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Pallavi A Acharya
Research scholar of Saurashtra
University Rajkot, Gujarat, India

Dr. Veena S Samani
M.V.M. Science & Home Science
College, Rajkot, Gujarat, India

Review study on detailing traditional motifs and techniques of Bandhani and its changes of Saurashtra region

Pallavi A Acharya and Dr. Veena S Samani

Abstract

The main purpose of the study is to evaluate Traditional Motifs and Techniques of Bandhani and its Changes of Saurashtra Region. The technique of the resist dye process in which fabric is tied or bound resisted from the dye prior to dyeing, Subdivisions of this term are the tie-and-dye processes of bandhani. Early times cotton, mulmul, handloom silk has been used, presently various synthetic fabrics are also highly in demand ex., georgette, chiffon. Traditionally vegetable dyes were used but today chemical dyes are becoming very popular. With changing times, as Bandhani has become a part of fashion. The bandhani motifs include flowers, creepers, bells and so on. Bandhani comes in a variety of designs, colors and motifs and these variations are region specific. Each district has its own distinct method of Bandhani which makes the pattern recognizable and gives it a different name. The centers of tie and dye fabrics in Gujarat are Jamnagar in Saurashtra (the water in this area brings out the brightest red while dyeing) and Ahmedabad. The basic pattern on the fabric which is decorated further by various embroideries.

Keywords: Traditional, Motifs, Techniques, Bandhani

1. Introduction

Bandhani is an ancient art began about 5000 years ago that is mainly used in the state of Gujarat and Rajasthan. The term "Bhandhani" is derived from the word 'Bhandhan' that means tying up. Some years ago Bandhani was started in Rajasthan state and in Saurashtra region of Gujarat state. It is the colour saris and odhnis dyed by tie and dye process. The Bandhani work has been exclusively carried out by the Khatri community of Kutchh and Saurashtra in Gujarat. Main colour used in Bhandhani are red, yellow, green, blue and black. The motif of the traditional represents animals, birds, flower and dancing dolls. These are popular amongst the women of Gujarat. Dyes were discovered by primitive man/woman in the form of extracts of various plants, flowers, leaves, bark, etc., which were applied to cloth and other fabrics. Even though color was applied they didn't consider this dyeing. It was simply a form of embellishment.

Bandhani was introduced in Jamnagar when the city was founded 400 years ago. Bandhani fabrics reign supreme in Rajasthan and Gujarat which are home an astounding variety of traditional crafts. Century old skills continue to produce some the most artistic and exciting wares in these two states and are popular all over the world. Rajasthan is a land of vibrant colors. These colors are a striking part of the life there and are found in the bustling bazaars, in fairs and festivals, in the costumes worn and in the traditional paintings and murals. Bandhani forms the basic pattern on the fabric which is decorated further by various embroideries. Aari and gota work are traditional embroideries done in zari are popular with Bandhani. These days a lot of ornamentation is done on Bandhani fabric to make it dressy and glittery for traditional occasions. The bandhani market is providing employment to over 5,000 artisans.

2. Literature Review

A good arrangement of available literature concerning the domain explored to conduct the present study. The researcher visited many museums and libraries and. After undergoing search for literature- refereed journals, periodicals, reference books and after visiting many museums and libraries, it was revealed that research related to tie and dye sector was very

Correspondence
Pallavi A Acharya
Research scholar of Saurashtra
University Rajkot, Gujarat, India

subjective and thus issues explored for this sector could only be reviewed from other handicraft sector. Hence, the literature classified into following heads and these are related to.

2.1 Prehistoric times of the tie and dye craft

Bandhej is a **Prehistoric times** craft widespread in many countries across the globe and its **Prehistoric times** has been authorized by many writers in their works. Some of the really mentionable studies are as follow

2.1.1 Prehistoric of the tie and dye across the world

Director of various internationally renowned museums and an expert of the ethnography noted that the earliest traces of plangi (tie-dye) in the continent of America dated to precolumbian times, with Peruvian fragments from the first millennium (CE). The author prepared reference to the existence of pictorial evidences showing familiarity with the technique in Mexico, prior to the arrival of the Spanish.

Anon (1967)^[3] described that in Japan the technique is known as Shibori and was particularly popular during the eighteenth century. Combinations with other resist dyeing technique as well as embroidery were not uncommon. The technique was deemed to be best suited for use with soft pliable fabrics and was seemingly first used on silk and then, in the sixteenth century and onwards, for cotton.

It was described by Buhler and Fisher (1980)^[4] that the technique was widespread in many other parts of Asia, and its use has been noted in Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand and Indonesia and Japan. Further, they state that Bandhej clothes have been vividly painted on the walls of Ajanta caves (6th and 7th century).

Have written in their book *Shibori: the Inventive Art Japanese Shaped Resist* that tie and dye, long before the 70s was known as Shibori, a Japanese term that encompasses a wide variety of resist dyeing techniques, which have been utilized by different cultures for over 6000 years. Similarly, revealed that tie and dye type fabrics have been produced in many parts of Africa since many centuries; the adire oniko (local name for tie-dyed clothes) produced by the Yoruba of Nigeria are probably the most notable.

As per many Americans who served in the Peace Corps in Africa during the 1960s learned tie-dye design from the native people, and when the cops returned to the United States, they skilled the craft to many. This is how it became popular among Americans

2.1.2 Prehistoric of Bandhej craft in India

Prehistoric of the Indian Bandhej craft has been explored and indicated by many of the writers. An outline of some of such studies is given below.

As per Ahiwasi (1976)^[2] fossils of a red and white dotted cloth found in the Indus Valley Civilization proves the antiquity of Bandhej craft. He says that we get to know from old Sanskrit literature and wall paintings that both men and women were fond of Bandhej clothes.

Inher summary of dye history writes Bandhani the Indian tie and dye technique, also known as Bandhej is the oldest tie-dye tradition we know that is still trained.

Mathur (2000)^[5] says Bandhej is an antique craft and has been being practiced for times unknown when the world was in its tender infancy, going back to the era of Indus Valley Civilization, the dyeing technique used in the prehistoric city of Mohenjo-Daro was by binding individual areas of cloth to shield them from the dye, today known as Bandhani.”

According to Abbott Indian Bandhani, a traditional form of tie

and dye began some 5000 year ago. Its references are found in many old books and scriptures.

Jaysi a sixteen century poet-described Pomcha tie-dyeing in his great epic *Padmawat* and immortalized it. However the earliest written mention in India sources is in *Harshcharit-* a seventh-century Sanskrit text that recounts the life of a king. There, the cloth is referred to as *apulakabandha*, literally tie-dye. Another instance of ancient times of Bandhej craft, we find in a Jain scripture of the fourteenth century that has a picture of Lord Mahavir fully draped in tie-dye fabrics.

Similarly, also stated that Bandhani cloth's description can be found in Bana Bhatta's *Harshcharit* (biography of king Harsha 606 to 648 A.D.).

In the book *Indian Folk Arts and Dhamija* reveals that many tribes of Rajasthan and Gujrat have been wearing Bandhej clothes as traditional attires. The Bhils wear a brilliant red odhani with black border and red roundels. The Rathwa community also wears a similarly styled odhani, though of thicker material. The nomadic Rabaris and Bharwards who keep sheep and use their own wool also have tie and dyed odhanis and skirts.

Thus we can see that tie and dye is a handicraft that has been produced for centuries not only in India but in many other Asian and African countries also.

2.2 Techniques and Motifs in Textiles Handicrafts

As Bandhej craft has been an unknown area of research, not many studies conducted on this craft absolutely were available for review point. However, some of the studies related to techniques, designs, and patterns of dissimilar crafts which focus on design alteration and innovations in last two decades have been outlined below. These studies on techniques, designs and motifs will help in understanding the importance of regional motif patterns, designs, colours, fabrics etc and their relevance in socio-cultural lives of people.

Did a study about motifs and yarns used in artistic weaving of Kutch district (Gujarat). She focused on design innovation in last two decades. She reveals that these craftsmen are using mill made blended yarns and merino wool yarns, which are much softer than Deshi and other woolen yarns. Some new designs have come in pre-valence in Dhabla, and Shawls etc. in last two decades viz. Popat, Dholki, Pankh, Satkhani, and Choumukh.

Strained the appropriateness of the motifs according to the fabrics in their study *Traditional Textiles Printing in India*. They state that there is a general belief that the traditional motifs used in Block Printing viz. flowers, leaves, birds and geometrical ones are suitable for coarse fabric and traditional items like Lugda and wall hanging only. Dispelling this, the National Workshop organized by the Central Silk Technological Research Institute (CSTRI), Bangalore has shown that some motifs, designs and colour combinations are suitable on dissimilar silk materials like chiffon, crepe, dupion, georgette etc. and can fit well with present day trend and fashion. There is a need for support and to make sure the continuity of these traditional arts and crafts, which provide employment to the local folk and the tribal, with a potentiality for acquiring a defined share in the export market.

Theeramongkol and prepared a Comparative study of tie and dye methods for pattern and design of Phra Nakhon in Thailand. The study paying attention on techniques, motifs, fabrics and dying procedure of local tie-dye of the country. The purpose of this research was to compare the separate motifs of tie-dye methods: binding technique, folding technique and stitching technique and to compare the dyeing

characteristics. It reveals that there are 8 motifs used-quadrangle, triangle, circle, heart form, flower, leaf, butterfly, and worm in geometrical patterns design group and naturalistic patterns design group. Further, it states that the best technique was binding technique because this technique could manufacture products in a huge extent. The stitching technique is artistic, stylish and precious. The folding technique could manufacture many patterns in one time. Three kinds of fabrics, cotton, linen, and rayon are used as grey-cloth. The dye used is vat dye. The best fabric absorption in dyeing is rayon; the second best fabric for dye absorption is cotton and linen. States that Patterns of Culture, Techniques of Decoration and Coloration that the vast majority of tie-and-dye products in India necessitate only one dyeing operation. In this case, one set of ties is made and the cloth is placed in the dye bath once only. Patterns are thus set aside in the natural colour of the fabric against a one-colour background. Multi-coloured tie and dye products are not as common and require the use of more than one dye bath. Every fresh dye bath requires the fresh tying of resists.

Revealed that tie and dye- type fabrics produced in many parts of Africa were made by – tying and stitching using raffia. Resist – dyed fabrics with designs composed of large or small circles were found throughout much of West-Africa, and production of these was particularly common among the Yoruba as well as the people of Senegal and Gambia. In Gambia and Senegal a marble effect was produced by crumpling the fabric and binding it loosely before immersion in a dye bath. In Senegal, geometric patterns were embroidered on cloths which, after dyeing, were unpicked to reveal very finely rendered designs against the dyed background.

Thus the review of the studies substantiates the fact that in the textiles handicrafts, there is definite routine continuity that need to be valued and familiar and many modifications and innovations that need to be recorded. Similarly, there are diversifications and novelties in the products with the continuum of art which must be documented.

3. Proposed Objectives

This paper expects to study detailing of Traditional Motifs and Techniques of Bandhani and its Changes of Saurashtra Region. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To study history of bandhani from past to present.
2. To Study of bandhani techniques.
3. To describe traditional motifs of bandhani.
4. To preserve cultural heritage of India.

4. Research Design

Following the literature review, qualitative research is directed by method for a self-contextual analysis on Traditional Motifs and Techniques of Bandhani. Keeping this in mind the Traditional Motifs and Techniques of Bandhani explored for socio-economic profile of the unit owner and artisans and raw materials, tools and techniques used in Traditional Motifs and Techniques of Bandhani. The younger generation has taken to the field of designing using modern tools and techniques and different materials, it is their responsibility to preserve the richness of Indian culture and to adapt the traditional motifs to contemporary in Saurashtra region. Hence keeping above points in mind this study on tie and dye textiles of Saurashtra work has been formulated.

5. Conclusion

This paper tries to study the motifs and techniques of past few decades. It was hoped that the result of the study could

encourage bandhani manufacturers to apply in a technical and creative approach. A detailed review of the history of bandhani and traditional motifs and techniques is conducted in the literature review section. Then, the entire operation process of bandhani manufacturer and related production problems are investigated during the researcher's survey. After that, creative application in traditional motifs will apply in fusion garments

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