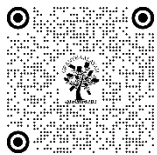


ENHANCING AWARENESS AMONG UJJAIN BATIK PRINTS' ARTISANS ABOUT THE GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION TAG

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DOI
[10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.iICETDA24.2024.1283](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.iICETDA24.2024.1283)

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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ABSTRACT

Geographical indication gives critical information regarding artisanal products. It plays a major role in presenting and promoting traditional crafts and products of the local region. Artisans in central parts of India give less importance to the GI tag which is hampering their sales or reducing the chances of getting the economic advantage. Therefore, this paper attempts to capture the effects of considering as well as not considering the GI tag for the promotion of their crafts. It studies the current scenario of not considering the GI tag by evaluating the effect of the sales and promotions of the Ujjain batik print. It also discusses the impact on craft if artisans give effective importance to the GI tag. The importance of the GI tag has been evaluated here by considering a case example of artisans practicing batik craft in the Ujjain region. The study evaluated that the lack of awareness among artisans regarding the GI tag makes it challenging to generate more revenue for dealers and artisans. It also hinders the growth of sales and promotions for their crafts. Bridging this awareness gap could significantly enhance their ability to market and sell their products successfully as well as improve the product's visibility both nationally and internationally. To achieve the research objectives, a descriptive research method approach is applied for data collection for well-structured interviews of 50 artisans of Bhairavgarh. The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of the lack of awareness among artisans regarding the GI tag, with a focus on the ability to increase their sales and promotion of the craft.

1. INTRODUCTION

The handicraft industry is India's second-largest unorganized industry after agriculture in terms of job creation in rural areas. India has a rich cultural history of crafts, and each craft is renowned because of the locals' skills, which have been developed over many generations and extended periods. The handicraft industry directly and indirectly employs around 7 million people, many of whom are women and members of the underprivileged segments of society. Every region of India has its distinctive textiles that reflect the skills of craftsmen, they meticulously craft the fabric and surface decoration that sets them apart from those of other or nearby regions. For an extensive period, people used these textiles with pride, signifying their origin and social standing (Ajay Tamta, 2017)

A geographical indicator (GI) is a label applied to goods that originated in a certain region and have characteristics or a reputation unique to that region. The TRIPS Agreement of the World Trade Organization, which went into effect in 1995, was the first international intellectual property law to utilize the term "geographical indication." The GIs of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, which was passed into law in India in 1999, went into implementation in September 2003 (Londhe). GI grants the sole rights to a region's producers to use the indicator on goods that are locally made. By using the GI tag they are entitled to forbid any unauthorized use or copying of the sign on a product not made in the

approved region or does not meet the GI's quality standards. It is mostly used to distinguish things that are handcrafted from a specific region that has gained popularity with consumers because of its uniqueness. A community that is a part of that specific location typically possesses the geographical indicator. Under the Geographical Indication of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act 1999, a Geographical Indications Registry is in operation with all Indian jurisdictions (Manjunatha, 2016).

2. ABOUT THE GI OF UJJAIN BATIK PRINT

Ujjain Batik Print was registered as a GI by Arunodaya Sarveshwari Lok Kalyan Samit and Deen Dayal Mahila Rangai Chhapai, Silai, Kadhahi Bahudesiya Antyodaya Sahkari Sanstha in 2022. Registered as Ujjain Batik Print under Application No. 700 in respect of Textile and Textile Goods falling in Class - 24 and 25. It is hereby advertised as accepted under Sub-section (1) of Section 13 of the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999. "Deen Dayal Mahila Rangai Chhapai Silai, Kadhahi Bahudesiya Antyodaya Sahkari Sanstha" is registered with the Sub Registrar of Cooperative Societies Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, making them an Applicant under Section 11. This organization is related to the marketing, production, and well-being of the region. The organization's members are drawn from the Batik Print community.

"Arunodaya Sarveshwari Lok Kalyan Samit" is registered with Ujjain under the Madhya Pradesh Society Registration Act, 1973, and qualifies under Section 11. This organization is also related to the marketing, production, and well-being of the geographical areas. The government of India, the government of Madhya Pradesh, and NABARD have all supported the organization for a very long time as it directly supports the batik print community and promotes this age-old traditional craft in many ways. Both organizations are working on marketing, manufacturing, and well-being in the relevant region. The organization's members are from the Batik Print community, are acknowledged by the government of Madhya Pradesh, and are connected to Batik Print producers and producing regions (Intellectual Property India).

Apart from the registered GI organizations, some other organizations such as cooperative societies and NGOs are also supporting the batik craft and artisans of Bhairavgarh. Ujjain's Swastik Mahila Udyog Sahakari Samiti Myt. is a cooperative society registered under the Society's Registration Act 1960 under section 7. The society promotes several crafts like Batik Print, Block Print, Kalamkari, and Tie & Die. The women of the Society create exquisite clothing that they sell at emporiums and government and non-government exhibitions (Swastik Mahila Udyog).

3. HISTORY OF UJJAIN BATIK

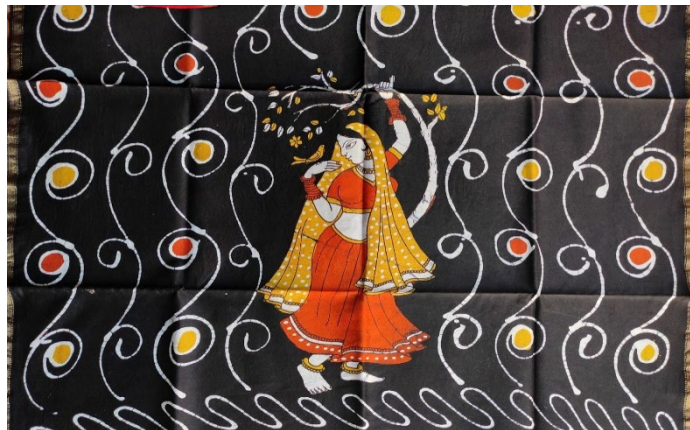


Fig. 1. Solanki. Batik Printed Fabric. 11 Nov. 2023.

For ages, artisans of colors have been one of the major centers of attraction in Bhairavgarh. This small village of Bhairavgarh is located on the banks of the Shipra River, only a short distance from Ujjain. The town is the center of Batik printing and is well-known for its magnificent Kaal Bhairav temple. Wax-resist dyeing and printing is a centuries-old art form that is believed to have been used for more than 2,000 years in countries including Egypt, Japan, and India. During the Mughal era, the ancient craft of batik made its way into Madhya Pradesh's handloom and craft industries. Around 400 years ago, craftspeople from Gujarat and Rajasthan settled in Bhairavgarh, which later became the center of Batik

printing in Madhya Pradesh. Batik printed cloth was originally used for draped clothing by the local tribal people. Today, over 800 artisans are working in the village of Bherugarh (MP Tourism, 2020)

From a historical angle, above 150 households rely on the traditional Bhairavghar print, which began with blocks made of potatoes and bandhej and has since come a long way through blocks of wood, alizarin chemicals, and screen-printing techniques. Today, a wide variety of dress materials, sarees, and home furnishings are sold throughout the country. The base fabric is sourced from Rajasthan, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu. (District Administration Ujjain). Craftsmen also utilize local Chanderi and Maheshwari fabric as the base for printing to merge two different handicrafts for a delightful mix. Hot melted wax is now utilized in place of the specially prepared soil that was used in the past, together with a pen or brush for dying. If there are multiple colors, the steps are carried out once again for each color. Natural candle wax has been replaced by industrial wax, reducing the amount of wax that may be recycled. Natural pigments are also less frequently utilized and are instead substituted with chemical dyes. These are the outcomes of the need for less expensive materials and quicker production. Artisans have been impacted by the mechanization of printing and dying. They have kept their tradition as it is in preserving their skills by being resourceful, efficient, and flexible in their work techniques to meet changing market demands. (Gatha, 2010)



Fig. 2. Solanki. Batik Printing Tools. 23 Oct. 2023.

These artisans practice this craft under the supervision of their ancestors, who taught it to them or passed it down to them. This explains why they possess an innate capacity to create original themes. Batik's method evolved, but its motifs stayed mostly constant. Typically, artisans create traditional motifs on their initiative, though occasionally they are prompted by customer demand. Motifs are inspired by natural elements like leaves, flowers, animals, and paisley. Several motifs, such as the human figure, animal figure, the Shiva statue, the rising sun, etc.



Fig. 3. Solanki. Batik Printing Process. 23 Oct. 2023. Author's collection.

The novelty of the study contributes to the GI tag of Ujjain batik prints, its awareness levels among artisans, and the subsequent effects on sales and promotions for the Ujjain batik print. The research includes the understanding of the GI tag of Ujjain batik print, an exploration of its awareness levels among the artisans of Bhairavgarh, and an assessment of the impact on the sales and promotion of the craft, by understanding the current information gap about the intricate

relationship between the GI tag and the Ujjain batik print by contributing valuable insights to its sales. By understanding the awareness levels of artisans regarding the GI tag and its influence on sales and promotions, this study highlights the crucial factors driving the recognition of the Ujjain batik craft. This knowledge is essential for informing promoting economic growth and preserving cultural heritage in the region.

4. OBJECTIVE

The objective of the study is to gain valuable insights into the awareness, perceptions, and impact of the GI tag on Ujjain batik print artisans. The key objectives of the study are as follows:

- To examine the awareness level among the artisans about the benefits of having a GI tag.
- To analyse the impact of GI on a critical factor of Ujjain batik print sales.
- To provide recommendations regarding the significance of GI tags and the potential benefits they can derive.

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

Manjunatha studied the Geographical indicators, a new type of intellectual property, that is evolving in India. Every year, the total number of geographical indicators that have been registered rises steadily. Among the states that are emerging as possible participants in this field is Odisha. This Tag benefits producers and consumers from prevents fraud (Manjunatha).

Harish Bapat explored the historical evolution of Geographical Indications (GIs) globally, back to the 19th century, with India's GI Act still in its early stages. However, despite its nascent status, the concept of GIs in India is not entirely novel in business and trade. He highlights several key outcomes of GI implementation, including regional empowerment, decentralization of business and trade, and opportunities for sustainable development. Despite controversies, the GI Act has paved the way for sensitization, creating trade opportunities and recognition. Furthermore, GIs serve as agents for ecological efficiency by preventing urban concentration and offering opportunities and recognition at the regional level, thereby contributing to regional development and curtailing migration to some extent. (Bapat).

Gauri Kathju explored valuable insights into the relationship between crafts and Geographical Indications (GIs). Government agencies play a pivotal role in incentivizing and promoting GIs, with a notable emphasis on textile crafts. Understanding the value chain model of these crafts sheds light on their socio-economic benefits, highlighting their significance beyond cultural preservation. Consumer awareness and buying behavior towards GI-based products emerge as crucial factors influencing market dynamics, suggesting a need for targeted strategies to enhance awareness and revenue generation for these products. (Kathju)

Shruti Tiwari studied the growth and evolution of Bhairavghar batik art from its traditional roots. The significance of preserving the craft's heritage and recognizing its aesthetic value as a handmade art form. Appreciating the craftsmanship involved in Bhairavghar batik craft can lead to a greater acknowledgment of artisans' skills and talents. Moreover, embracing innovative business practices can uplift the lifestyle of artisans, ensuring sustainable growth and prosperity within the community (Tiwari)

Swati Vyas and Isha Bhatt studied the current status of the Bhairavgarh cluster as the artisans are currently focused on batik craft, efforts are underway to revive traditional designs and reestablish the cluster's unique identity. Ujjain, with a rich history of textile printing since the 5th century AD, once boasted unique block printing techniques using natural dyes. However, the decline in traditional methods in Bhairongarh has led to the prevalence of synthetic dyes and pigment printing. The significance of promoting and preserving the authenticity of Bhairongarh designs reflects a positive sentiment towards traditional crafts. This underscores the importance of supporting artisans and safeguarding cultural heritage. The insights offer valuable guidance for efforts aimed at revitalizing the traditional prints of the Bhairongarh cluster, including considerations for design, pricing, packaging, and retail locations to align with consumer preferences and market demands. (Vyas and Bhatt)

6. METHODOLOGY

The study is based on the GI of the Ujjain batik print and the craft specific to the region, the study was conducted in the Bhairavgarh batik cluster. The work involves both the primary and the secondary data to find out the awareness of GI

among artisans. The primary data was collected from Bhairavgarh-based artisans via questionnaire as well as on-site observation. Secondary data was collected from different research papers, articles, and websites. The data was analyzed to extract useful information related to sales, promotions & awareness. The primary data will provide insights gathered directly from artisans including conducting surveys, interviews, or observations to gather insights into artisan's awareness levels regarding the Geographical Indication (GI) tag, their sales promotion strategies, and their perspectives on the impact of the GI tag on sales and promotions. The secondary data will give information from existing sources such as articles, research papers, government reports, and blogs. This data provided background information on the Ujjain batik print cluster, the significance of the GI tag, and other previous studies conducted on similar topics. Below is the conceptual framework flowchart that depicts the sequential process of data collection, analysis, and interpretation of the study.

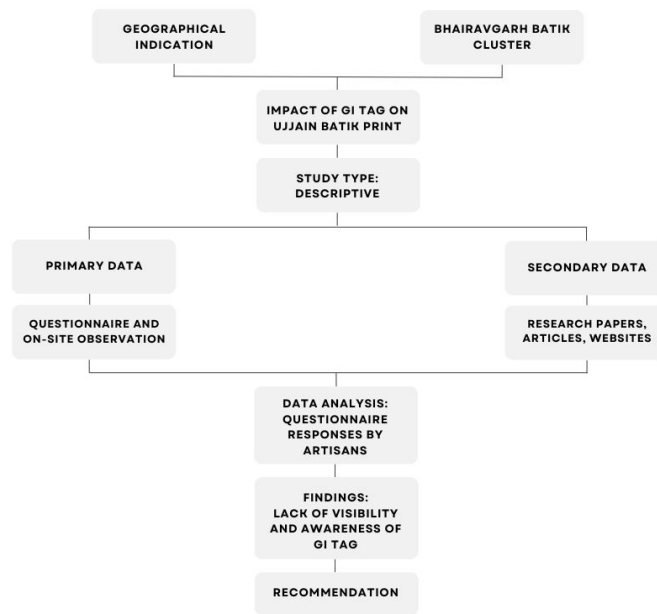


Fig. 2. Conceptual Framework

7. RESULT AND INTERPRETATION

1. How many years of experience do you have?

2. At what season the sales of products will be high? Please mention the product name.
☐ Summer _____
☐ Rainy _____
☐ Autumn _____
☐ Winter _____

3. In what aspects do you face the problems while selling the products?
☐ Product
☐ Price
☐ Design
☐ Fabric
☐ Other

4. What do you think will help the craft grow more?
☐ Production
☐ Design
☐ Packaging
☐ Marketing
☐ Other

5. Please mention the name of the government scheme you are aware of.

6. Are you aware of any of these government schemes?
☐ Mukhya Mantri Udyam Kranti Yojana
☐ Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME)
☐ Sant Ravidas Swarojgar Yojana
☐ National Handicrafts Development Programme (NHDP)
☐ None of the above

7. Which organization are you associated with?
☐ NGO
☐ Co-operative society
☐ Government organization
☐ Other
 Please mention name _____

8. What do you know about the GI tag?
☐ Provides legal protection
☐ Prevents unauthorized use of a registered GI by others
☐ Improves market access
☐ Boosts exports
☐ Helps consumers to get quality products

9. Do you think GI will help you to promote your business?
☐ Strongly Agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neutral
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly Disagree

10. Do you expect the level of sales after the GI tag will increase?
☐ Strongly Agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neutral
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly Disagree

Fig. 4. Survey Questionnaire for Artisans and Dealers.

- 25% of artisans have been working in this craft for less than 10 years, some of them started working in this craft as per their interest and some joined this craft and taken over the business from their ancestors as this craft is a family business and a source of income. 40% of artisans have been involved in this craft for 10 to 20 years. 30% of artisans are master artisans, continuing the craft for more than 20 years and the remaining 5% of the artisans have now taken retirement and teaching the craft to their new generation.
- In summer, sarees, and suit sales are higher. In the rainy season, sales started decreasing, while in the winter season, more home furnishings like bedsheets, cushion covers, etc are sold, especially due to the festive season which starts from October - November.
- Fabric received the highest number of votes with problems faced by artisans as many customers demanded different fabrics. The secondary concern is the pricing of the products, due to customers bargaining, artisans didn't receive the deserving compensation for their work. Sometimes design-related problems are also faced by the artisans as customers ask for new designs.
- The production received 65% the highest number of votes for growing the business as artisans face financial problems for more inventory for the upcoming season and sometimes, they receive payment from the wholesalers or government organizations after 2-3 months of selling the products, due to which they face financial problems for further production. Design received 20% and marketing received 35% votes as these aspects are also important for growing the business. None of the artisans responded on the packaging that they preferred no extra cost on it. They indicated that using plastic bags is sufficient for their packaging needs.
- 90% of the artisans are not aware of any of the government schemes, due to a lack of effective communication from the government organizations. Only 5% are aware of the MSME scheme and 5% are aware of DCS.
- 50% of artisans were aware of the MSME cluster development scheme, 45% heard about the Mukhya Mantri Udyam Kranti Yojana, and 5% heard about the Sant Ravidas Swarojgar Yojana. 30% of artisans do not know about any of the schemes they are asked for.
- All the artisans have registered with the Madhya Pradesh Hastha Shilpa Vikas Nigam (HSVN) government organization.
- 40% of artisans don't know about the GI tag due to a lack of awareness. While 60% of artisans know about the GI, only 20% of artisans understand the benefits associated with the GI tag.

9. 45% of artisans neither agree nor disagree about the promotion of their business after getting the GI tag. 30% of artisans disagree about the promotion, as they believe that the existing commercial activity meets their needs. While 25% of artisans agree because products with GI tags will be identifiable on the global market.
10. After explaining about GI, 50% of the artisans neither agree nor disagree that the GI tag will help them to increase their level of sales. Only 25% of the artisans agree and 15% of artisans strongly agree that the GI tag will help them to increase their sales in both national and international markets. 10% of the artisans disagree as they hold a differing perspective, asserting that the current business and sales they generate are satisfactory.

8. FINDINGS

The study reveals that the artisans are uncertain about the potential of the Geographical Indication (GI) tag for their work. Instead, many artisans express satisfaction with their existing sales, casting doubt on the perceived benefits of the GI tag for their craft. Several findings are:

1. Ujjain batik print artisans have a limited understanding of the concept, purpose, and benefits of obtaining a GI tag for their craft.
2. Among Ujjain batik print artisans, there is a lack of efficient communication routes for spreading knowledge about the GI tag. There aren't many workshops, training sessions, or educational resources on the significance of GI tags.
3. Artisans are not aware of the marketing benefits related to the GI tag, which leads to limited utilization of the GI tag for promotion.
4. Artisans prioritize their traditional methods ahead of any other legal aspects. Instead of understanding the advantages of the GI tag, their focus remains on their current sales and craft skills.
5. Many artisans are not aware of the sales potential that a GI tag brings and how it improves their product's marketability and creates more demand and financial potential.
6. The lack of community engagement and collaboration to educate artisans on the importance of the GI tag results in a lack of awareness within the Ujjain batik print artisan community.
7. Some artisans express satisfaction with their existing sales including local markets, exhibitions, and direct sales to customers. They believe that the current approach meets their financial needs without the perceived complexities of the GI tag.
8. It's important to understand that Ujjain batik print craftspeople may have different opinions about the GI tag. Some people are wary, but others are willing to learn more about the benefits and protections that GI tags can offer.

9. SUGGESTIONS

1. Information about Geographical Indications (GI) should be shared, and awareness raised by government & private organizations, and educational institutions, etc.
2. Organize training sessions and workshops to educate artisans about the importance of the GI tag, its advantages, and how it safeguards their distinctive work.
3. Conduct collaborative events of Bhairavgarh batik artisans, which include exhibitions, fairs, or cultural events where artisans can showcase their work under the GI-protected tag.
4. Conduct campaigns to educate consumers about the importance of GI-tagged products and promote the cultural and economic benefits of purchasing authentic craft.
5. Collaboration with government agencies, NGOs, and trade organizations to promote Ujjain batik print at national, and international levels.
6. Incorporate experiences with Ujjain batik prints into regional tourism campaigns. Provide guided tours of the batik cluster allowing visitors to witness the craft process and purchase authentic products.

10. DISCUSSION

The study presented the promotion and acceptance of the Geographical Indication (GI) tag for Ujjain batik print artisans. Certain artisans are satisfied with existing practices, while some are willing to learn more about the benefits of GI tag. The research suggests that educational campaigns, collaborations, and consumer engagement initiatives are crucial to building awareness about the GI and fostering a positive perception of the GI tag. The findings highlight the need to address the concerns and misconceptions of artisans about the GI tag. It is necessary to inform and involve them about the possible advantages of the GI tag for their craft and overall livelihoods. Developing a collaborative and well-informed

strategy will be crucial to managing the fine line between preserving traditional practices and leveraging the advantages offered by the GI tag for Ujjain batik print.

Limitations of the study primarily rely on data from artisans, which may be subject to inaccuracies. The research focuses on the sales & promotion and acceptance of the GI tag among artisans but may not fully capture the perspectives of other stakeholders such as consumers, and industry experts. External factors such as economic conditions, or market trends could influence the effectiveness of promoting the GI tag.

11. FUTURE SCOPE

1. Conduct longitudinal studies to track changes in artisan attitudes and perceptions towards the GI tag over time, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of its long-term impact.
2. Explore the role of different organizations, such as cooperatives or NGOs, in facilitating awareness and acceptance of the GI tag among artisans and assess their effectiveness in driving adoption.
3. Investigate the economic implications of GI certification for artisans, including its impact on market access, pricing, and income levels, to provide a more holistic assessment of its benefits.
4. Expand the scope of research to include analyses of GI promotion strategies across different craft communities, regions, or countries, to identify best practices and lessons learned that can inform future initiatives.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None

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