balance between creativity and practicality was essential so that artisans could produce items that met market standards without feeling overwhelmed. To manage this delicate balance, Ohrna implemented a feedback loop where artisans could share their experiences during production. This open communication allowed for adjustments in designs based on feasibility while preserving the artistic integrity of the products.

v) Marketing Challenges

Today, Ohrna faces a significant dilemma in the realm of digital marketing and customer engagement. The rapidly changing digital landscape poses challenges for connecting with audiences effectively. Constant updates to algorithms on platforms like Google and social media can drastically affect how content is ranked and displayed. Strategies that once worked may suddenly become ineffective, leaving Ohrna scrambling to adapt. Moreover, building authentic relationships with customers is increasingly challenging in a crowded digital space where consumers are bombarded with information from countless brands. Creating engaging content that stands out requires resources and creativity, something that can be limited for a small enterprise like Ohrna. The challenge lies in consistently producing content that not only showcases their products but also tells compelling stories about the artisans behind them.

Brand reach is another concern for Ohrna as it competes against larger companies with bigger marketing budgets. These brands often dominate paid advertising spaces, making it difficult for Ohrna to attract attention without significant investment in marketing efforts. As a result, Ohrna must focus on organic growth strategies like search engine optimization (SEO) and community engagement to enhance its visibility without incurring high costs. Ohrna implemented a strategy of focusing on organic marketing that will help to enhance visibility without high costs, Ohrna concentrated on organic growth strategies like search engine optimization (SEO) and community engagement. By creating engaging content that tells the stories of artisans, Ohrna aims to connect more meaningfully with customers despite competing against larger brands.

vi) Operational Challenges

Ohrna's operations are also impacted by several ongoing challenges that affect its growth potential. One major challenge is the slow pace of business due to the extensive training required for artisans. Since Ohrna focuses on training unskilled women, it usually takes two to three years before they can produce expected quality products independently. While this approach benefits artisans in the long run, it limits immediate revenue growth and creates uncertainty about future financial stability. Maintaining product quality while training new artisans is another hurdle. Jhumkee was aware that training unskilled women to skilled artisans is time-consuming, so she started working on simplification of the process, she broke down the training into smaller steps i.e. instead of teaching all at once, she started training on one skill, they started contributing faster by working on simple parts of the product making.

The next strategy to train new artisans was to pair them with experienced ones, as these experienced artisans will play the role of mentors, hence this way production and hands-on training will take place at the same time. Additionally, Jhumkee created simple instructional videos or visual guides in local languages, which helped women to learn faster. **Shifting from offline to online sales due to pandemic restrictions.**

The COVID-19 pandemic forced Ohrna to reevaluate its business model significantly. With physical interactions limited, they shifted focus towards online sales, here Ohrna created its own website and partnered with e-commerce platforms. The website and e-commerce platforms became a key part of

business strategy, allowing Ohrna to sell products directly to customers and showcase what they offer. It helped Ohrna to reach people not just locally but also internationally.

E) The Impact of Ohrna

Ohrna's Triple Impact - Social, Economic, and Environmental Change"

Ohrna's main motto is to bring meaningful change, transforming the lives of rural women and also preserving Indian culture and environment. Ohrna, as a social enterprise, has created a multifaceted impact.

i) Social Impact - Uplifting Women, Transforming Lives

Ohrna has offered free training in tailoring and traditional Kantha embroidery and empowered around 25 unskilled homemakers. This has enabled them to gain confidence and financial independence. A domestic helper named Sonam not only became a skilled artisan but also learned to read and write, and through her journey, she showcased thoughtful transformation. Even Ranjana managed to save enough money and purchased a two-wheeler, this symbolises freedom and independence. These stories prove Ohrna is more than a source of livelihood - it's a platform of self-discovery and empowerment.

ii) Economic Impact - Boosting Local Economies, Expanding Markets

Ohrna is contributing to boosting local economies by creating demand for handcrafted, ecofriendly products hence earning a steady revenue of around 10-12 lakhs in the fiscal year 20232024.

Ohrna generates 40% of sales through online platforms and by participating in international and national trade shows Ohrna manages the remaining i.e. 60% of sales. Ohrna has created a niche place for India's artisans' excellence in the international market.

iii) Sustainability Impact - Crafting a Greener Tomorrow

Ohrna's mission is to preserve the environment. Hence, Jhumkee uses natural materials like jute and even promotes India's traditional technique, thus reducing its environmental footprint. These eco-conscious practices align with consumers looking for sustainable products, thus, Ohrna contributes to the movement towards responsible consumption

iv) Reviving Cultural Heritage

Ohrna focuses on the traditional crafts like Kantha embroidery, which is at risk of fading away, hence this enterprise is trying to preserve India's rich artisanal heritage. These efforts ensure that our coming generation should remain in touch with the roots.

7. DISCUSSION

The case of Ohrna offers a compelling illustration of how a craft-based social enterprise can operationalize the core principles of social entrepreneurship as conceptualized by Dees (1998) and Zahra et al. (2009). At its heart, Ohrna aligns with Dees' view of social entrepreneurs as change agents who pursue mission-driven goals with entrepreneurial zeal and innovation, while simultaneously addressing persistent social challenges. Through its multifaceted approach—encompassing women's empowerment, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability—Ohrna exemplifies a model that seeks not only economic viability but also systemic transformation in rural India.

A central insight from Ohrna's model is its successful integration of empowerment through skill-building. This reflects the broader findings in the literature that social entrepreneurship, when intentionally designed, can serve as a vehicle for gender-inclusive development (Tripathy, Paliwal, & Singh, 2022). The training programs offered by Ohrna address structural barriers faced by rural women, such as limited education, mobility restrictions, and social norms that confine them to domestic roles. The organization not only teaches income-generating skills but also fosters agency, confidence, and leadership among its artisans—a layered process that transforms them from passive beneficiaries into active co-creators.

Moreover, the enterprise demonstrates how cultural heritage can be leveraged as a resource for economic and social development. By using traditional Indian crafts like Kantha, Ikkat, and Bandhani, Ohrna not only preserves intangible cultural assets but also injects them into global markets through contemporary product design. This practice reinforces Pathak and Mukherjee's (2020) argument that craft-based entrepreneurship can revitalize dying traditions when paired with modern marketing and distribution strategies. The use of biodegradable materials and upcycled packaging further aligns the enterprise with sustainability-driven practices, echoing Fhiri et al.'s (2021) advocacy for environmental stewardship within social business models.

Ohrna also provides an instructive case in adaptive strategy under resource constraints. The transition from offline to online sales during the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with the use of small-batch production to test market viability, illustrates the agility of small enterprises in navigating market disruptions. These adaptations resonate with the insights of Bansal, Garg, and Vasa (2023), who emphasize the importance of iterative development and responsive strategy in ensuring the longevity of social ventures.

Yet, the case also highlights significant operational and strategic challenges. Slow scalability due to extensive artisan training requirements, limited digital marketing resources, and competition with large brands in online marketplaces are ongoing concerns. These challenges point to a broader tension within social entrepreneurship: the need to maintain relational, community-driven practices while pursuing market-driven growth. As emphasized by François and Goi (2023), scaling social impact requires a careful balance between maintaining core social values and adapting to external commercial demands.

Importantly, Ohrna's journey contributes to the understanding of how micro-level social enterprises can inform macro-level change. By generating economic, social, environmental, and cultural value, the enterprise builds a strong case for policy interventions that support similar grassroots ventures. Its work demonstrates how decentralized, home-based production models can foster inclusive growth, particularly in contexts with high gender disparities and limited industrial infrastructure. If supported by enabling ecosystems—such as access to funding, incubation support, and market linkage—enterprises like Ohrna could influence larger development trajectories.

For educators and aspiring entrepreneurs, Ohrna offers a live case of how values-driven innovation can materialize into a viable business model. The enterprise reinforces the pedagogical view that social entrepreneurship is not merely a theoretical construct but a practical framework for creating meaningful change. It underscores the importance of empathy, community engagement, and cultural literacy as foundational components of social venture creation.

In sum, Ohrna does not represent a one-size-fits-all solution, but rather a context-specific innovation that emerges at the intersection of tradition and modernity, need and creativity. It provides a robust example of how entrepreneurial passion, when directed toward social and environmental goals, can foster inclusive, sustainable, and culturally resonant development in the Global South.

8. CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE SCOPE

CONCLUSION

The case of Ohrna illustrates the transformative potential of social entrepreneurship in addressing multifaceted challenges such as rural unemployment, gender inequality, cultural erosion, and environmental degradation. Through a holistic model that blends women's skill development, traditional craft preservation, and sustainable production, Ohrna serves as a compelling example of how values-driven business can generate both economic and social capital. The enterprise not only empowers women by providing them with marketable skills and economic opportunities but also reinvigorates endangered art forms by integrating them into contemporary product designs that appeal to global markets.

Ohrna's initiatives resonate strongly with established theoretical frameworks of social entrepreneurship (Dees, 1998; Zahra et al., 2009), particularly in their commitment to mission-driven innovation and stakeholder empowerment. The enterprise's success underscores the viability of decentralized, community-embedded business models that prioritize social impact over mere financial returns. In doing so, Ohrna contributes to a broader discourse on how localized, culturally rooted, and sustainable entrepreneurship can become a powerful engine for inclusive development in the Global South, particularly in the Indian context.

Limitations

While the case study of Ohrna offers valuable insights, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the study is **based on a single case**, which limits the generalizability of findings. While Ohrna provides a rich and representative example, other social enterprises may face different structural, cultural, or regional challenges. Second, the research **relies on qualitative data**—primarily interviews, field observations, and secondary reports. Although this approach allows for depth and contextual understanding, it may lack the empirical rigor of quantitative validation, such as longitudinal impact assessments or large-scale surveys.

Another limitation is the **potential bias in narrative sources**, especially given the founder-led perspective. While primary insights are invaluable, there may be subjective interpretations that do not fully capture dissenting voices, artisan perspectives, or market-level critiques. Additionally, the evolving nature of the

enterprise means that the data may quickly become outdated as the business scales or pivots in response to future challenges.

Future Scope

This study opens multiple avenues for future research. One key area is **comparative analysis**—future scholars can examine similar craft-based social enterprises in other Indian states or countries to identify patterns, challenges, and contextual differences. Such comparative studies could highlight best practices, replication strategies, and policy frameworks that support social entrepreneurship ecosystems.

Second, there is potential to conduct a **quantitative impact assessment** of Ohrna's work, including metrics related to women's income growth, household well-being, literacy levels, self-efficacy, and skill retention. Such data would strengthen the empirical grounding of the enterprise's social return on investment (SROI).

Future studies may also explore **consumer behavior and market perception** of ethically produced, handcrafted products. This would help enterprises like Ohrna understand demand dynamics and improve branding, pricing, and value communication in both domestic and international markets.

Lastly, as Ohrna continues to expand its digital presence, researchers could analyze the **role of digital platforms in enabling rural entrepreneurship**, particularly in terms of reach, visibility, customer engagement, and e-commerce capacity building

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