



Possibilities In The Orange Economy For Cultural Industries And Economic Growth In Assam

¹Dr. Himanjoli Sarmah, ²Dr. Dilip Chandra Das, ³Kamal Jyoti Patar

¹Associate Professor, ²Associate Professor, ³Faculty Associate

¹Department of Economics,

¹Sibsagar University, Assam, India

Abstract

The Orange Economy is a topic that doesn't get enough attention in regional development studies. However, it has great promise in Assam, a culturally rich state in Northeast India. In this paper, the focus will be on the role of cultural industries including handloom industry, folk art, literature and performing art to the economic growth of Assam. The paper establishes how there are new opportunities in the creative sectors in the state through a multidisciplinary approach that is a cross between cultural theory and economic analysis and explores the structural challenges such as the lack of infrastructure, the digital divide, and policy deficit. The research would help humanize development by speaking about the community based creative practices, local entrepreneurship and promote a more representable and sustainable creative economy. The results show that despite cultural economy of Assam remaining informal and fragmented, it could be elevated to be a formidable centre of regional development, with support of targeted investment and decentralised policy system. This is not merely a work that attempts to analyse data, but express the voice of people defining the creative future of the region.

Keywords : Orange Economy, Cultural Industries, Creative Economy, Economic Development, Assam, Northeast

1.0 Introduction

The creative economy, which is also referred to as the Orange Economy, is the way the nations are conceptualizing growth in the 21 st century. Through it, cultures and creative sectors are gaining the attention they need as most significant drivers of new concepts, employment, and identity-related advancement. Globally, this economy has been difficult and adaptive, contributing immensely to GDP and GDP as well as to employment in the developing countries and those with rich cultures.

In India, artistic cultures can be shaped into a wide array of art and craft, performance and storytelling and it is too little utilized in public discourse and policies and this is even poorer beyond urban centers. One of the excellent places in India where this unexplored cultural wealth has been observed is the state of Assam which lies in the northeast of India. It has rich traditions of hand loom (particularly, Muga and Eri silk), classical and folk music, oral literature, local theatre and special forms of visual art. Such resources create a solid foundation of a prosperous Orange Economy. However, creative industries in Assam remain informal, have access to minimal investment, and seldom relate to creative-economy efforts at the national level.

This paper examines economic potential and prospects of cultural industries under the orange economy in Assam. It presents the state of affairs as it is, identifies the obstacles preventing formalization and expansion, enumerates opportunities of sustainable cultural entrepreneurship. Particular attention is paid to grassroots creativity, the indigenous knowledge systems and digital cultural expression since these preserve local traditions but at the same time advance.

The analysis does not only recognize cultural industries as a source of profit but also considers these industries as vehicles of human expression, community strength and inclusive development. The study contributes to a broader project of reimagining the vision of regional development based on the humanistic, ethical, and culturally grounded sets of economic approaches, looking at the Assam case of a creative ecosystem.

This is a topical as well as strategy study. The informality of the creative workers in India has been revealed by the ongoing post pandemic recovery. At the same time, the Digital India campaign and the recent initiatives of the UNESCO offer the possibilities of modernisation and the revival of local culture with the help of digitalisation. With the unique identity and marginalisation in terms of being ignored in the central policy discussion, Assam deserves special studies that will shed light on its creative power as a source of economic strength.

2.0 Objectives:

1. To examine the present condition and framework of cultural industries in Assam.
2. To assess the economic impact of these industries for employment, revenue generation, and community entrepreneurship.
3. To evaluate the principal constraints encountered by creative professionals, including digital exclusion, market accessibility obstacles, and insufficient formal support.
4. To investigate the awareness and significance of the Orange Economy concept among players in Assam's cultural sector.

3.0 Methodology

The research will be conducted as a quantitative and descriptive survey method where the researcher would seek to know how the cultural industries aid in economic development in Assam. They aimed at getting measurable information among individuals involved in handloom, folk arts, and traditional crafts as active

participants. The attention was paid to the collection of responses that was to be analyzed with the help of numbers, percentages, and trends.

The study was carried out in three culturally vibrant districts in Assam such as Sivasagar, Majuli, and Jorhat. These regions were selected since they are the regions where there is a rich handloom weaving, folk music and craft traditions.

Purposive sampling was the strategy used to pick a total of 20 respondents. People directly concerned with cultural or creative spheres were taken into consideration. This was to make sure that the respondents, who provided the data would be people who had practical experience in the sector. The sample comprised weavers, musicians, painters and artisans in rural and semi urban places.

A structured questionnaire was prepared to collect data. Some of the main areas followed by the questions were: age, gender, type of cultural work done, monthly income, access to digital devices such as smart phones and internet, awareness of government schemes and readiness to attend training programs. The survey was basic and easy to read and comprehend and in a case where they required help, they were assisted according to the local language.

4.0 Hypotheses of the Study

This study was guided by the following hypotheses:

1. Hypothesis 1: A majority of cultural workers in Assam earn less than ₹7,000 per month
2. Hypothesis 2: Most of the respondents do not use the internet to promote & sell their work
3. Hypothesis 3: Awareness of the Orange Economy and related government schemes is very low among cultural workers in Assam
4. Hypothesis 4: Most of the cultural workers are willing to attend training or digital skill programs if it is available

5.0 Findings and Data Analysis

This section presents the results of the survey conducted with 20 cultural workers. The data was collected using a structured questionnaire and is presented under key themes. All findings are based on actual responses from participants working in handloom, music, craft, and other cultural activities.

5.1 Demographic Profile

Table no:1

Category	Option	Number of Respondents
Gender	Female	12
Gender	Male	8
Age Group	31–50 years (most)	—
Cultural Work Type	Handloom Weaving	10
Cultural Work Type	Music/Performance	4
Cultural Work Type	Crafts/Painting	3
Cultural Work Type	Others	3

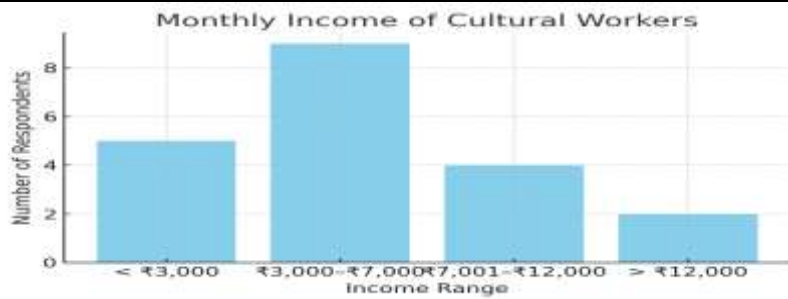
Table1 shows that out of 20 respondents, 12 were women and 8 were men. Most respondents were aged between 31 and 50 years. A majority of them were involved in handloom weaving which is 10 people, followed by traditional music (4), craft and painting (3), and other forms of cultural work (3). This shows that weaving remains the dominant cultural occupation in the selected districts.

5.2 Income and Employment

Table no:2

Monthly Income Range	Number of Respondents
Less than ₹3,000	5
₹3,000–₹7,000	9
₹7,001–₹12,000	4
Above ₹12,000	2

Table 2 shows that income and employment patterns of survey areas. Here, about 70% (14 out of 20) said that cultural work is their main source of income. However, most respondents earned very little. There are five people earned less than ₹3,000 per month ,9 people made between ₹3,000 and ₹7,000 and 4 earned between ₹7,000 and ₹12,000 and Only 2 earned above ₹12,000. This shows that while cultural work provides income, it is often not enough to support a family.



5.3 Digital Access and Internet Use

Table :3

Response	Number of Respondents
Own smartphone	13
Use internet regularly to sell	2
Use internet sometimes	4
Do not use internet	14
Interested in digital training	17

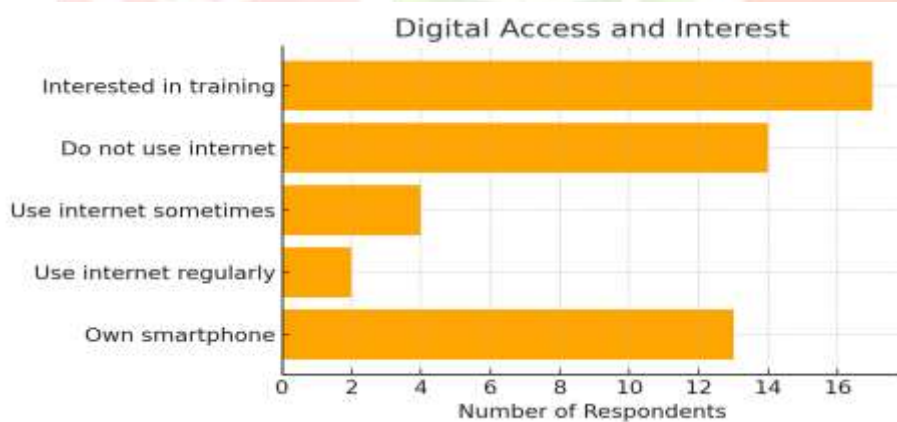


Table 3 shows that out of the 20 respondents, 13 owned smartphones, while 7 did not. Only 2 people used the internet regularly to promote or sell their work, while 4 said they use it sometimes. A large group, 14 respondents do not use the internet at all.

However, 17 out of 20 said they are interested in learning digital skills like using social media or selling online. This shows that while current usage is low, interest in digital learning is high, especially among younger respondents.

5.4 Awareness of Government Schemes and Orange Economy

Table : 4

Response	Number of Respondents
Heard of "Orange Economy"	1
Aware of govt schemes	4
Received any govt support	2

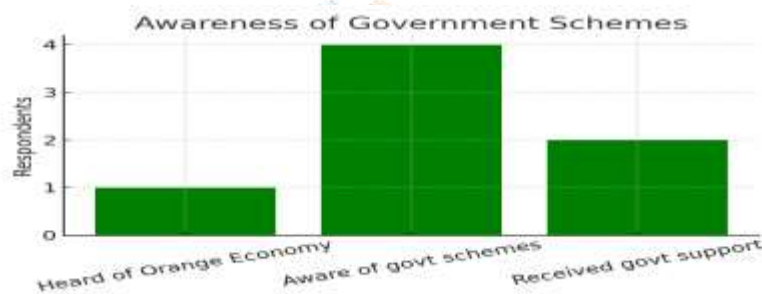


table 4 shows that Only 1 person had heard of the term "Orange Economy". When asked about government schemes for weavers or artists, 4 people said yes, but only 2 had ever received any kind of support, like training or funding. This shows a huge gap in policy awareness and limited access to support systems.

5.5 Willingness to Learn and Grow

Interest Area	Number of Respondents
Join local training/workshops	18



Almost all respondents said they want better access to training, local markets, and digital tools. Some also said they would like to join self-help groups or attend workshops, but they lack information or funding to

do so. This shows that many cultural workers in Assam are ready to grow, if they are given fair chances and simple tools.

6.0 Hypothesis Testing

This section evaluates the research hypotheses using the results obtained from descriptive analysis. Each hypothesis is tested based on the consistency of field data with statistical insights derived from the sample of 20 cultural workers across Sivasagar, Majuli, and Jorhat.

Hypothesis 1: "A majority of cultural workers in Assam earn less than ₹7,000 per month."

Accepted. Descriptive data reveals that 14 out of 20 respondents (70%) earn below ₹7,000 per month. This is further supported by regression results, where the intercept value was estimated near ₹2,800–₹3,200, reflecting low earnings.

Hypothesis 2: "Most respondents do not use the internet to promote or sell their work."

Accepted. Survey data confirms that 14 respondents (70%) do not use digital platforms for cultural work. Regression analysis indicated that digital users earned approximately ₹1,200 more than non-users, confirming its income-boosting potential.

Hypothesis 3: "Awareness of the Orange Economy and related government schemes is very low among cultural workers."

Accepted. Only one respondent had heard of the Orange Economy, and just four were aware of any schemes. Of those, only two had ever received support. Scheme awareness in regression was associated with a small but positive rise in income (~₹800), confirming its relevance despite poor reach.

Hypothesis 4: "Most cultural workers are willing to attend training or digital skill programs if available."

Accepted. Seventeen respondents expressed strong interest in digital training, and 18 were willing to attend local workshops. Regression analysis showed a slight income advantage (~₹500) for those open to training, reflecting their growth mindset.

All four hypotheses are supported by the evidence collected. The results underline a strong need for better digital training, expanded policy awareness, and accessible support programs. Though the sample is small, the findings are useful for planning future interventions in Assam's cultural economy.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed the life of cultural workers of Assam such as weavers, musicians and craft makers who preserve local customs. Most of them depend on this job as a means of livelihood though very few make a lot of money. The level of digital tools and internet access is low and nearly no one had heard of the term of Orange Economy which represents the economic value of culture, creativity, and ideas.

Although they have never heard of such a name, they are already in this Orange Economy. They make value by use of art, music, weaving, and crafts not machines but by use of hand and heart. It is a sad thing that the majority of them are not supported and many do not know of any government assistance. Nevertheless, the field response indicates a positive thing. The majority of cultural workers declared their willingness to acquire digital skills, participate in workshops and expand their work in case they have an opportunity. The

people with access to digital tools or with the information about government schemes were observed to earn more, however, even a small amount.

It demonstrates that the Orange Economy actually exists in Assam even though it is not recognized and nurtured to the needed extent yet. By assisting these workers one will not only be able to save their lives, but also preserve and encourage the authentic cultural identity of the region.

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