

Reimagining Tradition: Transforming *Sanjhi* Art into Screenprinting Designs for *Khadi* Jackets

Sulekha Ojha & Masha Afreen

Abstract

The study delves into the tradition of Sanjhi Painting, originating from the Krishna cult and thriving in Uttar Pradesh, particularly in Vraja or Vrindavan. It examines India's diverse textile tradition, renowned for its unique motifs, amidst today's fast fashion landscape. Recognizing the need for revival, the research explores innovative designs by incorporating the intricate art of Sanjhi, involving hand-cut designs on paper. The experimental phase involves adapting Sanjhi motifs through screen printing for apparel design, particularly focusing on men's wear garments using Sustainable Khadi fabric. By integrating traditional art with contemporary techniques like Screen Printing, this study aims to enrich textile design, acknowledging India's rich craft heritage and its significance in preserving customs and traditions by using Khadi Fabric for product development.

Keywords: Jackets; Khadi; Men's wear; Sanjhi art; Screen printing; Traditional designs.

Introduction

Rooted in the rich folk culture of its region, "Sanjhi Art" rose to prominence under the patronage of Vaishnava temples during the 15th and 16th centuries. Initially practiced by Brahmin priests, it evolved into a highly refined art form. Today, this intricate artistry is preserved by a few and remains a living tradition in only a handful of temples across India, notably the Radharamana temple in Vrindavan. Legend has it that Radha, Krishna's beloved, adorned her walls with Sanjhi art to captivate his attention, using coloured stones, metal foils, and flowers on freshly plastered cow dung walls. The term 'Sanjhi' is derived from words like 'Sajja', 'Shringar',

and 'Sajavat', all connoting 'decoration'. The motifs used in Sanjhi are from the epics of Krishna and Radha. They depict the various episodes of the deities' stories. (Seth & Singh. 2017)

The 'Sanjhi' craft are following of two forms:

- **Folk tradition:** At the heart of the tradition lies a captivating legend, wherein 'Sanjhi' practices entail the creation and embellishment of designs on walls using stones, mirrors, and coloured stones, all on a base of cow dung. These 'Sanjhis', distinct from temple rituals, are crafted by unmarried girls who fervently pray to the goddess 'Sanjhi' for a husband and children. The motifs adorning these 'Sanjhi' artworks are exquisitely intricate, featuring flowers, creepers, and depictions of 'Sanjhi and sanjha'.
- **Temple tradition:** Within the temple tradition, 'Sanjhi' is meticulously crafted every evening during the 'Pitru Paksha', the fortnight of remembrance for ancestors, occurring in the waning moon of the month of 'Ashwin', typically in September or October. Executed by temple priests and local artisans, the 'Sanjhi' takes form on a raised earthen platform known as 'vedi', composed of a mixture of mud and cow dung. Adorned with motifs primarily featuring intricate floral patterns and leaves arranged intricately akin to a 'rangoli', this artistry culminates with the creation of a central design depicting a 'Lila' or divine play of Krishna (Rishi & Singh, 2009).

Tools and Techniques: The technique behind creating 'Sanjhi' paper stencils demands a high degree of precision and practice. It begins with sketching the design onto paper, and if multiple copies are needed, the papers are securely pinned together on all sides. Utilizing only a pair of finely crafted scissors with long arms for easy manipulation, artisans meticulously rotate the paper around the scissors to achieve precise cuts. The number of papers cut stencils employed for any design depends on factors such as the intricacy of the pattern, the number of elements within the design, and the desired colour scheme.

Motifs: The art of 'Sanjhi' is a celebration of the legends of lord Krishna. The motifs and designs that appear in the traditional Sanjhi paper cutting are the scenes of Vrindavan which includes peacock, the cows, the monkey, the kadamba tree, the river flowing past the temple, Imageries and

themes like Krishna rasa, Nand Gopal stealing butter are also cut intricately. The very intricate 'Sanjhi' have many creepers and flowers running along the borders. The motifs and the themes also include the images of the deity "Sanjhi and Sanjha".

Khadi: Symbolizing Indian textile heritage, Khadi is where the entire production process, from spinning to weaving, is meticulously carried out by hand – an increasingly rare practice in today's era. The term 'Khadi' derives from 'Khaddar', denoting hand-spun fabric. Its production involves two primary steps: yarn manufacturing using a spinning wheel known as 'Charkha', followed by fabric weaving on a handloom. Khadi is renowned for its versatility, offering coolness in summer and warmth in winter. Mahatma Gandhi, the pioneer of Indian design, advocated for Khadi to foster self-reliance and national unity. Today, Khadi embodies a spiritual and sustainable way of life, offering answers to contemporary societal needs (Karim et al, 2021).

Significance of the Study

The aim of the study was to develop Men's Khaddar Jackets inspired by the traditional designs of "Sanjhi Art. It will help in educating and imparting knowledge about Sanjhi art motifs and in creating products incorporating Sanjhi art through screen printing, making them more appealing to consumers. The focus of the study was to transform Sanjhi art motifs for use in jacket designs and to promote use of khadi fabric.

Objectives of the Study

- To document motifs of Sanjhi Art in terms of design and colour.
- To analyse the preferred Sanjhi Art motifs to be screen printed on the Men's Jacket
- To assess the acceptability of the developed Men's Khadi Jacket.

Limitations

- The study was limited to Men's jackets.
- Only four khadi jackets were constructed. \

Review of Literature:

According to Babel & Sanchiher (2015), Sanjhi is a traditional artwork prevalent among Hindu families in which adolescent girls and young women, aged 15-30, are extensively engaged in Sanjhi art. Sanjhi drawings are created during pitru-paksha (the fortnight of the ancestors) and are categorized into four types in pushtimarg. These pictures are crafted using flowers, natural colors, banana leaves, and water. Majority of respondents are familiar with the significance of various motifs in Sanjhi, with geometric patterns such as spirals, dots, pentagons, squares, and rectangles being widely used. Holy symbols like Asthadal Kamal, Swastika, Deepak, Om, Mangal kalash, and scenes of Lord Krishna's Raasa leela are depicted in Sanjhi, particularly at the Shrinathji temple in Nathdwara. Traditional materials like Geru and Khadiya are still utilized by most respondents for Sanjhi making. Additionally, 60% of respondents believe that Sanjhi art has the potential to be established as an enterprise in the apparel sector.

Singh et al (2012) had concluded in their study that the Sanjhi artisans mostly depict traditional motifs of Hindu mythology along with human figures, floral, animal and bird's motifs using paper cutting technique by hand and scissor. The introduction of this art on textiles helps to preserve these designs and open new avenues for the designers working in the field of textile designing. The designs prepared by CAD were successfully applied on handicraft articles using laser cutting and all the prepared articles were highly appreciated and were well accepted.

According to Kumari and Singh (2019), Khadi transcends mere fabric; it embodies a spirit. This "khadi spirit" denotes boundless patience. Those familiar with khadi production understand the painstaking efforts of spinners and weavers, requiring immense patience. Similarly, in our pursuit of Swaraj, we must exercise patience. The essence of the "khadi spirit" extends to empathy for all humanity. It necessitates a total renunciation of anything detrimental to others and the nurturing of this spirit among millions. Khadi, therefore, should not just be viewed as a fabric but as a way of life—a symbol of returning to fundamentals.

Methodology

Methodology is the way of conducting research in order that study may be reliable and conducted with accuracy. This research was conducted in three phases:

Step 1- Documentation and Motif collection of Sanjhi Art

The data for the Sanjhi Art motifs collected through primary and secondary sources i.e. books, journals, and internet were categorized according to different types of motifs i.e. floral, religious, and geometrical. From the thirty collected motifs, the best five motifs were selected by 5 fashion designers, 5 experts, and 5 academicians. The design were ranked on 5- Point Likert scale ie. 5- Excellent, 4- Very Good, 3- Good, 2-Fair, 1-Poor.

Step 2- Designing and Evaluation of Illustrations using selected Sanjhi Art Motifs

Fifteen illustrations for men's Jackets were created through CAD, out of which best four illustrations were selected to develop jackets by five experts and five academicians. The designs were ranked on 5-Point Likert Scale The criteria of selection of illustrations were Design, Placement of Motifs and Aesthetic appeal.

Step 3- Assess the Acceptability Index of developed Jackets.

Four developed jackets were assessed to check the market acceptability of the product. The designs were analysed by five fashion designers (experts) and five academicians and forty male in the age group between 25-35 years through convenience sampling. The designs were ranked on 5-Point Likert Scale.-

The parameter of evaluation was:













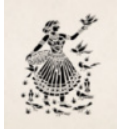





- Suitability of Motifs,
- Placement of Motifs,
- Cost of the Product
- Aesthetic Appeal

The formula for Acceptability Index was as follows-

$$\frac{\text{Maximum accepting frequency of design} \times 100}{\text{Total Scores}}$$

Results and Discussions

Collection of Sanjhi Art Motifs: For the present study, thirty motifs were collected from secondary sources like research papers, books and internet and a digital catalogue was created.

| Motif No | WMS | Rank | Motif No. | WMS | Rank | Motif No. | WMS | Rank |
|---|-----|------|--|-----|------|--|-----|------|
| M1  | 4 | II | M11  | 3.5 | III | M21  | 1 | V |
| M2  | 5 | I | M12  | 4 | III | M22  | 1.5 | II |
| M3  | 3.2 | III | M13  | 2 | IV | M23  | 3.5 | III |
| M4  | 3 | III | M14  | 3.2 | IV | M24  | 3 | II |
| M5  | 2.5 | IV | M15  | 5 | I | M25  | 4 | II |
| M6  | 1.5 | V | M16  | 3.4 | V | M26  | 2.5 | II |










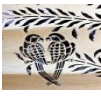


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|--|-----|----|--|-----|----|--|-----|-----|
| M7  | 4.5 | I | M17  | 1.5 | I | M27  | 1.5 | V |
| M8  | 2.5 | IV | M18  | 4.5 | I | M28  | 3.5 | III |
| M9  | 3.2 | II | M19  | 5 | IV | M29  | 2.5 | II |
| M10  | 3.6 | II | M20  | 2.3 | V | M30  | 4 | IV |

Plate I: Documented Motifs of Sanjhi Art

Figure 1 revealed that, out of 30 motifs, five designs were selected by 10 respondents using a 5-point Likert scale. Among these top five motifs, Motif 2 received the highest preference with a Weighted Mean Score (WMS) of 5, followed by Motif 7 (5 WMS), Motif 1 (5 WMS), Motif 18 (5 WMS), and Motif 19 (5 WMS). These motifs, derived from Sanjhi Art, were chosen for their significant and inspiring designs, which stimulate creative thinking and encourage imaginative approaches. These selected designs were subsequently utilized for product development.

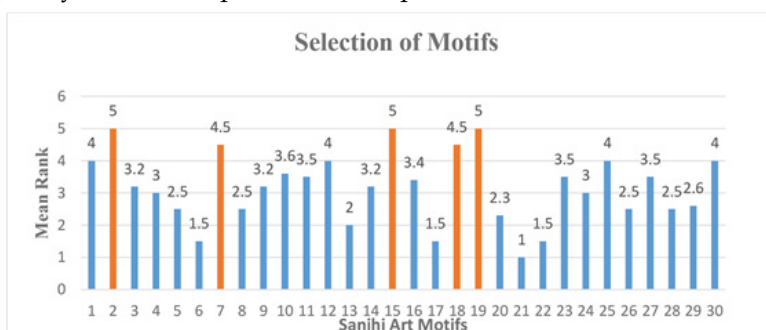


Figure 1: Selections of best five Motifs



Motif 2 Motif 7 Motif 15 Motif 18 Motif 19

Plate II: Selected Sanjhi Art Motifs

Selection of Men’s Jacket-designs

A collection of 15 design concepts for men’s jackets was developed using Khadi fabric, incorporating Sanjhi art motifs by Computer Aided Design. These designs explored a variety of pattern details and motif placements. Out of the fifteen designs, five were selected for the final development of Khadi jackets by panel of judges featuring Sanjhi art, based on their aesthetic appeal, innovative motif placement, and overall design creativity

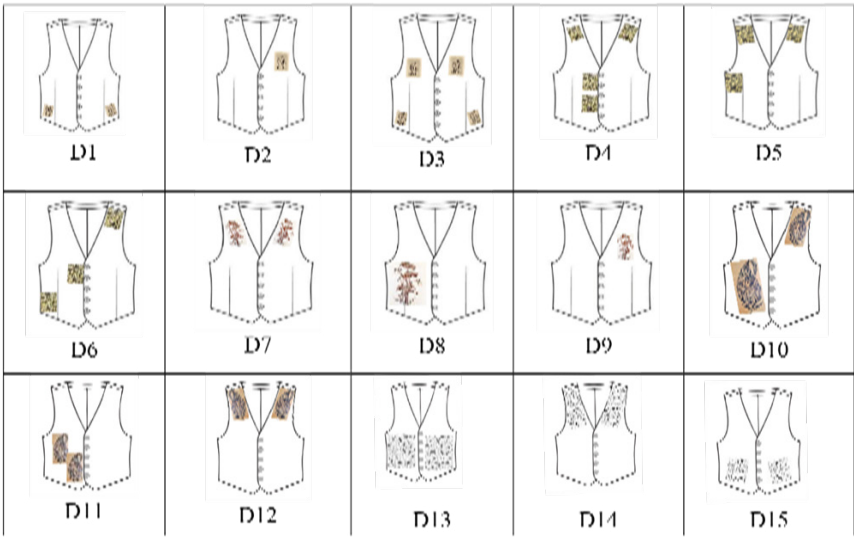


Plate III: Developed designs of Jackets

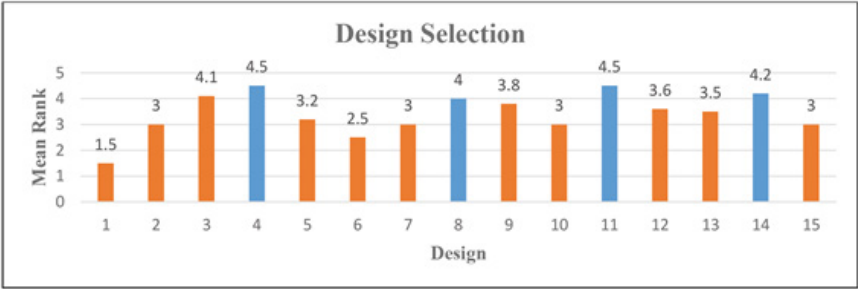


Figure 2: Selection of Men’s Jackets designs

Selection of Men’s Jacket-designs

Analysis of Figure 2 shows that the top five ranked men’s jacket designs, as selected by five design experts and five academicians using a 5-point Likert scale, are as follows: Design 11 and Design 4 both received the highest preference with a Weighted Mean Score (WMS) of 4.5, followed by Design 14 with a WMS of 4.2, Design 3 with a WMS of 4.1, and Design 8 with a WMS of 4. The respondents preferred these designs based on their overall design, the placement of motifs, and their aesthetic appeal. These selected designs were then used for further product development.

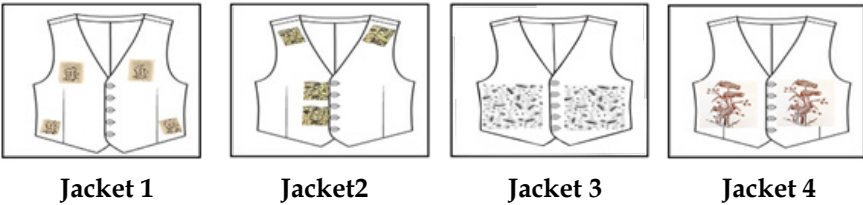


Plate IV Selected Illustrations for Jacket



Plate V: Developed Khadi Jacket using Sanjhi Art motifs

Table 1 : Costing of the Developed men’s Jacket

| Developed Men’s Jackets | Actual Cost (Rs) | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|
| | Fabric and Lining | Screen Printing | Labour Cost | Total Cost |
| Jackets 1 | 250/- | 100/- | 300/- | 650/- |
| Jackets 2 | 250/- | 100/- | 300/- | 650/- |
| Jackets 3 | 250/- | 100/- | 300/- | 650/- |
| Jackets 4 | 250/- | 100/- | 300/- | 650/- |

Table 2: Acceptability Index of Developed khadi Jackets

| Criteria of Evaluation | Jacket 1 | Jacket 2 | Jacket 3 | Jacket 4 |
|------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Placement of Motifs | 211 | 213 | 209 | 220 |
| Suitability of motif | 240 | 150 | 210 | 210 |
| Aesthetic appeal | 200 | 226 | 191 | 228 |
| Cost of the product | 195 | 240 | 209 | 206 |
| Total Score | 846 | 829 | 810 | 854 |
| Acceptability Index | 84.6% | 82.9% | 81% | 85.4% |

From the above acceptability index, it can be analysed that jacket 4 got the highest score of 85.4% followed by jacket 1(84.6%), Jacket 2(82.9%) and Jacket 3(81%). Jacket 4 got the highest score in terms of placement of motifs and aesthetic appeal whereas jacket 2 got highest score for cost of the product and jacket 1 got highest score for suitability of motifs on khadi fabric.

The study’s results align with the findings of Choudhary and Ojha (2015), demonstrating that most respondents are aware of khadi fabrics and products. Cotton is the most preferred material among various khadi options, highlighting its significant role in the promotion of khadi fabrics and products. The primary factors influencing consumers’ buying decisions are the quality of the material and the status symbol associated with khadi. This preference is also driven by the fact that khadi products are chemical-free and thus consumer-friendly. Overall, the results indicate a positive consumer attitude towards khadi products.

Conclusion

The aim of this study is to appreciate and bring to life the rich history and cultural heritage embodied in traditional art forms, highlighting our past development, knowledge, and thoughts. Specifically, the focus is on creating a collection of men's Khadi Jackets inspired by the traditional designs of "Sanjhi," for these intricate designs are hand-cut on paper from Mathura, Uttar Pradesh. This art form has not only continued but also flourished across various parts of India over the years. By incorporating Sanjhi-inspired motifs into modern apparel, this study seeks to educate and engage people with historical art in a contemporary context by promoting sustainable khadi fabric. The garment collection developed through a detailed process of analysing motifs from Sanjhi art, resulting in unique and culturally rich designs and promoting hand spun khadi.

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