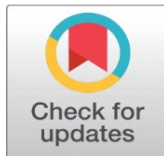
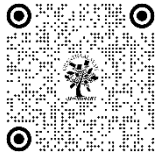


AN IN-DEPTH EXPLORATION OF BHIL ART-INSPIRED DESIGN IN CONTEMPORARY TEXTILE PRODUCTS

Anshu Singh Choudhary ¹✉ , Dr. Deepti Pargai ²✉ 

¹ Assistant Professor, Amity School of Fashion Design & Technology, Amity University Madhya Pradesh, Gwalior, India

² Assistant Professor, School of Design, Mody University, Sikar, Rajasthan, India



ABSTRACT

Known for the intricate motifs, vibrant colors, and deep cultural symbolism, Bhil art is the cultural heritage of the Bhil tribe in India. This paper presents an in-depth study of Bhil art-inspired designs in contemporary textile products. The study also explores the adaptation of traditional artistic elements into modern textile design, exploring the synergy between heritage and innovation. Emphasizing a qualitative approach, the research delves into the cultural nuances embedded in Bhil artistry and examines how these elements are translated into textile products through innovative design methodologies. The focus of the paper is to contribute to the discourse on the preservation of cultural heritage in the context of evolving design practices. This study not only sheds light on the artistic evolution but also addresses the ethical considerations and challenges in preserving the authenticity of Bhil culture amidst modern design processes. The primary findings contribute to a full consideration of the active chemistry between cultural heritage and the ever-evolving area of textile product design.

Keywords: Bhil Art, Textile Design, Contemporary Adaptation, Cultural Heritage, Innovation

Received 02 January 2024

Accepted 21 May 2024

Published 04 June 2024

Corresponding Author

Anshu Singh Choudhary,
anshusingh2k6@gmail.com

DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.870](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.870)

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

Copyright: © 2024 The Author(s). This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

With the license CC-BY, authors retain the copyright, allowing anyone to download, reuse, re-print, modify, distribute, and/or copy their contribution. The work must be properly attributed to its author.



1. INTRODUCTION

India's varied customs and creative evidence are deeply woven into its rich cultural fabric. Bhil art is a vivid representation of the traditions coming from the native Bhil people which is marked by its strong patterns, vivid colours, and profound symbolic meanings [Khot \(2021\)](#).

In last few years, the tribal art design interpretation has gained popularity which has enabled a special opportunity to connect innovation with legacy. This research examines how Bhil tribal art-inspired patterns have been adapted for use

in modern textile products, so it becomes important to investigate how old creative traditions have relevance in this dynamic environment as the textile sector experiences rapid changes driven by global design patterns and technological advances.

This research also uses a qualitative method to study the subtleties of Bhil art along with its deep symbolic significance and the ways in which its modification has influenced the stories and aesthetics of modern textile works. Beyond the obvious beauty of Bhil art, it aims to reveal the cultural value imbedded in the artwork and explore the way these components might be smoothly included in modern textile goods [Choudhary & Pargai \(2023\)](#). Design approaches, case studies, and ethical issues are just a few of the themes covered in this research that help provide a comprehensive understanding of the intricate relationship between tradition and modernity [Guha \(2022\)](#). Through disentangling the connections between Bhil art and modern textile goods, this study aims to illuminate the transformational power of cultural legacy in the ever-evolving field of design.

1.1. ORIGIN OF BHIL ART

The Bhil tribe, one of the biggest indigenous tribes in India with a very rich cultural history that is seen in its distinctive and colourful art styles is spread over the states of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, and Chhattisgarh. Bhil art, often referred to as Bhilpainting or Bhil tribal art, has its origins in the sociocultural practices of the Bhil people. It is evident from this study that Bhil art-inspired patterns in modern textiles add to the story of cultural variety and preservation as well as the fashion and design industries' aesthetic appeal. It also invites people to acknowledge the richness and beauty inherent in its themes, acting as a cultural ambassador in today's global scenario. The cultural creativity and preservation are a task to be done at this stage, where the path from tribal walls to modern fabrics has been revolutionary. As the progress in weaving the future, uniting cultures and generations in a celebration of creativity, identity, and the human experience is done, the history of Bhil art remains a vital thread. [Nath & Shanti \(2023\)](#). The Bhil tribe's daily routines, customs, and spiritual activities are deeply embedded in their art, which has ancient roots. Based on archaeological evidence, Bhil artistic traditions appear to have evolved over ages, as seen by cave paintings and rock art.

Bhil art represents not just the close relationship between the Bhil people and the natural environment, but also their cultural practice. The Bhil people's relationship to the earth, animals, and spiritual beliefs are all portrayed in the art, which is intricately woven into their lifestyle. Storytelling scenes of daily life, deities, and mythology are considered the major element of this artform wherein each motif has its symbolic meaning. As a reflection of the sustainable and environmentally conscious lifestyle of the Bhil people, traditional Bhil art is made from natural materials like plant extracts, clay, and cow dung etc [Kolay \(2016\)](#). Walls, floors, and cloth are just a few of the surfaces on which the art is frequently developed.

1.2. CHARACTERISTICS

Traditionally, common figures are depicted in big, unrealistic forms in Bhil art. Then, earthy hues in simple shapes are added to these patterns. The consistent multicoloured dots that are used to create various patterns on these illustrations stand out sharply against the background. The use of intentional dots is a significant aspect of Bhil art. Anything from Gods to ancestors may be used as motifs, and the

patterns created on them reflect the unique style of each artist. In Bhil art, in-filling the motif is a key feature, and painters' dot patterns frequently reflect their own style. These resemble Australian dot paintings created by Aboriginal artists [Upadhyay \(2023\)](#). Bhil painters exclusively use dots in different patterns and this technique is referred as pointillism. Below are some key characteristics of this artform.

- **Bright and Vibrant Colours:** Bhil art is set apart by a visually appealing and use of lively bold colours like red, yellow, blue, and green to create compositions that have a strong visual effect. Vibrant colour schemes are not only aesthetically pleasing but also meaningful, usually representing aspects of spirituality, nature, and cultural themes.
- **Detailed Patterns and Motifs:** This art is distinguished by use of detailed geometric patterns and stylized motifs. Artists often use intricate and repeating patterns to emphasise symmetry and rhythm to reflect the natural environment by using patterns featuring animals, human figures, flora, and wildlife [Guha \(2022\)](#).
- **Symbolism and Storytelling:** Bhil paintings often serve as a means of storytelling, and each theme has a symbolic meaning. Bhil artists employ creative skills to create design that narrate myths, folklore, traditional rituals and preserves the same by passing the knowledge to next generation.
- Nature and wildlife are shown extensively in Bhil art, with animals, birds, and landscapes taking the stage. The Bhil tribe has a strong relationship to the environment and depends on it for inspiration and subsistence, which is reflected in the paintings' fine details of wildlife.
- **Ritualistic and Spiritual Elements:** Bhil artwork frequently combines mythical stories, religious rituals, and goddess representations by using the elements of the art that adds sacredness to their work.
- **Use of Natural Materials:** Clay, cow dung and plant extracts are a few of the natural materials that is used by traditional Bhil artists in their works. Not only does this environmentally friendly strategy complement the Bhil's sustainable practices, but also adds unique texture.
- **Adaptability and Innovation:** Bhil art is open to innovation despite its strong historic foundations. Bhil artists of today have translated traditional art styles to canvas, fabric, and paper, among other materials and allows change while keeping its essential qualities, reflecting the art form's dynamic essence [Sharma \(2015\)](#).
- **Expression of Joy and Celebration:** Joy and celebration are frequently expressed in Bhil art as numerous paintings show joyful events, dancing, and social meetings which is a joyful and upbeat vibe of the Bhil community.
- **Community Involvement:** Bhil art frequently incorporates community involvement in addition to individual expression and as result community murals and paintings are created together to provide a feeling of cultural continuity and shared identity.
- **Resilience and Cultural Identity:** The history, culture & creative legacy of the Bhil tribe are powerfully expressed via their art, even if it has changed throughout time and this makes this art resilient as it can resist outside influences without losing its unique identity.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The main idea behind this research is to prepare design sheets by modifying Rajasthani Bhil patterns for use in textile printing. An exploratory research approach was used because the topic is multidisciplinary in nature as well as it focuses on adaptable and unrestricted method of gathering and analysing data [Sharma \(2016\)](#).

Data has been gathered using the primary data collection technique. To learn more about the traditional artistic forms and the methods of tribal people, a variety of surveys and interviews were carried out there. Secondary data were also collected from numerous sources including books, magazines, stickers, pictures, tribal museums, and stickers were used to gather the art designs [Hegde \(2019\)](#).

The collected data were segregated based on its suitability for further adaptations after considering the options for modifying motifs and designs into alternative designing techniques without compromising the original colour and theme with the help of Corel draw software & adobe Illustrator. A panel of fifty respondents were chosen randomly including faculty members and postgraduate students in the Design Department to assess the modified design to appraise its genuineness, visual allure, and cultural awareness [Barani et al. \(2022\)](#).





A five-point Likert scale was created to collect data. Weighted mean score (WMS) was calculated for each motif and ranked accordingly. Ten motifs were chosen and then as per top ranking given by expert panel top ranked two motifs were applied on tote bag for design development.



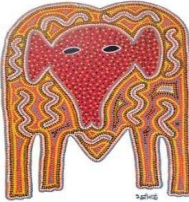



The designs were created by digitally modifying and adapting certain tribal art themes and patterns to maintain the integrity of the creative traditional art forms. Neither the colours nor the uniqueness of the motifs were altered during the process. Heat transfer printing technique was used in the creation of textile samples with modified tribal art.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The developed motif was assessed by a group fifty randomly chosen respondents, (faculty members and postgraduate students) in the Design Department. A five-point Likert scale and a systematic interview schedule have been created to collect data.

Table 1

Table 1 Motifs of Bhil Art (Original Form)							
S. No.	Designs	WMS	Rank	S. No.	Designs	WMS	Rank
1		3.82	I	6		3.5	IV
2		3.22	VI	7		3.75	II

3		3.65	III	8		2.89	VIII
4		2.76	IX	9		3.19	VII
5		3.43	V	10		2.43	X

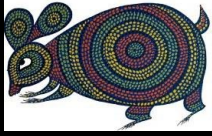


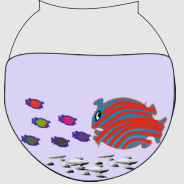

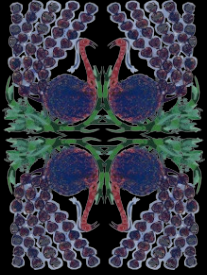


A Weighted Mean Score (WMS) was computed for every motif. Rank I was given to the theme with the greatest weighted mean score. The preferred option for choosing the Bhiltribal motif is shown in [Table 1](#) and [Table 2](#). With the WMS of 3.82 motif no 1 got 1st rank, followed by motif no 7 with weighted mean score of 3.75 ranked 2nd and motif no 3 got 3rd rank with Weighted mean score of 3.65. The other ranked motifs in descending order are 6 (3.5), 5 (3.43), 2 (3.22), 9 (3.19), 8 (2.89), 4 (2.76) and with the WMS of 2.43 motif no 10 was the least preferred design.

Table 2

S. No.	Motif No	WMS	Rank Order
1	1	3.82	1
2	7	3.75	II
3	3	3.65	III
4	6	3.50	IV
5	5	3.45	V
6	2	3.22	VI
7	9	3.19	VII
8	8	2.89	VIII
9	4	2.76	IX
10	10	2.43	10

For more customisation, the selected motifs were applied to tote bags, however, other textile products such as file covers, table covers, sofa covers, and cushion may also be created with the developed motifs. Moving further, the developed product was also assessed using a weighted mean score to determine its acceptability, colour schemes, and general look.

Table 3

Table 3 Developed Designs of Bhil Art for Cushion Cover			
S. No.	Motif No	Original Motif	Developed Designs of Bhil art forTote bag
1	1		
2	7		
3	3		
4	6		

Motif no 1, 7, 3 and 6 were selected as per the rank order of WMS. Further the development of designs started with every chosen motif of Bhil art using Corel Draw software, four motifs were developed and presented for tote bags in Table 3. The design arrangements of the newly developed designs were also evaluated by a panel of randomly selected 50 respondents and WMS was calculated for each design arrangements.

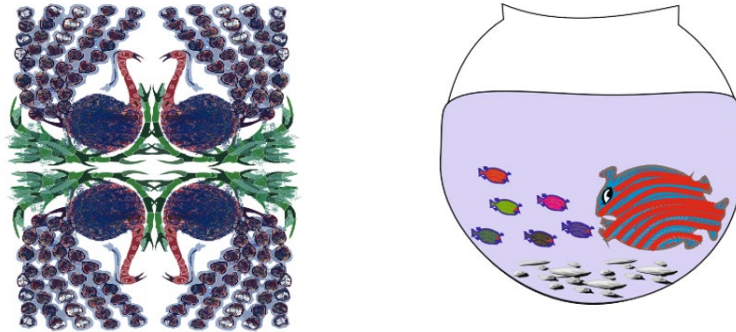
Table 4

Table 4 Experts Preferences for Developed Designs of Bhil Art for Tote Bag			
S. No.	Motif No	WMS	Rank (A)
1	3	3.58	I
2	2	3.44	II
3	1	3.26	III
4	6	3.08	IV

The tote bag was further customized with the ideal choice of developed designs as depicted in Table 4. With weighted mean score of 3.58 motif No 3 got 1st rank followed by WMS of 3.44 achieved by motif no 2 which got rank II, the 3rd rank with WMS of 3.26 was achieved by motif no 1 and with WMS of 3.08 motif no 6 was at

rank no IV was the least preferred motif. Top selected designs for printing on tote bag are motif no 3 & 7 as shown in [Figure 1](#).

Figure 1



Developed by Motif No 3

Developed by Motif No 7

Figure 1 Selected Top Two Designs of Bhil Art for Tote Bag

Lastly, with the help of sublimation printing the top two selected motifs were printed on a 12/16 inches tote bag. The peacock design (Developed Motif no 3) was used in centre of bag to form an attractive design. The fish design (Developed Motif no 7) was also adapted in center of Tote bag as shown in [Figure 2](#).

Figure 2



Motif no 3 on Tote Bag

Motif no 7 on Tote Bag

Figure 2 Placement of Selected Motif on Cushion Cover

The placement of motif in tote bag was also evaluated by the same panel of 50 respondents and WMS was determined for all design layouts as shown in [Figure 2](#) and [Table 5](#).

Table 5

Table 5 Experts Preferences for Placement of Designs of Bhil Art on Cushion Cover

S. No.	Design No	WMS	Rank Order
1	3	3.17	1
2	7	2.92	2

Design 3 is the most preferred layout by respondents with respect to the overall appeal with weighted mean score of 3.17 and Design 7 is the least preferred layout with a weighted mean score of 2.92 as it can be seen from [Table 5](#).

4. CONCLUSION

A perfect blend of history and technology is created by the adaptation of Bhil tribal art for the creation of textile items via the use of digital technologies that has great promise for both cultural preservation and commercial growth. This attempt will be an initiative to protect the indigenous art form, which has also given tribal groups new opportunities for economic growth and sustainable means of subsistence. Utilizing digital tools such as Corel Draw, one may generate an array of imaginative designs that enhance creativity and streamline workflow.

It is evident from this study that Bhil art-inspired patterns in modern textiles add to the story of cultural variety and preservation as well as the fashion and design industries' aesthetic appeal. It also invites people to acknowledge the richness and beauty inherent in its themes, acting as a cultural ambassador in today's worldwide society.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

REFERENCES

- Barani, S., Poornapushpakala, S., Subramoniam, M., Vijayashree, T., & Sudheera, K. (2022). Analysis on Image Restoration of Ancient Paintings. Proceedings - Ieee International Conference on Advances in Computing, Communication and Applied Informatics, Accai. <https://doi.org/10.1109/Accai53970.2022.9752613>
- Choudhary, A. S., & Pargai, D. (2023). Adaptation of Tribal Art of Central Western India for Development of Textile Product Using Digital Design Software. *Shodhkosh: Journal of Visual And Performing Arts*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.29121/Shodhkosh.V4.I2.2023.726>
- Guha, S. (2022). A Status Report of the Tribal Arts Within the Central Indian Tribal Belt. In *Tribal Development Report*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003172864-10>
- Hegde, M. (2019). Introspection on Regional Traditional Textiles of India Into Development of Innovative Fashion Costumes. In *Journal of the Textile Association*, 80(1).
- Khot, A. (2021). The Creative Tribal Bhil Art of India – Need To Be Focus. *International Journal of Textile And Fashion Technology (Ijftt)*, 11(2), 1–8.
- Kolay, S. (2016). Cultural Heritage Preservation of Traditional Indian Art Through Virtual New-Media. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 225. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.Sbspro.2016.06.030>
- Nath, P. P., & Shanti. (2023). Aesthetics and Visual Connotations of Rajasthani Folk Arts: A Critical Study. *Shodhkosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.29121/Shodhkosh.V4.I1.2023.266>

- Sharma, E. (2015). Tribal Folk Arts of India. *Journal of International Academic Research for Multidisciplinary*, 3(5), 300-308.
- Sharma, E. (2016). Digitalization of Motifs Based on Indian Folk Paintings Through Cad and their Adaptation on Apparels Using Digital Printing Technique. *Research Journal of Family, Community and Consumer Sciences*, 4(1).
- Upadhyay, S. S. (2023). Art Speaks Louder than Words: Indian Folk Art for Anthropocene. *Shodhkosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.29121/Shodhkosh.V4.I1.2023.276>