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Identification of Key Factors to Uplift Traditional Lac (*Laksha*) Craft in Sri Lanka

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Art and craft are key factors that can express the culture and traditions of a country. *Laksha* is a traditional craft in Sri Lanka, and it has an immense and enduring history. Lac is one of the decorative media that can be applied on different types of materials, such as wood, ivory, pottery, clothes, horns, and shells. But in current society it does not cater to present social needs. This can be considered as a dying industry, and as a traditional craft that was continued from generation to generation, even though it is not continued as before; it will become a dilapidated craft in the craft milieu after three or four generations. It is needed for future generations to identify their traditional techniques, tools, equipment, decorations, manufacturing methods and market opportunities. It is a cast based industry and was continued in several rural areas in Sri Lanka, and still continues in a few areas in country. Craftsmen in the Kandy and Matale districts, in particular, still continue their practices in the traditional manner. This research gathered factual data in the craft places in the Central Province. The methodology of the research was based on the Grounded theory method and a questionnaire survey aimed at selected craft villagers. The required data were collected through an extensive literature survey, and case studies on the use of a variety of Lac crafts. According to the research findings, the six key factors identified, in order of the importance, are introducing new technology, designs, materials, color experiments, conducting trainee programmes, and teaching as a technical subject. These are the main factors that should be considered to uplift the dying tradition of Sri Lankan lac craft.

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