

# Asian Resonance

## New Trends in Bagh Prints:A Prospective study

### Abstract

Block printing is an ancient art that has been practiced in India for thousands of years. The earliest documented evidence of this craft is from the times of Alexander the Great in 327 B.C, when he mentions 'beautiful printed cottons' in India. Bagh printing in its current form started in 1962 when a group of Muslim Khatri weavers migrated from the near by Manavar to Bagh. They were originally from Sindh, and had since migrated to Marwad in Rajasthan and then to Manavar, with them they brought the block printing technique, which is now the unique Bagh printing style. In Bagh printing, only vegetable dyes are used, the main colours being black and red. For black colour, a mixture of harada and iron ore is used. For red, a mixture of alum and dhavada flower is used. These dyes are extracted and prepared locally. Wooden blocks are used for making block prints. For raw material cotton, silk and combination clothes are used, due to good absorption power. The whole method goes through a long process of dyeing and printing by different traditional designs. Once the printing is finished the cloth is left to dry in sun. To cover the whole process, survey and interview methods are used, by these methods data's are collected randomly. For results, Chi square test is applied and the significant level is checked.

**Keywords:** Blocks, Process of Dyeing, Vegetable Dyes.

### Introduction

Bagh, which lends its name to the Bagh prints, is a small tribal village/ town in the Kukshi tehsil of Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh. Legend has it that the village of Bagh, the Bagh River, and the nearby Bagh caves (3rd & 5th century AD, with rich carvings and paintings dedicated to both Hindu as well as Buddhist deities) got their name from the baghs or tigers that inhabited the region. The village, located on the Dhar-Kukshi road, has a population of about 12,000. The Bagh River flows at a distance of about a kilometer from the Dhar-Kukshi road.

From a near forgotten tribal art in a small village in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh, today Bagh prints have left an imprint in the textile and art world. Originally used only on lehengas and ghagras, today the prints adorn saris, dress materials and bed covers. Umar Farukh speaks about the unique block print, its history, the processes involved and its soaring popularity. Ismail Suleiman moved to Bagh village in the 1950s and began practising and giving new dimensions to the block printing. The art was already being practised by 80 per cent of the Adivasi population. In the 1960s, due to the lure of synthetics, many artisans left the craft but stuck to vocation and began to redefine its concept, process and look.

He got 200 and 300-year-old blocks based on traditional motifs inspired by the 1,500-year-old paintings found in caves in the region. These motifs include chameli or jasmine, maithir or mushroom, leheriya and jurvaria or small dots on the field. Also got blocks made which were based on the jaali work found in the Taj Mahal and local forts. He streamlined the processing of the two important colours -- red from Alzarin and black from iron filings. He also discovered new vegetable dyes such as yellow and green. But his single biggest contribution was imprinting the Bagh print on on bed sheets, saris and fabrics. In 1982 he won the National Award for a bed cover in which he used 1,400 different blocks, many of them depicting his own reinvented designs. Also, his saris were being appreciated all over India. The unique Bagh print had arrived!



**Manik Samwatsar Dange**

Assistant Professor,  
Department of Home Science,  
Govt.Girls College,  
Ratlam (M.P.).



**Smita Mandloi**

**Designation.....**  
**Department .....**  
**College.....**  
**City.....**

## Reviews

Sudhakar and Gowda (2005) revealed from the study "Eco-friendly dyeing of silk with copper pod bark extract" that natural bark of copper pod tree, available abundantly as by product, can successfully be applied on silk with better colour values and fastness properties using low concentrations of mordant. The use of low percentage of mordants not only resulted in better dye up take and colour fastness also beneficial from environmental point of view in better dye up take and colour fastness.

The Hindu, Editor (2009) wrote an article "Bagh Print: A Friend But Foe for Nature", it shows Bagh, which lends its name to the Bagh prints. It is a small tribal town in Dhar district of M.P. The Khatri community, who comprise the 'chhipas' or printer came here about 400 years ago from Larkana in Sind which is famous for its Ajrak prints. Bagh's proximity to the river was an important reason for its choice as flowing river water is vital to the process of printing. He invented new vegetable dye colours. Also created new colour combinations. He started experimenting this printing on crepe and silk. He invented mustard colour which he got of pomegranate rinds. He is having 200 years old blocks in his collection. He uses to make colours out of flowers, barks, leaves, fruit skin and natural minerals.

M. P. Midday Editor (2011) wrote an article about "Bagh print artists in Argentina for fourth Bharat Mahotsav". At the festival, national awardee in Bagh prints Mohammad Yusuf Khatri of Madhya Pradesh gave a demonstration on Bagh prints. Through the demonstration of Bagh Kala Thappa Chhapaai, he informed Argentineans about minute details of this art. Indian ambassador in Argentina also called on Bagh print artistes during Bharat Mahotsav and encouraged them. The Bagh print artistes had also carried saree as an emblem of Indian traditional attire to the festival. Describing it as astonishing, an art lover grabbed the saree with both hands. It may be mentioned that silk scarves and other clothes were also liked very much of Argentineans at the festival. The Union Ministry of Textiles has also lauded demonstration of art by Bagh artistes. 'Bagh prints' are trendy, cool and comfortable cloth material. An array of products are now available made from Bagh printed fabric — be it ladies suits, sarees, dress material, dupatta, bed-covers, pillow covers etc, one can find all. Bagh prints have unique hand block printing, printed using vegetable dyes. The fabric used originally was cotton, but now saw tassar, crepe, and silk are being used with excellent results. Bagh layouts are dramatic with use of black and red alternately on a white background. Production process is painstaking and manual.

Pushpa Chari, Oct. 20 (2011) published an article in "The Hindu" in which he wrote about the importance of Bagh prints. Bagh prints have left an imprint in the textile and art world. Originally used only on lehengas and ghagras, today the prints adorn saris, dress materials and bed covers. Umar Farukh speaks about the unique block print, its history, the processes involved and its soaring popularity.

## Methods

The samples were selected from Bagh. The samples of this study were selected through purposive

sampling method. 100 samples of the place were selected. The samples of this study were selected through purposive sampling method. The procedure performed by the crafts person of these places from generation.

Data collection is one of the most important stages in conducting a research. You can have the best research design in the world but if you cannot collect the required data you will be not be able to complete your project. Data collection is a very demanding job which needs thorough planning, hard work, patience, perseverance and more to be able to complete the task successfully. Data collection starts with determining what kind of data required followed by the selection of a sample from a certain population. After that, you need to use a certain instrument to collect the data from the selected sample. The task of data collection begins after a research problem has been defined and research design/ plan chalked out. While deciding about the method of data collection to be used for the study.

There are many methods to collect data, depending on our research design and the methodologies employed. Some of the common methods are questionnaires, interview and observation.

## Result and Discussion

1. 28 workers of Bagh belonged to age group 31 to 50. The mean age of the workers of Bagh is 34 years. The chi square value calculated is 44.33 and the degree of freedom is 6 which is significant at 0.05 level.
2. In Bagh the highest number of people are primary educated that is 48. Then comes the number of illiterates i.e. 25. The number of middle educated and that of graduates are equal, which are 10.
3. In Bagh, 85% of males and 15% are of females do this work.
4. 63% belongs to joint family and 37% are from nuclear family. This work is parental in most of the families.
5. The mean size of the families of Bagh is 6.24.
6. Maximum workers of Bagh i.e. 38 use Rust iron. The chi-square value is 124.65 and degree of freedom is 12, which is significant at 0.05 levels.
7. Vegetable dyes used in Bagh are 48%, Direct and Naphthol dyes are used 19% and 9% respectively. The chi square value is 16.81 and degree of freedom is 6, which is significant at 0.05 level.
8. In Bagh no wool is used. Cotton used is 56%, silk is 37% and 7% of synthetic fiber is used.
9. Block printing is the most popular method done in Bagh. About 96% of people do block and only 4% use to do bandhage. No other type of work is done there.
10. Bagh, today also people follow the traditional machines and equipments. Their percentage is 83%.
11. Floral and geometrical and linear designs are used. Now a day's floral, geometric and figurative designs are used. A geometric design also gives a good

# Asian Resonance

effect. These are liked by the people, 57 people use floral and 31 use geometric and 12 follows figurative patterns.

12. Of the total workers only few of the workers are in Government jobs. Rest all are self employed. 73% people are self employed of the total percentage.
13. To fix the colour on the fabric some treatments are necessary. Drying is the common operation used to prevent the colour from spreading. Fixing is the operation used to fix colour by passing fabric through the salt solution. Of the total 31 workers use drying, 22 of them use Ageing, 26 use Dinging and 31 workers use Fixing as the after treatment for colour fixing.

Table 1- Products Used

Products used	Number
Pomegranate peels	3
Dhavari wood	28
Tamrind seed	6
Palash flower	5
Rust iron	38
Alizerine	17
Catchew	3
Total	100

Table 2- Dyes Used

Dyes used	Number
Vegetable	48
Direct	19
Vat	24
Naphthol	9
Total	100

Table 3- Fabric Used

Fabric Used	Number
Cotton	56
Wool	-
Silk	37
Synthetic	7
Total	100

Table 4- Methods Used

Methods	Number
Bandhage	4
Batik	-
Block	96
Screen	-
Total	100

Table 5- Machine and equipments used

Equipments	Number
Traditional	83
Modern	17
Total	100

Table 6- Marketing according to patterns

Patterns	Number
Floural	57
Figurative	12
Geometric	31
Total	100

Table 7- Job satisfaction

Jobs	Number
Govt. jobs	27
Self employed	73
Total	100

Govt. jobs	27
Self employed	73
Total	100

Table 8- After treatments

Process	Number
Dyeing	31
Ageing	22
Dunging	26
Fixing	31
Total	100

## Conclusion

The conclusion of work done during the research it has been observed that the process of dyeing & printing of fabric, Cotton & Silk is fibers obtained from natural sources them have good absorption properties so they can easily be treated with the dyes & undergoes printing process very conveniently enhancing the good bright colours so they are preferred by the workers. Also atmosphere, Environment and most importantly the different minerals available in water affects a lot at the work of that place. Bagh specially follows block printing process.

The process of dyeing and printing completely is been done by the crafts person by hands using various hand dyeing and hand printing techniques. The dyes mostly used at these three places are natural, Vegetable Dyes non-chemical dyes which are non-hazardous, non-allergic to the crafts persons while the processing as well as to the user wearing or using these fabrics.

The designs and patterns been operational at the place although finds some match to the changing fashions but because it has a regular customer segment which mostly likes the traditional designs and patterns which are more or less derived from the tradition and culture of the near by locality . The traditional designs and patterns are now also more of popular now a days as well.

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