

Blueprint for “*Creating Database through workshops and performance documentation for developing teaching methodologies/archiving of the form and contents: A case study on Oggukatha Performance Cultures and Rituals*” under the Scheme Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India, sanctioned under Sanction Letter No: 28-6/ICH-Scheme/2/2013-14/13617, Dated: 31st. March, 2014. **Purpose:** *Traditional Folk Theatre(Oggu Katha), Restoring the Nuances of a Performance Tradition.*



Photos: *Oggu katha* in different contexts and styles.

INTRODUCTION

Title of the Project

Creating Database through workshops and performance documentation for developing teaching methodologies/archiving of the form and contents: A case study on Oggukatha Performance Cultures and Rituals

There are many intangible Cultural heritages in the area of folk theatrical performance traditions in different Telugu Speaking regions, but the existence and survival of those forms are now in dilemma. Most of them use regional community specific, language and ethos. Interestingly many of the times the content of the themes centers on popular epics and folklores. All of them follow an informal system of teaching training process in transferring the performance knowledge to the younger generations and use codified/stylized theatrical presentations which blends Music, Dance, Drama, and Acrobatics. In this category we can see the traditional Folk theatre form called "Oggukatha" which is an ancient narrative form of Telugu speaking regions this literally means, 'oggu tales', from oggu, a small hand drum associated with Lord Shiva. It is performed by the pastoral communities like: Kuruma and Golla (Yadav's), of the Deccan plateau. These tradition-loving and ritual-performing troops move from place to place, narrating the stories of their caste gods. Oggus Poojari's are the traditional priests of the Yadav's and perform the marriage of Mallanna with Bhramaramba. Oggukatha sustained from several years ago with its immense way of performing in different contexts by using Hindu mythologies and later general issues of the society. There are more than 100 Oggukatha groups exists now, each comprising with 4 to 6 performers. Late. Middey Ramulu and Chukka Sattaiah were the most famous who made the form more popular at national venues.

The performers acquire skills by observation of senior performers which is ritual based, and having an oral text. The performance and its training comprises with ten types of Singing styles, Dance movements, Makeup, Costumes, unique use of musical orchestration with

instruments etc. Improvisation and Imagination are the other major key elements in this form. This makes the learning process more tedious and time consuming .As time is changing there are many changes are going on in this age-old tradition and there is a need to develop proper attention towards teaching and training methods of this form, in order to make it transferred to the next generation .So and immediate necessity of documentation on Preparations and Performances of the tradition needs to be done along with a critical analysis of the existing informal mode of teaching and training ,this attempt will be more meaningful contribution for the Performing arts academics of our country.

Theatrical elements in Oggukatha: the performers acquires skills by observation of senior performers, the performance comprises with ten types of Singing styles, Dance movements, Makeup, Costumes, unique musical instruments. Improvisation and Imagination are the other major key elements in this form. Singing and dance tradition, unique instruments (Special), ritual based, oral text. Other features of folk theatre forms are

ICH•BLUE PRINT FROM Dr.G.Kumara Swamy
Outdoor stages, mostly in the village squares and open places of temple yards.

- Song-speech-dance sequence.
- Percussion string and wind instruments.
- Performer as narrator and character.
- Purvaranga or invocatory session.
- Female impersonation.
- A comic relief character.
- Audience participation in the performance.

Present context: there is a need to develop proper teaching and training method by evolving through workshops and performances of this form, and need to bring some text books for academic purpose, and documentation on Preparations and Performances can be more meaningful contribution for preserving and safeguarding this performance tradition.

OBJECTIVE

Aims and Objectives:

The proposed project focuses at creating data/Documentation for the future usage of register of (For Oggukatha) Intangible Cultural Heritage at state level.

- Conducting Workshops and Documenting Performances
- Supporting the Chosen Group to travel and showcase their skills in the different schools/colleges.
- Hosting seminars for academic collaborations through Integration of education and culture
- Database creation and dissemination for Safeguarding the form
- Introduce the different prospective and possibilities of imparting this form into more academic level studies.
- Finding Reasons for not much development of methods of teaching and training of this form can be studied from the prospective of the context and relevance, patronage, social functions of the form, artists, and audience.
- Trying to write about it, academically research and study, writing helps that forms to come out and Re-visiting the forms for long term sustenance in 21st century.
- Conducting Interviews with the performers and their families.
- Analysing the Interviews and transcribing the information then preparing for Visual text.
- Preparing Policy document to be submitted to the Dept.of Culture for initiating a Publication on teaching and training methodology of this form can be more useful for future Performing arts academics and Researchers.

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IMPLEMENTATION

Research and methodology:

A wide range of research methods would be used to gather the data. These include

1. Participant observation of the performances that take place at different parts of the region on different contexts which are still continuing.
2. Conducting Workshops and seminars for school children to explore the form and the pattern of performing styles.
3. Published and unpublished performances, publicity material, photographs, audio-video records, interviews and write ups on performances, reviews appeared in news papers, journals, magazines etc.
4. Structured and unstructured interviews with all sorts of creative groups ranging from artists, technicians, Organizers, audiences etc. The relationship between performer-audience changing scenarios also studied.

Field works for data collection coupled up with audio and video documentation for further analysis using multiple performance theories. Interview based method by visiting landmark performing places and meeting performers can bring the nuances of preparations of pre performance process.



Photos (preliminary level) related to the project/art form (for the intended website)



Photo: popular *Oggukatha* group performing the contents of the stories at Indian School of Business, Hyderabad under scholar's directions.



Photo: popular *Oggukatha* group performing the contents of the stories at Indian School of Business, Hyderabad under scholar's directions.



Photo: Young actors learning process in class room



Photo: Professional Oggu katha Group performed at "NALSAR LAW UNIVERSITY then scholar was interacted with the group.



Photo: Young actors in Karimnagar learning the singing and movement styles of “Oggukatha”

LOCALE

Karimnagar District and Warangal District in Telangana state.

Language: English

TIME FRAME

For 2013-2014 the workshops will be commenced in the months of August-September months 2014 with selected Oggukatha Groups on teaching methods/Documentation in Karimnagar District, Telangana State.

Note: If this project gets more financial support from ICH Scheme then the research will be extended for more one year for creating visual texts and academic materials/Documentations.

WORK PLAN

- Through conducting a Workshop on Teaching and Training of Performance content and process by documenting the process, it will be analyzed and transcribed for visual text. Along with the text and Video document together can be sent to the ICH office.
- If this project gets more financial support for One year then: During the first six months a random survey conducted to get the basic data like personalities involved in the performance practices of *oggu Katha*.
- Through video documentation process the performances, interviews with eminent artists and other personalities involved in setting new trends with transforming and re inventing process of performances.
- The Field work and video documentation would be completed in duration of 4 to 6 months apart from the initial 1 month of preparatory work. The remaining 6 months would be spent on analyzing the data, editing the video tapes, drafting a soft copy of the report along with a video document.
- Re documenting the existing material with the aim of developing curriculums for educational usage.

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CONCLUSION

Proposed outcomes of the project:

Major outcomes are: the Workshop with major groups creates discussion among the academicians and art scholars for developing the teaching and training method in this age old form and also the video documentation with interviews of major Guru's in this form helps ICH to look after further development in research and contributions. Also in future Creating material for Print visual text, documentation for archival use, models of learning the form and Developing sample model curriculum, preserving the History of oggukatha Tradition, Finding the contexts and performance practice with different themes.

This project will also be a model for knowing the movements and transformations of performance practices of intangible Cultural Heritages of India. Scholarly interventions through interactions will empower the community and the artists of the Oggukatha form, they will also critically think and analyses the reasons behind the transformations. This project will also helps in recreating and rejuvenating the other chosen forms.

Thanking You

Yours Sincerely

Dr.G.Kumara Swamy

M.P.A,Ph.D

C/o Dr.Joly Puthussery

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Center for Folk Culture Studies

University of Hyderabad

Gachibowli, Hyderabad-500046

Telangana state.

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PERSONNEL JUSTIFICATION

My initial exposure in the traditional forms of the Telangana region, acquired modern concepts and techniques from the University is building my confidence to realize my ambition I am a performer of folk form and I started to learn the medium of theatre arts in the university. This exposure helped me to understand the concepts of modern/Contemporary theatre. As an actor/Director I have the proven performances in my credit, I have the experience of teaching in colleges and workshops within india and abroad.

Academic potential:

Completed basic education in Telugu language medium and nurtured in the Performing skills with the **OGGUKATHA** (a folk art form of a pastoral community in Andhra Pradesh) performers in a traditional family structure. I have continued theatre education after graduating in computer applications at Karimanagar. To learn and practice theatre led me to Hyderabad city. Also completed Post Graduate Diploma in Theatre arts at Potti Sriramulu Telugu University, Yoga Teacher Training course from Gandhi Gyan Mandir, Certificate Programme in *Beijing Opera Performer Training from National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts (NACTA)*, Beijing, China and Master of Performing Arts

(Theatre Arts) degree from University Of Hyderabad. To my credit I have 65 theatre productions and 11 short films, two feature films and a heart full of ambition to continue.

Conferences and international presentations:

Participated in UNESCO- International and European Symposium on evaluating the impact of **Art and Cultural Education** at Paris, France in 2007, Presented Research papers in 5 international and 2 national conferences, Selected for **INTER-ASIA SUMMER CAMP** at SEOUL (SOUTH KOREA) and presented a Paper in June-2008. Selected for Beijing opera Performer Training Programme on **Chinese Govt.Sponsorship**. worked in 3 International performances in China-2009 and at Singapore, Malaysia in 2007.

Teaching and Publications:

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Taught *Indian classical theatre, Folk Performance Traditions* acting/teaching/training classes at various workshops and colleges. Giving guest lectures at various places of Andhra Pradesh and also having several Publications in account.

Awards:

Awarded Inter- Asia Cultural Studies Society, Summer Camp Travel Grant,-2008, South Korea. Chinese Government Scholarship Award for Beijing Opera Performer Training at National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts(NACTA) in 2009, UGC/NET -Junior Research Fellowship (JRF) 2006-2008 and Senior Research Fellowship (SRF) 2009-2011 University Grants Commission, Govt.of India. Young Artist Scholarship by Ministry of Human Resource Development, Dept.of Culture, Govt. of India, 2004.Merit Scholarships - 2003-2005 by University of Hyderabad. International Federation of Theatre Research Bursary award in 2008 for the annual conference at Seoul, South Korea.

My special interests are: yoga practice, learning mimicry, dance, singing, music

and to know the different performance traditions of the world, all these helped me

in molding myself as a Performer and Research scholar in the field.

I am the one from our traditional performing community of Telangana state Completed doctoral level studies in the field of Theatre arts. I have the fortune to represent my research work through paper presentations at national and international venues. I have the experience of Traditional acting, because of folk family tradition from my childhood I performed along with my father. Later by theatre academics I got experience in the modern concepts. Here in the academics I have learned different methods and approaches towards Cultural studies and performance research.

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I am sure my proposed study will definitely open up the knowledge domain and contributes for safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage of India.



Photo: major Instrument in *Oggu Katha* called *Oggu DoLu*

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COVERING LETTER

Date: 25-8-2014

To

The ICH-Scheme section

Sangeet Natak Academi

New Delhi.

Sub: First Report of Research Project on Oggu katha *“Creating Database through workshops and performance documentation for developing teaching methodologies/archiving of the form and contents: A case study on Oggukatha Performance Cultures and Rituals”*

Ref: Scheme: Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India,
Sanction Letter No: 28-6/ICH-Scheme/2/2013-14/13617

Dated: 31st. March, 2014. *Purpose: Traditional Folk Theatre (Oggu Katha), Restoring the Nuances of a Performance Tradition.*

Respected Sir/Madam,

I am Dr.G.Kumara Swamy from Hyderabad, here by sending the First report of my research project got under ICH-Scheme. Please provide and extend your support further more for achieving the total objectives of this project.

Thanking you

Yours sincerely

Dr.G.Kumara Swamy

Please find the enclosures:

- **Detailed Project Report work**
- **Teaching –Learning process Video DVD**
- **Interviews with the Group video CD**
- **Photo graphs and CD**

FIRST REPORT FOR ICH-SCHEME

***TITLE:** “Creating Database through workshops and performance documentation for developing teaching methodologies/archiving of the form and contents: A case study on Oggukatha Performance Cultures and Rituals”*

Scheme: Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India, **Sanction Letter No:** 28-6/ICH-Scheme/2/2013-14/13617

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Contents

Introduction

Theatrical elements in oggukatha

Present context

Aims and objectives

Implementation

The work done So far

Findings in the workshop and while interviews

Actor training in folk context

The work produced

Acting skills in oggu katha

Knowledge transmission in oggu katha

Folk theatre context: horizontal transmission model

Works to be done

Areas Tealgana mapping

Time frame

Proposed outcomes of the project

Personnel justification

INTRODUCTION

There are many intangible Cultural heritages in the area of folk theatrical performance traditions in different Telugu Speaking regions, but the existence and survival of those forms are now in dilemma. Most of them use regional community specific, language and ethos. Interestingly many of the times the content of the themes centers on popular epics and folklores. All of them follow an informal system of teaching training process in transferring the performance knowledge to the younger generations and use codified/stylized theatrical presentations which blends Music, Dance, Drama, and Acrobatics. In this category we can see the traditional Folk theatre form called“Oggukatha”which is an ancient narrative form of Telugu speaking regions this literally means, 'oggu tales', from oggu, a small hand drum associated with Lord Shiva. It is performed by the pastoral communities like: Kuruma and Golla(Yadav's), of the Deccan plateau. These tradition-loving and ritual-performing troops move from place to place, narrating the stories of their caste gods. Oggus Poojari's are the traditional priests of the Yadav's and perform the marriage of Mallanna with Bhramaramba. Oggukatha sustained from several years ago with its immense way of performing in different contexts by using Hindu mythologies and later general issues of the society. There are more than 100 Oggukatha groups exists now, each comprising with 4 to 6 performers. Late.Middey Ramulu and Chukka Sattaiah were the most famous who made the form more popular at national venues.

THEATRICAL ELEMENTS IN OGGUKATHA: The performers acquire skills by observation of senior performers which is ritual based, and having an oral text. The performance and its training comprises with ten types of Singing styles, Dance movements, Makeup, Costumes, unique use of musical orchestration with instruments etc. Singing and dance tradition, unique instruments (Special), ritual based, oral text. Improvisation and Imagination are the other major key elements in this form. This makes the learning process more tedious and time consuming .As time is changing there are many changes are going on in this age-old tradition and there is a need to develop proper attention towards teaching and training methods of this form, in order to make it transferred to the next generation. So and immediate necessity of documentation on Preparations and Performances of the

tradition needs to be done along with a critical analysis of the existing informal mode of teaching and training ,this attempt will be more meaningful contribution for the Performing arts academics of our country.

Other features of folk theatre forms are:

- Outdoor stages, mostly in the village squares and open places of temple yards.
- Song-speech-dance sequence.
- Percussion string and wind instruments.
- Performer as narrator and character.
- Purvaranga or invocatory session.
- Female impersonation.
- A comic relief character.
- Audience participation in the performance.

PRESENT CONTEXT: there is a need to develop proper teaching and training method by evolving through workshops and performances of this form, and need to bring some text books for academic purpose, and documentation on Preparations and Performances can be more meaningful contribution for preserving and safeguarding this performance tradition.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The proposed project focuses at creating data/Documentation for the future usage of register of (For Oggukatha) Intangible Cultural Heritage at state level.

- Conducting Workshops and Documenting Performances
- Supporting the Chosen Group to travel and showcase their skills in the different schools/colleges.
- Hosting seminars for academic collaborations through Integration of education and culture

- Database creation and dissemination for safeguarding the form
- Introduce the different prospective and possibilities of imparting this form into more academic level studies.
- Finding Reasons for not much development of methods of teaching and training of this form can be studied from the prospective of the context and relevance, patronage, social functions of the form, artists, and audience.
- Trying to write about it, academically research and study, writing helps that forms to come out and Re-visiting the forms for long term sustenance in 21st century.
- Conducting Interviews with the performers and their families.
- Analyzing the Interviews and transcribing the information then preparing for Visual text.
- Preparing Policy document to be submitted to the Dept.of Culture for initiating a Publication on teaching and training methodology of this form can be more useful for future Performing arts academics and Researchers.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Research and methodology:

A wide range of research methods would be used to gather the data. These include

1. Participant observation of the performances that take place at different parts of the region on different contexts which are still continuing.
2. Conducting Workshops and seminars for school children to explore the form and the pattern of performing styles.
3. Published and unpublished performances, publicity material, photographs, audio-video records, interviews and write ups on performance reviews appeared in news papers, journals, magazines etc.

4. Structured and unstructured interviews with all sorts of creative groups ranging from artists, technicians, Organizers, audiences etc. The relationship between performer-audience changing scenarios also studied.

Field works for data collection coupled up with audio and video documentation for further analysis using multiple performance theories. Interview based method by visiting landmark performing places and meeting performers can bring the nuances of preparations of pre performance process.

THE WORK DONE

First phase work done so far: Done filed work for one month and identified the traditional groups/Gurus's/Group Leaders of "Komuravelli Mallannaa Oggukatha" / "Oggukatha families at Komuravelli temple" then Conducted a 3 days' workshop at Karimnagar which is a major hub for oggukatha families in telangana state. These workshops went on in two different months i.e. May and in the month of august have taken. The selected entire oggukatha group also interviewed by the scholar to bring out their prospective of present situation they are facing in terms of keeping the tradition authentic.

FINDINGS IN THE WORKSHOP AND WHILE INTERVIEWS:

Actor training in Folk context:

The *Natyasastra* provided guidelines to our classical Indian drama, but said very little about the folk forms. Only some references to popular folk form like Rasaka and Charchari are made. They are considered as elementary and undeveloped because of their limited number of characters and the total dependence on music and drama, because of its association with temples and aristocratic families remained cut-off from the mainstream of Indian life whereas folk drama, on the other hand, was mainly oral and enjoyed the patronage of the common man. The only rightful place of folk drama received was in the *Jaina Shastra* where they were vividly described.

The more outstanding of the folk theatres are still alive through in an attenuated form. The Jatra of Bengal, the Oggukatha of Telangana, the Bhagavatam of the South, the Bhavai of Gujarat, Rasalila of Saurashtra, the Nautanki of the North are perhaps some of

the better known of these folk styles. They are important because while the classical Indian stage which attained a very high standard and refinement has all but disappeared the folk form still continues not only to occupy a definite place in the cultural life of the country today, but even acts as an inspiration in the current revival of the theater and is being absorbed in the new dramatic forms that are being forged in this theatre renaissance, all of which bears eloquent testimony to its vitality. Folk theatre represents the people in their natural habitat, with all their contradiction and multifarious activities. It gives a glimpse style of speech, music, dance, dress, behavior, humor, proverbs, wit and wisdom. It contains a rich store of mythological heroes, medieval romances, chivalric tales, social customs, beliefs, and legends. In order to understand the Colorful diversity and unity of India, it is important to see the folk theatre in its natural setting.

THE WORK PRODUCED

The following work analyzed and produced after deep understanding of raw materials through interviews exerts and Workshop teaching then developed following structures.

Self-learning and training of the actors is the major factor in the folk theatre. With reference to Purana's and Epics, the local folk actors are learning new techniques and also mixing the local art forms to improve their performing skills. In this context the actors improved by using their own knowledge within their own society. The guidance and instruction and ratification are justified by their society; only imitation from the nature made folk actor's skills in the folk forms more relevant to the society

Main elements used by the folk actor are

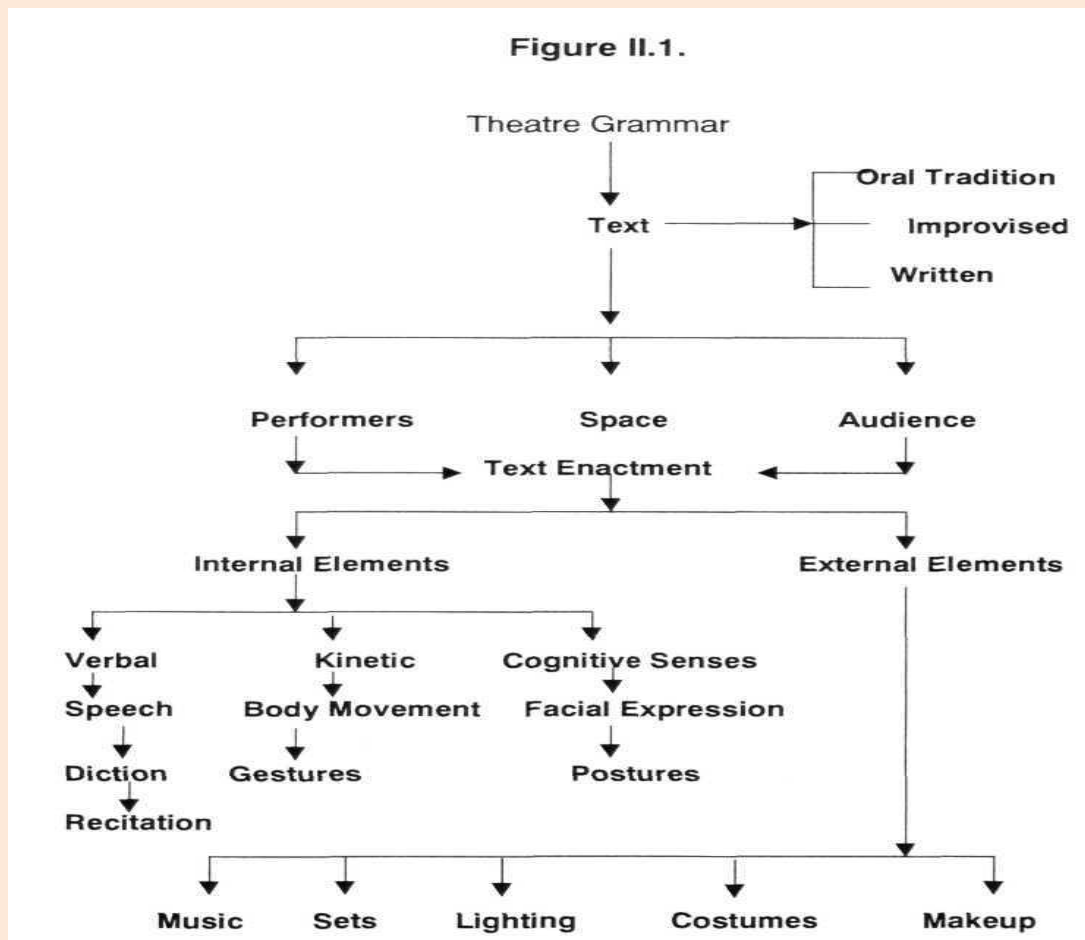
- Singing
- Dancing
- Dialogues
- Martial arts
- Using musical instruments

Hence so many folk forms are evolved in India on the basis of epics and social life of the people. For every form there is a background of different context developed in different

times. According to that, the actors got trained in that context based on different elements required in those particular folk performances.

Naturally the basis for all the modern concepts of acting has the roots of folk forms. According to the time and new inventions of methods and techniques; the folk elements changed its style and the way civilized people separated the theatre for their convenience by following the *Natyasastra* and other classics. But still the originality of the folk forms got developing through different times.

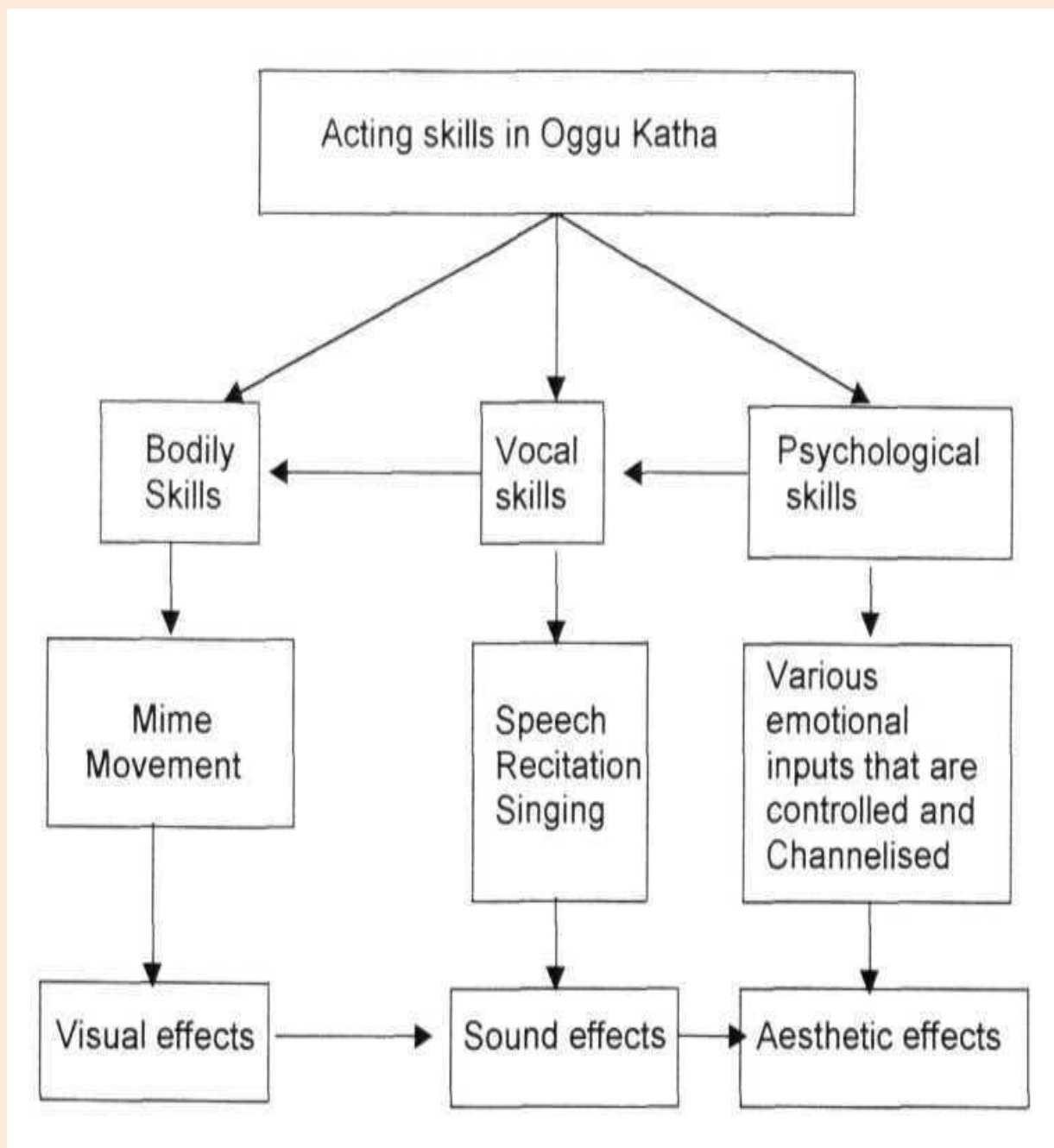
The inner elements that are demanded by actor for the enactment are - The oral, speech, diction, recitation and singing. The kinesis - use of space through movement, rhythmic movement, and the cognitive inputs - facial expression postures and gestures. The external elements are music, set design, lighting, costumes and make-up. These are given in figure.



Some commonality brought the performers and audience together to share their lived experience through theatrical expression. The themes therefore of folk theatre are mostly connected with the gods, goddesses, epic heroes and legendary personalities. The indigenous techniques of performance evolved in folk theatre on the improvised space in the temple yards and village squares are very much common. Generally the folk theatre has certain features common both in content and form. The following are some of them.

- A. Outdoor stages, mostly in the village squares and open places of temple yards.
- B. Song-speech-dance sequence.
- C. Percussion string and wind instruments. D. Performer as narrator and character.
- E. Purvaranga or invocatory session. F. Female impersonation.
- G. A comic relief character.
- H. Audience participation in the performance.

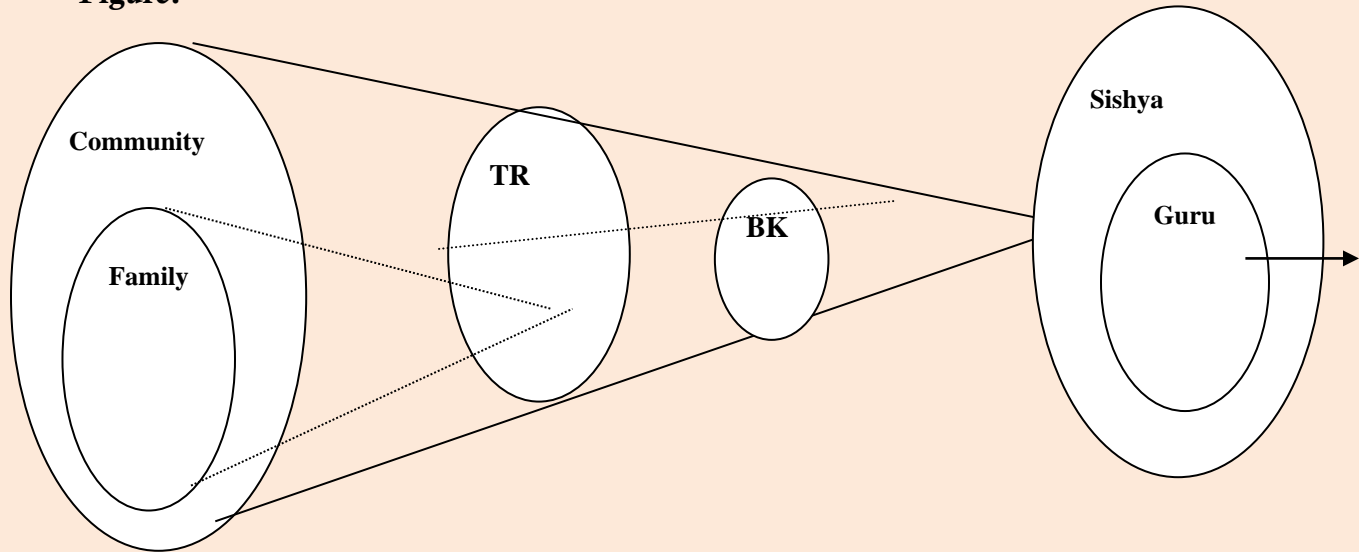
ACTING SKILLS IN OGGU KATHA: Actors in this form must acquire the skills of all set like vocal, physical, Psychological, singing, movement etc so that they make the total performance into comprehensive show. The major aspect of this research also the focus on that how an actor in oggukatha can be given training in terms of all set of skills? And how they can imbibe the knowledge from their seniors? How can we develop a teaching module for this kind of training? How this training can be related to modern actor in Theatre? These kinds of research questions will be traced as part of this project. –



KNOWLEDGE TRANSMISSION IN OGGU KATHA

Folk Theatre Context: Horizontal Transmission Model

Figure:



TR = Textual Rendition (Training for Voice culture and memory culture)
BK = Body Kinesics (Training for Body Movement and flexibility)

The above diagram is typical Folk Model where in 'Horizontal Transmission' is the key for training processes. In the Folk Art tradition, bards and Ministerial being the bearers of tradition teach their posterity the technique of art. The bards are supported by the community under reciprocity norms. The right of the bards is to perform the caste myth or epic to the patron community and the patron community is in obligation to support the bard family. Violation of the reciprocity norms is believed to impart curse on them and therefore both the parties are obliged to sustain the performing tradition. The absolute absence of Guru like figure that enrolls pupils independently and reside in isolation during the period of teaching makes the Folk model as antithetical to the Vertical model. The children of the

Folk artists learn from their elders not only by observing but also by imitation. They were made to memorize the oral text (TR) in the initial phases and later made to enact on stage. In this Horizontal transmission an interesting feature is that voice culture (TR) precedes the body culture (BK). As seen in the above diagram the tradition becomes the factor of continuity for Horizontal Transmission. Since there is no Hierarchy between the learners and the learned the art form is transmitted in a more informal and casual setting therefore this model can be termed as Horizontal transmission. Community and Family of traditional bearers work in close proximity to ensure the continuity of the tradition and therefore when the child grows to a full-fledged performer is recognized by the community as he follows his family right from his childhood to his patron community during performances. All well versed in the art form can become masters and train the youngsters without being bestowed the status of a master. In fact it is the audience who bestow the privilege of a master over a good performer. It is their recognition which prompts them to become leaders of the group. Ultimately it is the family to which they belong becomes the driving force for the continuity of the art form.

WORKS TO BE DONE:

1. Analysis of how the workshops help in finding/preserving the nuances of the form?
2. Analysis to find what is the Participants' perspective in learning this form?
3. Analysis to find what is the Teachers' Perspective while teaching this form?
4. To reach the proposed objectives final Suggestions also will be made along with the Final project Report to ICH-Section.
5. Going to work with other identified oggukatha group on conducting a District level workshop by inviting the major groups from Karimnagar District and Warangal District in Telangana state. The week long workshop will be aiming at bringing out the teaching methods of each group on different themes of performance structures. Conducting wider range interviews on preserving the nuances of the form. The entire workshop will be documented and teaching methods will be transcribed into text then finally Final report

along with documentations video file/Photographs of teaching learning submitted to the ICH-Section.

6. Through video documentation process the performances, interviews with eminent artists and other personalities involved in setting new trends with transforming and re inventing process of performances.
7. If this project gets more financial support for One more year then: During the first six months a random survey conducted to get the basic data like personalities involved in the performance practices of oggukatha and a complete documentary can be made on this form.
8. The Field work and video documentation would be completed in duration of 4 to 6 months apart from the initial 1 month of preparatory work. The remaining 6 months would be spent on analyzing the data, editing the video tapes, drafting a soft copy of the report along with a video document.
9. Re documenting the existing material with the aim of developing curriculums for educational usage.
10. Making the Database/Directory for all the artists groups and publishing it/Conducting state level festival on Oggukatha.

TELANGANA MAPING: The newly formed state of telangana is having Oggukatha artist communities in huge populations. The state covers 10 districts , among the 10 districts almost 8 districts witnesses the Oggukatha form frequently in remote or urban area accordingly situations. The geographical area mapped here will be covered in the future projects but the two districts (Karimnagar and Warangal) will be focused for this present project. The distance between both districts not much far and shares the border also have similar linguistic and cultural aspects. In the both districts more than 500 families lives with oggukatha art. see the picture below.



PROJECT REPORT LANGUAGE: English

TIME FRAME

For 2013-2014 the week long workshops will be commenced in the months of October-November months 2014 with identified Oggukatha Groups on Preservation/teaching methods/Documentation in Karimnagar District, Warangal Districts of Telangana State.

Note: If this project gets more financial support from ICH Scheme then the research will be extended for more one year for creating visual texts and academic materials/Documentations.

PROPOSED OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECT:

MAJOR OUTCOMES ARE: the Workshops with major groups creates discussion among the academicians and art scholars for developing the teaching and training method in this age old form and also the video documentation with interviews of major Guru's in this form helps ICH to look after further development in research and contributions. Also in future

creating material for Print visual text, documentation for archival use, models of learning the form and Developing sample model curriculum, preserving the History of oggukatha Tradition, Finding the contexts and performance practice with different themes.

This project will also be a model for knowing the movements and transformations of performance practices of intangible Cultural Heritages of India. Scholarly interventions through interactions will empower the community and the artists of the Oggukatha form, they will also critically think and analyses the reasons behind the transformations. This project will also helps in recreating and rejuvenating the other chosen forms.

Thanking You

Yours Sincerely

Dr.G.Kumara Swamy

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C/o Dr.Joly Puthussery

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Center for Folk Culture Studies

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PERSONNEL JUSTIFICATION

Being born in a remote village, I was influenced by the culture and the customs being followed in the village, and later enamored by the fine arts indigenously born out of the village atmosphere. Moreover, having been brought up in the family which practices Oggukatha art form, I started observing keenly the nuances of the traditional theatre art forms. This is the seed that penetrated strongly into my mind to pursue fine arts and took up theatre. The knowledge of traditional theatre forms helped me in understanding the roots of the theatre art form. After my doctoral studies with the help of ICH-Scheme expanded my horizons in terms of developing teaching methodologies and preserving the teaching and learning process which is through documentation.

My initial exposure in the traditional forms of the Telangana region, acquired modern concepts and techniques from the University is building my confidence to realize my ambition I am a performer of folk form and I started to learn the medium of theatre arts in the university. This exposure helped me to understand the concepts of modern/Contemporary theatre. As an actor/Director I have the proven performances in my credit, I have the experience of teaching in colleges and workshops within india and abroad.

Academic potential:

Completed basic education in Telugu language medium and nurtured in the Performing skills with the **OGGUKATHA** (a folk art form of a pastoral community in Andhra Pradesh) performers in a traditional family structure. I have continued theatre education after graduating in computer applications at Karimanagar. To learn and practice theatre led me to Hyderabad city. Also completed Post Graduate Diploma in Theatre arts at Potti Sriramulu Telugu University, Yoga Teacher Training course from Gandhi Gyan Mandir, Certificate Programme in *Beijing Opera Performer Training from National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts (NACTA)*, Beijing, China and Master of Performing Arts (Theatre Arts) degree from University Of Hyderabad. To my credit I have 65 theatre productions and 11 short films, two feature films and a heart full of ambition to continue.

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My special interests are: yoga practice, learning mimicry, dance, singing, music and to know the different performance traditions of the world, all these helped me in molding myself as a Performer and Research scholar in the field.

I am the one from our traditional performing community of Telangana state Completed doctoral level studies in the field of Theatre arts. I have the fortune to represent my research work through paper presentations at national and international venues. I have the experience of Traditional acting, because of folk family tradition from my childhood I performed along with my father. Later by theatre academics I got experience in the modern

concepts. Here in the academics I have learned different methods and approaches towards Cultural studies and Performance research.

I am sure my proposed study will definitely open up the knowledge domain and contributes for safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage of India.



*******End of the Report*******

COVERING LETTER

Date: 19-9-2015

To

The ICH-Scheme section

Sangeet Natak Academy

New Delhi.

Sub: Submission of Final Report of Research Project on Oggu katha (*“Creating Database through workshops and performance documentation for developing teaching methodologies/archiving of the form and contents: A case study on Oggukatha Performance Cultures and Rituals”*)

Ref: Scheme: Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India,
Sanction Letter No: 28-6/ICH-Scheme/2/2013-14/13617

Dated: 31st. March, 2014. *Purpose: Traditional Folk Theatre (Oggu Katha), Restoring the Nuances of a Performance Tradition.*

Respected Sir/Madam,

I am Dr.G.Kumara Swamy from Hyderabad, here by sending the Final report of my research project got under ICH-Scheme. Please provide and extend your support further more for achieving the total objectives of this project.

Thanking you

Yours sincerely

Dr.G.Kumara Swamy

Please find the enclosures:

- Detailed Project Report work
- Teaching –Learning process –Photos
- Interviews with the Group video CD
- DVD’s and CD’s will be sent by post.

FINAL PROEJCT REPORT FOR ICH-SCHEME

TITLE: “Creating Database through workshops and performance documentation for developing teaching methodologies/archiving of the form and contents: A case study on Oggukatha Performance Cultures and Rituals”

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Contents

1. Introduction
2. Theatrical elements in oggukatha
3. Present context
4. Aims and objectives
5. Implementation
6. The work done So far
7. Findings in the workshop and while interviews

8. Actor training in folk context
9. The work produced
10. Acting skills in oggu katha
11. Knowledge transmission in oggu katha
12. Folk theatre context: horizontal transmission model
13. Areas Tealgana maping
14. Outcomes of the project
15. Works to be done further
16. Time frame
17. Further financial assistance needed
18. Personnel justification



1.INTRODUCTION

Oggu Katha as a form of narration has its own theatrical grammar. Though it is discussed by several academicians of linguistics, languages, folklorists and theatre artists, there is still much scope to explain the potentialities of the varied components of its

grammar. There are many intangible Cultural heritages in the area of folk theatrical performance traditions in different Telugu Speaking regions, but the existence and survival of those forms are now in dilemma. Most of them use regional community specific, language and ethos. Interestingly many of the times the content of the themes centers on popular epics and folklores. All of them follow an informal system of teaching training process in transferring the performance knowledge to the younger generations and use codified/stylized theatrical presentations which blends Music, Dance, Drama, and Acrobatics. In this category we can see the traditional Folk theatre form called“Oggukatha”which is an ancient narrative form of Telugu speaking regions this literally means, 'oggu tales', from oggu, a small hand drum associated with Lord Shiva. It is performed by the pastoral communities like: Kuruma and Golla(Yadav's), of the Deccan plateau. These tradition-loving and ritual-performing troops move from place to place, narrating the stories of their caste gods. Oggus Poojari's are the traditional priests of the Yadav's and perform the marriage of Mallanna with Bhramaramba. Oggukatha sustained from several years ago with its immense way of performing in different contexts by using Hindu mythologies and later general issues of the society. There are more than 100 Oggukatha groups exists now, each comprising with 4 to 6 performers. Late.Middey Ramulu and Chukka Sattaiah were the most famous who made the form more popular at national venues.



2.THEATRICAL ELEMENTS IN OGGUKATHA: The performers acquire skills by observation of senior performers which is ritual based, and having an oral text. The performance and its training comprises with ten types of Singing styles, Dance movements, Makeup, Costumes, unique use of musical orchestration with instruments etc. Singing and dance tradition, unique instruments (Special), ritual based, oral text. Improvisation and Imagination are the other major key elements in this form. This makes the learning process more tedious and time consuming .As time is changing there are many changes are going on in this age-old tradition and there is a need to develop proper attention towards teaching and training methods of this form, in order to make it transferred to the next generation. So and immediate necessity of documentation on Preparations and Performances of the tradition needs to be done along with a critical analysis of the existing informal mode of teaching and training ,this attempt will be more meaningful contribution for the Performing arts academics of our country.

Other features of folk theatre forms are:

- Outdoor stages, mostly in the village squares and open places of temple yards.
- Song-speech-dance sequence.

- Percussion string and wind instruments.
- Performer as narrator and character.
- Purvaranga or invocatory session.
- Female impersonation.
- A comic relief character.
- Audience participation in the performance.



3. PRESENT CONTEXT: there is a need to develop proper teaching and training method by evolving through workshops and performances of this form, and need to bring some text books for academic purpose, and documentation on Preparations and Performances can be more meaningful contribution for preserving and safeguarding this performance tradition.

4. Achieved AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The project focused at creating data/Documentation for the future usage of register of (For Oggukatha) Intangible Cultural Heritage at state level.

1. Conducted 3 Workshops and Documented the Performances
2. Invited the selected Groups to showcase their skills in the different schools/colleges.

3. Hosted seminars for academic collaborations through Integration of education and culture
4. Database creation and dissemination for safeguarding the form: Already created the curated BASIC DATABASE.
5. Introduced the different prospective and possibilities of imparting this form into more academic level studies. Ex:P.S.Telugu University, Hyderabad and IIIT-Hyderabad.
6. Found the Reasons for not much development of methods of teaching and training of this form can be studied from the prospective of the context and relevance, patronage, social functions of the form, artists, and audience.
7. Wrote a about it, Presented a Paper in a National Seminar at Andhra Univeristy,which helped academically research and study, writing helped this form to come out and Re-visiting the forms for long term sustenance in 21st century.
8. Conducted Interviews with the performers and their families.
9. Analyzed the Interviews and transcribed the information and prepared for Visual text.(In progress)
10. Preparing Policy document to be submitted to the Dept.of Culture for initiating a Publication on teaching and training methodology of this form can be more useful for future Performing arts academics and Researchers.

5. IMPLEMENTATION:

Research and methodology:

A wide range of research methods used to gather the data. These include

1. Participant observation of the performances that take place at different parts of the region on different contexts which are still continuing.
2. Conducting Workshops and seminars for school children to explore the form and the pattern of performing styles.
3. Published and unpublished performances, publicity material, photographs, audio-video records, interviews and write ups on performance reviews appeared in news papers, journals, magazines etc.

4. Structured and unstructured interviews with all sorts of creative groups ranging from artists, technicians, Organizers, audiences etc. The relationship between performer-audience changing scenarios also studied.

Field works for data collection coupled up with audio and video documentation for further analysis using multiple performance theories. Interview based method by visiting landmark performing places and meeting performers can bring the nuances of preparations of pre performance process.

6.THE WORK DONE IN ONE YEAR

First phase work done so far: Done filed work for one month and identified the traditional groups/Gurus's/Group Leaders of "Komuravelli Mallannaa Oggukatha" / "Oggukatha families at Komuravelli temple" then Conducted a 3 days' workshop at Karimnagar which is a major hub for oggukatha families in telangana state. These workshops went on in two different months i.e. May and in the month of august have taken. The selected entire oggukatha group also interviewed by the scholar to bring out their prospective of present situation they are facing in terms of keeping the tradition authentic. Then done the following works.

- 2nd workshop for 3 days at warnagal and Karimangar in the month of August 2014
- 3rd workshop for 3 days at Karimangar in the month of November-2014.
- Presented a Research paper in a National seminar by Social science academy, new Delhi at Andhra University, Vizag, Andhra Pradesh.
- Documented the workshops and Performances along with selected Interviews.
- Recorded the Musical instruments rhythms.
- Writing an article to be published soon.
- Given Lecture Demonstrations in various Educational Institutions like IIIT, ISB, NALSAR, MASK etc., in Karimangar, Hyderabad.



7. FINDINGS IN THE WORKSHOP AND WHILE INTERVIEWS:

Oral Contents: There are more than 30 kinds of stories based around the god of Mallanna (Lord Shiva) are the main resource for the artists in Oggu katha. Accordingly in different contexts they chose to perform specific stories for the specific audiences. The young artists said that they want help in transcribing the stories into visual texts and wants to preserve their inborn talent of Imagination and Creativity. They want to preserve the Instruments and costumes styles for transforming to the next generations.

Actor training in Folk context:

The *Natyasastra* provided guidelines to our classical Indian drama, but said very little about the folk forms. Only some references to popular folk form like Rasaka and Charchari

are made. They are considered as elementary and undeveloped because of their limited number of characters and the total dependence on music and drama, because of its association with temples and aristocratic families remained cut-off from the mainstream of Indian life whereas folk drama, on the other hand, was mainly oral and enjoyed the patronage of the common man. The only rightful place of folk drama received was in the *Jaina Shastra* where they were vividly described.

The more outstanding of the folk theatres are still alive through in an attenuated form. The Jatra of Bengal, the Oggukatha of Telangana, the Bhagavatam of the South, the Bhavai of Gujarat, Rasalila of Saurashtra, the Nautanki of the North are perhaps some of the better known of these folk styles. They are important because while the classical Indian stage which attained a very high standard and refinement has all but disappeared the folk form still continues not only to occupy a definite place in the cultural life of the country today, but even acts as an inspiration in the current revival of the theater and is being absorbed in the new dramatic forms that are being forged in this theatre renaissance, all of which bears eloquent testimony to its vitality. Folk theatre represents the people in their natural habitat, with all their contradiction and multifarious activities. It gives a glimpse style of speech, music, dance, dress, behavior, humor, proverbs, wit and wisdom. It contains a rich store of mythological heroes, medieval romances, chivalric tales, social customs, beliefs, and legends. In order to understand the Colorful diversity and unity of India, it is important to see the folk theatre in its natural setting.

8. THE WORK PRODUCED

The following work analyzed and produced after deep understanding of raw materials through interviews exerts and Workshop teaching then developed following structures.

Self-learning and training of the actors is the major factor in the folk theatre. With reference to Purana's and Epics, the local folk actors are learning new techniques and also mixing the local art forms to improve their performing skills. In this context the actors improved by using their own knowledge within their own society. The guidance and

instruction and ratification are justified by their society; only imitation from the nature made folk actor's skills in the folk forms more relevant to the society

Main elements used by the folk actor are

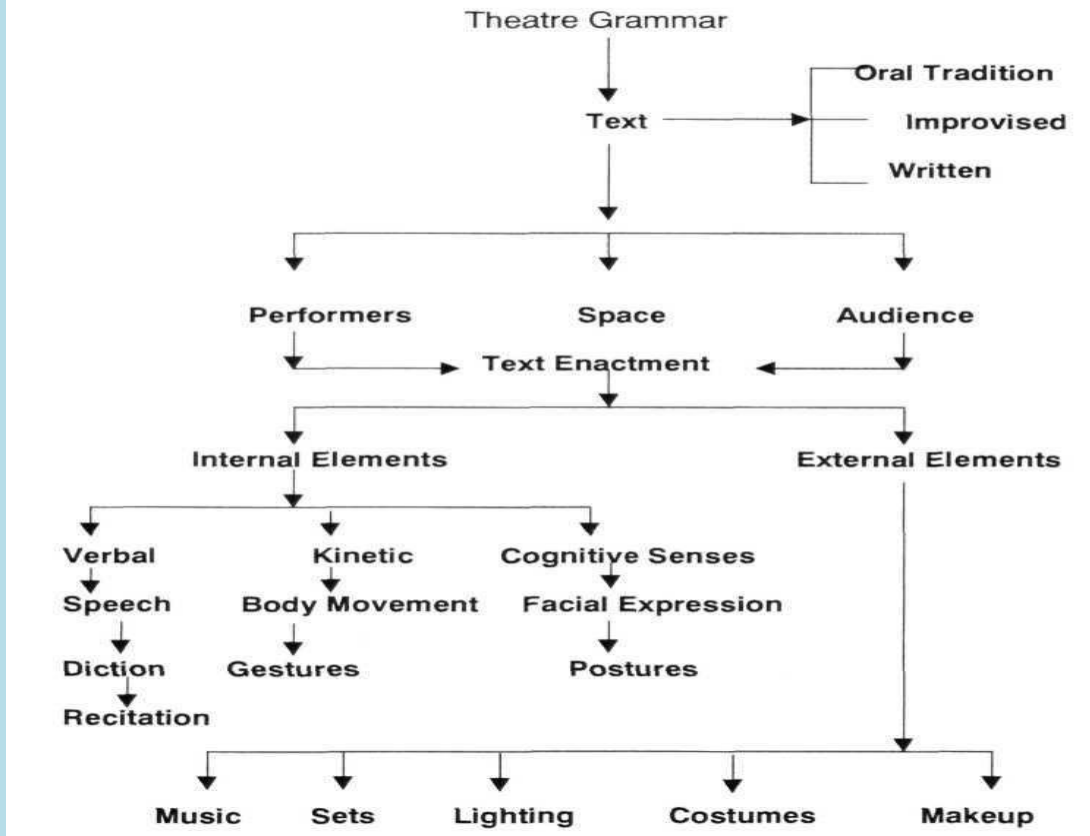
- Singing
- Dancing
- Dialogues
- Martial arts
- Using musical instruments

Hence so many folk forms are evolved in India on the basis of epics and social life of the people. For every form there is a background of different context developed in different times. According to that, the actors got trained in that context based on different elements required in those particular folk performances.

Naturally the basis for all the modern concepts of acting has the roots of folk forms. According to the time and new inventions of methods and techniques; the folk elements changed its style and the way civilized people separated the theatre for their convenience by following the *Natyasastra* and other classics. But still the originality of the folk forms got developing through different times.

The inner elements that are demanded by actor for the enactment are - The oral, speech, diction, recitation and singing. The kinesis - use of space through movement, rhythmic movement, and the cognitive inputs - facial expression postures and gestures. The external elements are music, set design, lighting, costumes and make-up. These are given in figure.

Figure II.1.



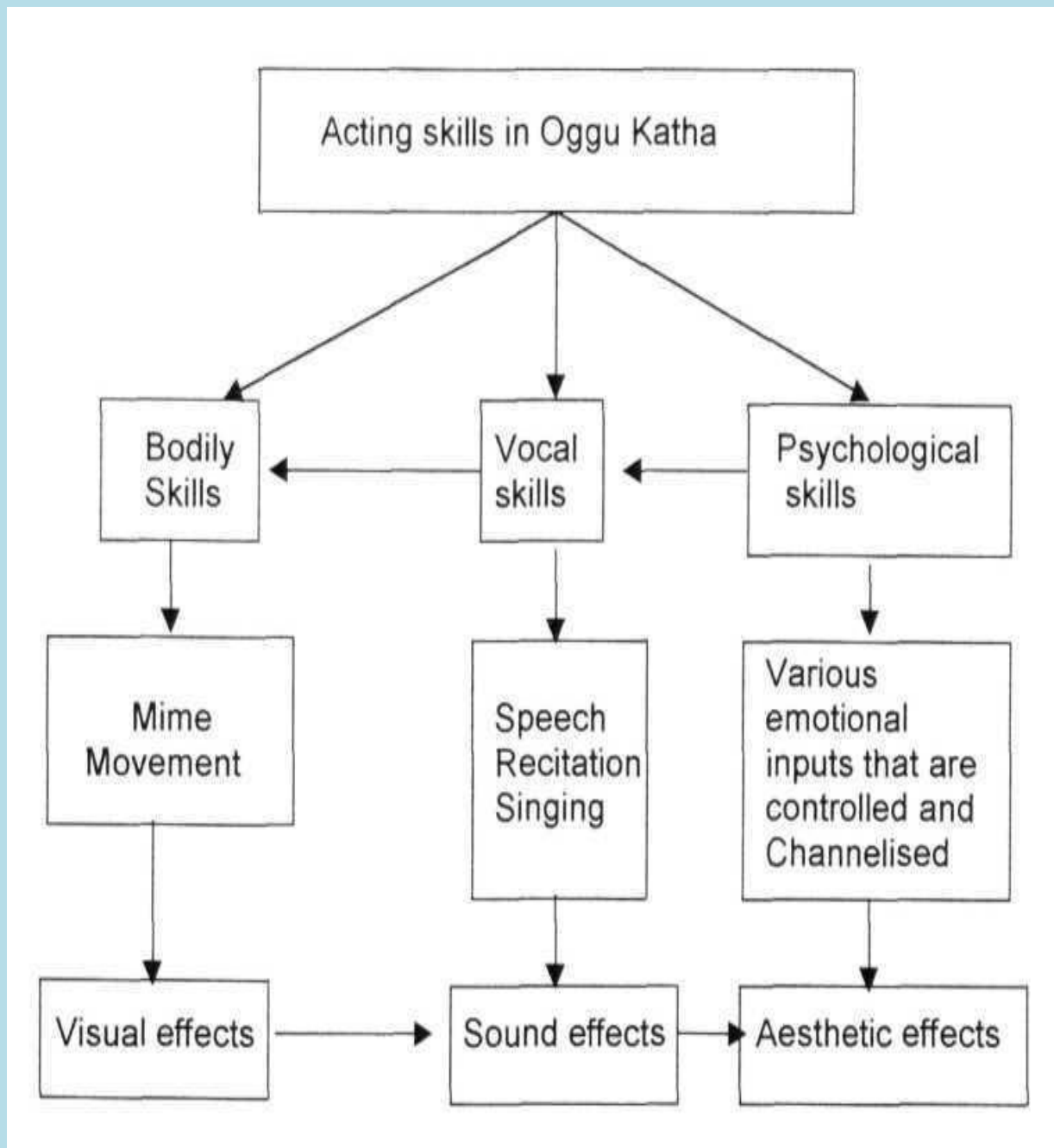
Some commonality brought the performers and audience together to share their lived experience through theatrical expression. The themes therefore of folk theatre are mostly connected with the gods, goddesses, epic heroes and legendary personalities. The indigenous techniques of performance evolved in folk theatre on the improvised space in the temple yards and village squares are very much common. Generally the folk theatre has certain features common both in content and form. The following are some of them.

- A. Outdoor stages, mostly in the village squares and open places of temple yards.
- B. Song-speech-dance sequence.
- C. Percussion string and wind instruments. D. Performer as narrator and character.
- E. Purvaranga or invocatory session. F. Female impersonation.
- G. A comic relief character.

H. Audience participation in the performance.



9. ACTING SKILLS IN OGGU KATHA: Actors in this form must acquire the skills of all set like vocal, physical, Psychological, singing, movement etc so that they make the total performance into comprehensive show. The major aspect of this research also the focus on that how an actor in oggukatha can be given training in terms of all set of skills? And how they can imbibe the knowledge from their seniors? How can we develop a teaching module for this kind of training? How this training can be related to modern actor in Theatre? These kinds of research questions will be traced as part of this project. –

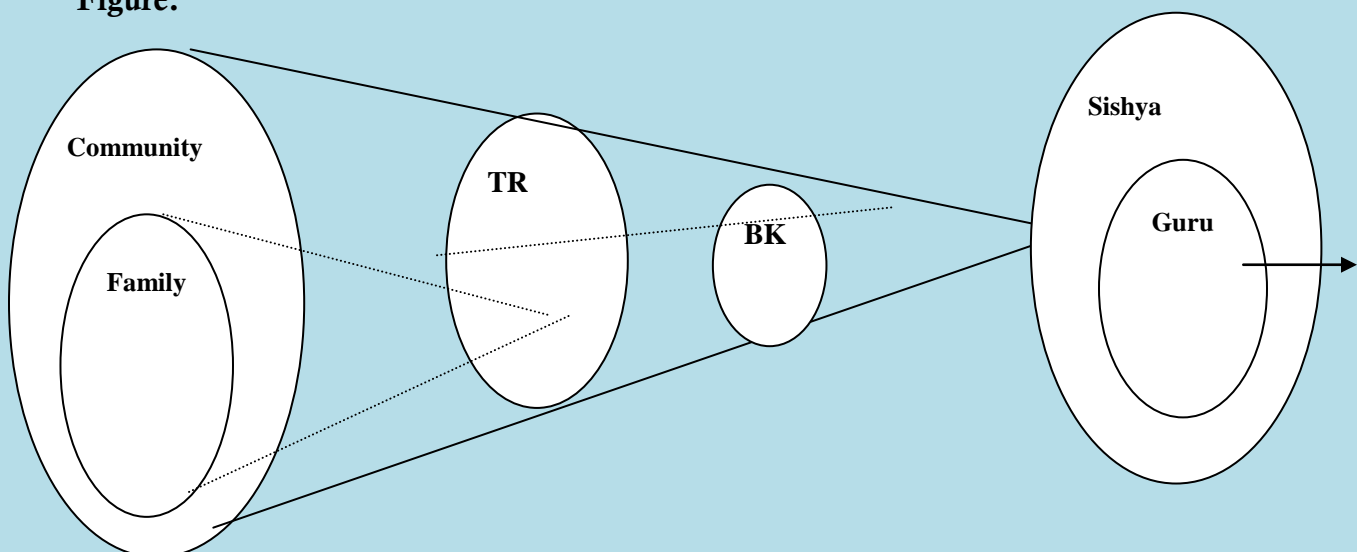




10. KNOWLEDGE TRANSMISSION IN OGGU KATHA

Folk Theatre Context: Horizontal Transmission Model

Figure:

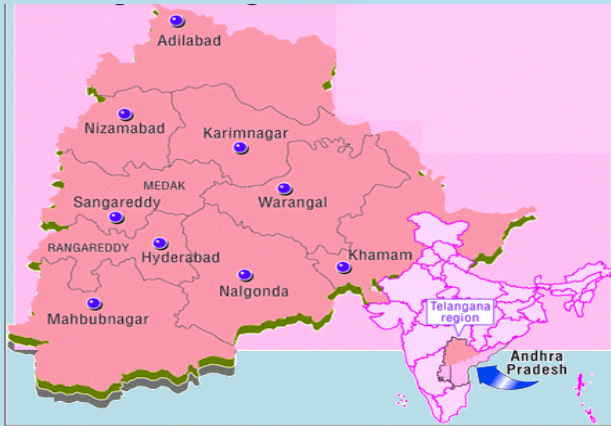


TR = Textual Rendition (Training for Voice culture and memory culture)
BK = Body Kinesics (Training for Body Movement and flexibility)

The above diagram is typical Folk Model where in 'Horizontal Transmission' is the key for training processes. In the Folk Art tradition, bards and Ministerial being the bearers of tradition teach their posterity the technique of art. The bards are supported by the community under reciprocity norms. The right of the bards is to perform the caste myth or epic to the patron community and the patron community is in obligation to support the bard family. Violation of the reciprocity norms is believed to impart curse on them and therefore both the parties are obliged to sustain the performing tradition. The absolute absence of Guru like figure that enrolls pupils independently and reside in isolation during the period of teaching makes the Folk model as antithetical to the Vertical model. The children of the Folk artists learn from their elders not only by observing but also by imitation. They were made to memorize the oral text (TR) in the initial phases and later made to enact on stage. In this Horizontal transmission an interesting feature is that voice culture (TR) precedes the body culture (BK). As seen in the above diagram the tradition becomes the factor of continuity for Horizontal Transmission. Since there is no Hierarchy between the learners and the learned the art form is transmitted in a more informal and casual setting therefore this model can be termed as Horizontal transmission. Community and Family of traditional bearers work in close proximity to ensure the continuity of the tradition and therefore when the child grows to a full-fledged performer is recognized by the community as he follows his family right from his childhood to his patron community during performances. All well versed in the art form can become masters and train the youngsters without being bestowed the status of a master. In fact it is the audience who bestow the privilege of a master over a good performer. It is their recognition which prompts them to become leaders of the group. Ultimately it is the family to which they belong becomes the driving force for the continuity of the art form.



11.TELANGANA MAPING: The newly formed state of telangana is having Oggukatha artist communities in huge populations. The state covers 10 districts , among the 10 districts almost 8 districts witnesses the Oggukatha form frequently in remote or urban area accordingly situations. The geographical area mapped here will be covered in the future projects but the two districts (Karimnagar and Warangal) will be focused for this present project. The distance between both districts not much far and shares the border also have similar linguistic and cultural aspects. In the both districts more than 1000 families lives with oggukatha art. see the picture below.



12. PROPOSED OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECT:

MAJOR OUTCOMES ARE: the Workshops with major groups creates discussion among the academicians and art scholars for developing the teaching and training method in this age old form and also the video documentation with interviews of major Guru's in this form helps ICH to look after further development in research and contributions. Also in future creating material for Print visual text, documentation for archival use, models of learning the form and Developing sample model curriculum, preserving the History of oggukatha Tradition, Finding the contexts and performance practice with different themes.

This project will also be a model for knowing the movements and transformations of performance practices of intangible Cultural Heritages of India. Scholarly interventions through interactions will empower the community and the artists of the Oggukatha form, they will also critically think and analyses the reasons behind the transformations. This project will also helps in recreating and rejuvenating the other chosen forms.

13. WORKS TO BE DONE:

1. Building extensive network of Artists groups (around 50000 artists) by using Technology.
2. Publishing the Directory of the artist's information.
3. Preservation of Instruments and making a Documentary on oggu katha Musical Instruments making.
4. Making a Proposal for creation of a Oggu Katha Academy/Center at Karimnagar, Telangana for more academic pursuance.
5. Creating an Archive/Digitizing the Objects of the form.
6. Developing Applications using IT.

7. Preparing Artists Profiles and making them available on Internet will expand their opportunities of Performances all over the world.
8. Creating a Web site for disseminating the knowledge of this form.
9. Conducting training programmes and improving soft skills at high school level.
10. Analysis of how the workshops help in finding/preserving the nuances of the form?
11. Analysis to find what is the Participants' perspective in learning this form?
12. Analysis to find what is the Teachers' Perspective while teaching this form?
13. To reach the proposed objectives final Suggestions also will be made along with the Final project Report to ICH-Section.
14. Going to work with other identified oggukatha group on conducting a District level workshop by inviting the major groups from Karimnagar District and Warangal District in Telangana state. The week long workshop will be aiming at bringing out the teaching methods of each group on different themes of performance structures. Conducting wider range interviews on preserving the nuances of the form. The entire workshop will be documented and teaching methods will be transcribed into text then finally Final report along with documentations video file/Photographs of teaching learning submitted to the ICH-Section.
15. Through video documentation process the performances, interviews with eminent artists and other personalities involved in setting new trends with transforming and re inventing process of performances.
16. If this project gets more financial support for One more year then: During the first six months a random survey conducted to get the basic data like personalities involved in the performance practices of oggukatha and a complete documentary can be made on this form.
17. The Field work and video documentation would be completed in duration of 4 to 6 months apart from the initial 1 month of preparatory work. The remaining 6 months would be spent on analyzing the data, editing the video tapes, drafting a soft copy of the report along with a video document.
18. Re documenting the existing material with the aim of developing curriculums for educational usage.
19. Making the Database/Directory for all the artists groups and publishing it/Conducting state level festival on Oggu Katha.

14. TIME FRAME

For 2015-2016 the week long workshops will be commenced in the months of October-November-December months 2015 with already identified Oggukatha Groups on Preservation/teaching methods/Documentation in Karimnagar District, Warangal Districts of Telangana State. So the project is able to reach its aims and objectives with the extended support of ICH Grant to preserve this form by producing documentary evidences along with visual text publications.

15. Further Financial assistance needed:

Item	Expenditure	Remarks
a) Video camera(3CCD) & still camera with accessories	20000	
b) External Hard Disk	10000	
c) Printing, Scanning & Xerox	5000	
d)Books / Journals/ Videos	8500	
e) Preserving Costumes and Musical Instruments	10000	
f) Promotional		

activities	10000	
g) Audio-Visual materials	10000	
h) Purchasing Performance materials	5000	
i) Creating Photo albums	10000	
j) Videographer for Documentation	5000	
e) Field work & Travel	10000	
f) Informant fees	20000	
g) Contingency	15000	
h) Conducting 20 training Workshops expenditures(20X5000)	100000	
i)5 Public Performances (5x5000)	25000	
Hiring Services		
h) Hiring of Edit suit and editor	25000	

<p>i)Honorarium for researcher @10000P.M</p> <p>HRA Rs 2000p.m 12x12000</p> <p>Grand Total (Rupees Three Lacks sixty thousands five Hundred)</p>	<p>144000</p> <p>Rs.360500</p>	
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Hoping to complete this project for making knowledge domain of OGGU KATHA

Thanking You

Yours Sincerely

Dr.G.Kumara Swamy

M.P.A,Ph.D

C/o Dr.Joly Puthussery

Associate Professor-Center for Folk Culture Studies

University of Hyderabad, Gachibowli, Hyderabad-500046

Telangana state.Phone: 09948035372, Email: kumhcu6@gmail.com

PERSONNEL JUSTIFICATION

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*******End of the Report*******