

“Documentation and Preservation of Bela Printing of Gujarat”

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B.Sc. (F.C.Sc.)

Clothing and Textiles

“Documentation and Preservation of Bela Printing of Gujarat”

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree
of Master of Family and Community Sciences**

By

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DEDICATED TO MY PARENTS AND FAMILY

A SPECIAL NOTE OF GRATITUDE

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my parents and family for their unwavering support, unconditional love, and constant care throughout my journey. Their belief in me has been my greatest strength.

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Krishna Ardeshta

CERTIFICATE

This is to inform you that research work presented in this dissertation entitled ***“Documentation and Preservation of Bela Printing of Gujarat ”*** in pursuit of partial fulfilment of the Master’s Degree in Clothing and Textiles is the original bonafide work of the student Ms. Krishna Ardeszna.

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Abstract

India's textile traditions are deeply rooted in its cultural heritage, with many crafts sustained through generational knowledge within local communities. One such endangered practice is Bela Block Printing, a unique resist-dyeing and hand-block printing technique from Bela village in the Kutch region of Gujarat, historically practiced by the Hindu-Khatri community. Noted for its symbolic motifs, use of natural dyes, and reliance on eco-friendly materials, this craft reflects the intimate relationship between people, culture, and nature—particularly the now-depleted Sarang River, once crucial to the dyeing process.

Once practiced by 40–50 artisan families, Bela printing now faces near extinction due to industrialization, the Partition of India, environmental challenges, the 2001 Gujarat earthquake, and the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Currently, it is preserved by a single artisan, Shri Mansukh Pitambar Khatri, making the craft one of India's most critically endangered textile traditions.

This research aims to document, preserve, and promote Bela Block Printing by exploring its historical roots, technical processes, and cultural relevance. Data collection involved extensive fieldwork, artisan interviews, and high-resolution photo and video documentation. To support dissemination, a range of promotional and educational materials—including brochures, bookmarks, postcards, a block motif catalogue, and a documentary—were developed.

A key intervention was a hands-on awareness workshop, organized with the objective of enhancing understanding, appreciation, and engagement with Bela Block Printing among students, academician and craft enthusiasts. The workshop aimed to highlight the cultural significance of the craft, demonstrate its traditional techniques, and spark discussions on its relevance in the contemporary design context. Attended by 42 participants, the session included pre- and post-questionnaires that revealed a marked improvement in awareness and perception, validating the effectiveness of the initiative.

To further expand outreach, a digital awareness campaign was launched across Instagram, YouTube, and Reels, featuring process videos, artisan interviews, and behind-the-scenes content. The campaign attracted increasing public engagement and received additional visibility through media coverage in Sayaji Samachar (976 views), Nation Plus News, and the Sandesh newspaper. In parallel, catalogues were distributed in both print and digital formats to stakeholders such as Khamir, the Kutch Museum, and Shri Khatri, ensuring ongoing educational and cultural engagement.

Institutional dialogue was also initiated with the Gujarat State Handloom & Handicrafts Development Corporation Ltd. to explore future collaborations through the Gurjari platform, including possible exhibitions and digital promotion.

By blending traditional ethnographic methods with creative outreach strategies, this research emphasizes the urgent need to preserve Bela Block Printing. It plays a key role in protecting India's intangible textile traditions while encouraging development that is both environmentally responsible and deeply rooted in cultural heritage.

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CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

“Preserving Heritage, Printing Dreams.”

India has its diverse and intricate textile traditions, with each region developing distinct methods of fabric decoration that reflect its history, culture, and available resources. Among these, hand block printing stands as one of the oldest and most revered techniques, where skilled artisans use carved wooden blocks and natural dyes to create intricate patterns on fabric. Renowned block printing styles such as Ajrakh from Kutch, Bagru from Rajasthan, and Sanganer from Jaipur have gained widespread recognition. However, Bela Block Printing, a lesser-known but equally significant craft from Bela village, Kutch, Gujarat, is on the brink of extinction.

"Bela Printing: Mansukh Pitambar Khatri Untold Story and the Legacy of Resilience"

Bela Block Printing was historically practiced by the Hindu-Khatri community and distinguished by its eco-friendly materials, resist technique and natural dyeing process. Artisans relied on plant-based dyes, mineral-rich water from the Sarang River, and techniques. Motifs used in Bela printing were deeply symbolic, often representing cultural identity, community status, and social hierarchy. Once a thriving craft, sustained by 40–50 artisan families, Bela printing has now dwindled to a single known practitioner, Shri Mansukh Pitambar Khatri, making it one of the most endangered textile traditions in India.

Bela Block Printing flourished during the pre-Partition era due to active trade between Kutch (India) and Sindh (now in Pakistan). The Partition of India in 1947 disrupted this trade route, cutting off a significant market and supply chain for artisans. Many Hindu-Khatri families, once engaged in the craft, migrated or shifted to alternative livelihoods due to economic instability. As a result, the once-thriving practice of Bela printing faced a drastic decline.

Further challenges emerged in the post-independence era, with rapid industrialization and the introduction of mechanized textile production, which provided faster and cheaper

alternatives. The 2001 Gujarat earthquake devastated Kutch, leading to the displacement of communities and loss of infrastructure crucial for sustaining traditional crafts. More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic (2020) further impacted the already struggling craft, causing a decline in artisanship due to economic hardships and reduced demand.

Younger generations are also moving away from traditional work due to better earning opportunities in other fields.

Bela Block Printing, a traditional craft of Gujarat, is at risk of disappearing due to resource scarcity, labour-intensive production, and a lack of awareness among younger generations. Once a flourishing art form, it now struggles against industrialization and mass production. To prevent its decline, documentation, awareness campaigns, and promotional efforts are essential. By preserving traditional techniques through research and increasing public engagement, this study aims to safeguard Bela Printing as an integral part of India's textile heritage.

This research focuses on documenting the history, techniques, and cultural significance of Bela Block Printing while promoting awareness through various outreach initiatives. It highlights the importance of archiving traditional knowledge, educating the public, and leveraging digital platforms to revive interest in this endangered craft.

This dissertation seeks to capture and preserve the essence of Bela Printing before it is lost to history. By meticulously recording its origins, processes, motifs, and the stories of its last practicing artisan, the study will create a valuable repository of information. It will also explore ways to increase public awareness and appreciation through workshops, exhibitions, digital content and educational collaborations, ensuring that Bela Printing gains recognition beyond its traditional boundaries.

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to document, preserve, and promote Bela Block Printing, a lesser-known but culturally rich hand block printing tradition practiced in Bela village, Rapar block of Kutch, Gujarat. This traditional craft is mainly carried out by the Hindu-Khatri community and is entirely eco-friendly, using natural dyes and handmade wooden blocks on soft cotton fabric. Bela printing is not only a craft but also a reflection of the community's identity, their bond with nature, and their generational knowledge.

This research aims to create a comprehensive record of Bela Printing, preserving its unique heritage through detailed documentation of its processes and motifs. Also, it seeks to increase awareness about the craft's value by organizing workshops, exhibitions, and digital campaigns.

Furthermore, the study focuses on promotional strategies to reintroduce Bela Printing to a larger audience. Through social media outreach, educational initiatives, and visual storytelling, it aims to bring Bela Printing into contemporary discourse, encouraging appreciation and support for its survival.

1.2 Objectives of the study

1. To document history and evolution of Bela printing of Gujarat.
2. To document traditional techniques, processes, material and motifs of Bela print.
3. To create awareness and promotion of Bela craft.

1.3 De – Limitations

1. Limited to Bela village of Kutch, Gujarat, India.

Only traditional wooden blocks that are over 50 years old have been considered for documentation.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

To provide a comprehensive understanding of the current study, a review of relevant literature was conducted. This review includes data and insights from various sources such as unpublished dissertations, doctoral theses, research journals, books, magazines, websites, and government publications. This approach helps to define the scope of the study supports the formulation of the research methodology and aligns the research proposal with existing knowledge.

The literature review for this study is divided into two main sections:

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Textile Printing and its Types (Including Resist Printing)

2.1.2 History and Evolution of Resist Block Printing

2.1.3 The Hindu - Khatri community and craftsmanship in Bela Printing

2.1.4 Role of Digital Media in the Promotion of Traditional Crafts

2.2 Related Research Review

2.2.1 Studies on Hand Block Printed and Resist – Dyed Textile

2.2.2. Challenges in Preserving Traditional Crafts in India

2.2.3. Study on revival of craft

Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Textile Printing and its Types (Including Resist Printing)

Textile designs are created on fabrics by arranging motifs in one or more colours. These designs can be produced through various techniques such as weaving (using differently coloured warps and weft threads), painting or textile printing.

Textile printing is the method of localised application of dyes or pigments in a thickened form to a substrate that produces a particular colour effect on fabric according to design. The difference of textile printing with dyeing is the whole fabric is uniformly covered with one colour, whereas in printing one or more colours are applied to it in certain parts only, and in sharply defined patterns.

Badoe, W. (2015). Textile printing: according to *Tortora, P. G., & Merkel, R. S. (1996)* there are four different printing styles used to produce patterned effects on textiles namely, the 'resist' style, the 'dyed/mordant' style, the 'discharge' style and the 'direct' style. This implies that the term has several interpretations some of which may include dyed, sprayed or even painted fabrics or any format through which a print paste is used to transfer the design onto fabric.

History and Origin of Textile Printing:

The origins of textile printing trace back to ancient times, with evidence of printed fabrics dating as early as the 4th century BC. China is credited with the invention of textile printing, particularly woodblock printing, with examples found from 220 AD. From China, this technique spread across Asia, eventually reaching Europe. By the 17th century, the East India Company was importing printed cotton into England. Unable to produce the designs they wanted themselves, the English also commissioned specific patterns, plainer than the traditional Indian style, to be printed and brought back to Britain. It wasn't until 1676 that a French refugee set up England's first print works near to the city of London. During the 18th century the popularity of Calico printing spread rapidly, with new print-works opening in Switzerland, Germany and later Britain. And it were the French that became most renowned for their artistic patterns and craftsmanship, so popular that they would be copied all over Europe.

Indian Printed Textiles –Historical Background

India has a rich history in textile printing, especially with the resist-dyed technique. Cave paintings at Ajanta (6th to 7th century AD) depict women in fabrics believed to have been produced using resist-dyeing methods. The tradition of resist-dyeing in India is further elaborated upon through illustrated Jain manuscripts from the 12th century onward, providing a more comprehensive understanding of this intricate technique. Additionally, resist-style patterns, later replicated in block printing, are found in several cotton fragments excavated from Fustat and related sites in Egypt, highlighting the international reach and influence of Indian textile craftsmanship.

Traditional Printing styles

Textile printing in India, like weaving is a widespread and deeply ingrained craft. Each region, and sometimes even smaller local centres, has developed its unique style and methods of textile production. Despite this regional variation, a common thread uniting these traditions is the use of locally sourced materials combined with traditional techniques, often passed down through generations. When local materials were unavailable, artisans would procure resources from other regions, thus fostering a sense of interconnectedness within the craft community.

The primary styles of traditional printing include:

Direct style of printing: In this style, designs are applied directly onto a fabric with a light-coloured or white background, using various methods of printing.

Discharge style of printing: This involves the removal of colour from a dyed fabric to create the pattern. In the 'white discharge' method, the dye is removed to reveal the base fabric, while 'colour discharge' replaces the removed dye with new pigments.

Resist Style of printing: a resist material, such as wax or mud, is applied to the fabric to block dye from certain areas. The fabric is then dyed, and the resist material is later removed, leaving undyed portions that may be further embellished with additional colours

Mordant Printing style: Mordant are fixing agents. They give a strong bond between textile material and colorants. Metallic compounds like Copper sulphate, Aluminium

sulphate and ferrous sulphate are normally used as mordant. Some metallic materials affect the final products, like ferrous sulphate that leaves a blackish shade on the final fabric while alum improves washing and makes it faster.

The presents a rich account of the historical development and cultural importance of block printing in western India. Based on the detailed research conducted by Shri Madan Meena through the Kota Heritage Society and supported by the Center for Embodied Knowledge (INDICA), this study explores how block printing is closely linked to the migration of artisan communities, trade exchanges, and changing social landscapes. It focuses especially on regions like Marwar, Kachchh, and Sindh, where the craft has been practiced and preserved for generations.

According to the study, two major communities have kept the tradition of block printing alive in Rajasthan and Gujarat: the Hindu Bhramkshatriya Khattris and the Muslim Chhipas. These communities, especially the Khattris, have roots in Sindh, now part of Pakistan, and many migrated to India during the Partition. Others have been living in these regions for centuries. While the Chhipas are commonly found in places like Bikaner, Nagaur, and Jodhpur, the Khattris settled around Barmer and Kachchh.

The research traces how many once-thriving block printing centers in Kachchh have now vanished. Places that used to echo with the rhythmic stamping of wooden blocks are now quiet, with many families shifting to cities such as Ahmedabad and Disa for better economic opportunities. However, efforts by craft-based organizations like Khamir have helped revive the tradition in some areas. One such case is Mansukh Bhai Khatri, a printer from Bela village near the Pakistan border, who continues printing using traditional blocks.

Madan Meena has documented more than 200 unique block designs, many of which were found in personal collections of printers or textile dealers, especially in places like Jaisalmer, Dhamadka, and Phalodi. These include rare, non-Ajrakh prints that were made for local pastoral communities such as the Rabari, Ahir, and Meghwar. Traditionally, these communities wore printed fabrics like skirts, odhanis, and turbans, which were not Ajrakh but still carried distinct patterns passed down through generations.

The research also discusses how the geographical and cultural boundaries between Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Sindh were once fluid. Before Partition, these regions were deeply connected through trade and cultural exchanges. Jaisalmer, for instance, had strong economic links with Karachi and Hyderabad (Sindh). Block printing designs and traditions reflect these ties, showing shared motifs and dyeing methods.

A significant archaeological insight from the study is the discovery of indigo plants (*Indigofera Tinctoria*) near Indus Valley Civilization sites like Dholavira, Satokda, and Kanmer. This suggests that indigo dyeing was not introduced recently but has been part of the region's natural and cultural heritage for thousands of years. This finding has led to new initiatives, with the Central Arid Zone Research Institute (CAZRI) discussing the possibility of reviving indigo cultivation with the Ministry of Textiles to support natural dyeing for present-day artisans.

The study further maps the status of nine major traditional printing centers in western Rajasthan, such as Pipad, Jodhpur, Phalodi, Balotra, Barmer, Pali, Jaisalmer, Kakani, and Shaitrawa. Of these, only a few—especially Pipad and Balotra—still practice traditional block printing. In Pipad, four Muslim Cheepa families are currently supplying block-printed fabrics to brands like Anokhi, Vrajbhoomi, and FabIndia. However, many other centers have shifted to screen printing or ceased printing entirely.

To preserve this disappearing legacy, Meena's project has not only documented old blocks and textiles but also included efforts like engaging students from NIFT Jodhpur to archive block designs from different regions. His aim is to create a book featuring 500 rare and extinct block designs, making sure this part of India's cultural heritage is not lost.

Sridhar (2025). In summary, this research does not just document the craft of block printing but also tells a deeper story of migration, identity, community resilience, and the cultural ties that connect people across borders. It reflects how textile traditions are living records of history, showing how artisans adapted to environmental, political, and social changes over time.

2.1.2 History and Evolution of Resist Block Printing

History and Evolution of Resist Block Printing

Resist block printing is one of the most significant textile printing methods that have been used for centuries across various cultures. The process involves applying a resist material—such as wax, mud, clay, or starch—to fabric before dyeing, preventing the dye from penetrating specific areas and creating intricate patterns. This technique has evolved over time, adapting to regional materials, artistic styles, and technological advancements. The history and evolution of resist block printing reveal a deep cultural heritage, global trade significance, and the craft's ongoing transformation in the modern world.

Origins of Resist Block Printing in Ancient Civilizations

The earliest forms of resist dyeing and printing date back thousands of years. Various civilizations developed their own methods using locally available materials and dyes, reflecting their unique cultural aesthetics.

Indus Valley Civilization (c. 2500 BCE – 1500 BCE)

Archaeological discoveries suggest that resist-dyed textiles were produced as early as the Indus Valley Civilization (modern-day India and Pakistan). Excavations at Mohenjo-Daro have unearthed fragments of dyed cotton with patterns that indicate resist-dyeing techniques using plant-based dyes such as indigo and madder (*Barnes, R. 2022*). These early textiles likely involved techniques similar to modern block printing, where wooden blocks or resist-paste were applied to create intricate geometric and floral patterns. The existence of such textiles highlights the advanced knowledge of dyeing and textile processing in the ancient Indian subcontinent, which later influenced global textile production.

Ancient China and Japan: Development of Resist Techniques on Silk

(*Crill, R. 2021*). China played a crucial role in the evolution of resist dyeing, particularly on silk fabrics. During the Han Dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE), artisans developed wax-resist dyeing methods where melted wax was applied to silk before dyeing, a process that ensured intricate and delicate designs (*Watt, J. 2023*). This technique later spread to Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia, influencing the development of Japanese katazome—a resist-dyeing method using rice paste stencils to create elaborate textile patterns.

Ancient Egypt and West Africa: Use of Natural Resists for Dyeing

(Taylor, R. 2022). In Egypt, resist printing and dyeing were practiced as early as the 5th century BCE, with linen textiles found in tombs displaying resist-treated patterns created using clay, wax, and starch (Jasper, S. & Pirie, V. 2020). Similarly, in West Africa, the Yoruba people of Nigeria developed the adire textile tradition, where cassava paste was applied as a resist before dyeing with natural indigo. These textiles were deeply embedded in ceremonial and everyday clothing, reflecting social status and cultural identity.

The existence of parallel yet distinct resist printing techniques across different civilizations underscores the universal appeal and significance of textile decoration using natural dyes and resist materials.

Development of Resist Block Printing in India

India has been a major centre of resist-dyed textiles, with various regional techniques flourishing over centuries. From Rajasthan's Dabu printing to Gujarat's Ajrakh printing, artisans have refined the process of resist application and natural dyeing, producing textiles that gained global recognition.

History of Block Printing In India

Block printing, also known as woodblock printing is an ancient and intricate craft that involves hand-carved wooden blocks to transfer patterns onto fabric, paper, or other materials. This labour-intensive technique requires the design to be carved into the wooden block, which is then coated with ink or dye and pressed onto the fabric to create a repeated pattern. The process begins with the design drawn on paper, which is transferred to the wooden block for carving. Once the block is prepared, it is used to print mirror-image patterns onto fabric, creating beautiful designs through carefully prepared dye baths.

The origins of block printing are believed to trace back to China in the 3rd century. By the 4th century, evidence of block printing appeared in Egypt and other parts of Asia, from where it gradually spread to Europe and the rest of the world. One of the earliest known examples is the *Diamond Sutra* from 868 AD, which is currently housed in the British Museum, London. The craft's prominence in the Indian subcontinent became particularly notable by the 12th century, with centres on the southern, eastern, and western

coasts recognized for their printed textiles. In the southern region, the *kalam* (brush) was used to transfer prints onto fabric, while Rajasthan and Gujarat developed their own specialized techniques for block printing and dyeing cotton.

Under royal patronage, especially during the Mughal period, block printing flourished and became synonymous with high-quality textiles used in royal households. During this period, the designs evolved from the earlier geometric patterns to more curvilinear motifs, incorporating forms such as animals, birds, and fruits. The influence of the Mughal aesthetic significantly shaped the craft, and the trade engagements with the British East India Company helped introduce Indian block-printed textiles to European markets. This increased global exposure further solidified the status of block printing as a respected and admired craft.

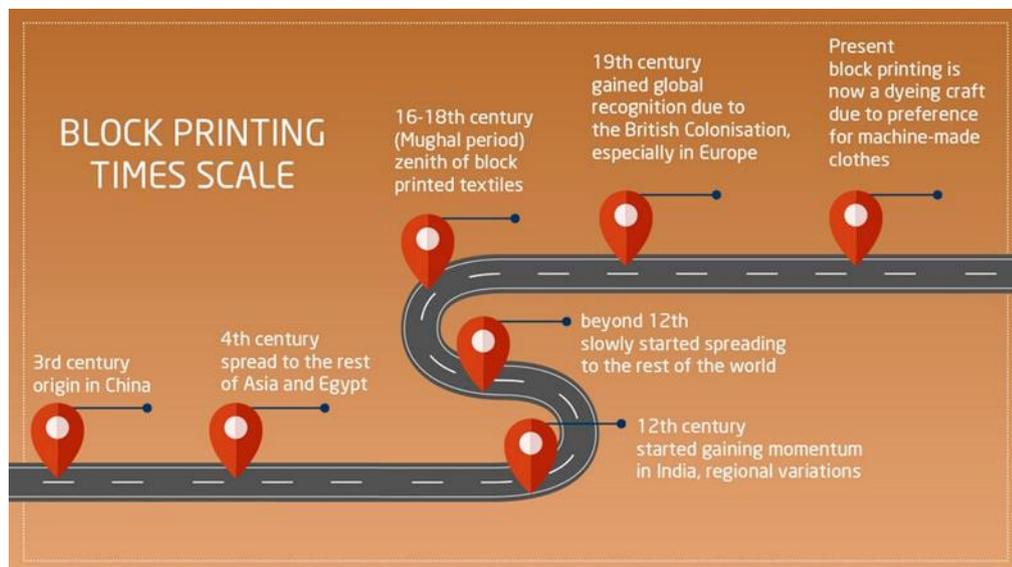


Plate 2.1 Block Printing Times Scale

Source: <https://www.jdinstitute.edu.in/history-of-block-printing-with-infographics/>

Regional Evolution of Block Printing in India

- **Gujarat:** In Gujarat, block printing has been a long-standing tradition, notably practiced by the Paithapur families. Known for their intricate designs and the resist-dye technique called *Sodagiri*, this method involves using mud to block parts of the fabric before dyeing, resulting in striking, resisted patterns. Prominent centres of block printing in Gujarat include Ahmedabad (Paithapur), Vadodara

(Padra), Kutch, Bhavnagar, Rajkot, Jamnagar, Jetpur, and Porbandar. Artisans in these regions commonly use dyes derived from locally sourced plants and natural resources, maintaining a connection to the environment.

- **Rajasthan:** The block printing craft from Gujarat spread to Rajasthan, where it evolved into a vibrant, colourful tradition. Centres like Jaipur, Sanganer, Bagru, Pali, and Barmer became well-known for their distinctive styles. The rich motifs of Rajasthan are often inspired by flora, fauna, and traditional geometric patterns.
- **Andhra Pradesh:** In Andhra Pradesh, block printing took the form of the *kalamkari* technique. Artisans in areas like Sri Kalahasti and Masulipatnam use a brush or *kalam* (pen) to create intricate designs, often depicting religious or mythological stories. This tradition uses natural resources like myrobalan and buffalo milk as tanning and mordant agents to fix the print onto the fabric, emphasizing eco-friendly practices.
- **Madhya Pradesh:** Centers such as Bagh, Behrongarh, Indore, and Burhanpur in Madhya Pradesh have a rich history of block printing. Bagh printing, in particular, is known for its deep red and black colours achieved using natural dyes and intricate patterns that draw on the region's cultural heritage.
- **Uttar Pradesh:** In Uttar Pradesh, cities like Varanasi, Farrukabad, and Pilakhuan are known for their expertise in block-making and printing. Varanasi, a historic centre for textile production, has long been associated with block-printed fabrics, while Pilakhuan is renowned for its skilled block makers.
- **West Bengal:** Block printing traditions in West Bengal, especially in Kolkata and Serampur, have evolved to include a unique blend of traditional and modern motifs. The region's rich cultural history and proximity to global textile trade routes have influenced its block printing styles.

While each region in India developed its own distinct design elements, colour schemes, and motifs, the commercialization of the craft has led to some convergence of styles between regions. However, fabrics produced by master craftsmen from these areas remain recognizable by their unique regional signatures, preserving their cultural identity. Despite modernization and mass production, the essence of traditional block printing remains intact, reflecting the diversity and rich heritage of India's textile art.

Colonial Impact (18th–19th Century): Decline and Industrial Competition

The 18th and 19th centuries marked a decline in traditional Indian textile production due to British colonial policies. The Industrial Revolution in Britain introduced machine-made textiles, which displaced handcrafted Indian block-printed textiles in global markets (Gopinath, 2022). British authorities imposed heavy taxes on Indian weavers and restricted the sale of Indian textiles, forcing many artisans into economic hardship. Despite these challenges, certain regions, particularly Rajasthan and Gujarat continued to practice resist block printing on a smaller, local scale. Artisans adapted by developing new motifs and techniques, ensuring that their craft survived.

The traditional textile craft of Bela block printing, practiced in the village of Bela in Rapar block, Kutch (Gujarat), is currently facing the threat of extinction. According to a report in *The Hindu* (2024), Bela block printing once played a vibrant role in the region's cultural and economic life, especially before the Partition of India, when the village thrived as a trade hub connecting Kutch with Sindh (now in Pakistan). Traders and camel caravans carried these bold and colourful printed fabrics across regions, making them an integral part of pre-independence textile commerce.

Bela block printing is known for its bold, graphic patterns and the use of mud-resist techniques involving natural materials like alum, mud, and bajra flour. The process is labor-intensive and includes multiple steps such as dyeing, washing, sun-drying, and printing with hand-carved wooden blocks. Unlike the finer motifs of Ajrakh printing, Bela prints use thicker lines and often feature animal motifs, such as horses and elephants.

The craft experienced a sharp decline after Partition, as cross-border trade routes were cut off. In addition, the rise of mechanized textile production, screen printing, and the remote location of Bela (180 km from Bhuj) contributed to its marginalization. The sole remaining artisan of this tradition, Mansukh Pitambar Khatri, represents the last known link to the original craft practices of Bela printing.

In 2013, the NGO Khamir stepped in to help revive the tradition. They supported Mansukhbhai in relearning the techniques, introduced new designs and natural indigo dyeing, and helped promote the craft to wider audiences. Their intervention sparked a modest revival and has brought national attention to the importance of preserving this

heritage. Bela block printing was recently listed as an “endangered craft” by the Development Commissioner for Handicrafts, opening up potential government support through exhibitions and promotional efforts.

This documentation is significant to the study of Indian textile crafts, as it demonstrates how historical, geographic, and political shifts have impacted traditional practices. It also showcases how focused revival efforts by NGOs and artisans can help preserve endangered art forms.

2.1.3 The Hindu- Khatri community and craftsmanship in Bela Printing

The Khatri community, historically associated with Northern India, particularly undivided Punjab, is a socio-economic group known for its business acumen, military roles, and trade activities. Originally, Khatri were associated with the Kshatriya (warrior) caste but transitioned into various occupations, including accounting and scribal roles similar to Kayasthas and Rajputs. After the Partition of India, many Khatri migrated to different parts of India, primarily settling in Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, and Uttar Pradesh. While the majority of Khatri identify as Hindus, Sikhs or Jains, a small segment of Muslim Khatri exists, particularly in Kutch, Gujarat.

The *Bombay Presidency Gazetteers* (n.d.) identify the Khatri community in Gujarat as skilled weavers and dyers, particularly in the Kutch region. Kutch, the largest district in Gujarat, is renowned for its distinct morphology, cultural practices, and historical traditions. Its unique geographical and cultural connections with Sindh differentiate it from the rest of Gujarat. According to *Burnes, J. (n.d.)* "History of Kutch," this migration was driven by famine in Sindh during the sixteenth century. The migration was supported by the Rao Tamachiji of Kutch, who helped the Khatri settle in towns like Bhuj, Anjar, Mandvi, and Mundra.

Kutch's extensive coastline of 1600 kilometres and its maritime tradition facilitated the settlement of these migratory communities. This enabled them to spread further into Kathiyawar, South Gujarat, the Deccan, Burhanpur, and even the Persian Gulf seaports, extending their reach along the Red Sea and the Somali Coast. The migration of Khatri's from Sindh began in 1542 and persisted until 1600 AD, a fact corroborated by records in the *Sindh Gazetteer* (n.d) and correspondence available in the archives of historian M.H. Panhwar, accessible on his website www.panhwar.org.

Historical Origins and Evolution

Bela printing, a traditional textile craft of the Hindu-Khatri community in Bela village, Kutch, Gujarat, has been practiced for generations. This art form, known for its distinctive block printing and resist-dyeing methods, reflects a blend of indigenous Indian techniques with Persian and Mughal influences. The migration of the Khatri community from regions such as Sindh and Rajasthan to Gujarat played a vital role in shaping the craft, as the area's natural resources—such as Harda, Indigo, and mineral-rich water—proved essential for textile dyeing (*Jain, J. & Shah, A. 1989*). These resources contributed to the development of high-quality prints with long-lasting colors, making Bela textiles highly sought after.

During the Mughal era, Bela printing gained prominence due to royal patronage, which encouraged artisans to refine their craft and introduce more intricate motifs, including floral and geometric designs. The textiles became popular not only in Indian markets but also in international trade, reaching destinations such as Persia, Central Asia, and Europe (*Kramrisch, S. 1968*). European traders, including the Portuguese and Dutch, played a significant role in spreading these textiles globally. However, the 19th century brought challenges, as British industrialization led to an influx of machine-made fabrics, reducing the demand for handcrafted textiles. This shift forced many artisans to seek alternative livelihoods, yet some families remained dedicated to preserving the traditional methods of Bela printing.

Beyond its commercial value, Bela printing holds deep cultural significance within the Hindu-Khatri community. The motifs used in the textiles are not merely decorative but convey symbolic meanings—peacocks represent beauty and prosperity, mango designs signify fertility, and geometric patterns reflect cultural identity (*Jain, J. & Shah, A. 1989; Kramrisch, S. 1968*). In recent years, efforts by artisans, NGOs, and government initiatives have contributed to reviving the craft. Many practitioners have adopted sustainable approaches, such as using natural dyes and eco-friendly production methods, to align with modern environmental concerns while maintaining traditional authenticity. Documentation and promotional efforts have further supported the continuation of Bela printing, ensuring that this heritage craft remains a vital part of India's textile tradition.

Hindu Khatri and Muslim Khatri in Kutch

In Gujarat, particularly in Kutch, the Khatri community is recognized for its craftsmanship, especially in textiles and dyeing. The Hindu Khatri, who migrated from Sindh around the 16th century, embraced local traditions and expanded their skills into crafts like weaving, dyeing, and block printing. Over time, a portion of the Hindu Khatri converted to Islam, forming the Muslim Khatri community.

Reasons for Conversion to Islam

There are several accounts of why Hindu Khatri converted to Islam after settling in Kutch:

1. **Fear of Death Rituals:** One narrative suggests that a person from the Patae clan converted to Islam after seeking refuge in the Ismaili Khoja guest house. Fearing the traditional Hindu practice of being cremated, this person chose to embrace Islam, which led to a settlement in Mundra.
2. **Economic Constraints:** Another account states that Hindu Khatri men were forced to convert to Islam because they could not afford to pay Brahmin priests for life-cycle rituals.

Despite the conversion, Hindu and Muslim Khatri continued working together for over two centuries. They even shared a communal treasury until 1829, when they decided to separate their assets due to a legal dispute.

The Muslim Khatri of Kutch trace their origins to Sindh, migrating due to famines in the region during the 16th century. Over time, the Muslim Khatri blended into the local culture, speaking the Kutchi language and adopting the Sunni Islamic faith. Their social customs became indistinguishable from other Sunni Muslim communities in the region

Today, the Khatri population in Kutch is approximately 15,000. Khatri men, resembling other Kutchi Muslims, shave their heads and maintain beards. They adhere to Sunni Islam, follow ordinary Sunni Maulvis, and speak Kutchi, using the Gujarati script. Their social customs, including marriages performed according to Shariat (Muslim Law), reflect traditional Sunni practices. Both joint and nuclear family structures are present within the community.

The growth of the handicrafts industry in contemporary Kutch has brought significant changes to the Khatri community, enhancing their economic prosperity and social status. Khatri women, in particular, now enjoy a higher status compared to their counterparts in other Muslim communities. They have inheritance rights, their advice is valued in socio-religious matters, and they actively participate in community rituals. In areas with a substantial Khatri presence, local caste councils, known as Khatri Jamat, handle disputes, divorce cases, and educational matters. These councils, led by an Agrasar, Patel, or Whyvati (President) and four additional members, are registered with the Wakf Board of Gujarat State. They also oversee the community's traditional occupations and celebrate key Islamic festivals, including Idul-Zuha, Moharram, Milad-Un-Nabi, and Gyarme, in accordance with Islamic traditions.

Craftsmanship and Industry

Kutch is renowned as a hub for a variety of handicrafts, passed down through generations. The region's traditional prosperity has largely been driven by its foreign trade in these crafts. Kutch's artifacts have not only spread across India but have also reached international markets. The district's key handicrafts include ethnic-style embroidery, mud crafts, textile crafts like patchwork, terracotta, pen knives, wooden crafts, and tribal crafts. Among these, the Khatri community is particularly well-known for their expertise in printing crafts. The Khatri have developed three main systems of printing within their craft tradition.

Key Crafts of the Khatri Community:

The Khatri community, especially in Kutch, became famous for their textile crafts, specifically Bandhani, Ajrakh printing, and Rogan art.

1. **Bandhani (Tie-Dye):** This traditional craft of Kutch has been practiced by the Khatri community for over 400 years. Bandhani textiles are closely tied to Indian social customs, especially in symbolizing married life. The intricate process involves tying cloth at specific points and then dyeing it, resulting in vibrant patterns. Key centres for Bandhani production include Mandvi, Bhuj, Anjar, and Dhamanka.

2. **Ajrakh Printing:** Ajrakh, a resist-dyeing technique, is believed to have originated in Sindh. It involves intricate block printing on both sides of the fabric. The process is highly technical, requiring the use of multiple blocks and natural dyes. Ajrakhpur and Dhamadka are prominent centres of Ajrakh production in Kutch.
3. **Rogan Art:** Rogan painting, a rare and intricate art form, has its origins in Persia and was brought to Kutch around 400 years ago. It involves painting with castor oil and pigments to create floral and geometric designs on fabric. The Khatri family of Jura and Nirona is the last remaining practitioners of this art.

Evolution of the Craft Industry:

Broadly classified this development in two categories (1) Before 1970 and (2) After 1970.

- Before 1970, the Khatri community's involvement in the craft industry was primarily manual labor, while the sales and investment were managed by other communities like Shrivak and Vaishnav Vaniyas. During this period, the use of natural dyes was common, but the introduction of chemical dyes in the mid-19th century led to health issues among artisans and contributed to the disappearance of the Hindu Khatri community from the industry.
- After 1970, the establishment of organizations like the Gujarat State Handloom & Handicrafts Development Corporation (GSHDC) and the involvement of NGOs such as Shrujan, Sewa, KHAMIR, Kala Raksh, Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan and Kutch Nav Nirman Abhiyan (KNVA) transformed the handicraft industry. These organizations provided support through design development, marketing, and skill training, leading to a revival of the craft industry. The handicraft industry became a significant source of livelihood, employing around 32,000 artisans.

Major Centres of Khatri Community Handicrafts:

1. **Dhamadka:** A village known for its Muslim Khatri artisans, who specialize in Ajrakh printing using natural dyes. The geometric and abstract motifs are influenced by Islamic architecture. Notable artisans include Dr. Ismail Haji Khatri, Abdul Razzaq, and Abdul Jabbar Khatri, the latter receiving *UNESCO's Seal of Excellence for Handicrafts in 2006 and 2007*. After the 2001 earthquake, many printers relocated to Ajrakhpur near Bhuj.

2. **Ajrakhpur:** Established by Dr. Ismail Haji Khatri, this village is now a hub for traditional hand block printing using resist techniques on cotton and silk. Dr. Khatri was awarded an honorary PhD by *De Montfort University (n.d)* for his expertise in natural dyes. Other artisans like Abdul Raheman Buddhna and Abdul Gani Hasan also work here.
3. **Jura and Nirona:** Located near Bhuj, these villages are known for Rogan art, practiced by Khatri artisans. Abdul Gafur Khatri is a well-known artisan, and others like Haji Vali Mohammad are known for copper bell-making and lacquer woodwork.
4. **Bhuj:** The capital city of Kutch and a major handicraft market, Bhuj has many shops and production centres run by Khatri community entrepreneurs. It also serves as an export centre for Khatri handicrafts.
5. **Mandvi:** Famous for its shipbuilding industry, Mandvi was a key migration centre for Khatri in the 16th century. Many Khatri entrepreneurs, including both Muslim and Hindu Khatri, continue to operate outlets and production centres here.
6. **Anjar:** One of the oldest cities in Kutch, known for its Khatri artisans skilled in Bandhani art. Anjar is a significant centre for exporting Khatri handicrafts internationally.
7. **Mundra:** A seafaring city where Khatri artisans, including National Award winner Dawood Kaka, are recognized for their intricate Bandhani designs.
8. **Khavda:** Situated in the small Rann of Kutch, Khavda is another important centre for Ajrakh printing, known for its artisans who continue this traditional craft.

Bela Block Printing: An Endangered Craft of Kachchh

(*Lukmaan IAS, 2024*). Bela block printing is a traditional textile craft from the village of Bela in Rapar block of Kachchh, Gujarat. It is known for its bold and graphic motifs printed on rustic fabrics using mud and alum resist dyeing methods. This craft, once thriving and vital to regional trade, is now at risk of extinction, with only one known artisan, Mansukhbhai Pitambar Khatri, still practising it.

(Lukmaan IAS, 2024). Historically, Bela block printing was an important part of the cultural and economic trade between Kachchh and Sindh (now in Pakistan) during pre-Independence India. Traders and camel caravans transported printed textiles across regions. However, after the Partition of India in 1947, cross-border trade was severely affected. The introduction of power looms, screen printing, and polyester fabrics further reduced the demand for handcrafted textiles, pushing many artisans to abandon the craft.

(Lukmaan IAS, 2024). Unlike Ajrakh printing, which is known for fine geometric and floral patterns using lime and gum, Bela printing uses thicker lines and motifs such as elephants and horses, with a resist made of mud and bajra flour. The process involves applying alum paste, drying in sunlight, permanent dyeing, and then mud printing followed by boiling in iron rust water to achieve a black color. The wooden blocks used are hand-carved and come in different sizes and designs, showing the high level of skill of the artisans.

(Lukmaan IAS, 2024). In 2013, Khamir, an NGO working for craft revival in Kachchh, helped Mansukhbhai resume his work. They introduced indigo dyeing and new designs, giving him exposure to wider audiences. The Development Commissioner for Handicrafts has also listed Bela block printing as an endangered craft, which opens the way for government support, exhibitions, and further recognition.

Pandey (2020) This article presents a compelling narrative of Bela block printing, focusing on the personal story of Mansukhbhai Pitambar Khatri, the last known artisan practicing this traditional textile craft in Bela village, Rapar block, Kachchh district, Gujarat. The article documents the decline of this once-thriving art form and explores the socio-economic, political, and industrial factors responsible for its near extinction.

Bela block printing is recognized for its bold and precise motifs created on coarse fabrics using alum and mud resist techniques. The patterns traditionally cater to the Rabari, Kanni, and Rajput communities and are printed using hand-carved wooden blocks passed down through generations. Historically, Bela was a vibrant trade center, especially before the Partition of India, with connections to Sindh (now in Pakistan). However, with the closure of cross-border trade, migration of artisans, and the rise of synthetic fabrics and machine printing, the craft suffered a major decline.

Mansukhbhai's narrative reflects the broader displacement of craft communities. Having once left the craft for 35 years to pursue better income opportunities, he returned to printing to support his brother and gradually revived the practice on his own. Today, he is a "one-man army," managing all aspects of the process—from printing and dyeing to finishing—using the same traditional tools and techniques he learned as a child. He also highlighted how polyester and fast-fashion significantly contributed to the fall of handmade textile traditions like Bela printing.

The article describes the entire process of Bela printing, including alum paste printing, sun-drying, dyeing, and boiling the mud-printed fabric in iron rust water to achieve black tones. Despite the challenges, renewed interest in handmade crafts, along with support from local organizations and informed consumers, has sparked hope for revival. Awareness-building, student visits, and local collaborations have brought some visibility to the craft, but sustainability still remains uncertain.

This account provides crucial insight into the human dimension of craft preservation, showing how survival and revival depend not only on skill and heritage but also on external support systems, policy, and cultural valuation. The story is a significant contribution to the literature on endangered crafts in India.

2.1.4 Role of Digital Media in the Promotion of Traditional Crafts

(Kotler, P. 1991) "Marketing is the social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products of value with others."

(Woolley, D. 2023) "Marketing is creating, communicating and delivering value to a target market profitably."

The fundamental elements of marketing as:

- An understanding of customer requirements
- The ability to create, communicate and deliver value → A social process
- An exchange process
- A managerial and business process

Elements of marketing can be applied in the context of fashion, and in particular, how they relate to the connection between the consumer and their clothing.

Bridging Tradition and Technology: The Role of E-Commerce and Social Media in Jaipur's Handicraft Marketing

The study conducted by *Sharma, R. and Gupta, A. (2024)* explores how Jaipur's artisans have leveraged digital platforms such as social media and e-commerce to promote and sustain their handicrafts. The research highlights that digital tools provide artisans with direct access to customers, eliminating intermediaries that traditionally controlled the supply chain. Social media platforms, particularly Instagram, Facebook, and Pinterest, allow artisans to showcase their work through engaging visuals, live storytelling, and customer interactions.

One of the key insights from this study is that digital marketing strategies enhance the global visibility of traditional crafts. Techniques such as collaborations with influencers, digital exhibitions, and video storytelling help in attracting a broader audience while preserving the historical and cultural significance of these crafts. This aligns with the research objective of this dissertation, which seeks to explore how Bela block printing can benefit from digital documentation and promotion.

From a methodological perspective, *Sharma, R. and Gupta, A. (2024)* conducted qualitative research using case studies, interviews with artisans, and content analysis of social media posts. This methodological approach is relevant to this study, as it provides a structured way to analyze the impact of digital platforms on the craft industry. By adopting similar methods, this research will explore how Bela artisans perceive and engage with digital promotion.

Sharma, R., & Gupta, A. (2024). Bridging tradition and technology: The role of e-commerce and social media in Jaipur's handicraft marketing. *ShodhKosh Journal of Arts & Humanities*, 8(3), 112-130. Retrieved from <https://www.granthaalayahpublication.org/Arts-Journal/ShodhKosh/article/view/3536>

E-Commerce in Handicraft Industry: A Study on the Growth and Challenges

The study by *Patel, S. and Mehta, R. (2023)* examines how e-commerce platforms like Etsy, Amazon Handmade, and Flipkart Samarth have opened new opportunities for artisans to sell their products directly to customers. The research identifies several

benefits of digital sales, including increased market reach, reduced dependency on local sales, and improved financial sustainability. However, it also outlines critical challenges that artisans face, such as:

- Limited digital literacy – Many artisans, especially in rural areas, lack training in using digital platforms effectively.
- Market competition – Traditional handmade products compete with mass-produced goods, affecting pricing and demand. Logistical constraints – Managing inventory, shipping, and customer service remains a challenge for small-scale artisans.

The findings of this study are highly relevant to the present research on Bela block printing. Similar challenges exist in Bela, where artisans often struggle with adopting digital sales due to lack of technological access and financial support. By integrating training programs, government support, and online marketing strategies, these issues can be mitigated.

From a methodological standpoint, *Patel, S. and Mehta, R. (2023)* utilized survey-based research and case studies of e-commerce businesses to understand the effectiveness of digital platforms. This research will incorporate a similar approach by conducting interviews and surveys with Bela artisans to examine their perspectives on digital selling.

Patel, S., & Mehta, R. (2023). E-commerce in handicraft industry: A study on the growth and challenges. *International Journal of Business and Digital Economy*, 9(2), 89-102. Retrieved from <https://ijbde.com/ecommerce-handicraft-industry>

Indian Handicrafts in Globalization Times: An Analysis of Global-Local Dynamics

Globalization has introduced both opportunities and challenges for the Indian handicraft industry. The study by *Das, M. and Mishra, P (2023)* analyses how digital media can be a tool for balancing global demand with cultural preservation. While globalization provides access to international buyers, bulk production, and market expansion, it also raises concerns regarding:

- Loss of originality – The rise of factory-made imitations threatens the authenticity of handcrafted products.
- Cultural dilution – Over-commercialization can shift the focus from craftsmanship to mass appeal.

- Pricing pressures – Handmade products often struggle to compete with cheaper machine-made alternatives.

To address these challenges, the study suggests using digital storytelling, social media documentation, and virtual exhibitions as tools for cultural preservation. The research also emphasizes the importance of government initiatives such as Geographical Indication (GI) tags and artisan welfare programs, which help in protecting traditional crafts.

The findings from this study are directly relevant to the research objective of documenting and promoting Bela block printing through digital media. By using digital campaigns, artisan interviews, and educational social media content, Bela artisans can preserve their craft while also engaging with a wider audience.

Das, M., & Mishra, P. (2023). Indian handicrafts in globalization times: An analysis of global-local dynamics. *Journal of Cultural and Creative Industries*, 12(4), 45-62. Retrieved from <https://jculturecreative.org/handicrafts-globalization>

Related Research Review

2.2.1 Studies on Hand Block Printed and Resist – Dyed Textile

Chauhan, A. (2021) - The study titled "Documentation of Sanganer Hand Block Printing and Development of Sustainable Craft Ecosystem Based on Its Market Model" explores the evolution and marketing strategies of Sanganer block printing. Over the past three decades, significant changes in Sanganer block printing were noted, including the introduction of new motifs, increased block sizes up to 12"x12", and the use of varied fabrics such as silk and cotton blends. Despite these advancements, the use of chemical dyes remained relatively constant. The research identified key factors affecting the marketing of Sanganer block prints, including product pricing, raw material quality, labor absorption, environmental impact, motif uniqueness, production speed, distribution channels, and technological expertise. By addressing these factors, Sanganer block printing units have successfully expanded their market reach. A strategic marketing plan was developed based on these findings, and feedback from retailers and industry professionals indicated strong support for the proposed strategy and confidence in its potential success.

Modi, B. (2014) - This study title "Documentation on Batik of Kachchh: Focus on its Past and Present Status", emphasized the urgent need to revive and preserve the traditional Batik craft of Kachchh, which is facing extinction due to modernization and industrialization. The research explores the cultural, historical, and socio-economic aspects associated with Batik, a traditional resist printing technique using wax and natural dyes, practiced primarily by the Khatri community in Kachchh. The study outlines the origins of Batik tracing back to Sindh and highlights its evolution in the Kachchh region, where it was traditionally known as Meniya. Historically, it was practiced by Muslim artisans and limited to specific communities such as Ahir, Harijan, and Bhansali. Over time, due to technological interventions and socio-economic shifts—particularly after the 2001 Kachchh earthquake—the number of practicing artisans drastically reduced, and the craft saw a shift towards synthetic dyes, brushwork, and market-driven motifs.

A descriptive research design was adopted using personal interviews, case studies, and observation methods. Findings revealed that traditional methods were time-consuming and labor-intensive, causing a decline in youth participation and shift toward alternative livelihoods. Furthermore, although Batik holds cultural and aesthetic significance, lack of awareness and inadequate government support have contributed to its marginalization. Organizations like Kala Raksha Vidhyalaya, Khamir, and Vivekanand Gramin Udyog Sanstha have initiated skill development programs to support artisans. However, the study concluded that more promotional and educational initiatives are needed to revive this heritage craft. A technical manual was developed as part of the study to serve as an instructional tool and awareness guide for educational institutions and craft enthusiasts.

The study significantly contributes to craft preservation literature by documenting the complete process, tools, motifs, and current challenges faced by Batik artisans. It also emphasizes the need for institutional support and integration of traditional crafts into mainstream awareness platforms to ensure their survival and continuity.

Renu, Yadav, & Rose, (2024) - The research paper explores the traditional art of Bagru printing, a hand-block printing technique from Rajasthan, India, practiced for centuries by the Chhipa community. This art form uses natural dyes and intricate designs carved into wooden blocks, often inspired by nature, folklore, and geometric symbolism. Despite challenges posed by modernization and industrialization, Bagru printing remains relevant due to its unique aesthetic and eco-friendly practices. Preservation efforts, including

collaborations with contemporary designers and skill development programs, have helped sustain its appeal in modern markets. The research highlights the cultural significance of Bagru printing and emphasizes its role in empowering women artisans, providing them with sustainable livelihoods. Furthermore, the paper addresses the challenge of urbanization and the need for continued support from policymakers to preserve this valuable cultural heritage.

2.2.2 Challenges in Preserving Traditional Crafts in India

Unit-20, (2004) - The document explains the importance of traditional crafts and folk art in India, especially how they are connected to tourism and preserving cultural heritage. It introduces the idea of "languishing crafts," which are traditional crafts that have lost popularity due to modernization but still have cultural value. To keep these crafts alive, efforts like improving designs, marketing, and offering technical support are needed. The document also highlights the role of museums and cultural centers, such as the Crafts Museum in Delhi, in promoting and preserving these crafts. These places not only showcase the crafts but also demonstrate the skills of artisans, helping to keep the traditions alive. Even though modernization poses challenges to traditional crafts, with proper support, they can be revived and sustained for future generations.

For your review of literature on the study of languishing crafts, this content shows how traditional crafts, while fading in practice, still have cultural importance. It discusses how tourism, cultural festivals, and museums can help bring attention back to these crafts and preserve them for the future. These efforts play a key role in reviving the skills and traditions of artisans.

Craft Revival Trust, n.d. - **Pithora art**, a traditional painting style practiced by the Bhil and Bhilala tribes in Western Madhya Pradesh and parts of Gujarat, is an example of a languishing craft. This art form, which involves community participation and is deeply rooted in cultural and religious practices, is now facing a significant decline. Economic hardships, migration, and lack of support have led to a drastic reduction in the number of practicing artists. Traditionally painted on walls, Pithora art has shifted to canvas due to the availability of modern materials and market demands. Despite these challenges, efforts are being made to revive this unique art form by adapting it to modern tastes and improving support for the artists.

2.2.3. Approaches to Craft Revival: Case Studies

Lalwani Y. (2022) - The study "Documentation and Revival of mud printing of Gujarat and refashioning it for workwear" focuses on Crafts as a reflection of the cultural identity of the communities that create them, especially in India, where traditional crafts have been an integral part of rural and tribal life for centuries. Indian artisans have long possessed a natural sense of design, and their craftsmanship is evident in a wide variety of traditional textiles, including hand printing, hand painting, weaving, embroidery, and resist dyeing. These crafts have played a vital role in India's rich cultural heritage. Among them, Gujarat has historically been known for its unique block and resist-printed textiles, particularly mud printing, which was prominent in the Padra district of Vadodara during the 1980s and 1990s. However, over time, the demand for this craft declined, leading to its near extinction. To counter this, the researcher aimed to revive mud printing by introducing new motifs and a modern color palette, expanding its appeal to a broader audience.

The researcher employed a descriptive cum exploratory study, gathering data through interviews, discussions, and observations from a selected family in Padra, who, despite no longer practicing the craft, retain knowledge of it. Through a detailed case study, the researcher explored the craft's history, process, motifs, and its significance to the Rabari community, for whom garments like odhini and gara were made. The study focused on reviving the craft while maintaining its authenticity, introducing naturalistic and geometric motifs and exploring these through computer-aided design software. The newly created designs were applied to men's and women's workwear and evaluated for their aesthetic appeal, consumer acceptance, and economic viability. The final designs, printed with natural dyes, were launched on Instagram under the label "PANCH KHILI," successfully garnering positive feedback and helping to promote awareness and appreciation for the revived craft of mud printing.

Asia InCH, n.d. - **Waraq printing** is a traditional method where gold or silver leaf is applied to fabrics using blocks. This technique highlights the skill and versatility of the artisans. Although the exact origins are unclear, it is believed to have started during the Mughal period.

Waraq has many uses, including in Ayurveda and as a decoration for Indian sweets. For textiles, Waraq is made from thin sheets of silver or gold, ranging from 2mm to 25mm

thick. The traditional process involves using a gum called Saras, which is stamped onto the fabric. The Waraq is then applied while the gum is still wet, and the fabric is polished with a smooth stone like agate

The technique of gold leaf printing is linked to Jaipur, Rajasthan. Historical sources such as paintings, heritage textiles in museums, and information from craftspeople and collectors provide insights into its history. Although India has a rich tradition in weaving, gold printing likely came from outside the subcontinent.

Mansukhani, (2018) - The study of this craft is crucial as it is on the verge of extinction. Efforts to revive it include research, designer involvement, and technical improvements. Understanding the socio-economic significance and the challenges faced by artisans can help in preserving this valuable cultural heritage.

Singh, (2023) - Dr. Nisha Singh's research focuses on how traditional crafts in India and Southeast Asia are being preserved and revived in the face of modernization and globalization. Through case studies, the paper examines the revival of crafts like Kutch embroidery, Madhubani painting, Thai silk weaving, and Batik. Key elements such as the involvement of local communities, skill development, access to markets, and government support are found to be crucial in keeping these crafts alive. However, the study also highlights some challenges, such as competition with mass-produced goods, dependence on outside funding, and the difficulty in passing skills to the younger generation. Overall, the research offers insights into how traditional crafts can be preserved while adapting to modern needs.

Mangaonkar, P., & Joshi, M. (2021) - The paper, Study & Revival Strategies for Traditional Art Form – Case of Sindhudurg, by Priyanka Mangaonkar-Vaiude and Minu Joshi, explores the difficulties currently faced by India's craft industry, specifically focusing on traditional crafts like wooden toys and Ganjifa cards from the Sawantwadi region of Maharashtra. Despite India's rich tradition of handcrafted goods, the nation's share of the global craft market is less than 2%, while China holds 30%. Additionally, over the past 30 years, the number of Indian artisans has decreased by 30%, signaling an urgent need to reinvest in this sector to preserve cultural heritage and sustain livelihoods.

The paper identifies multiple challenges artisans' face, such as limited access to raw materials, issues with mass production, and difficulties in obtaining fair market prices. The authors stress the importance of creating an ecosystem that benefits all stakeholders,

from artisans to NGOs and suppliers, by aligning policies to support the craft sector. Through a case study of the endangered wooden toy craft and Ganjifa cards, the research examines strategies that could help revitalize these crafts. It also draws on successful examples from other art forms in India to suggest possible solutions for the artisans of Sindhudurg to secure their livelihoods.

CHAPTER – III

METHODOLOGY

Bela, a village in Kutch, Gujarat, has a rich history of textile craftsmanship, especially in hand-block printing. Among its traditional practices, Bela printing stands out for its natural dyes, wooden blocks, bold designs and cultural significance motifs. This craft, once flourishing, has seen a decline over the past few decades due to various factors like drying of Sarang river, Industrialization, reduced market demand, changing consumer preference and lack of interest in younger generation. The absence of proper documentation and the loss of generational knowledge have further threatened its survival. This study aims to document and preserve Bela printing by researching its history, techniques, motifs, process and cultural significance. To ensure its revival, efforts must be made to increase awareness and promotion through social media campaigns, documentary film, brochures, research paper presentation at various form and catalogue distribution. A descriptive and exploratory research approach has been adopted to provide a structured understanding of the craft and explore innovative ways to sustain it. Promoting Bela printing can help artisans continue their legacy while adapting it to modern textile and fashion markets.

The method of the procedure followed to fulfil the objectives of the study was as follows:

3.1 Research Design:

3.2 Documentation of the Craft

3.2.1 History and Evolution of Bela printing

3.2.2 Preliminary Survey of the Craft

3.2.3 Documentation through Case Study

3.3 Documentation of Traditional Techniques, Processes, and Motifs

3.3.1 Detailed observation of the Traditional Bela printing process

3.3.2. Resist Paste preparation: Formation and application

3.3.3 Traditional Dyeing technique in Bela printing

3.3.4 Documentation of Blocks Designs and Analysis

3.3.4.1 Digital and Physical Cataloging of traditional Motifs

3.3.4.1.1 Classification and Dimensional Analysis of Blocks

3.3.4.1.2 Cultural and Symbolic Significance of Motifs

3.3.5. Development of Promotional Materials for Bela Printing

3.2.5.1 Creation of Informative Brochures

3.2.5.2 Design of Postcards and Bookmarks

3.2.5.3 Making of a Promotional Documentary Film

3.4. Awareness and Promotion of Bela Printing

3.4.1. Awareness Initiative

3.4.1.1 Interactive Session with Hands on Workshops

3.4.1.2 Evaluation of Awareness Initiative

3.4.1.3 Presentation of Research Paper on Bela Printing at Prestigious Forums

3.4.2 Promotion strategies

3.4.2.1 Social Media and Public Promotion

3.4.2.2 Catalogue Distribution (Kutch Museum, KHAMIR, and Artisan: Mansukh Pitambar Khatri)

3.4.2.3 Collaboration with Gujarat Government Bodies

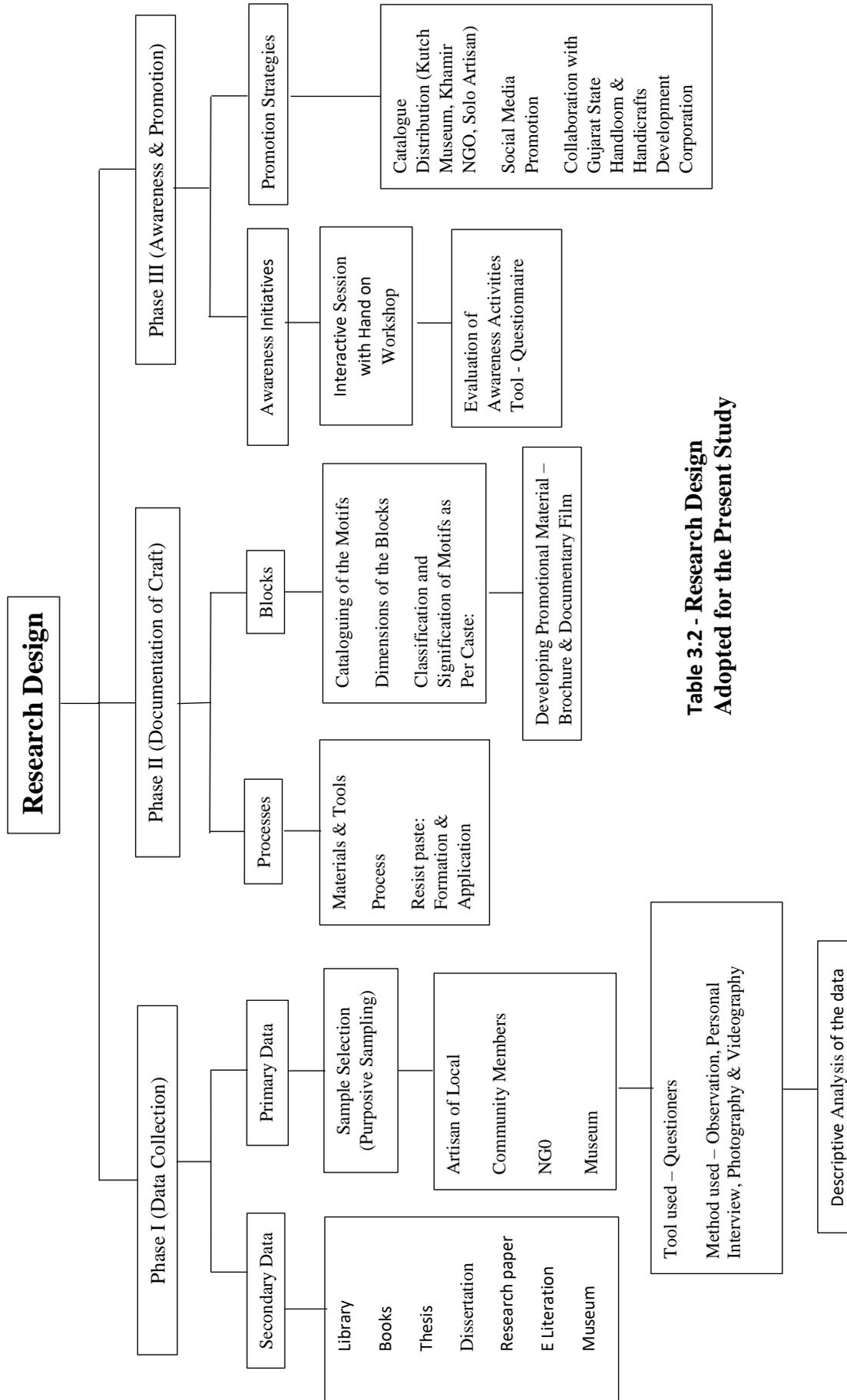


Table 3.2 - Research Design Adopted for the Present Study

3.2 Documentation of Craft

3.2.1 History and Evolution of Bela Printing

To gain a deep understanding of Bela printing, this study explores its origins and traces its journey over the time. The research aims to highlight the cultural significance of this traditional craft and examine the various factors that have influenced its development.

To achieve this objective, the researcher visited Bela village, where interactions with artisans and local residents provided valuable insights into the history of Bela printing. Conversations with the people of the village helped in understanding how the craft has evolved with changing times, the challenges faced by artisans, and the adaptations they have made to sustain their work.

In addition to field visits, the researcher also conducted extensive secondary research. Visits to Bhuj Museum and Bhuj Library allowed access to historical records and artifacts related to traditional textile printing. The LLDC (Living and Learning Design Centre) museum, Kutch and Library provided further information about the evolution of block printing techniques in the region, along with the documented case studies and archival materials that helped trace the transformation of this craft.

Furthermore, the researcher visited KHAMIR, an NGO dedicated to reviving and supporting traditional crafts of Kutch. KHAMIR works closely with artisans, helping them sustain their livelihoods while preserving heritage crafts like Bela printing. The organization provided valuable insights into the contemporary challenges faced by artisans and the efforts being made to keep the craft alive through training programs, workshops, and market linkages.

To ensure a well-rounded understanding, the study also involved reviewing various sources of literature, including books, journals, research papers, and other academic materials available online. This combination of field work and literature review helped in gathering authentic and detailed information about the history and transformation of Bela printing over the years.

3.2.2 Preliminary Survey of the Craft

On July 30, 2024, researcher conducted the initial survey for MSc research on Bela block printing by visiting the KHAMIR organization in Kutch. This visit helped the researcher understand the printing techniques, tools, and challenges faced by artisans.

Watching the artisans work gave a clear idea of how Bela prints are made, including the materials used and the skills required. Conversations with them revealed key issues such as fewer young people joining the craft, limited market reach.

This visit confirmed that Bela block printing is an important research topic and helped shape the next steps, including field visits, artisan interviews, and ways to document and promote the craft effectively.

3.2.3 Documentation through a Case Study

To understand Bela printing artisans and their work, detailed case studies were conducted using interviews, observations, and technical documentation. These were focused on artisans' personal stories, skills, daily routines, and the challenges they face, showing how the craft has influenced their lives and changed over time. The study also documented the entire printing process, including fabric preparation, resist paste preparation, dyeing, and printing techniques. Interviews helped explore financial struggles, market conditions, and the effects of modernization on the craft. Additionally, it examined the tools, materials, and cultural importance of Bela printing in artisan communities.

All visual and video documentation for this research were captured using the Samsung Galaxy S24 Ultra, equipped with a high-performance rear camera system (200 MP + 50 MP + 12 MP + 10 MP), offering optical zoom at 3x and 5x, optical quality zoom at 2x and 10x (enabled by Adaptive Pixel sensor), and digital zoom up to 100x. The front camera (12 MP) and UHD 8K video recording at 30fps, along with slow-motion features (240fps @FHD, 120fps @UHD), enable detailed visual capture of the Bela printing process and artisan activities. These high-resolution visuals aided in accurately recording techniques, tools, and environments, enhancing the quality of documentation.

This approach gave a complete and clear picture of Bela printing, helping to preserve and promote its importance in both tradition and modern times.

3.3 Documentation of Traditional Techniques, Processes, and Motifs

3.3.1 Detailed Observation of the Traditional Bela Printing Process

To document the traditional Bela printing process, the researcher conducted field visits to artisan workshops, closely observing each stage. The process began with fabric preparation, where the cloth is thoroughly washed, treated, and dried to ensure it is clean

and ready for printing. Next, artisans prepared natural dyes using plant-based ingredients, minerals, and other organic sources to create vibrant and lasting colours. A key step in the process is the application of resist paste, which is carefully applied using hand-carved wooden blocks to create intricate designs. This paste prevents the dye from penetrating certain areas, forming distinct patterns on the fabric. The printing stage involves artisans dipping wooden blocks into natural dyes and stamping them onto the fabric with precision, ensuring that the patterns align correctly. Once the printing is complete, the fabric is left to dry, and finishing processes were carried out to enhance the quality of the final product.

Throughout the documentation, special attention was given to the tools, materials, and techniques used, ensuring that the traditional knowledge of Bela printing is preserved for future generations to learn and practice.

3.3.2 Resist Paste Preparation: Formation and Application

A key step in Bela printing is the preparation of resist paste, which plays a crucial role in defining the patterns by preventing the absorption of dye in selected areas of the fabric. The researcher documented the process by closely observing artisans and conducting interviews to understand the ingredients, mixing techniques, and application methods. The resist paste is made using natural substances such as wheat flour, lime, tree gum, and clay, combined in precise proportions to achieve the ideal consistency. Artisans carefully mix and knead the paste to ensure it is smooth and easy to apply. The prepared paste is then applied onto the fabric using hand-carved wooden blocks, ensuring even distribution and sharp pattern definition. Once applied, the fabric is left to dry before undergoing the dyeing process, allowing the paste to effectively resist color penetration. Artisan interviews provided insights into how different ingredient combinations affect the quality of the paste, its durability, and its impact on the final design. This documentation serves as a valuable reference, helping to ensure that the traditional resist paste-making process is accurately recorded and preserved for future practitioners.

3.3.3 Traditional Dyeing Technique in Bela Printing

The dyeing process in Bela printing is based entirely on natural dyes, which enhance the aesthetic appeal of the fabric but also promote eco-friendly and sustainable practices. The researcher documented this process by observing artisans at work and recording their dye

preparation, application, and fixation methods. The process involves boiling, fermenting, and filtering these raw materials to obtain the desired shades. Artisans carefully control the temperature, soaking duration, and number of dye baths to achieve the correct color intensity. Once the fabric is dyed, it undergoes a fixation process where natural mordant like alum are applied to ensure the colors remain bright and long-lasting. The dyed fabrics were then dried in shaded areas to prevent color fading and maintain their natural vibrancy. Through careful documentation of these techniques, this research ensures that the knowledge of traditional dyeing methods in Bela printing is preserved and can continue to be practiced for future generations.

3.3.4 Documentation of Blocks Design and Analysis

A crucial part of preserving Bela printing is the documentation of wooden printing blocks used by artisans. These blocks are intricately hand-carved and have been passed down through generations. Most of the blocks currently in use were used by the artisan's father and are more than 50 years old. They play a significant role in creating the unique patterns found in Bela prints. By recording and analyzing these blocks, the research aims to understand their dimensions, classification, and cultural significance. This documentation ensures that traditional motifs are preserved and can be referred to by artisans, researchers, and designers in the future.

3.3.4.1 Digital and Physical Cataloguing of Traditional Motifs

To systematically document the motifs used in Bela printing, a catalogue was created that recorded the various patterns, their historical importance, and their cultural meaning. Each motif has a unique story, symbolism, and purpose, often influenced by the caste and community that traditionally used them. Print impressions of the blocks were taken according to different castes, and these pieces were used to prepare a physical catalogue of Bela printing. This physical catalogue was created to visually document and showcase the traditional block usage. Along with this, digital cataloguing was also carried out. By recording and analyzing these blocks, the research aims to understand their dimensions, classification, and cultural significance. This documentation ensured that traditional motifs are preserved and can be referred to by artisans, researchers, and designers in the future.

3.3.4.1.1 Classification and Dimensions Analysis Blocks

To gain a complete understanding of the blocks used in Bela printing, their sizes, shapes, and proportions were recorded. The researcher documented the measurements of different blocks used by artisans, noted their length, width, thickness, and carving depth. This data helped in understanding the technical aspects of the blocks, such as how different sizes influence the printing process and how artisans select blocks based on fabric type and design complexity.

3.3.4.1.2 Cultural and Symbolic Significance of Motifs

The motifs in Bela printing are deeply connected to the caste and community traditions of the artisans and their customers. Certain motifs were historically preferred by specific groups based on their social and cultural backgrounds. This research had classified motifs according to which caste or community traditionally used them, helped to uncover the relationship between the craft and social identity. By analysing these motifs, the study highlighted how designs were influenced by local traditions, beliefs and even economic status. This classification served as a valuable reference for understanding the historical and cultural roots of Bela printing and how it continues to hold significance in contemporary times.

3.3.5 Development of Promotional Materials for Bela Printing

To create awareness and appreciation for Bela printing, various promotional materials were developed as part of the research. These materials helped in educating the public, supporting artisans, and increasing market demand for Bela prints. By using visual and informational resources, the goal was to make this traditional craft more accessible to a wider audience, including designers, consumers, and craft enthusiasts.

3.3.5.1 Creation of Informative Brochures

A detailed and visually appealing brochure was designed to introduce people to the history, techniques, and cultural significance of Bela printing. This brochure featured high-quality images of artisans at work, traditional motifs, and step-by-step printing processes. It also provided information about the origins of Bela printing, the communities involved, and the steps of the printing . The aim is preservation and promotion.

3.3.5.2 Design of Postcards and Bookmarks

To promote the traditional craft of Bela printing, specially designed postcards and bookmarks were developed as part of the promotional materials. The postcards featured visuals created using traditional Bela printing blocks, highlighting the intricate motifs and rich cultural heritage of the craft. The bookmarks included images of various blocks along with a photograph of Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri, a key artisan dedicated to preserving this tradition. These materials served as both functional souvenirs and storytelling tools, designed to generate interest, awareness, and appreciation for Bela printing when shared at exhibitions, workshops, and other craft-related events.

3.3.5.2 Making of a Promotional Documentary Film

A documentary film was created to showcase the entire Bela printing process, from fabric preparation to the final product. The film included interviews with artisans, particularly Mansukh Bhai Khatri, an expert in Bela printing, who shared insights about the process, and importance of the craft. This documentary served as an educational and promotional tool, helping to spread awareness through social media, exhibitions, and craft fairs. It also highlighted the challenges artisans face today, such as declining demand, lack of younger artisans, and competition from machine-printed textiles. By sharing these stories, the documentary aimed to inspire support for Bela printing and encourage more people to value and invest in this traditional art form.

3.4 Awareness and Promotion of Bela Printing

To preserve and promote Bela printing for the future, awareness and promotion activities were planned. These efforts aimed to educate students, researchers, designers, and the general public about the craft while helping artisans gain more exposure and better market opportunities. By presenting research paper, interactive lecture sessions, and promotional events, the goal was to showcase the cultural importance and artistic value of Bela printing. These activities also helped connect traditional craftsmanship with modern fields like textiles, fashion, and heritage conservation, ensuring that Bela printing remains relevant and appreciated.

3.4.1 Awareness Initiatives

Creating awareness about Bela printing was a key factor in its preservation and promotion. Several initiatives were undertaken to spread knowledge about its techniques, history, and relevance in today's world. These initiatives included academic research presentations, expert-led lecture sessions, and evaluations to measure their effectiveness in educating people about this traditional craft.

3.4.1.1 Interactive Session with Hands-on Workshop

A special awareness event was organized featuring Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri, the sole custodian who still practiced the traditional craft of Bela block printing in Kutch, Gujarat. This event included two key segments- an interactive talk and a hands-on workshop.

During the interactive session, Mansukhbhai discussed his personal experiences, the generational transmission of the craft, and what made Bela printing unique. He also elaborated on its cultural significance, traditional techniques, and contemporary challenges. The session was open to audience questions, providing participants a chance to engage directly with the artisan and learn from his deep-rooted knowledge.

Following the talk, a hands-on workshop allowed participants to experience first-hand on Bela printing. Under Mansukhbhai's guidance, they learned fabric preparation, natural dye mixing, and block printing techniques. Each participant created their own printed piece to take home. This workshop is not just about learning a skill fostering a deeper appreciation for India's rich craft heritage and its preservation.

3.4.1.2 Evaluation of Awareness Initiative

To measure the effectiveness of the interactive lecture session, a pre- and post-questionnaire evaluation was conducted. The pre-questionnaire assessed participants' existing knowledge and awareness of Bela printing before the session. After the lecture, a post-questionnaire have evaluated the knowledge gained, engagement level, and change in perception regarding the craft. By comparing both responses, the impact of the session was analysed, ensuring that it effectively enhances awareness and appreciation for Bela printing. The findings will help refine future sessions, making them more informative and impactful.

DEPARTMENT OF CLOTHING AND TEXTILES
FACULTY OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SCIENCES
THE MAHARAJA SAYAJIRAO UNIVERSITY OF BARODA, VADODARA

Inviting you to the Workshop
Partial Fullfillment of M.S.c Dissertation Work

Documentation and Preservation of Bela Printing of Kutch, Gujarat

Guided by:
Dr. Rajni Yadav

Researcher
Ms. Krishna Ardeschna

*Experience the Timeless Art of Bela Hand Block Printing from
Bela Village, Kutch'- Preserved by Its Sole Practicing Artisan!*

THURSDAY | 20th March 2025

VENUE:- Department of Clothing and Textiles W.S.R.C Lab,
Faculty of Family and Community Sciences,
The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara

TIME:- 10:00 a.m to 2:00 p.m

Register by: 19th March 2025, 05:00pm - Don't miss it **OPEN FOR ALL**

Dr. Reena Bhatia
I/C Head,
Department of Clothing and Textiles,
The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda

Prof. (Dr.) Anjali Pahad,
Dean,
Faculty of Family and Community Sciences
The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda

Plate 3.1 – Workshop Flyer

3.4.1.3 Presentation of Research Paper on Bela Printing at Prestigious Forums

The research significance of Bela printing was established through multiple academic presentations at renowned institutions – first at the National conference hosted by IIS Jaipur, second at SID Pune, and third at IIT Delhi.

3.4.2 Promotional Strategies

The study incorporated a multi-faceted promotional approach to enhance awareness, visibility, and market reach for Bela Printing. The key promotional activities included catalogue distribution, social media promotion, and collaboration with the Gujarat State Handloom and Handicrafts Development Corporation.

3.4.2.1 Social Media and Public Promotion

To leverage digital outreach, a social media campaign was initiated, utilizing platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube to showcase artisan stories, the step-by-step printing process, and challenges faced by the craftsmen. A dedicated Instagram page was created to share reels, short videos, and interviews with Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri, the last known practitioner of Bela Printing. Additionally, a documentary highlighting the craft's significance and survival challenges was published to engage a broader audience, including designers, researchers, and textile conservationists. The campaign also gained recognition when it was featured in a local newspaper, further strengthening its outreach.

3.4.2.2 Catalogue Distribution

A catalogue was developed and strategically distributed to institutions such as the Kutch Museum, Khamir, and key stakeholders Manshukbhai Khatri, ensuring that visitors, researchers, and craft enthusiasts could access detailed information about Bela Printing's history, techniques, motifs, and reasons for decline. This catalogue also documented the dimensions of the blocks and the significance of different motifs, helping preserve the craft's identity in the textile tradition.

3.4.2.3 Collaboration with Government bodies

A crucial aspect of the promotional efforts involved collaboration with the Gujarat State Handloom and Handicrafts Development Corporation, a government initiative focused on reviving and supporting traditional textile crafts. This partnership aimed to provide market opportunities, financial support, and visibility for Bela Printing, ensuring its sustainability through formal platforms.

By integrating physical distribution, digital outreach, and institutional collaboration, the study adopted a comprehensive approach to craft promotion, contributing to the promotion and preservation of Bela Printing for future generations.

CHAPTER – IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study focused on documenting and preserving the traditional craft of resist Bela block printing by capturing its techniques, motifs, and cultural significance. Information was gathered through interviews with artisans and community elders, documenting key processes such as preparation and application of resist paste and steps of Bela block printing

Traditional motifs were identified, categorized, and compiled into a comprehensive catalogue, detailing their dimensions, meanings, and design applications. Also documentary film was produced to showcase the entire printing process, artisan experiences, and traditional techniques, aiming to raise awareness about the historical importance and the challenges of Bela Printing.

To further enhance awareness and recognition, research papers were presented at prestigious academic platforms, awareness and promotion included hands-on workshops, social media campaigns, and collaborations with government bodies, contributing to the visibility and sustainability of Bela block printing was conducted. The objectives of study have been successfully achieved and are outlined in detail in the following sections of this chapter.

4.1 Documentation of the Craft

4.1.1 History and Evolution of Bela printing

4.1.2 Preliminary Survey of the Craft

4.1.3 Documentation through Case Study

4.2 Documentation of Traditional Techniques, Processes, and Motifs

4.2.1 Detailed observation of the Traditional Bela Printing Process

4.2.2. Resist Paste preparation: Formation and Application

4.2.3 Traditional Dyeing technique in Bela printing

4.2.4 Documentation of Blocks Designs and Analysis

4.2.4.1 Digital and Physical Cataloging of Traditional Motifs

4.2.4.1.1 Classification and Dimensional Analysis of Blocks

4.2.4.1.2 Cultural and Symbolic Significance of Motifs

4.2.5. Development of Promotional Materials for Bela Printing

4.2.5.1 Creation of Informative Brochures

4.2.5.2 Design of Postcards and Bookmarks

4.2.5.3 Making of a Promotional Documentary Film

4.3. Awareness and Promotion of Bela Printing

4.3.1 Awareness Initiatives

4.3.1.1 Interactive Session with Hands on Workshops

4.3.1.2 Evaluation of Awareness Initiatives

4.3.1.3 Presentation of Research paper on Bela Printing at Prestigious Forums

4.3.2 Promotion strategies

4.3.2.1 Social Media and Public Promotion

4.3.2.2 Catalogue Distribution (Kutch Museum, KHAMIR, Artisan : Mansukh Pitambar Khatri)

4.3.2.3 Collaboration with Gujarat State Handloom and Handicraft Development Corporation

4.1 Documentation of Craft

4.1.1 History and evolution of Bela printing

Bela printing is a traditional textile printing technique deeply rooted in the cultural and historical lands of Kutch, Gujarat. This craft, known for its bold motifs and natural dyeing processes. This evolved over centuries, shaped by geographical, historical, and socio-economic influences. The rich history of region, from ancient civilizations to royal patronage and colonial interactions, has played a crucial role in shaping Bela printing into the present art form.

The origin of Bela printing can be traced back to the vibrant textile traditions of Kutch, where artisans have used natural dyes and resist-printing techniques to create intricate designs. Historically, the craft thrived under the patronage of local rulers and traders, who facilitated its expansion through trade routes connecting India to Persia, Africa, and the Middle East. Over time, this craft adapted to changing market demands while retaining its unique identity

Bela block printing is a ancient craft deeply rooted in the cultural and artistic heritage of Kutch, Gujarat. This traditional resist-printing technique, practiced by local artisan communities, reflects the historical influences, evolving through interactions with various dynasties, traders, and cultural exchanges. The craft has been shaped by the geographical setting of Bela Island and the rich historical background of Kutch.

Over time, the craft has witnessed periods of prosperity and decline shaped by economic, technological, and cultural shifts.

This section explores the historical timeline of Bela printing, its connection to ancient trade routes, and its transformation. By documenting its history and evolution, we aim to highlight the resilience of the craft and its role in preserving the artistic legacy of Kutch.

Historical Development of Bela Island and Bela Village: Timeline and Significance

4.1 Geological Formation and Early History of Bela Island

4.1.1 Jurassic Period: Marine Ecosystem and Sedimentation

The geological history of Bela Island traces back to the Jurassic period (201 to 145 millions year ago), when the region was submerged under a vast shallow sea. Fossils found in rock layers-particularly the Gadhada Sandstone and Hadibhadang Shale formation confirms the presence of diverse marine life, including the discovery of 57 species of ostracodes, tiny marine animals with shells, suggests a rich prehistoric ecosystem, with 26 species confirms its biological richness. These microfossils indicate that Bela shared faunal connections with Madagascar, Tanzania, and Central Arabia, emphasizing its significance in understanding past marine environments.

4.1.1.1 Geological Evolution and Impact on Present-Day Landscape

Over millions of years, sedimentary processes led to the formation of limestone and sandstone deposits, which later played a crucial role in shaping Bela’s vernacular architecture. The Tectonic shifts and sea-level changes influenced the topography, creating fertile plains suitable for early human habitation. The uplift faults such as the Nagar Parkar Fault (NPF), Vigodi Fault (VG), and Kutch Mainland Fault (KMF) significantly shaped the region’s geomorphology, making it prone to seismic activity.

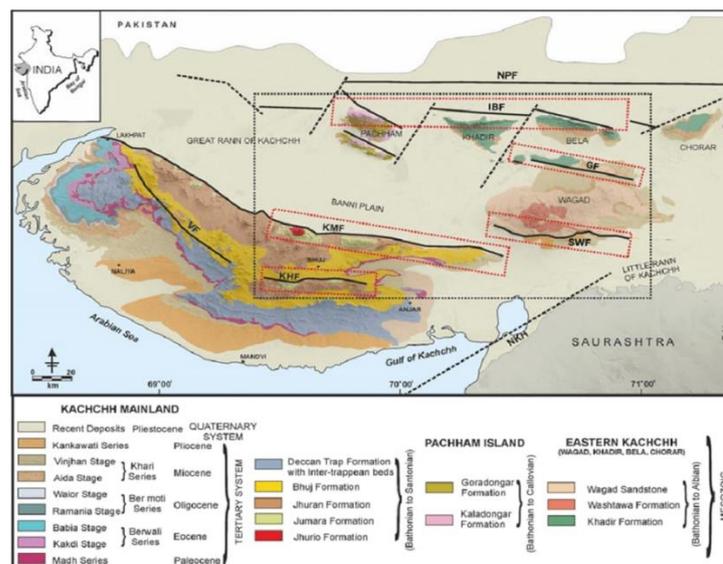


Plate 4.1 - Map of the Kutchh Basin

Image 4.1 - Map of the Kutchh Basin showing the general geomorphic configuration and various uplift bounding faults. (Biswas, 1993) The area in the black dotted box shows the extent of the presently active Kutchh Seismic Zone. Smaller red dotted boxes indicate the faults zones covered in the present article. NPF, Nagar Parkar Fault; VG, Vigodi Fault; NKF, North Kathiawar Fault; KHF, Katrol Hill Fault; KMF, Kutchh Mainland Fault; IBF, Island belt Fault; SWF, South Wagad Fault. Inset, wider location map.

4.1.1.2 Early Human Settlement and Evolution of Bela Village

Pre-1600s : Initial Settlements and Resource Utilization

Long after the Jurassic seas receded, Bela's landscape underwent significant transformations due to tectonic activity and sedimentary deposits. By the time humans settled in the region, the area had become fertile, offering essential resources such as fresh water, limestone, and nutrient-rich soil (CEPT University, 2022). These factors made Bela an ideal location for agriculture, cattle rearing, and early human habitation. The earliest settlers likely practiced subsistence farming, fishing, and pastoralism while utilizing locally available materials to construct rudimentary dwellings of stone and mud. Over a period of time, these structures evolved, incorporating regionally sourced limestone and improved construction techniques, which contributed to the development of Bela's distinct vernacular architecture.

4.1.1.3 Historical Context: Kutch and Its Influence on Bela

Kutch, a region in present-day Gujarat, has a long history, shaped by migrations, rulers, and traders. Early settlers included nomadic tribes and pastoral communities, with the Samma and Jadeja Rajputs playing key roles in shaping its political and cultural landscape. By the 16th century, under Rao Khengarji I (1548–1585), Kutch became a well-organized princely state with a feudal system ensuring stability. (*Williams, L. F. R. 1958*).

During the 18th century, Kutch witnessed remarkable artistic and technological advancements. Under the patronage of Maharao Lakhpatji, the region became a center for architectural innovation, blending Indian and European influences. Kutch flourished as a hub for textiles, pottery, and maritime commerce, with its crafts gaining prominence in regional and international markets. The trade routes connecting Kutch to Sindh, Persia,

and Africa facilitated cultural and economic exchange, significantly influencing artisanal and economic landscape of Bela. The influx of traders and craftsmen contributed to the refinement of local construction techniques, textile traditions, and agricultural practices.

Throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, Kutch maintained its status as a princely state under British rule, engaging in trade and revenue agreements that allowed it to retain autonomy. The strategic location of the region made it a vital player in colonial trade networks, indirectly impacting Bela's economy and craft traditions.

Following India's independence in 1947, Kutch merged with the Indian Union in 1948 and became part of Gujarat in 1960. Despite political changes, the region has preserved its cultural identity, with its historical richness reflected in forts, craft traditions, and oral legends. Bela, as an integral part of this heritage, continued to thrive as a centre of craftsmanship and trade, carrying forward the legacy of Kutch's cultural dynamism.

4.1.1.4 Establishment of Bela Village in the 1600s

The formal establishment of Bela village during the reign of Rao Tamachiji (1655-1662), a ruler of Kutch in the 17th century. Its strategic location along key trade routes connecting Gujarat with Sindh (now in Pakistan) played a crucial role in its development. This connectivity facilitated the exchange of goods, knowledge, and cultural practices, contributing to Bela's emergence as a prominent centre for agriculture and artisanal crafts (CEPT University, 2022).



Plate 4.2 - Rule of Kutchh leadership of Rao Tamachiji

Image Source: (<https://kkavyaanjali.blogspot.com/2013/06/rulers-of-kutch.html?m=1>)

Development of Textile Craft and Economic Significance

Bela became renowned for its traditional textile craft, notably block printing. Artisans from the Khatri community specialized in intricate hand-block printing using natural dyes and wooden blocks. The high demand for these fabrics, both local and for export, significantly contributed to the prosperity of the village. The integration of natural dyeing techniques and skilled craftsmanship positioned Bela as a key player in the regional textile industry and reinforcing its economic relevance. However, this economic stability was later challenged by Partition and the shift towards mechanized textile production.

Architectural and Cultural Legacy

During this period, the Darbargadh fort was constructed, which was home for local leaders and as a symbol of power and protection. The fort was built using local limestone and sandstone, which showcased regional architectural styles with thick defensive walls, intricately carved doorways, and structural reinforcements designed to withstand conflicts and natural disasters. The presence of such a fort indicates the socio-political significance of Bela and the need for fortified structures in response to historical challenges.

4.1.1.5 1819 Kutch Earthquake and Its Consequence

On June 16, 1819, a powerful earthquake with a magnitude of 8.0 Mw struck the Kutch region, causing massive destruction and altering the region geography (*BMTPC, 2010*). The earthquake led to an 80km long and 16 km wide uplift, disrupting local water source. This shift resulted in the diversion of water sources, severely impacting agriculture and cutting off vital irrigation channels. Consequently, crop production declined, leading to economic instability and a downfall in trade.

The Darbargadh fort, along with other traditional structures, sustained substantial damage. While the fort's robust stone construction prevented total collapse, significant repairs were required. The disaster tested the resilience of the local community, which responded by rebuilding homes and reviving agricultural activities. However, the earthquake marked a turning point, in initiating a long-term economic decline, as subsequent natural disasters further challenged the sustainability of the village.

Expansion of Darbargadh and Cultural Growth (1800s–Early 1900s)

Despite the hardships following the 1819 earthquake, Bela experienced a period of recovery and cultural growth in the subsequent decades. Under the leadership of Ahilyaji, the Darbargadh fort was expanded, incorporating enhanced defensive structures and additional residential spaces. The fort continued to serve as the administrative centre of the village, reinforcing its significance in regional governance and cultural heritage (CEPT University, 2022).

Bela's economy gradually recovered, driven by agriculture and traditional textile crafts. Artisans, particularly from the Khatri community, continued to practice block printing, producing vibrant textiles for local and export markets. The Darbar community which played a dominant role in the social structure, facilitated the preservation of traditional knowledge by ensuring the continuity of artisanal skills across generations.

However, dependence on trade with Sindh made it vulnerable to external disruptions which was a challenge that became evident in the mid-20th century. This dependency highlights the interconnected nature of regional economies and the long-term impact of geopolitical shifts on local industries.

Partition of India and Pakistan (1947) and Decline in Trade

The partition of India in 1947 marked a turning point for Bela, as it severed the long standing trade connections with Sindh, a region that had been crucial for its economic stability. Artisans, particularly those engaged in block printing, faced severe economic hardship due to the disruption of cross-border trade (*Devilat, B. M., Lanuza, F., Mane, M., & Pithawalla, Z. 2024*). With diminishing market opportunities, many skilled artisans migrated to Bhuj, Ahmedabad, and other urban centres in search of better livelihoods.

This migration of artisans significantly disrupted the intergenerational transmission of block printing knowledge. Younger generation was neither able to sustain the craft economically nor drawn to urban employment, gradually moved away from traditional textile practices. The remaining workshops in Bela struggled to survive and over the period of time, traditional block printing techniques were overshadowed by modern, mechanized production in industrial centres. This period marked a decline in artisanal identity, shift in economy and cultural landscape of Bela.

4.1.1.6 Impact of the 2001 Bhuj Earthquake

On January 26, 2001, a 7.7 Mw earthquake struck the Kutch region, causing extensive damage in Bela. Traditional houses built with stone and mud mortar proved to be vulnerable as many collapsed or became structurally unsafe. The Darbargadh fort sustained severe damage, highlighting the urgent need for heritage preservation and structural reinforcement (*Devilat, B. M., Lanuza, F., Mane, M., & Pithawalla, Z. 2024*).

The disaster also exposed weaknesses in previous reconstruction efforts, which had failed to integrate culturally sensitive and seismic-resistant building techniques. While temporary shelters were provided, long-term recovery remained incomplete, leaving many residents in a state of housing insecurity. The earthquake further accelerated socio-economic shifts, as some families relocated permanently to more stable urban areas, diminishing Bela's population and artisanal heritage.

4.1.1.7 Current State of Bela: Socio-Economic and Craft Decline

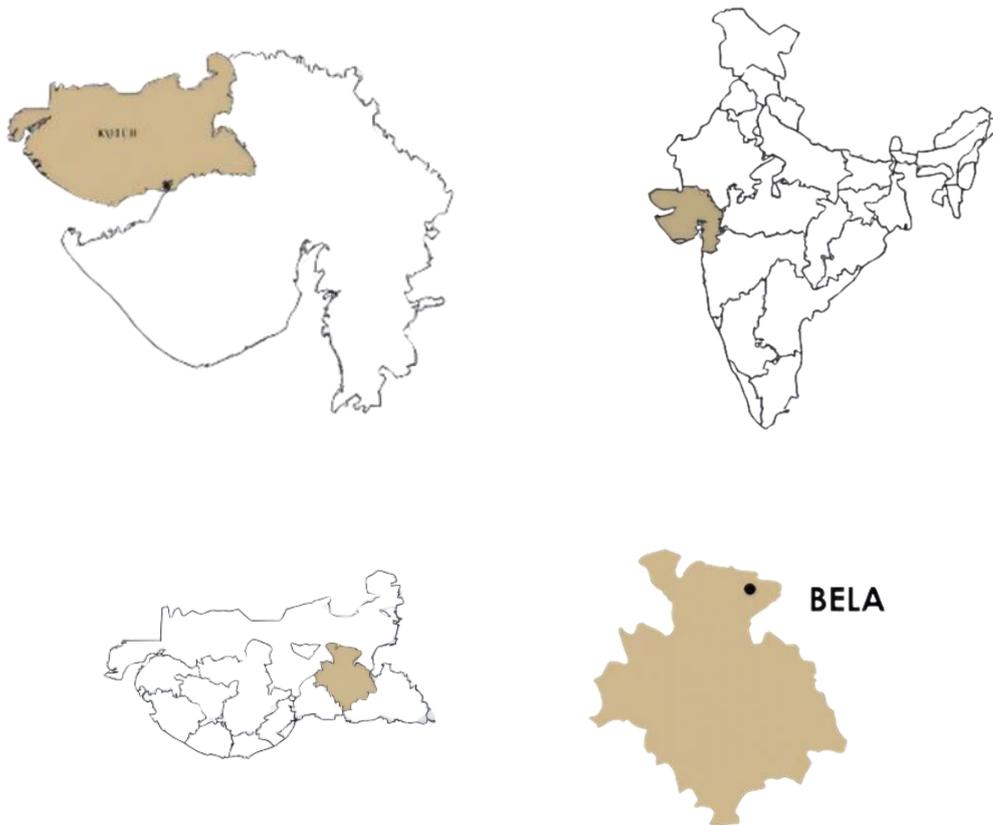


Plate 4.3 - Bela Village on the India map

Bela is a small yet historically rich village located in the Kutch region of Gujarat, India, covering an area of 85 square kilometres and a home to over 4,000 residents (*Devilat, B. M., Lanuza, F., Mane, M., & Pithawalla, Z. 2024*). The village is geographically situated near major fault lines, making it prone to seismic activity. The built environment of Bela comprises a combination of vernacular architecture and heritage structures, including an old fortress (Darbargadh), religious temples, memorial stones, and around 800 traditional domestic structures that have evolved over time, reflecting the unique cultural expressions of its residents.

Historically, Bela played a significant role in the regional economy as a trading settlement within the Sindh belt. However, geopolitical events such as the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 disrupted this status, severing critical trade networks with regions like Nagarparkar (now in Pakistan). Bela's prominence further declined after the 1971 Indo-Pakistani war, leading to the migration of skilled workers and a shift in the village economic base (*Devilat, B. M., Lanuza, F., Mane, M., & Pithawalla, Z. 2024*). Today the built heritage and crafts of Bela, especially Bela block printing, is challenged by natural disasters and socio-economic shifts, making its preservation crucial for the community identity and continuity.

Preservation Efforts: Documenting and Reviving Bela Block Printing

Organizations such as CEPT University and the Hunnarshala Foundation have spearheaded efforts to document and preserve cultural and architectural heritage of Bela (*Devilat, B. M., Lanuza, F., Mane, M., & Pithawalla, Z. 2024*). Utilizing 3D laser scanning and drone mapping, these initiatives provide detailed data on the structural integrity of historical sites, aiding in their restoration.

Beyond architectural conservation, efforts to revive traditional Bela block printing craft have been integral to preservation strategies. Social media campaigns have been employed to raise awareness about its unique textile heritage, aiming to attract tourists, buyers, and cultural organizations. Initiatives such as Khamir's intervention have provided workspace and resources to the last known practicing artisan, Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri, by facilitating printing, dyeing, and washing. However, despite these efforts, the long-term sustainability of Bela block printing remains uncertain due to lack of structured skill transmission and decline in artisan participation.

Similarly, design platforms like MORII have engaged the Bela block printing by reinterpreting its motifs for modern applications. However, these adaptations often shift the craft away from its traditional roots, characterized by grid structures, natural dyes, and artisan-led production, towards a more designer-driven approach. This transformation raises concerns about the sustainability of authentic craft heritage of Bela.

Research Approach: Case Study and Field observations

To address these gaps, this research has undertaken a case study approach, incorporating interviews and field observations with Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri and elderly Bela artisans. This study aims to validate desk research findings, document block printing techniques, and analyse socio-economic factors influencing the craft sustainability. Through this approach, a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities surrounding Bela block printing is developed.

4.1.2 Preliminary Survey of the Craft

The initial survey for this research on Bela block printing was conducted on July 30, 2024, during a visit to the Khamir organization in Kutch. This visit provided important insights into the craft history, techniques, tools, and the challenges faced by artisan. Observing the artisan and his work confirms that this craft is a valuable topic for research. The visit also guided in the planning of further studies, including fieldwork, interviews and strategies to document and promote Bela block printing effectively.

4.1.2.1 Preparation of Tools for Interviews and Case Study

The interview schedule developed for data collection consisted of open and close-ended questions focusing on various aspects of the Bela block printing craft. These questions covered topics such as the origin of the craft, resist paste ingredient and its methods, dyeing techniques, and socio-economic factors influencing artisan participation. A primary pre-testing interview schedule was initially drafted in English and later translated into Gujarati for the convenience of respondents. This schedule was validated by professional textile experts to ensure its effectiveness in gathering relevant data.

The tailored interview schedule facilitated a systematic approach in collecting data about Bela block printing. By including both open and close-ended questions, the schedule allowed for a thorough exploration of different aspects, including historical background,

local terminology, and artisan perspectives on craft sustainability. Translating the schedule into Gujarati after its initial preparation in English was a thoughtful step to cater to the language preferences of respondents, ensuring clear communication during interviews. The validation by textile experts added credibility to the interview schedule, ensuring the reliability and validity of the data obtained.

4.1.3 Documentation through Case Study of solo artisan Mansukh Pitambar Khatri

The case study involved direct engagement with artisan to document traditional block printing techniques, assess the socio-economic factors influencing the Bela craft. Interviews with elderly villager provided historical context on the craft evolution, while field observations highlighted the practical challenges faced in contemporary practice. This in-depth study serves as a foundation for identifying sustainable strategies for craft awareness and promotion, skill transmission and future interventions aimed at preserving Bela block printing.

1. Artisan: Mashukhbhai Pitambar Khatri



Plate 4.4 - Mansukhbhai Pitambar bhai Khatri

Mr. Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri, a 58-year-old artisan, is the only practitioner of Bela block printing. Having education till the 6th standard, he is fluent in Gujarati and Hindi. Born and raised in Bela village, he learned the craft from his elder brother, Mr. Ganpatbhai Khatri. Over the years, he remained dedicated in preserving this traditional art form. Currently residing in Bhuj, Kutch, he practices his craft at the Khamir NGO, where he has been working for the past seven years and continue to practise the Bela craft.

Family and Early Life

Mansukhbhai comes from a family of artisans. He has one elder brother and two elder sisters. His elder brother, Ganpatbhai Khatri (now deceased), was also a skilled Bela printer but had to stop practicing due to health issues. Around 15 years ago, Ganpatbhai relocated from Bela village to Mithi Road, near Gandhidham, Gujarat. He has one son, Atulbhai, and three daughters, Alkaben, Naynaben, and Bhartiben. His son Atulbhai is married and has two children:- a 16 year-old daughter and an 18 year-old son and runs a Mithai (sweet) shop in Gandhidham for past 12 years. His daughters are married and settled in different parts of Kutch: Alkaben in Bhuj, Naynaben in Mundra, and Bhartiben in Adipur.

Mansukhbhai's two elder sisters, Savitaben and Diwariben, have families of their own. Savitaben (now deceased) was married in Tharad taluka (Sabarkantha) and had three children- one daughter and two sons, all married. Diwariben resides in Bhuj, Kutch, with her family and has five children- two daughters and three sons, all married.

Mansukhbhai lost his father at the tender age of eight. By the age of eleven, he was assisting his elder brother in various aspects of the craft, such as washing, drying, and printing small pieces of fabric. As a result, he developed a deep appreciation for the art form. "My father passed away when I was quite young. Most of my time with my elder brother was spent sitting quietly beside him, watching him transform an ordinary piece of fabric into a work of art," he shares. Their workspace was their own house in Bela village, where they had ample space, including an Angan (courtyard) equipped with a Rangchul (for dyeing fabric) and a Bhathi (for boiling and heating fabric). They also used the village's open spaces, including the chok (central square where roads cross), to dry the printed textiles.

Initially, the fabric used was 18 inches wide and of a thick, heavy material, typically used to make Ghagharas (traditional skirts). Other items they produced included cushion covers, bedsheets, and Shirakh (chattai or mats). The two brothers worked together for nearly 15 years before separating their businesses in 1991. At the age of 21, in 1987, Mansukhbhai married Chandrikaben, and after five years, they started living separately while continuing their craft. Ganpatbhai stopped practicing the craft 20 years ago and passed away eight years ago.

The Present Day

Today, Mansukhbhai lives in Chitrakut Apartment, Ghanshyam Nagar, Bhuj, Kutch, with his wife and two sons. His elder son, Mr. Sandipbhai, is married and works as accountant, while his younger son, Mr. Mehulbhai, recently started learning Bela printing from his father after leaving his job at a cosmetic shop. Every day, they travel 14 km from Bhuj to Kukma village, where Khamir NGO has provided them with a workspace and regular orders to sustain the craft.

Mansukhbhai's daughter, Kalpanaben, is married and resides in Tharad, Banaskantha, with her family. She has three children—two daughters aged 8yr and 5yr, and one son 3yr old.

Mansukhbhai is a devoted family man, his wife Chandrikaben, has been a pillar of support in his journey, managing all household responsibilities while ensuring the family's financial stability. His daughter-in-law, who is married to Sandipbhai, is also involved in the family daily activities and supports their livelihood. Mansukhbhai hopes to pass down his knowledge to the next generation, ensuring that Bela printing remains alive within his family.

Extended Family

Mansukhbhai's extended family has played a significant role in shaping his life and craft. His father's brother, Natwarlal Khatri, was also an artisan and influenced his early years in printing. His cousins, who reside in different parts of Gujarat have pursued various careers, with some involved in the textile industry and others in business. Despite geographical distances, the family maintains strong ties, frequently gathering for religious and cultural festivals.

His wife's side of the family is equally supportive. Chandrikaben's brother, Rameshbhai, has been instrumental in helping Mansukhbhai establish connections with NGOs and customers. Her extended family residing in Bhuj and Gandhidham often provides logistical support for sourcing raw materials and expanding their market reach.

Historical Context and Decline of Bela Block Printing

A century ago, Bela was home to 40 to 50 families engaged in block printing. These artisans produced textiles for local communities, including the Rabari and Kanni groups,

whose traditional clothing featured large-scale motifs. The craft was also known as "Patthar" in East Kutch, possibly due to the unique stone-like durability of the printing blocks made from a composite of mud, sand, and natural adhesives.

These textiles were predominantly used for dowry gifts, reflecting the cultural importance and significance of Bela printing. The designs drawn from the local Rabari and Kanni communities' traditional clothing, such as *chaniya* (skirt) and *odhani* (Veil), featured large-scale, graphic motifs that left a lasting impression on the textile landscape. The term "Patthar" (meaning "stone" in Hindi and Gujarati) likely derives from the unique method and materials used in creating Bela-style textiles. Historically, Bela printing involved crafting printing blocks from a composite of mud, sand, and natural adhesives, giving the blocks a stone-like durability and appearance. This characteristic might have led to the craft being colloquially referred to as "Patthar" in East Kutchh, where the technique was practiced. Additionally, the term could metaphorically emphasize the sturdy and lasting nature of the patterns and fabrics created using these blocks, making them suitable for significant cultural purposes like dowry gifts. The artisan Manshukhbhai Khatri also preserves an old block inherited from his father, crafted from a unique mud and sand composite.



Plate 4.5 - Stone Block

He explained that, in the past, Bela printed the handmade woollen shawls highly sought after by various communities, including Darbars, Rajputs, Kanbi Patels, Lauva Patels, Parejiya Brahmins, Kodis, Anjana Kanbis, Meghwars, and Prajapatis. These groups used to wear traditional clothes made with Bela prints. These shawls were prized for their intricate designs and cultural significance. However, over time, many of these communities moved to cities or other places for better economic opportunities. As they settled elsewhere, their dressing styles evolved under the influence of their new

surroundings, and they gradually adopted other types of printed fabrics. The decline in demand for Bela prints was further exacerbated by societal changes and the advent of modern fashion trends. As preferences shifted from traditional garments to contemporary attire, the once-thriving craft began to lose its significance.

Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri also recalls a time when the Sarang River once flowed through Bela village, providing an essential water source for fabric washing, dyeing, and processing. However, over time, the river dried up, leading to a shortage of water for printing. This environmental shift contributed to the decline of traditional block printing in Bela, as water is crucial for the craft's survival.

According to the book "Shifting Sands: Textiles, Traditions, Transformation" by Archana Shah, Hindu Khatri from Dhado in Sindh migrated to Kutch, settling in regions where they found two rivers—Safala in the east and Saran Ganga in the west in Dhamaka. Their decision to establish a printing village near flowing water was strategic and crucial for fabric production.

The book also mentions that during the time of Mohammed Panna Pir, many Hindus converted to Islam due to the increasing cost of Hindu rituals. Today, most Khatri families in this region follow Islam, with Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri remaining the only Hindu Khatri in Bela.

The Partition of India in 1947 made things worse when many families left Bela to move to other parts of India. This reduced the number of people living in the village and the demand for Bela prints. In recent years, digital printing and fast fashion have further hurt this craft. These modern methods are quicker and cheaper, making hand-block printing less popular. As a result, fewer artisans are left practicing this craft, and it is now at risk of being forgotten. However, over the time, the advent of machine-printed fabrics led to a decline in the demand for handmade Bela textiles. As cheaper, mass-produced options flooded the market, the art of Bela printing began to fade. Despite these challenges, contemporary adaptations of Bela printing have emerged, introducing new vegetable dyes like green and indigo, catering to evolving tastes and preferences.

SEVERAL KEY FACTORS CONTRIBUTED TO THIS DECLINE:

Partition of India (1947): The partition severed Bela's long-standing trade connections with Sindh, which had been crucial for its economic stability. This disruption led to

severe financial hardships for artisans, forcing many to migrate to urban centers like Bhuj and Ahmedabad in search of better livelihoods.

Environmental Changes: The drying up of the Sarang River, which was once a crucial water source for washing and dyeing fabrics, severely impacted the ability of artisans to continue block printing. Water scarcity made it difficult to maintain the quality and scale of production.

Declining Demand for Traditional Prints: Bela prints were once an essential part of the attire for various communities, including Rabaris, Rajputs, Kanbi Patels, and Meghwars. However, as these communities migrated and adapted to modern lifestyles, their dressing styles changed, reducing the demand for handcrafted textiles.

Economic Challenges for Artisans: Due to the declining demand for Bela prints, many artisans had to shift to alternative occupations to sustain their livelihoods. Without sufficient financial incentives, younger generations were discouraged from learning and continuing the craft, leading to a sharp decline in skilled artisans.

Rise of Machine-Printed Fabrics and Fast Fashion: The advent of machine printing and digital textile production introduced cheaper and faster alternatives to handmade Bela textiles. This led to a significant decline in demand for labour-intensive block printing, making it less economically viable for artisans.

Migration and Changing Livelihoods: As artisans moved away from Bela for economic reasons, the intergenerational transmission of knowledge weakened. Younger generations found more sustainable job opportunities in urban areas, leading to a gradual abandonment of traditional textile practices.

Despite these challenges, Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri have managed to keep the tradition alive through contemporary adaptations and collaborations with organizations like Khamir NGO.

2. Field Visit to Bela Village



Plate 4.6 – Bela Village

During our field visit to Bela Village with Mansukhbhai, we first visited the main street of the village. There we saw the people of the village were sitting near the shop of Pravinbhai (35 year old) sweet shop. Among them Mahavir Sinh (34 year), Munabhai Gumansinh (42 year), Narsubha Fatehsinh (45 year). Conversations with them provided valuable insights into the village's rich history, which spans over 500 years. Bela was once a self-sustaining community where all basic needs were fulfilled within the village itself. The main street of the village was a bustling hub of activity, lined with shops owned by local businessmen. These shops catered to everyday needs, from groceries to clothing, and the village boasted essential facilities such as schools, hospitals, and banks. Skilled tradesmen, including blacksmiths, carpenters, goldsmiths, potters, and construction workers, also resided in Bela, ensuring that the community was well-equipped to meet its requirements independently.

Over the time, the number of artisans practicing Bela block printing dwindled. The villagers echoed the same factors for the decline of Bela printing, emphasizing migration, changing fashion trends, and economic shifts.

3. Parbhaben Babuvan Valvan Varsani (Bavaji), a 68-year-old priest



Plate 4.7 - Parbhaben Babuvan Valvan Varsani

Parbhaben Babuvan Valvan Varsani (Bavaji), a 68-year-old priest in the temple of Billeshwar Mahadev, shared childhood memories of Bela block printing. When she was 10 years old, she recalled that four artisans—Santilal, Ravilal, Ganpatlal, and Mansukhbhai—practiced Bela block printing in the village, all belonging to the Hindu Khatri community. Now, only Mansukhbhai continues this tradition.

4. Retired Indian Army Honorary Captain Bahadur Singh Vaghela



Plate 4.8 - Captain Bahadur Singh Vaghela

Retired Indian Army Honorary Captain Bahadur Singh Vaghela(74 years) shared with me a fascinating account of how Bela village was formed. Long ago, near the picturesque Nilwa Mountain, the Sarang River flowed. Situated about 60 km from the Rann of Kutch, Bela is the last village in the Kutch region. At the heart of the village today stands the revered Billeshwar Mahadev Temple, whose origins are deeply intertwined with the founding of Bela itself.

The Miracle of the Cow

In the village of Gardi, the people lived simple lives, sustaining themselves through farming and dairy. Among their cattle, one cow displayed an unusual habit. Every day, when the village herders took the cows for grazing—about 3 to 4 km outside the village—this particular cow would stop at a specific spot at exactly 12 p.m., facing north. There, it would release milk from its udder, letting it flow directly into the ground.

Puzzled by this strange behaviour, the cowherd observed it for several days before informing the village Sarpanch (leader) and the Brahman (priest).

Discovering the Shivling

The next day, the villagers gathered to witness the event. True to the cowherd's account, the cow repeated its ritual. The Brahman suggested digging at the spot, believing it to be a divine sign. When they did, they uncovered a Shivling (a sacred symbol of Lord Shiva) buried in the earth. The villagers were astonished, interpreting this as a blessing from the divine.

Honouring the miraculous discovery, they named the Shivling Bileshwar Mahadev, meaning "Lord Shiva of the Two Lingas" (as "Be" means two in Gujarati). They believed that the cow's act was a divine indication that this was a holy site.

The Birth of Bela Village

Moved by this revelation, the people of Gardi decided to settle near the sacred site. They established a new village around the temple and named it Bela, inspired by the Shivling. Over time, the settlement flourished, with the temple at its spiritual and communal centre.

A Diverse and Thriving Community

Bela gradually became a vibrant village, home to various communities, including Hindu Khatris, Rajputs, Meghwars, Rabaris, Brahmans, Baniyas, Harijans, Kodis, Prajapatis, and Lohanas. These groups coexisted harmoniously, united by their shared devotion to Bileshwar Mahadev.

The Temple Today

Today, the Bileshwar Mahadev Temple remains a revered place of worship, attracting devotees from far and wide. It stands as a powerful reminder of the miracle that led to the village's founding, preserving the spiritual and cultural legacy of Bela for generations to come.

5. Field Visit to Salim Wajir's Collection



Plate 4.9 - Salim Wajir

As part of the research, researcher visited the home of Salim Wajir (68 year old), a respected textile dealer and son of the late A.A. Wajir. The visit, conducted on November 16, 2024, provided insights into historical Bela-printed textiles. During this meeting, researcher had the opportunity to examine historical printed textiles and gain deeper insights into the origins, use, and trade of Bela-printed fabrics.

Salim Wajir shared details about a Bela printed Sadla in his collection, which he had acquired from Bela village. He explained that this Sadla was traditionally used by the Lauva Kanbi community, a farming group that primarily wore and utilized printed textiles in their daily lives. Estimated to be 50 to 60 years old, this *Sadla* featured a distinctive border design with *chakliya* (sparrow) block motifs. Created using the natural dyeing and resist-printing techniques characteristic of Bela printing, reflecting the community's deep-rooted connection to handcrafted fabric textiles.



Plate 4.10 – Shirakh (Chattai)

Another significant textiles was a *shirakh* (chattai), measuring 500 inches in length and 19 inches in width and was printed with *Butta*, *Ekla Kor*, *Chakliya*, and *Gadebandhi* block designs in black colour.

Additionally, a *Sadla* the length of this is 210 inches and width is 40 inches in width featured *Ekla kor* block, and *Gadebandhi* blocks. printed, striking combination of black and dark red.



Plate 4.11 – Saree (Sadlo)

Barter System and the Decline of Bela Printing

During our discussion, Salim Wajir shed light on an age-old barter system once prevalent in Bela and its neighbouring villages. In the past, local villagers exchanged old textiles—both printed and embroidered with visiting traders in return for essential household items like utensils. This practice played a crucial role in preserving traditional textile crafts, as many of these exchanged fabrics were later acquired by collectors, ensuring their survival over generations.

However, he also expressed concern over the gradual decline of Bela printing. While the craft once thrived, today, only one artisan continues the practice. Many younger generations have shifted to other occupations due to changing economic circumstances, leading to the near-extinction of this once-flourishing art form.

Despite this, Wajir's private collection of historic printed textiles serves as an invaluable archive for researchers, artisans, and enthusiasts who seek to revive and document this traditional craft.

Bela printing endured because nothing came close to its versatility or efficiency. It was one of the earliest, simplest, and slowest forms of textile printing, a craft that once held a significance far beyond mere utility. It was more than just a fabric; it was a possession that embodied memories, marked the essential landmarks of life, and served as an expression of identity for the people of Bela. As they used these printed textiles and lived with them, they became a testament to the passage of time.

Through research, documentation, awareness, and promotion, we are striving to preserve the legacy of Bela printing.

However, today, Bela printing is in danger of fading away unless younger generations make a concerted effort to learn and sustain it. While Mansukhbhai's own son shows no interest in continuing the craft. The past few years have seen the rise of machines that can produce textiles infinitely faster and at a lower cost, leaving a slow and intricate craft like Bela printing struggling to compete. The challenge lies not just in its survival but in encouraging the younger generation to see value in a profession that demands patience and precision.

“These skills will only survive if they live on in each generation. They provide a link to our roots, and they are a part of our shared heritage,” Mansukhbhai says with pain in his voice. “It saddens me to realize that generations of young people whose ancestors came from Bela are growing up with no understanding of the craft’s long history or its intricate techniques,” he adds.

What Mansukh Bhai will be leaving behind is not just his legacy of hand block printing but also the wooden blocks that were once central to family life in much of Bela. These blocks will remain as tangible threads connecting decades of Bela’s rich block-printing history.

Perhaps, Bela printing will survive not just as a craft but as a cultural tradition built on community, where families and neighbours once worked together across generations, bound by a shared history. By preserving its techniques and promoting awareness, we can ensure that Bela printing continues to thrive, keeping alive the legacy of those who dedicated their lives to this beautiful art form.

Recognizing the urgent need for preservation, this research focuses on documenting the intricate process and techniques of Bela block printing. By highlighting its historical and cultural significance, the study strives to enhance recognition and admiration for this traditional craft. Through detailed documentation, interactive workshops, and social media outreach, this initiative seeks to revitalize Bela printing and inspire efforts toward its revival.

4.2 Documentation of traditional techniques, processes, and motifs

4.2.1 Detailed observation of the Traditional Bela printing process:

Bela printing is a traditional textile craft that dates back to the early 1600s. The establishment of Bela village occurred during the reign of Raw Tamachiji, a ruler of Kutch known for his significant contributions to the region’s development. During this period, Bela block printing emerged as a distinct craft, primarily practiced by the Hindu Khatri community.

Bela block printing evolved as an elaborate and skill-intensive process that artisans historically executed using locally available and primitive tools. This allowed artisans to execute the printing process in diverse conditions without requiring sophisticated

equipment. These rudimentary techniques allowed for printing in diverse conditions without requiring sophisticated equipment. The essential materials for Bela printing included fabric yardages, wooden blocks known as *biba*, clay, and a range of natural dyes and mordants.

4.2.1 (A) Traditional Materials and Tools

The primary dyeing ingredients in Bela printing consisted of:



Plate 4.12 - Tamarind Seed Powder



Plate 4.13 – Alum Powder



Plate 4.14 – Waste Iron (Rusted or Waste iron)



Plate 4.15 – Harda Powder



Plate 4.16 – Dhawadi Phul



Plate 4.17 – Alizarin Powder



Plate 4.18 – Paraffin Wax



Plate 4.19 – Matti

Alizarin: Alizarin is used to give a red or maroon colour to the fabric. In Bela printing, the fabric is first printed with alum, and then dipped in alizarin dye. The parts with alum turn red when dyed.

Dhawadi Phul (Woodfordia fruticosa flowers): These are dry flowers added while making the black dye. They help in fixing the black colour properly on the fabric and make the colour stronger during boiling.

Waste Iron (rusted or scrap iron): Waste iron is soaked in water for 20 to 25 days so that it releases iron. Then jaggery is added and kept for 2 more days to start fermentation. This liquid becomes the base for making black printing paste.

Tamarind Seed Powder: Tamarind seed powder is used as a natural thickener. It makes the dye paste thick enough so it can be easily printed using blocks and doesn't spread on the fabric.

Jaggery: Jaggery (a type of unrefined sugar) is mixed with the soaked iron solution. It helps in the fermentation process, which is needed to make black dye.

Alum: Alum is a mordant, which means it helps the dye stick to the fabric. It is printed on the fabric using blocks, and later, when the fabric is dyed with alizarin, those parts turn red.

Bajara Flour (Pearl millet flour): Bajara flour is another thickening agent. It gives the dye paste a smooth and sticky texture, so the block prints come out clearly and don't smudge.

Paraffin Wax: Wax is used for the resist dyeing process. It is applied to parts of the fabric where dye is not wanted. It helps in creating patterns by blocking certain areas during indigo dyeing.

Indigo: It is a natural blue dye. It is used in the last stage of dyeing. After wax is applied to protect some areas, the fabric is dipped in indigo. The open parts turn blue, while the waxed parts remain in their original colour.

The traditional colour palette of Bela printing was primarily composed of red, black, off-white, and indigo. Black was predominantly used for outlining motifs, while red served as an additional outlining and detailing color. Off-white acts as the preferred background shade, allowing the intricate printed patterns to stand out. Around a century ago, indigo was introduced into the process, expanding the traditional colour scheme and adding a new aesthetic dimension to the textiles. This inclusion of indigo enabled the creation of textiles with a deeper, richer backgrounds, enhancing the overall visual appeal of the Bela printed fabrics.

4.2.1 (B) Tools used in printing process:

1. Printing Table



Plate 4.20 – Printing Table

The printing table serves as the foundation for the printing process, providing a flat and stable surface to ensure the fabric remain even throughout printing. To enhance printing accuracy, the table is covered with multiple layers of muslin and jute fabric, creating a

soft, cushioned base that helps the printing block to make uniform contact with the fabric. Jute plays a crucial role in this setup by providing cushioning, absorbing excess ink, creating a stable surface, enhancing durability, and supporting fabric adhesion. Its firm yet flexible nature helps maintain printing precision while preventing smudging and fabric displacement.

Before printing, the fabric is carefully laid onto this surface, ensuring no folds or creases, as even minor imperfections can lead to distorted or uneven prints. Traditionally, when artisans practiced Bela printing in the village, the printing table measured 4 feet in length \times 2 feet in width. However, with advancements and adaptations over time, the current printing table size has expanded to 12 feet in length \times 4 feet in width, allowing artisans to print on larger fabric pieces efficiently.

2. Printing Paste Tray



Plate 4.21 – Printing Paste Tray

The printing paste tray is a rectangular plastic tray measuring approximately 12 inches by 8 inches to hold the dye paste conveniently.

Its size and material help contain the paste, prevent spills, and ensure consistent application during the printing process. The tray's design allows artisans to easily dip the printing block, ensuring a smooth workflow and uniform dye transfer onto the fabric.

3. Sponge Layer



Plate 4.22 – Sponge

Inside the printing paste tray sponge is placed . The sponge absorbs the printing paste, creating a smooth and even surface for the printing block to pick up the right amount of dye. It helps in regulating dye absorption, preventing excessive dye that could cause smudging or unclear prints. The sponge ensures the prints are sharp, well-defined, and consistent throughout the process.

4. Jute Fabric



Plate 4.23 – Jute Fabric

On top of the sponge, a layer of jute fabric is placed. This layer provides support and evenly distributes the pressure applied by the printing block. It ensures the block presses down evenly on the fabric, preventing sticking or snagging, and contributes to the stability and durability of the paste tray.

5. Chapari (Wooden Frame)



Plate 4.24 – Chapari (Wooden Frame)

Finally a wooden frame known as the Chapari is placed on top of the jute fabric. Made from Vas wood (Bamboo tree wood), the Chapari consists of wooden slats arranged horizontally and vertically, forming a grid pattern with square checks. This structure helps in evenly distributing the dye paste within the tray. By maintaining an even spread of paste, the Chapari ensures that the printing block absorbs a consistent amount of dye during each dip. Without this tool, there is a risk of uneven absorption, which could lead to irregular prints.

6. Woodern Blocks



Plate 4. 25 - Wooden Blocks

The wooden blocks used for Bela printing are traditionally made from was sag wood (teak wood), scientifically known as was printed *Tectona grandis*. Teak wood is preferred for its strength, durability, and fine grain, which makes it ideal for carving detailed designs used in block printing.

Historically, blocks were also made from teak wood. Some of the existing blocks, which are around 70 to 80 years old, date back to the time of Mansukhbhai's father. However, the exact place where these older blocks were originally made is not known.

In recent years, many of the old blocks became damaged and unusable. To help preserve the traditional designs of Bela printing, the NGO supported the artisans by providing 10 newly made blocks in the year 2022. These blocks were carved in Pethapur, Gujarat, by skilled block maker Mukeshbhai Prajapati by using the original designs from the old, damaged blocks.

This initiative has allowed the artisans to continue working with original traditional motifs and has supported the ongoing preservation of Bela block printing heritage.

4.2.1 (C) Printing Process of Bela Printing

The Bela printing process involves a series of carefully coordinated steps and tools, each essential for achieving high-quality, precise prints. The tools used, from preparation to final printing, play a vital role in ensuring consistency, durability, and accuracy in the prints. Below is an outline of the steps involved in the printing process, highlighting the tools and techniques used.

Step 1: Preparing the Cloth



Plate 4.26 – Raw Fabric

The Bela printing process begins with the preparation of the raw fabric, which is sourced from Ajrakhpur, located 3.8 km from the Khamir NGO at Kukma village. The fabric often contains impurities such as starch, oils, and dust from the weaving process. These impurities, if left untreated, can interfere with dye absorption, resulting in uneven prints and compromised quality. To clean the fabric:

Pre – Treatment of Fabric



Plate 4.27 - Pre - Treatmenting

The raw fabric is immersed in a large vessel containing water and a measured amount of Nirma washing powder, washing powder. The solution is heated, and the fabric is boiled for 5 to 10 minutes. This helps to remove impurities and opens the fabric's fibers, allowing them to better absorb dyes. After boiling, the fabric is thoroughly rinsed to remove any residual detergent and impurities. The cleaned fabric is hung to dry naturally before proceeding to the next stage of printing preparation.

This pre-treatment ensures that the fabric is primed for optimal dye absorption, which is crucial for achieving vibrant and consistent prints.

Step 2: Harda Treatment



Plate 4.28 – Preparing Harda Solution

After cleaning fabric is treated with Harda, which is derived from the Myrobalan fruit, Harda serves as a natural tannin source, enhancing the fabric ability to bond with dyes, ensuring permanent and vibrant prints. Harda powder is procured from the Bhuj at approximately ₹100 per kg.

Preparing the Harda Solution

Finely ground Harda powder is mixed with an adequate amount of water to create a dye bath. For every 10 meters of fabric, approximately 100 grams of Harda powder is used. The solution is stirred thoroughly to ensure even dissolution, forming a uniform bath for fabric treatment.

Fabric Immersion



Plate 4.29 – Harda Treatment

The cleaned fabric is fully immersed in the Harda solution, ensuring even penetration of tannins. This step enhances the fabric's ability to bond with dyes, improving color fastness and print clarity.

Soaking Process

The fabric is soaked in the Harda solution for 10 minutes to ensure thorough absorption of natural tannins.

Step 3: Drying the Harda treated Fabric

Natural sunlight plays an integral role in the Bela printing process. After Harda treatment, fabrics undergo sun drying.



Plate 4.30 – Drying Harda Treated Fabric

After soaking, the fabric is then spread out on a open area and dried under natural sunlight. Care is taken to avoid creases or folds to prevent uneven colouring. Sun drying helps to set the Harda treatment, ensuring stabilized color absorption for the next stage of printing. Depending on weather conditions, drying may take several hours to a full day.

Step 4: (A) Preparation of Black Colour for Printing

Creating the black dye paste is a time-intensive process rooted in traditional knowledge. It uses waste iron, jaggery (unrefined sugar), and Tamarind seed powder, combining fermentation and natural ingredients to achieve a rich black hue.

Preparation of the Iron Solution:



Plate 4.31 – Fermented Iron Solution

Waste iron pieces, such as pieces of rusted nails or scrap metal, are submerged in large containers of water. The iron is left to ferment for 20 to 25 days, releasing iron particles into the water. Three days before the end of this period, jaggery is added to the solution. Acting as a fermenting agent, enhances the release of iron and aids in chemical bonding.

Preparation of the Thickening Agent:

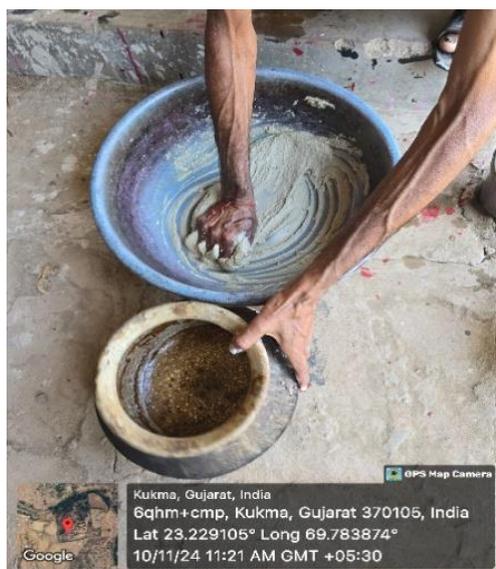


Plate 4.32 – Preparation of Thickening agent

Tamarind seed powder is gradually added to water, ensuring a lump-free paste. The consistency is carefully adjusted to achieve the desired thickness for printing.

Combining the Solutions



Plate 4.33 – Combining Solution

The fermented iron-jaggery solution is slowly blended with the *Caesalpinia crista* paste (derived from tamarind seed powder). The mixture is heated on low heat for 15 to 20 minutes on low heat, allowing the components to integrate thoroughly. Continuous stirring during heating prevents clumping and ensures uniform consistency.

Final Black Printing Paste



Plate 4.34 – Black Printing Paste is Ready

The resulting paste is rich, viscous, and ready for printing. Its natural composition ensures deep fabric penetration, creating long-lasting black motifs upon application. Once prepared, the fabric is printed using this black printing past, ensuring sharp and permanent impressions.

Sun Drying of Printed Fabric



Plate 4.35 – Sun Drying of Printed Fabric

After printing, the fabric is laid on sand under direct sunlight to fix the black dye. Sun exposure is essential for proper oxidation, ensuring the depth and permanence of the colour.

- Sunlight Exposure: Essential for dye fixation, which intensifies and deepens the black colour.
- Proper Drying: The process takes several hours, and incomplete drying may result in faded or uneven prints.
- Final Handling: Once fully dried, the fabric is carefully lifted to prevent smudging or distortion, preparing it for further processing.

Step 4: (B) Fixation of Black Print Using Dhawadi Phol

When the black printing paste is used for outlining designs, the fabric undergoes a fixation process using Dhawadi Phol (*Woodfordia fruticosa*) to ensure the permanence of the black colour.

Process of Fixation:



Plate 4.36 – Preparing Dhawadi Phol Solution

Preparation of Dhawadi Phol Solution:

For 10 meters of fabric, measure 100 grams of Dhawadi Phol. Boil 4 liters of water in a vessel.

Boiling Process:

Add Dhawadi Phol to the boiling water. Let it boil for 5–10 minutes.

Fabric Treatment:



Plate 4.37 – Fixation of black printing paste in Dhawadi phul solution

Immerse the printed fabric into the warm Dhawadi Phol solution. Stir gently for 5–10 minutes to ensure even absorption. Take out the fabric and allow it to dry.

Washing to Remove Excess Dye

After the fixation process with Dhawadi Phol, the fabric undergoes a thorough washing to remove any excess dye and impurities.

Washing Process:



Plate 4.38 – Washing to remove Excess dye

The fabric is gently washed in clean normal water to remove any residual dye and printing paste. This prevents excess dye from affecting the final color and ensures a clean, even print.

Sun Drying:



Plate 4.39 – Sun Drying

After washing, the fabric is sun-dried by spreading it on a clean surface or sand to ensure even drying. Sun exposure fixes the dyes permanently and enhances color vibrancy. The fabric is left for several hours until fully dry, preventing moisture retention that could affect quality. A final inspection ensures uniform colour and a high-quality finish before storage or further use.

Step 5: (A) Preparation of Red Colour Printing Paste

Red motifs in Bela printing are created using a combination of alum powder (acts as a mordant), Tamarind seed powder (for thickness), and a small amount of direct red dye (Only added to help artisans see the block alignment during printing. It does not contribute to the final colour of the print.) This mixture ensures vibrant and long lasting prints.

Boiling the Alum Solution:



Plate 4.40 – Dissolving Alum

For every 3 meters of fabric: Take 150 grams of alum powder and add it to 3 litres of water are poured into a vessel. Heat the mixture until the alum fully dissolves into a clear solution.

Preparation of Thickening Agent:



Plate 4.41 – Preparation of thickening agent

150 grams of Tamarind seed powder and mixed with 2 liters of water in a separate vessel. The mixture is stirred continuously to prevent lumps, ensuring a smooth, uniform paste for printing.

Adding Red Colour:



Plate 4.42 – Adding red - direct dye colour

To achieve the desired red hue and enhance print visibility, 1 to 2 grams of direct red dye (red colour does not play any crucial it's just added to see the joining line of the block while printing) are introduced into the paste.

Combining the Solutions:



Plate 4.43 – Straining the printing paste

The boiled alum solution and the tamarind seed paste are combined. The mixture is then boiled gently for 15 to 20 minutes, allowing it to thicken to the desired consistency. It is recommended to prepare this paste a day in advance, allowing it to settle and improves in texture.

Final Red Printing Paste:



Plate 4.44 – Straining the printing paste

The resulting paste is rich, viscous, and ready for printing. Its natural composition ensures deep fabric penetration into the fabric, creating sharp, long-lasting motifs.

Hence the fabric is been printed with the Red colour printing paste.



Plate 4.45 – Printing the fabric

Sun Drying of Red Printed Fabric:

After applying the red printing paste, the fabric undergoes sun drying, a crucial step for colour fixation and intensity enhancement.



Plate 4.46 – Sun Drying

Sunlight Exposure: Direct sunlight facilitates oxidation, allowing the red color to fully develop and bond with the fabric fibers.

Drying: The fabric is left to dry completely for several hours. Proper drying ensures the prints retain their vibrancy and do not appear dull or faded.

Final Handling: Once fully dried, the fabric is carefully lifted to prevent smudging or distortion, preparing it for further processing, such as washing or additional dyeing.

Step 5: (B) Fixation of Red Print Using Alizarin Powder

When the red printing paste is used, the fabric undergoes a fixation process with Alizarin powder to ensure the permanence and vibrancy of the red colour.

Process of Fixation:

Preparation of Alizarin Solution:

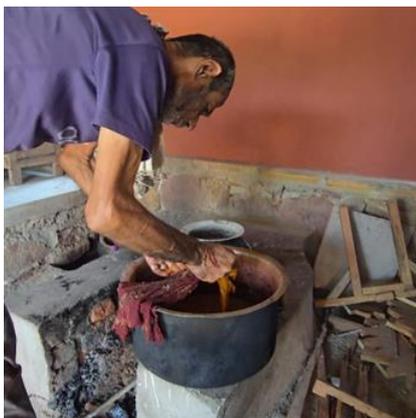


Plate 4.47 – Preparation of Alizarin solution

For 10 meters of fabric, measure 80grams of Alizarin powder. Boil 4 liters of water in a vessel.

Boiling Process:

Add Alizarin powder to the boiling water. Let it boil for 5–10 minutes, allowing the dye to dissolve completely.

Fabric Treatment:



Plate 4.48 – Fixation of red printing paste

Immerse the printed fabric into the warm Alizarin solution. Stir gently for 5 – 10 minutes to ensure the even absorption of dye. Take out the fabric and allow it to dry naturally.

Washing to Remove Excess Dye:

After Alizarin fixation, the fabric undergoes through washing to remove any unfixed dye and impurities.

Washing Process:



Plate 4.49 – Washing to remove excess dye

The fabric is gently washed in clean, normal water to remove any residual dye and printing paste. This prevents excess dye from affecting the final color and ensures a clean, even print.

Sun Drying



Plate 4.50 – Sun drying

After washing, the fabric is sun-dried by spreading it on a clean surface or sand for natural drying. Sun exposure fixes the dyes permanently and enhances colour vibrancy. The fabric is left for several hours until fully dry, eliminates any moisture retention that could affect quality. A final inspection ensures uniform colour and a high-quality finish before storage or further use.

4.2.1.1 Resist Paste Preparation: Formation and Application



Plate 4.51 – Cutting Matti into small pieces

The resist paste used in Bela printing is a crucial component for achieving intricate designs by preventing dye penetration in specific areas of the fabric. This paste is traditionally prepared using clay (Matti), wax, and Bajara flour.

Collection and Preparation of Clay (Matti)



Plate 4.52 – Mixing to make lump free

Clay (Matti) is sourced from local potters in Bela village. It is soaked in water overnight to soften, ensuring better consistency when mixed with other ingredients. Proper soaking enhances the uniformity of the clay, making it ideal for resist paste preparation.

Addition of Wax and Bajara Flour

Wax:



Plate 4.53 – Melting of wax

Wax is melted separately by heating it with water in a 1:2 ratio (e.g. 250 grams of wax is heated with 500 ml of water). The mixture is heated until the wax liquefies.

Bajara Flour:



Plate 4.54 – Bajara flour

Bajara flour acts as a thickening agent, improving the paste's texture. 250 grams of Bajara flour is added to the softened clay to enhance consistency. Finally, the melted wax and Bajara flour are gradually incorporated into the softened clay. Ensuring a homogeneous and smooth resist paste.

Mixing and Proportions:

The proportions are used for 5 meters of fabric:

2 kg of clay (Matti)

250 grams of wax

250 grams of Bajara flour

3 litres of water

These ingredients are thoroughly mixed to ensure there are no lumps, achieving a uniform and smooth paste for easy application.

Heating the Mixture



Plate 4.55 – mixing and boiling all Ingredients

The combined mixture is heated until it begins to form bubbles, indicating proper integration. This heating process is critical for proper integration of all ingredients and achieving the desired viscosity and ensuring all ingredients blend uniformly. Continuous stirring is necessary to prevent lumps and ensure an even consistency. The mixture is heated for approximately 45 to 60 minutes until it reaches the optimal texture for resist printing.

Final Paste Application



Plate 4.56 – Printing the resist paste

The Prepared, resist paste is ready for use in block printing. It is carefully applied to designated areas of the fabric to prevent dye absorption, facilitating the creation of intricate patterns. The paste's natural composition ensures environmentally friendly printing while maintaining high-quality printing results. This preparation process ensures that the resist paste effectively maintains its integrity during the dyeing stages, producing precise and well-defined patterns characteristic of Bela printing.

4.2.1.2 Traditional Dyeing Technique in Bela Printing

The Indigo Dyeing Process in Bela Printing is a multi-step procedure that requires careful control to achieve the rich, deep blue hues typical of this traditional technique.

1. Preparation of Indigo Solution



Plate 4.57 – Adding Caustic soda

Take 60 grams of indigo powder and mix it with a small amount of water to form a smooth paste. Gradually add warm water while stirring continuously to create a homogeneous indigo solution. This helps break down the indigo powder further and ensures that the solution becomes homogeneous and smooth, allowing better dye absorption.

2. Vat Reduction Process (Indigo Activation)



Plate 4.58 – Indigo Activation

Since natural indigo is not water-soluble, it must undergo a reduction process to become usable for dyeing. This reduction process is known as vat reduction. In a separate container, dissolve 20 grams of caustic soda in 10 litres of water to create an alkaline medium. Slowly add 60 grams of sodium hydrosulphite to the alkaline solution while gently stirring. Sodium hydrosulphite is a reducing agent that transforms the indigo into a soluble form that can be absorbed by the fabric. Allow the mixture to sit undisturbed for 8–10 minutes. During this time, the solution will turn a yellow-green color, indicating that the reduction process is successful and the indigo is now ready to be used for dyeing.

3. Mixing Indigo Solution in the Dye Vat



Plate 4.59 – Mixing Indigo Solution in the Dye Vat

Carefully Transfer the reduced indigo solution into the dye vat. The solution should now have an appear olive green or yellowish-green appearance, confirming that it has been properly reduced. Let it indigo solution rest for 10–15 minutes to allow complete reduction of the indigo before fabric immersion.

4. Dyeing Process



Plate 4.60 – Fabric Immerse into Indigo dye liquor

Now that the indigo solution is ready, the fabric can be dyed. The following steps are essential for ensuring even dye absorption:

5. Fabric Immersion in the Indigo Vat:

Gently immerse the fabric into the indigo vat, being careful to minimize air bubbles that could cause oxidation inside the vat. Keep the fabric submerged for 2–3 minutes, gently moving it around to ensure that the dye is absorbed evenly across the entire fabric. For a darker, more intense blue. Repeat the immersion process twice or thrice, depending on the desired shade of blue.

6. Oxidation Process



Plate 4.61 – Indigo dyeing

Once the fabric has been dyed in the indigo vat, the next step is oxidation, which is crucial for developing the characteristic blue color of indigo. Slowly remove the fabric from the vat, allowing excess dye to drip off. The fabric will initially appear greenish due to the reduced indigo. As the fabric comes into contact with oxygen, colour will change from green to deep blue due to oxidation. This process is essential for the final colour development. Allow the fabric to fully oxidize before any further dyeing steps. For darker indigo shades, you can repeat the immersion and oxidation process 2–3 times to achieve the desired depth of colour.

Effect of Fabric Quality on Indigo Dye Absorption:

The quality of the fabric plays a crucial role in the indigo dyeing process, directly impacting colour vibrancy, uniformity, and dye consumption:

High-Quality Fabric: Absorbs dye more efficiently, requiring less indigo while achieving a rich, even coloration with enhanced depth.

Low-Quality Fabric: Consumes more dye due to its lower absorbency, often resulting in uneven and inconsistent shades.

This meticulous approach to dyeing ensures that textiles exhibit the deep, characteristic hues of Bela printing while maintaining colourfastness and durability. Understanding these fabric-dye interactions is essential for preserving the authenticity and sustainability of traditional indigo dyeing practices.

Sun Drying After Indigo Dyeing:



Plate 4.62 – Sun Drying

After dyeing, the fabric is sun-dried to fix the indigo color and enhance its depth. It is spread on a clean surface or sand, ensuring even exposure to sunlight, which aids oxidation and deepens the blue hue. The fabric is left for several hours until fully dry, preventing uneven coloration. Proper drying ensures colourfastness and durability, maintaining the rich indigo tones.

Step 8: Colour Fixing with Alum Powder

Preparation of Alum Solution:



Plate 4.63 – Fixation of dyed fabric

Measure 200 grams of alum powder for 10 meters of fabric. Dissolve the alum powder in 12 litres of water in a vessel. Heat the solution until the alum is completely dissolved, ensuring uniform distribution. Stir occasionally to ensure the solution is homogeneous.



Plate 4.64 – Fabric Immersion

Place the dyed fabric into the alum solution. Stir gently for 10–15 minutes to ensure that the fixing agent is evenly absorbed by the fabric.

Remove the fabric from the solution and allow any excess liquid to drain off. Prepare the fabric for the final washing and drying stages.

Step 9: Final Washing



Plate 4.65 – Washing

After the color-fixing process, the fabric undergoes thorough washing to remove any remaining resist paste and excess dye, ensuring a clean and uniform finish. The fabric is washed multiple times with clean, normal water to remove any residual resist paste and unfixed dye. Gentle agitation is done to ensure that all unwanted residues are washed away without damaging the printed motifs. Washing continues until the water runs clear, indicating that the fabric is free from excess dye and printing materials.

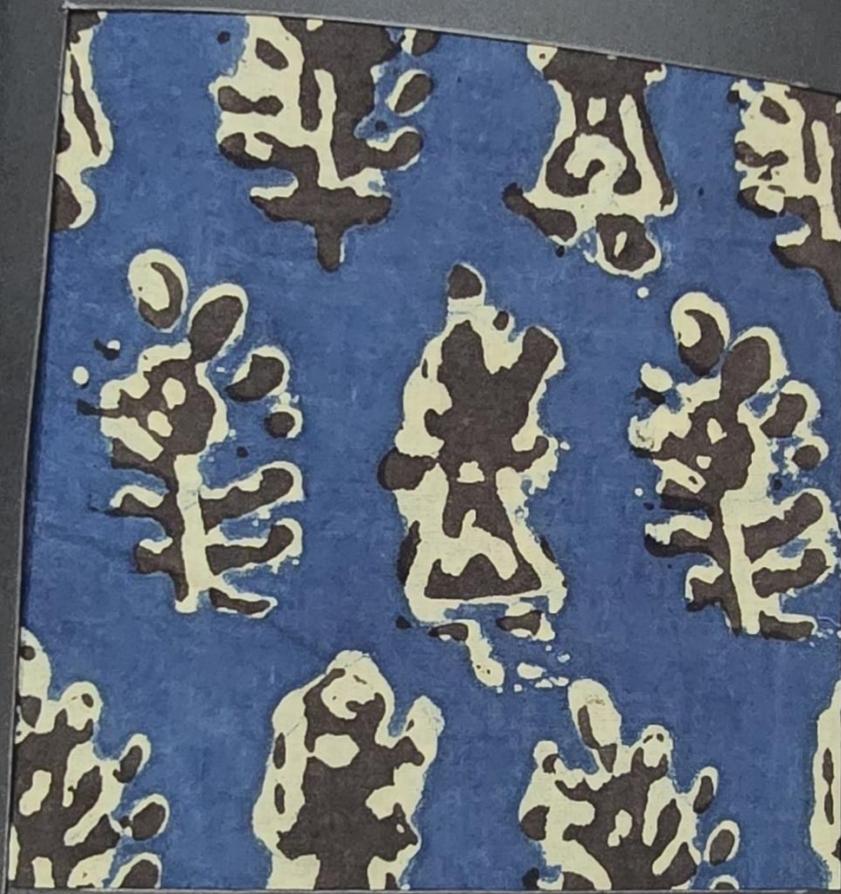
Step 10: Final Sun Drying



Plate 4.66 – Sun Drying

After washing, the fabric is sun-dried by spreading it on a clean surface or sand to ensure even drying. Sun exposure fixes the dyes permanently and enhances color vibrancy. The fabric is left for several hours until fully dry, preventing moisture retention that could affect quality. A final inspection ensures uniform colour and a high-quality finish before storage or further use.





Indigo Dyeing

4.2.4 Documentation of Blocks

Bela printing, a traditional hand-block printing technique from the Bela village of Kutch, Gujarat, stands as a symbol of cultural heritage. These unique craft artisans have long catered to various caste groups, each with its own specific motifs, pattern and traditions that carry deep cultural, social and symbolic meanings. These motifs are passed down through generations, preserving the artistic legacy and heritage of their respective communities.

However, with the decline in traditional craft practices and the introduction of modern textile techniques, many of these motifs and block designs have either become obsolete or have lost their significance. To safeguard and preserve this rich heritage, it is critical to document and catalogue the motifs used in Bela printing. This documentation aims to secure the legacy of these designs and ensure their recognition and continuity in contemporary textile practices.

This study aims to systematically record and classify Bela printing motifs based on the communities that historically used them. Also, it documents the dimensions of the blocks and the significance of different motifs to ensure their preservation and continued recognition in textile traditions.

The cataloging process includes three key aspects:

1. Classification and significance of motifs by caste/community different motifs in Bela printing are associated with specific caste or community groups. These motifs often hold symbolic and cultural significance, relating to the customs, beliefs, and traditions of each community. Understanding how different motifs are linked to these communities helps preserve the traditions and historical context of Bela printing. These motifs not only reflect the artistic expression of a community but also its social structure, religious practices, and local history.

2. Dimensions of the blocks – The blocks used for printing are typically made of wood and vary in size depending on the design, motif, and the intended use of the fabric. Recording the dimensions of these blocks helps preserve details about their craftsmanship and size variations, providing insight into the technical aspects of the printing process.

This includes documenting the length, width, and depth of each block, ensuring that future generations can recreate the blocks with accuracy if needed.

3. Uses of the motifs - Each motif used in Bela printing serves a distinct purpose in terms of its aesthetic, functional, or symbolic role. The motifs are applied to textiles used in various forms such as garments, home textiles, and ceremonial items.

4.2.4.1 Community wise Cataloging of Bela Prints

Many different communities have played an important role in keeping the Bela printing tradition alive. The Bela printing was mainly done by Hindu Khatri families for the generations. Artisans made textiles for different communities like Anjana Kanbi, Lauva Kanbi, Kodi, Prajapati, Meghwar, Parejiya Brahman, Rajput, and Darbar communities and also household items like Shirakh (basically it is a chattai, mat) and Rumal (fabric which is used to cover). This community has its unique style and preferences. These designs were deeply connected to the identity of the people who wore them.

Following are the communities and Household textiles:

- Anjana Kanbi Community
- Lauva Kanbi Community
- Darbar Community
- Parejiya Brahman Community
- Rajput Community
- Prajapati Community
- Kodi Community
- Meghwar Community
- Shirakh
- Rumal



Plate 4.67 – Catalog of Motifs of all the Community

1. Anjana Kanbi Community:

The Anjana Kanbi community, mainly involved in farming has a unique cultural identity that is seen in their traditional clothing. Women in this community usually wore a Sadalo (saree) with a Polku (blouse), and often paired it with an Odhani.

Most of the designs used in Anjana Kanbi women is clothing featured nature-inspired butta of flower, leaves, trees and grains. These patterns were not only decorative but also showed the community's way of life, their values, and their strong bond with nature and farming.



Plate 4.68 – Anjana Kanbi Community

Analysis of Block Prints for the Lower Garment (Chaniya)

The block printing style observed in this lower garment follows the traditional Bela block printing technique, characterized by white resist prints on an indigo background. The design layout incorporates small, repetitive motifs, which complement the fluid drape of the skirt. The identified motifs include Phol Butti (Floral Sprig), representing nature's beauty, and Butto (Dot Motif), featuring circular, repeated dots that enhance symmetry. The Bangido (Border Motif) is likely placed along the hemline to provide structural balance, while Jeniya (Connected Motif) consists of interlinked patterns symbolizing unity. The Moti-Chokkhengar (Pearl-Like Grid Motif) adds a refined touch with its small dotted grid arrangement. Fatiya (Leaf-like Motif), stylized to resemble leaves, reflects a deep connection to agriculture, whereas Bajariya (Grain-inspired Motif) signifies

prosperity through its representation of harvested grains. Lastly, Boradiya (Seed Pod Motif) symbolizes fertility and growth, reinforcing the agricultural roots of the Anjana Kanbi community.

This textile design honours the agricultural lifestyle of the Anjana Kanbi community, using natural elements as inspiration



Plate 4.69 – Anjana Kanbi Community

This design embodies cultural symbolism and artistic intricacy, reflecting the rich tradition of Bela block printing. Phol Butti (Floral Sprig Motif) represents nature and femininity, while Butto (Dot Motif) consists of circular dot formations that enhance symmetry. Bangido (Border Motif) serves as a defining edge, providing structural clarity, and Moti-Chokkhengar (Pearl Grid Motif) adds elegance with its pearl-like grid arrangement. Chakaliya (Circular Design Motif) features intricate circular patterns, symbolizing wholeness and continuity. Border Patti (Decorative Border) is a traditional elongated motif used to embellish the hemline. Zad-Putadi Butto (Tree-Inspired Motif) resembles a tree, signifying growth and a deep connection to nature. Boradiya (Seed Pod Motif) represents fertility and prosperity.

These motifs not only enhance the aesthetic appeal of the textile but also preserve the cultural heritage and storytelling of traditional craftsmanship.

2. Lauva Kanbi Community

The Lauva Kanbi community has traditionally been involved in farming and Landowner. Their agricultural way of life is clearly reflected in their traditional clothing. Women in this community typically wore a Sadalo (saree) along with a Polku (blouse). The Polku was either plain or decorated with small buttas. This attire was not only culturally meaningful but also comfortable for everyday work.

Men of the Lauva Kanbi community wore a Peran (a plain tunic that reached the knees) and Chorani (a loose, durable lower garment). These clothes were usually made up of cotton of white or off-white colour, ideal for long working hours in the fields, while also keeping a clean and traditional look.

For women's garments, especially the Odhani (veil) and Chaniya (skirt), a variety of motifs were used. Common Odhani motifs included Boder Patti, Zad-Putadi Butto, Boradiya, Single Ekal Kor, Double Kor, Chakaliya, Gadebandhi, Phulkiya, and Phol Border.



Plate 4.70 – Lauva Kanbi Community

In general, the motifs found in Lauva Kanbi women's clothing included buttas, flowers, borders, and designs inspired by nature such as trees, fruits, and birds. These patterns reflect their close bond with the natural world, their farming lifestyle, and a love for simplicity, order, and traditional beauty in their everyday clothing.

3. Darbar Community

The Darbar community is known for its brave and strong background. The men in this community were often freedom fighters and protectors of the people. This proud history is also seen in their clothing, which looks rich and graceful. Darbar women traditionally wore a Perana (a skirt-like lower garment), an Odhani (veil), and a Kapadu (a loose upper garment).

Darbar men wore a Chorani (loose pants) made from Madarpat, a durable and thick fabric. They also wore a Sinbandh Kadiyu, a well-fitted upper garment, usually kept plain. These clothes were mostly white or off-white in colour.

As the Darbar men were known to be freedom fighters and protectors, the motifs used in women's clothing symbolically represent power, bravery, and nobility.



Plate 4.71 – Darbar Community

Motifs like Hathi (elephant), Amdadi Hathi (elephant with a royal umbrella) Indicates nobility and divine protection, Hathi (Elephant Motif): Depicts elephants, signifying power, wisdom, and royal processions and Ashwarohi (Horse Rider Motif): Represents warriors, kings, or messengers, showcasing valor and prestige. Mor (peacock) represents pride and dignity, aligning with their respected social status. Ghadiyal (clock) suggests discipline and the importance of time—values essential in a warrior's life. Moto Chakkar

(large circle) symbolizes unity, movement, and readiness, Dhabo (bold dot) brings balance and focus to the design, highlighting strength through simplicity.

These Darbar-themed motifs not only enhance the textile's aesthetic but also serve as a visual record of royal heritage, bravery, noble valor, protection, and cultural richness in traditional Bela block printing.

4. Parejiya Brahman Community

The Parejiya Brahman community is traditionally known for its religious and scholarly roles. Men in this community worked as priests, teachers, and spiritual guides. Their clothing reflected their simple and respectful way of life.

Parejiya Brahman women wore sarees. Men wore a Dhotiyu (a draped lower garment) and Jabho (a long kurta), mostly in white shades and made from fine cotton fabric. These clothes were simple and graceful, matching their cultural values.

Their garments were adorned with delicate motifs created using nail blocks, a technique that forms intricate patterns through precise dot arrangements. The motifs featured in their clothing were inspired by nature and tradition, including Cheda ni Border, Chakar/Butto, Dhvak Mandvo, Kor Border, and Kor Cheda Border. These designs were characterized by small, clean patterns, often floral and paisley-like, with a strong emphasis on buttas and neat borders.

Overall, the motifs in Parejiya Brahman clothing are simple, small, and clean, with a focus on buttas, neat borders, , reflecting their peaceful and traditional lifestyle. The designs are characterized by dot arrangements form



Plate 4.72 – Parejiya Brahman Community

5. Rajput Community

Rajput men, known for their warrior spirit and royal lineage, influenced the clothing style of Rajput women, which reflected grace, elegance, and grandeur. Rajput women adorned themselves in beautifully printed garments featuring bold borders and repeated motifs, symbolizing their regal heritage. Their traditional attire included an Odhani (veil), Ghaghara (long pleated skirt), and Choli (blouse), often crafted with intricate patterns and vibrant colors.

The primary motifs used in Rajput women's garments were Borevel and Minagari, both of which added a distinctive charm and richness to the fabric. Borevel features interconnected floral and vine-like structures, while Minagari, inspired by fine enamel work

These motifs, along with decorative borders, enhanced the overall aesthetic, making Rajput women's clothing a perfect blend of tradition and royal sophistication. Highly structured, symmetrical, and repetitive, these designs were commonly used in borders and panel arrangements, reflecting the elegance and grandeur of Rajput culture. Their presence in Rajput textiles not only added beauty but also symbolized power, heritage, and status, reinforcing the regal identity of Rajput women.



Plate 4.73 – Rajput Community

6. Prajapati Community

Prajapati men traditionally work as Kadiya (house builders) and also take up various daily wage. Their attire includes a Vajana, a long upper garment similar to a Peran, and a loose Chorani (lower garment), made for comfort during physical work.

Prajapati women wear a Ghaghara (skirt), Blouse, and Odhani (veil).

The commonly used motifs are Nagvel, Butto, and Side Border. Nagvel is a leafy creeper design that represents nature and growth. Butto is a small circular motif, used for minimal and elegant decoration. Side Border is a straight-line pattern along the edge.

Overall, the motifs in Prajapati women's garments mostly include buttas, floral elements, and borders



Plate 4.74 – Prajapati Community

7. Kodi Community

Kodi men are engaged in various types of labour work such as carpentry (suthar) and daily wage. Their traditional attire includes a Dhotiyu and Jabho, usually in off-white shades, made from durable fabrics suitable for everyday tasks. Kodi women wear a Ghaghara, Odhani, and Choli.

The main motifs used in women's garments are Phol Kor and Butti Border. Phol Kor is a floral border symbolizing beauty and nature. Butti Border features small repeated motifs along the edge.

Overall, the Kodi community uses floral and butta-style motifs, reflecting their simple lifestyle, hardworking nature.



Plate 4.75 – Kodi Community

8. Meghwar Community

Meghwar men take care of animals like cows and buffaloes. Their clothes are simple and comfortable, usually a Dhotiyu (dhoti) and Jabho (kurta), in white or off-white colors. Meghwar women wear a Perana (skirt), Odhani (veil), and Kapadu (upper garment).

The main designs used in their clothes are Pan Phol Border and Side Border. Pan Phol Border is a flower design with a betel leaf shape, showing nature and beauty. Side Border is a straight line along the edge.

Overall, Meghwar women's clothes mostly have floral and border-style designs.

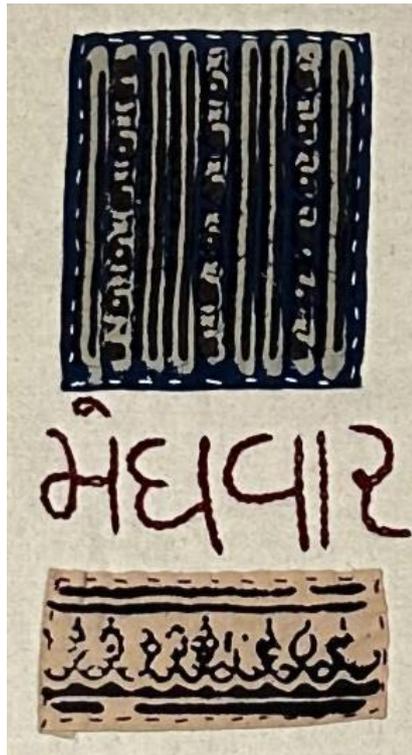


Plate 4.76 – Meghwar Community

9. Shirakh

Shirakh is a traditional household textile mainly used as a mat, also known as a chattai. It is commonly spread on the floor for sitting or other daily uses. It reflects the everyday. The all community uses it and even today, it remains a useful item in many households.



Plate 4.77 – Shirakh

10. Rumal

Rumal is a small piece of fabric traditionally used to cover things like food or other household items. It can also be used for wiping hands or the face. Rumal are simple, multipurpose cloths found in almost every Indian home. It is also used by the all community so the motifs are used for all the community. They serve both practical and hygienic purposes. Like Shirakh, the Rumal also shows how basic textiles are part of everyday life.



Plate 4.78 – Rumal

4.2.4.1 Cataloguing of the Motifs

Documenting Bela printing motifs is essential for preserving the traditional design vocabulary passed down over generations. Each motif- whether floral, geometric or symbolic- carries regional and cultural significance. Through fieldwork and artisan interviews, a detailed visual record was created, capturing their shapes, names, and contexts. This catalogue serves as a valuable tool for academic research and efforts to revive the craft.

4.2.4.1.2 Dimensions of the Blocks

The size of blocks used in Bela printing differs according to the complexity and style of the motif. Some blocks feature intricate carvings for fine detailing, while others are larger and bolder for prominent designs. Understanding this variation highlights the technical expertise required and the careful planning behind motif arrangement and repetition.

4.2.4.1.3 Community wise cataloging of Bela Printing Blocks

In Bela block printing, every community possesses its own traditional motifs that symbolize cultural identity and meaning. These motifs are commonly found on garments worn by specific groups. During the research, the printing blocks were classified according to the communities they belong to. The motifs represent the lifestyle, values, and traditions of the people, and artisans carefully select them based on the caste group they are printing for. This categorization reveals the link between design and community identity, emphasizing how traditional crafts are closely tied to cultural and social structures.

A Rare Mud Block



Plate 4.79 – MITTI BLOCK

Block Print Name: ***MITTI BLOCK***

Approximate age of the Block: 90 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 1.75 inches

Length: 2 inches

Width: 4 inches

Uses:

This design were printed for the old age (80 - ...) women in their Odhani.

During the documentation of Bela printing techniques, a significant artifact was discovered in the collection of Shri Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri. Among the

many intricately carved wooden blocks used in traditional Bela printing, one particular block stood out due to its material and historical significance. This block, made of mud and over a century old, was originally owned by Mansukhbhai's father.

The block has suffered deterioration over time. Certain portions are damaged, with visible cracks and missing fragments, making it unsuitable for contemporary printing practices. However, the preserved patterns on its surface still offer valuable insights into early block-making techniques. Unlike the wooden blocks used today, this mud block was likely shaped manually, with designs imprinted into the soft material before it was hardened. This technique indicates an early experimental phase in Bela block printing, demonstrating the transition from ephemeral materials to more durable wooden blocks.

Mansukh Bhai emphasized the sentimental and cultural importance of this artifact. While it is no longer in use, he continues to preserve it as a connection to his ancestral legacy.

<p>Anjana Kanbi Community</p>	
<p>Anjana Kanbi Odhani</p>	
 <p data-bbox="347 875 600 907">Plate 4.80– BORDER</p>	<p data-bbox="815 394 1198 425">Block Print Name: <i>BORDER</i></p> <p data-bbox="815 468 1321 537">Approximate age of the Block: 80 Years</p> <p data-bbox="815 577 1171 719">Dimensions of Each Block: Height: 2.1 inches Length: 3.75 inches Width: 5.75 inches</p> <p data-bbox="815 761 1321 869">Border were printed for the old age (80 +) women in their Odhana Cheda no Bhag (last portion of the edge)</p>
<p data-bbox="248 960 560 992">Block Print Name: <i>VEL</i></p> <p data-bbox="248 1034 754 1104">Approximate age of the Block: 80 Years</p> <p data-bbox="248 1144 600 1285">Dimensions of Each Block: Height: 2.3 inches Length: 5.2 inches Width: 3.8 inches</p> <p data-bbox="248 1328 679 1435">Vel was printed for old age (80 +) women in their Odhana Cheda no Bhag (last portion of the edge)</p>	 <p data-bbox="946 1442 1142 1473">Plate 4.81 – VEL</p>
 <p data-bbox="301 1917 647 1948">Plate 4.82 – BORDER PATTI</p>	<p data-bbox="815 1527 1302 1559">Block Print Name: <i>BORDER PATTI</i></p> <p data-bbox="815 1601 1321 1671">Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years</p> <p data-bbox="815 1711 1171 1852">Dimensions of Each Block: Height: 2 inches Length: 3.75 inches Width: 5.75 inches</p> <p data-bbox="815 1895 1321 2002">Border Patti was used by the all community for upper and lower as well as Odhana</p>



Plate 4.83 – BUTTO

Block Print Name: **BUTTO**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.2 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Butto was printed for both Anjana & Lauva Kanbi in Sadla(Saree) Pallu (Pallav) portion and also in the field of the Sadla.

Block Print Name: **PHUL BUTTI**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 1.90 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

PHUL butti blocks were printed in overall Print.



Plate 4.84 – PHUL BUTTI



Plate 4.85 – ZAD - PUTADI

Block Print Name: **ZAD - PUTADI**

Approximate age of the Block: 80 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.1 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Zad – Putadi was also printed for both Anjana & Lauva Kanbi in overall overall print and in the Pallav of Sadla border (Saree).

Block Print Name: ***DHABO***

Approximate age of the Block: 80 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:
Height: 2.4 inches
Length: 3.75 inches
Width: 5.75 inches

This design were printed for the old age (80 +) women in their Odhana.



Plate 4.86 – DHABO

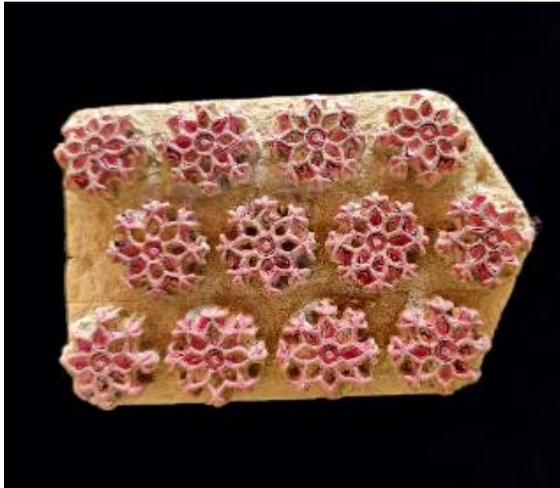


Plate 4.87 – BANGIDO

Block Print Name: ***BANGIDO***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:
Height: 2.2 inches
Length: 3.75 inches
Width: 5.75 inches

Bangido was printed in overall pattern and in the Pallav of Sadla (Saree).

Block Print Name: ***MOTI CHOCK***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:
Height: 2.2 inches
Length: 3.75 inches
Width: 5.75 inches

Moti Chock was printed in overall print of all the Garments.

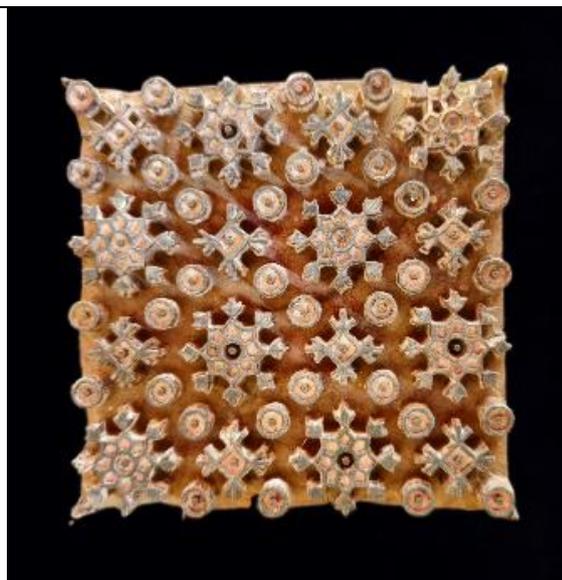


Plate 4.88 – MOTI CHOCK

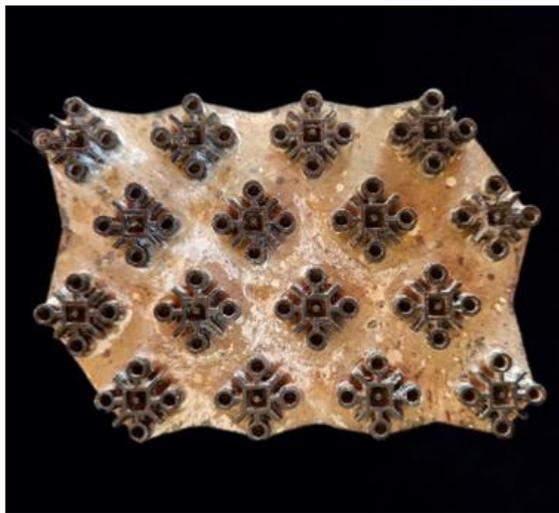


Plate 4.89 – KHENGAR SAHI

Block Print Name: ***KHENGAR SAHI***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Khengar Sahi was printed in overall pattern

Anjana kanbi chaniya

Block Print Name: ***JENIYA***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 1.75 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Jeniya was printed in overall for the all age group women in Sadla and in Ghaghara.



Plate 4.90 – JENIYA



Plate 4.91 – NANKI BUTTI

Block Print Name: ***NANKI BUTTI***

Approximate Age of the Block: 70 years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 1.85 inches

Length: 3.25 inches

Width: 5.25 inches

Nanki Butti was printed in overall pattern for the all age group women in Ghaghara (Skirt), sadla (Saree).

Block Print Name: **FATIYA**

Approximate Age of the Block: 70 years

Dimensions of Each Block:
Height: 1.90 inches
Length: 3.25 inches
Width: 5.25 inches

Fatiya was print for Unmarried Anjana kanbi women in their chaniya (Ghaghara) in overall

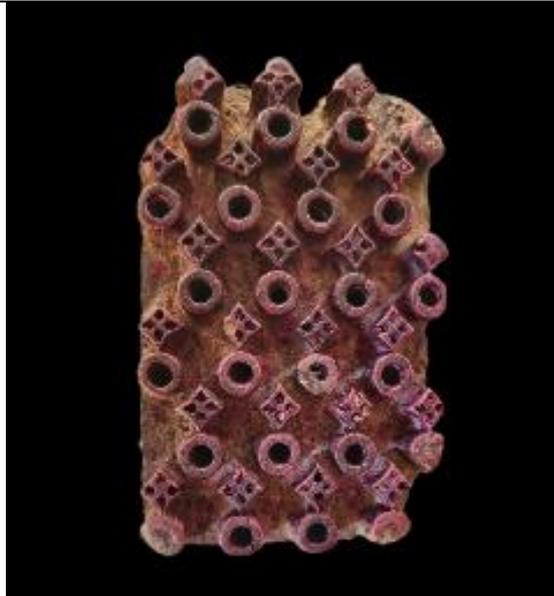


Plate 4.92 – FATIYA



Plate 4.93 – ZAD

Block Print Name: **ZAD**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:
Height: 2 inches
Length: 3.75 inches
Width: 5.75 inches

Zad was printed printed for overall for the all age group women in Sadla (Saree) and also in Ghaghara.

Block Print Name: **PHUL BUTTI**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:
Height: 1.95 inches
Length: 3.75 inches
Width: 6 inches

It was printed in overall pattern in sadla (Saree) and Ghaghara



Plate 4.94 – PHUL BUTTI

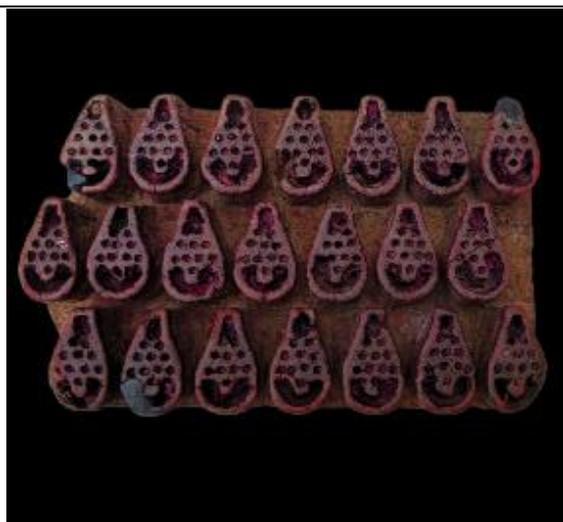


Plate 4.95 – BAJARIYA

Block Print Name: **BAJARIYA**

Approximate Age of the Block: 70 years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 1.85 inches

Length: 3.25 inches

Width: 5.25 inches

Bajariya was printed for Anjana Kanbi women (middle-aged women, 30–45 years old) it was printed in the Sadla (Saree - in the field portion).

Block Print Name: **MAKHALIYA**

Approximate Age of the Block: 70 years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 1.75 inches

Length: 3.50 inches

Width: 5.25 inches

Anjana Kanbi women, specifically those aged around 80 years Makhaliya was printed for them in overall pattern Sadla (Saree).



Plate 4.96 – MAKHALIYA

Block Print Name: **BORADIYA**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

For both Anjana Kanbi Women and Luva Kanbi women it was printed in overall pattern and in multiple uses like Sadla (Saree), Ghaghara,.etc.



Plate 4.97 – BORADIYA

Lauva kanbi



Plate 4.98 – SINGLE (EKAL KOR)

Block Print Name: ***SINGLE (EKAL KOR)***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.2 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Single ekal kor was printed for both Anjana Kanbi Women and Lauva kanbi in their garment border

Block Print Name: ***DOUBLE KOR***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.1 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Double kor was printed for both community Anjana Kanbi and Lauva



Plate 4.99 – DOUBLE KOR

Block Print Name: ***PATDI KOR***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.1 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Printed for both Anjana & Lauva Kanbi women in Sadla border (Saree).



Plate 4.100 – PATDI KOR



Plate 4.101 – PHUL BORDER

Block Print Name: **PHUL BORDER**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.1 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Phul border was printed for both Anjana & Lauva Kanbi women in Sadla border (Saree).

Block Print Name: **CHAKALIYA**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.4 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Chakalia was printed in Sadla (Saree) which is upto 8 to 8.5 meter long



Plate 4.102 – CHAKALIYA

Block Print Name: **GADEBANDHI**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.20 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Anjana Kanbi Women and Lauva Kanbi this was printed for both in sadla kor (side) part



Plate 4.103 – GADEBANDHI

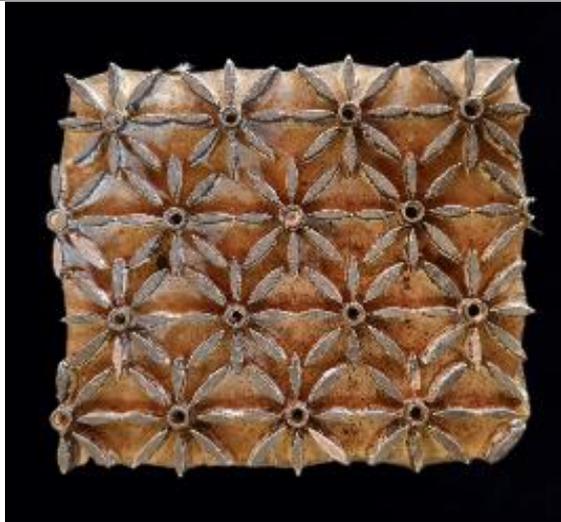


Plate 4.104 – PHULKIYA

Block Print Name: **PHULKIYA**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.5 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Phulkiya was printed in lower part like in border portion of sadla(saree)

Block Print Name: **PHUL BUTTO**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.2 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Anjana Kanbi Women and Luva kanbi women for both it was printed in Sadla border(Saree Border)



Plate 4.105 – PHUL BUTTO



Plate 4.106 – ZAD – PUTADI

Block Print Name: **ZAD – PUTADI**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.50 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Zad – Putadi was printed for both Anjana Kanbi Women and Lauva Kanbi in Sadla (Saree) 8 to 8.5 meter long in the middle portion of sadla and sometimes in Pallu (Pallav).



Plate 4.107 – BUTTO

Block Print Name: **BUTTO**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.1 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Butto was printed for Anjana Kanbi & Lauva Kanbi wpmen it was printed in the Sadla (Saree) border and in the lower border of the sadla (Edge Border Saree).

Darbar Community

Block Print Name: **PHUL BORDER**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.1 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design was printed in border of Odhani and Perana (lower Ghaghara).



Plate 4.108 – PHUL BORDER



Plate 4.109 – MOTI BORDER

Block Print Name: **MOTI BORDER**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.5 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design was printed in Chattai.

Block Print Name: **AMDADI HATHI**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.3 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Amdadi hathi was printed in their odhani (border).



Plate 4.110 – AMDADI HATHI



Plate 4.111 – GHODO

Block Print Name: **GHODO**

Approximate age of the Block: 80 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.3 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Ghodo was printed in their Odhani border and in the Sadla border in Pallu (Palav) portion

Block Print Name: **PHUL**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Phul was printed in fields of Sadla, and in Odhani (overall pattern)



Plate 4.112 – PHUL

Block Print Name: **GHADIYAL**

Approximate age of the Block: 80 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design was printed in Chattai and in overall pattern.



Plate 4.113 – GHADIYAL



Plate 4.114 – MOR

Block Print Name: **MOR**

Approximate age of the Block: 80 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Mor was printed in field of Sadla, odhani and Ghaghara.

Block Print Name: **HATHI**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.2 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Hathi was printed in border of the Sadla (Saree) and in the Pallu (Palav) of the Sadla (Saree).



Plate 4.115 – HATHI



Plate 4.116 – SIPAHI

Block Print Name: *SIPAHI*

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 1.75 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Sipahi was printed in Chattai, and in Borders.

Block Print Name: *MOTO CHAKKAR*

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.2 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design was printed in border of Odhani and Perana (lower Ghaghara).



Plate 4.117 – MOTO CHAKKAR



Plate 4.118 – DHABO

Block Print Name: *DHABO*

Approximate age of the Block: 80 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.4 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Dhabo was printed in their Odhani.

Parejiya Brahman Community

Block Print Name: ***CHEDA NI BORDER***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.1 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Cheda ni border was printed in the Cheda of Sadla (Edge of the Saree).



Plate 4.119 – CHEDA NI BORDER



Plate 4.120 – SIDE AND CHEDA BORDER

Block Print Name: ***SIDE AND CHEDA BORDER***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.1 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Border was printed in the side part (Edge portion) of the Odhani.

Block Print Name: ***CHEDA NI BORDER***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.2 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design block was usually printed in the cheda of sadla (edge of the saree).



Plate 4.121 – CHEDA NI BORDER



Plate 4.122 – CHAKAR / BUTTO

Block Print Name: **CHAKAR / BUTTO**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.1 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Chakar/ Butto was printed in middle portion of the Odhani and in overall pattern in middle portion of Sadla (Saree).

Block Print Name: **DHRAK MANDVO**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.4 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design block was usually printed in the middle portion of the Odhani and sadla (Saree).



Plate 4.123 – DHRAK MANDVO

Rajput Community

Block Print Name: ***BOREVEL***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:
 Height: 2.1 inches
 Length: 3.75 inches
 Width: 5.75 inches

This design blocks was printed in border of Chaniya (Skirt).



Plate 4.124 – BOREVEL



Plate 4.125 – MINAGARI

Block Print Name: ***MINAGARI***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:
 Height: 2.1 inches
 Length: 3.75 inches
 Width: 5.75 inches

This design blocks was printed in border of Chaniya (Skirt).

Block Print Name: ***NEKHAM***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:
 Height: 2.1 inches
 Length: 3.75 inches
 Width: 5.75 inches

Nekham was printed in border of Chaniya (Skirt).

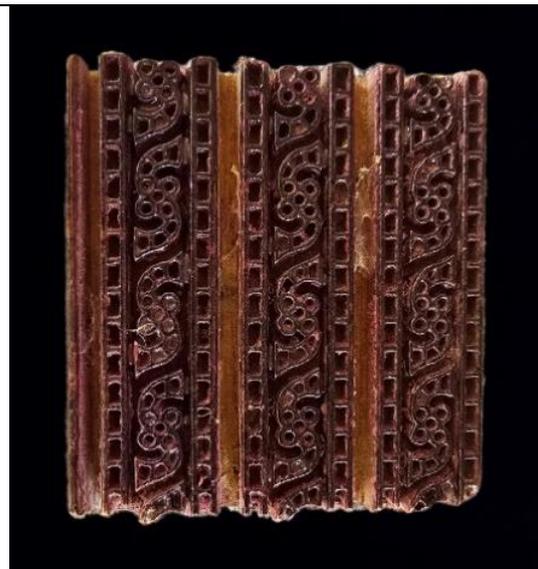


Plate 4.126 – NEKHAM

Prajapati



Plate 4.127 – SIDE BORDER

Block Print Name: ***SIDE BORDER***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.1 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design block was usually printed in the side part of the Odhani.

Block Print Name: ***SIDE BORDER***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.1 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design block is for printing with the resist paste.

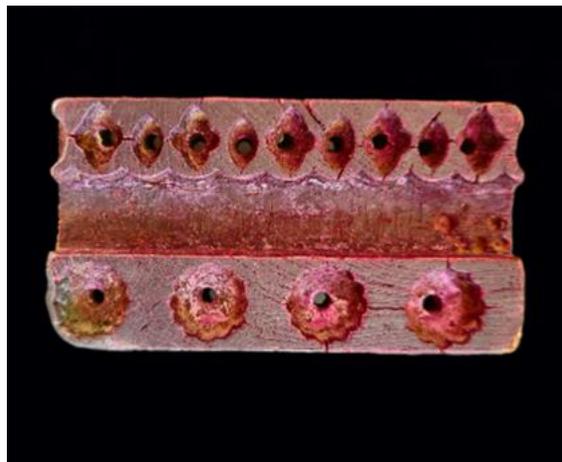


Plate 4.128 – SIDE BORDER



Plate 4.129 – BUTTO

Block Print Name: ***BUTTO***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.3 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design block was printed in the Ghaghara and in Odhani this was printed with the Black colour.



Plate 4.130 – BUTTO

Block Print Name: **BUTTO**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.3 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design block is the upper block part 2 printed with the Red colour.

Block Print Name: **NAGVEL**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.1 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design block was usually printed in Odhani. This block was printed with the Red colour.



Plate 4.131 – NAGVEL

Block Print Name: **NAGVEL**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.1 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design block is the filling block of the upper block usually printed with the Black colour.



Plate 4.132 – NAGVEL

Kodi



Plate 4.133 – PHUL VEL BORDER

Block Print Name: ***PHUL VEL BORDER***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2 inches

Length: 5.75 inches

Width: 3 inches

Phul Vel Border it was printed in the border

Block Print Name: ***PHUL BUTTI***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 1,75 inches

Length: 5.50 inches

Width: 4.75 inches

Phul butti was printed in the border of chaniya (skirt) and sadla (saree)

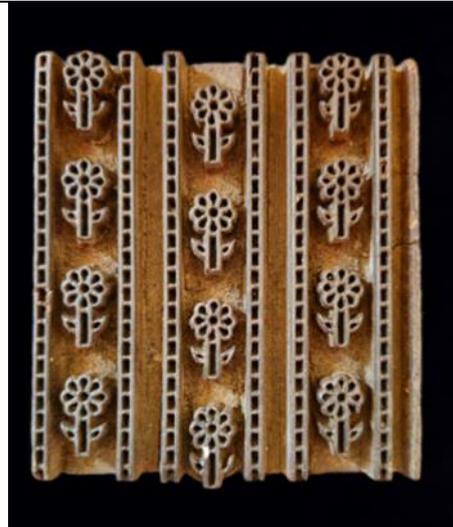


Plate 4.134 – PHUL BUTTI



Plate 4.135 – PHUL BUTTI

Block Print Name: ***PHUL BUTTI***

Approximate age of the Block: Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 1,75 inches

Length: 5.50 inches

Width: 4.50 inches

This is a resist printing block of upper block

Block Print Name: *MINDU*

Approximate age of the Block: 80
Years

Dimensions of Each Block:
Height: 1.80 inches
Length: 3.25 inches
Width: 2.90 inches

It was printed in sadla (saree) border



Plate 4.136 – MINDU

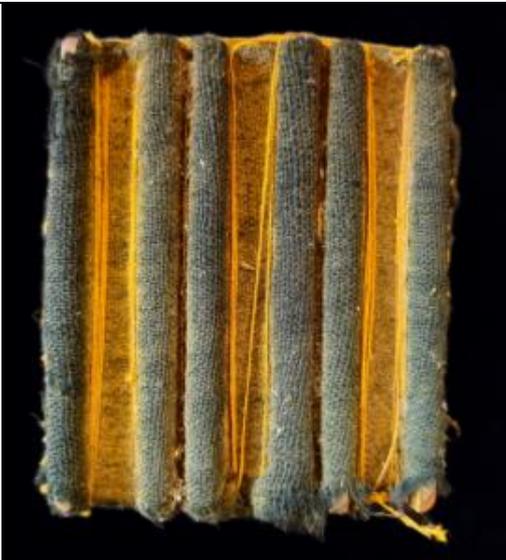


Plate 4.137 – PATTI

Block Print Name: *PATTI*

Approximate age of the Block: Years

Dimensions of Each Block:
Height: 1.80 inches
Length: 3.25 inches
Width: 2.90 inches

It was printed in border of upper
garment lower garment as well in
odhani also

Meghwar



Plate 4.138 – BORDER

Block Print Name: ***BORDER***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.5 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design blocks was printed in Chaniya vacha no bhag (middle portion of the skirt).

Block Print Name: ***BORDER***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.5 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design blocks was printed with by using resits paste.



Plate 4.139 – BORDER

Block Print Name: ***SIDE BORDER***

Approximate age of the Block: 80 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.2 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design blocks was printed in Border.



Plate 4.140 – SIDE BORDER

Sirakh = (patharvu)

Block Print Name: ***DOUBLE KOR***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.5 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Double kor is used by both Anjana & Lauva Kanbi in their sadla (saree) border



Plate 4.141 – DOUBLE KOR



Plate 4.142 – PALAV CHEDA NI BORDER

Block Print Name: ***PALAV CHEDA NI BORDER***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 1.95 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design blocks was printed with usually Red colour, in Pallu (Pallav) Cheda (edge of the pallav).

Block Print Name: ***BORDER***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 1.85 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design blocks was printed with usually red colour, in palav cheda (Edge of the Pallav).



Plate 4.143 – BORDER



Plate 4.144 – BORDER

Block Print Name: ***BORDER***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.2 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design blocks used in side border.

Block Print Name: ***PHUL VEL***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.4 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Phul Vel was usually printed in Border usually printed with the Black colour.



Plate 4.145 – PHUL VEL

Block Print Name: ***PHUL VEL***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.4 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design blocks is a part of upper block used in filling block of upper block was usually printed with the Red colour.



Plate 4.146 – PHUL VEL

Block Print Name: *PASSO*

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 1.75 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This design blocks was printed with usually Red colour.



Plate 4.147 – PASSO



Plate 4.148 – PHUL BUTTO

Block Print Name: *PHUL BUTTO*

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.2 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Phul butto was printed in middle portion and in overall print with the Black colour.

Block Print Name: *PHUL BUTTO*

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.2 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

This is the resist block of the upper block



Plate 4.149 – PHUL BUTTO



Plate 4.150 – GOL CHAKAR (ROUND)

Block Print Name: ***GOL CHAKAR (ROUND)***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:
Height: 2 inches
Length: 3.75 inches
Width: 5.75 inches

This design blocks was printed with usually Red colour.

Block Print Name: ***GOL CHAKAR (ROUND)***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:
Height: 2 inches
Length: 3.75 inches
Width: 5.75 inches

This design blocks are printed with using resist paste.



Plate 4.151 – GOL CHAKAR (ROUND)



Plate 4.152 – GOL BUTTO

Block Print Name: ***GOL BUTTO***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:
Height: 2 inches
Length: 4 inches
Width: 4 inches

This design block was printed in the Sadla (Saree) border.

Block Print Name: **KERI BUTTO**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2 inches

Length: 3.40 inches

Width: 2.60 inches

This design block was printed in the Sadla (Saree) border.



Plate 4.153 – KERI BUTTO

Rumal



Plate 4.154 – BORDER

Block Print Name: **BORDER**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.2 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Block Print Name: **DHOTLI – RUMAL**

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.6 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches



Plate 4.155 – DHOTLI – RUMAL



Plate 4.156 – DHOTLI – RUMAL

Block Print Name: ***DHOTLI – RUMAL***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.6 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

Block Print Name: ***CHEDA BORDER***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.4 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches



Plate 4.157 – CHEDA BORDER

Block Print Name: ***PHUL BUTTI***

Approximate age of the Block: 70 Years

Dimensions of Each Block:

Height: 2.2 inches

Length: 3.75 inches

Width: 5.75 inches

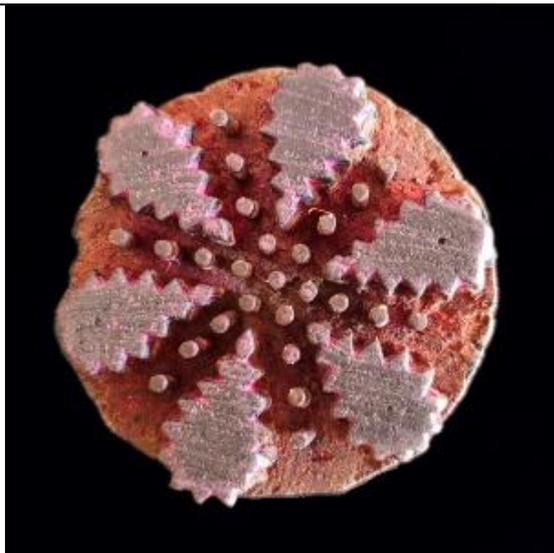
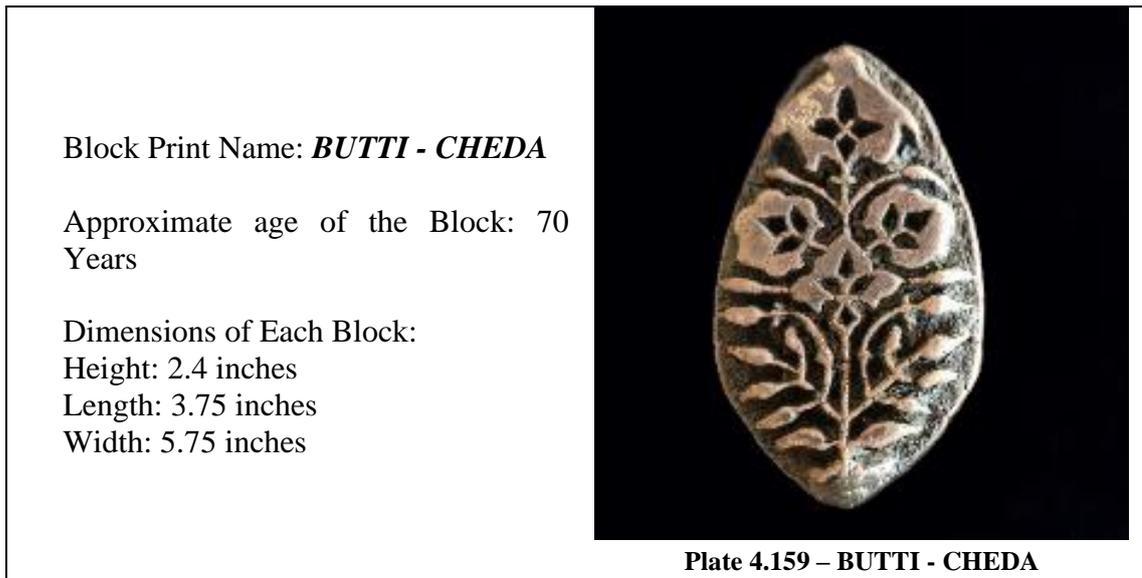


Plate 4.158 – PHUL BUTTI



4.2.5 Developing Promotional Materials

In an effort to preserve and promote the traditional craft of Bela block printing, various promotional materials have been developed. These materials serve as educational tools to raise awareness, document the intricate process and highlight the cultural significance of this unique craft. The promotional materials include brochures and a documentary film, each designed to reach a wide audience, from researchers, students to artisans and craft enthusiasts. These efforts aim to safeguard the heritage of Bela printing and encourage its continuity in the face of modernization and industrialization.

4.2.5.1. Brochures

Creation of the Brochure

The Bela Printing brochure was developed as a promotional material to spread awareness about the traditional craft of Bela block printing from Bela village, Kutch, Gujarat. Designed using the Canva app, it ensures an engaging and visually appealing presentation.

The development process involved several key steps. Extensive research was conducted including historical reviews, field visits and artisan interactions, to gather information on the crafts history, techniques, and significance. Photographic documentation was carried out to capture each stage of Bela printing, from fabric preparation to block printing. The content was written in simple, accessible language to ensure clarity for a broad audience.

Once compiled, the brochure was designed in Canva, integrating text, images and maps into a structured layout. The final stage involved thorough editing and review the content to ensure accuracy and clarity before printing.

Purpose of the Brochure

The primary objective of this brochure is to promote and preserve Bela printing, a craft facing decline due to industrialization and decreasing artisan participation. It serves multiple purposes:

- **Awareness** - Educates people about the craft history, significance, and techniques.
- **Documentation** - Provides a step-by-step reference for future generations.
- **Artisan Recognition** - Highlights the contribution of artisans, especially Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri, the last practicing artisan dedicated to preserve this heritage.
- **Preservation Efforts** - Encourages researchers, organizations and enthusiasts to support and promote Bela printing.
- **Cultural Heritage Promotion** - Showcases unique block designs and materials used by different artisan communities in Bela village.
- **Market Engagement** - Attracts potential buyers and designers, fostering collaborations that provide artisans with new opportunities.

Brochure Creation for Bela Printing

The Bela Printing brochure was created to promote and preserve the traditional craft of Bela block printing from Bela village in Kutch, Gujarat. Due to industrialization and a decline in artisan participation, this craft is at risk of fading away. The brochure serves as an informative and visually engaging tool to create awareness to the people about Bela printing history, techniques, and cultural importance. It connects artisans, researchers, designers and craft enthusiasts, encouraging appreciation and support for this age-old tradition.

Design and Layout

The brochure was created using Canva, ensuring a professional and attractive design. A balance of text, images, and graphics was maintained to make it easy to read. Additional

elements, such as artisan quotes, historical references, and maps, were included to make the brochure more engaging and informative.

Editing and Final Review

A thorough review process ensured accuracy, clarity, and readability. Errors were corrected and the text was refined for better coherence before finalizing the print version.

To maximize outreach, the brochure is distributed to various groups:

- **Local Communities and Visitors** – Raising awareness and appreciation of Bela printing.
- **Students and Researchers** – Serving as an educational resource.
- **Craft Organizations and NGOs** – Promoting preservation initiatives.

By making the brochure widely accessible, awareness about Bela printing can be revived, supporting its continuity and encouraging preservation efforts.



**“Bela Printing”
A Legacy of
Resilience**



**Documentation
and
Preservation
of Bela printing
of Kutch, Gujarat**



**The Craft of BELA:
ALEGANCY IN PRINT**

Bela Printing is a traditional resist-dyeing technique in which specific areas of the fabric are treated with a natural mixture of mud and gum to create intricate patterns. This method produces beautifully detailed and enduring designs that showcase the rich cultural heritage of Kutch. Characterised by bold, thick lines, Bela Printing features motifs inspired by nature and tradition, including geometric patterns, floral designs, and depictions of animals such as elephants and horses.

**STEP 1
PREPARATION OF FABRIC**



The fabric is thoroughly washed to remove impurities. The fabric is washed with mild detergent and boiled for 5-10 minutes to remove impurities, enhancing dye absorption.

**STEP 2
HARDA TREATMENT**



Harda is a natural mordant derived from the Myrobalan fruit (Terminalia chebula). It is used in fabric treatment to enhance dye absorption and improve colorfastness.

**STEP 4-
PREPARATION OF BLACK
PRINTING PASTE**



Creating a rich, natural black color involves preparing a printing paste using ferrous sulfate (iron salts), jaggery, tamarind seed powder, and gum Arabic. The mixture is fermented, allowing it to develop a deep and rich black tone.

**STEP 3
DRYING OF THE HARDA
TREATED FABRIC**



After Harda treatment, the fabrics are spread out in open areas where direct sunlight helps remove moisture and enhances colour development.

**STEP 5
PRINTING WITH BLEU COLOUR
A. PREPARATION OF RESIST
PRINTING PASTE**



A resist paste is prepared using clay, wax, and Bajara flour to create intricate patterns by blocking dye in specific areas. The paste is heated until it forms bubbles, ensuring proper mixing and optimal consistency.

**STEP 5
PRINTING WITH RED COLOUR**



A boiled alum solution is combined with Caesalpinia crista powder to form a thick paste. A small amount of red direct dye is added to enhance the visibility of the print.

**STEP 5
PRINTING WITH INDIGO DYE**



The fabric is dipped in an indigo dye bath and then exposed to air for oxidation, gradually transforming into a deep blue hue. Multiple dips are performed to achieve richer shades, ensuring a vibrant, long-lasting finish.

Researcher: Krishna Arshodha, M.Sc.
Guide : Dr. Rajul Yadav, Assistant Professor
Department of Clothing and Textiles,
Faculty of Family and Community Sciences,
The Maharaja Sayajirao University of
Baroda, Vadodara, Gujarat, India.
For More Details-9925192809, 7763819111

Plate 4.160 – Brochure (Front side)

THE BELA VILLAGE

Bela, a historic village in the Rapar district of Kutch, Gujarat, has been a renowned centre for textile crafts for centuries. Among its treasured traditions is *Bela Printing*, an resist block printing technique that play a vital role in trade between Kutch and Sindh, establishing the village as a key hub along ancient trade routes.

Over the years, the practice of Bela Printing has drastically declined. Today, only one artisan, Mansukhbhai Khatri, continues this craft, striving to keep the artistic tradition alive.

Bela Village Communities & Associated block

	Anjana Kanbi community Jeniya Block		Prajapati community Nagvel Block		Darbar community Ambhadi Hatthi Block		Parjija Brahman community Dhrak Mandvo Block
	Rajput community Minagari Block		Lauva Kanbi Community Zad - Putadi Block		Kodi community Nanki phooli border Block		Rajput community Minagari Block

Plate 4.161 – Brochure (Back side)

4.2.5.2 Designing of Postcards and Bookmarks

To further enhance outreach and engagement, specially designed postcards and bookmarks were created. These items not only visually represent the beauty and heritage of Bela block printing but also serve as functional and collectible souvenirs.

Postcards

A set of five postcard designs was developed, each measuring 6 inches by 4 inches. The visuals were carefully curated using traditional Bela printing blocks, showcasing intricate motifs and characteristic designs of the craft. The postcards were designed to be both aesthetically appealing and informative, capturing the essence of Bela printing and sparking interest among viewers.



Plate 4.162 – Postcard 1 (Front side)



Plate 4.163 – Postcard 2 (Front side)



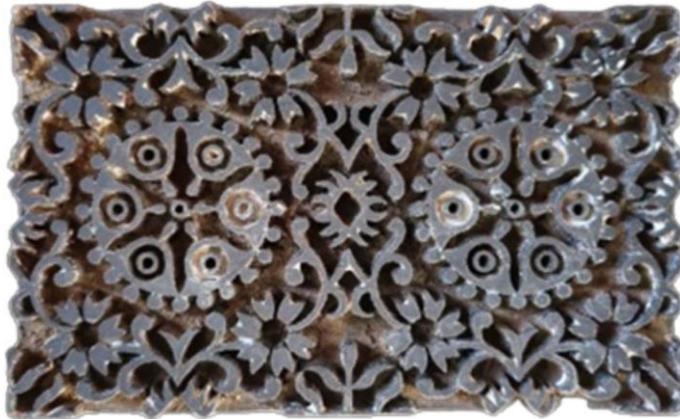
Plate 4.164 – Postcard 3 (Front side)



Plate 4.165 – Postcard 4 (Front side)



Plate 4.166 – Postcard 5 (Front side)



“BELA” Traditional Hand Block Print of Kutch

Plate 4.167 – Postcard 6 (Front side)

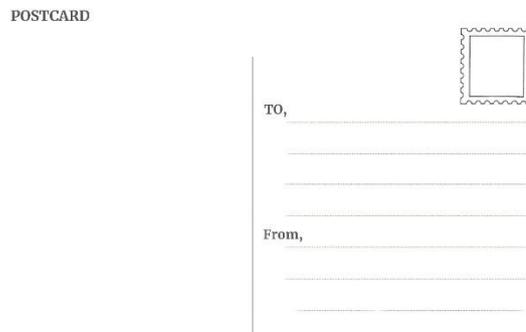


Plate 4.168 – Postcard (Back side)

Bookmarks

Bookmarks measuring 2 inches by 6 inches were also designed as part of the promotional strategy. These bookmarks feature images of various Bela printing blocks and a photograph of Mansukhbhai, a key artisan dedicated to preserving this craft. Beyond being practical reading accessories, these bookmarks serve as storytelling tools, offering a glimpse into the artisan’s world and the authenticity of Bela printing.

Impact and Distribution

These promotional materials are intended for distribution at exhibitions, workshops, and craft-related events. By generating curiosity and appreciation among the public, they contribute to the preservation and promotion of Bela block printing, ensuring that this rich textile tradition continues to thrive in contemporary times.

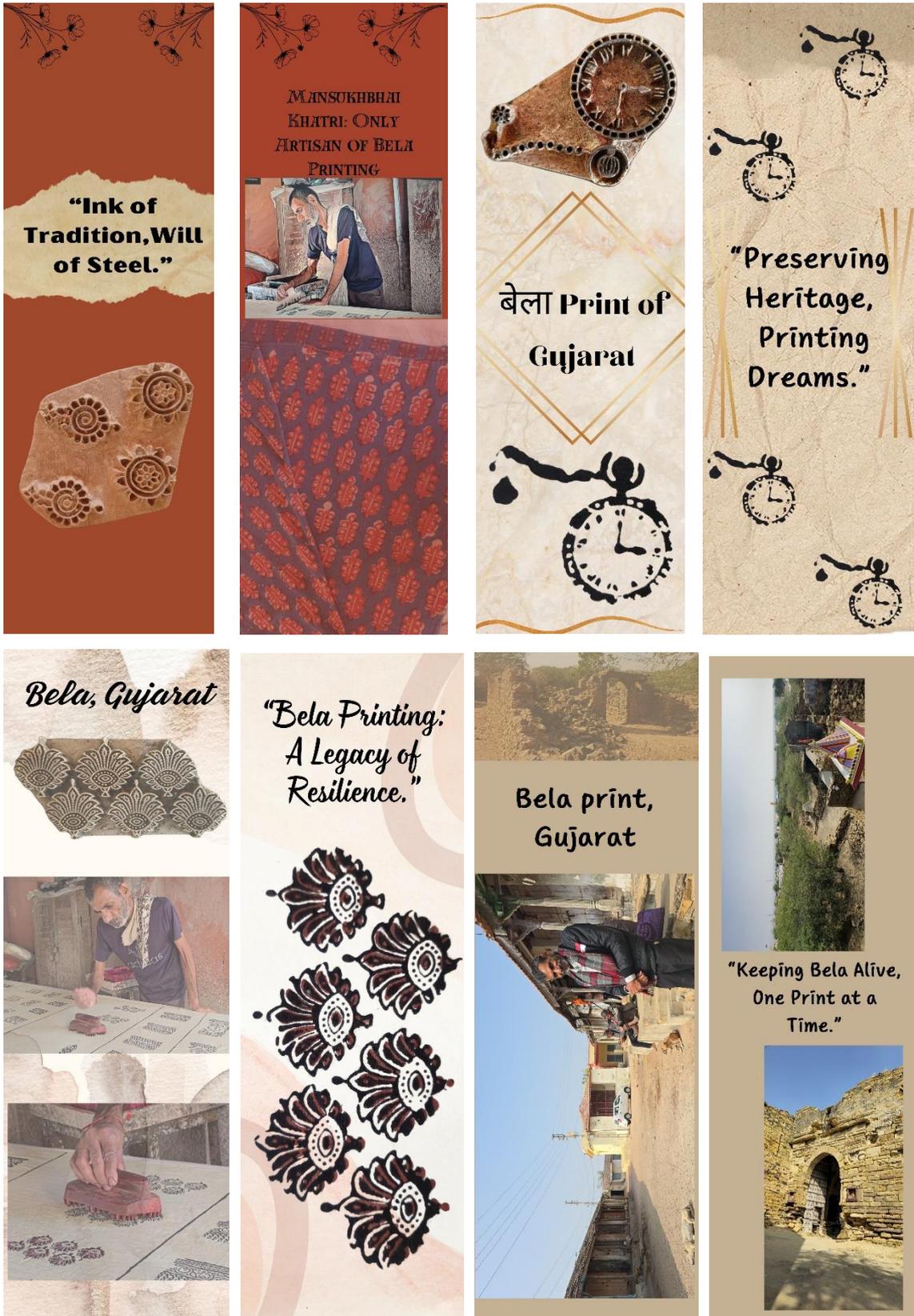


Plate 4.169 – Bookmark (Front and back side)

4.2.5.3. Documentary Film

The documentary film on Bela printing begins with an interview with Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri, where he shares his journey in the craft, providing insight into the history, challenges and cultural significance of Bela printing. Through this personal narrative, viewers gain a deeper understanding of the artistry and dedication required to sustain this traditional craft, along with a visual representation of Bela village and its rich textile heritage.

The documentary then visually presents the entire Bela Printing process. It captures each traditional step, from fabric preparation to the final washing, highlighting the intricate techniques, tools and skills involved. It serves as a vital tool for craft documentation and preservation, offering viewers an authentic glimpse into the heritage of Bela printing practiced in Kutch, Gujarat. The film also showcases Bela village, immersing viewers in the environment where this art form thrives, providing a holistic perspective on its cultural and economic impact.

4.3 Awareness and Promotion of Bela printing

4.3.1 Awareness Initiatives

To ensure the preservation and promotion of Bela printing, a range of targeted awareness initiatives were undertaken, addressing diverse stakeholder groups, including students, academicians, entrepreneurs, and the general public. These initiatives aimed to foster appreciation, facilitate knowledge transfer, and create opportunities for the sustained practice of this traditional craft.

Brochures, posters, and social media content were thoughtfully designed to visually communicate the essence and uniqueness of Bela printing to a larger audience. These promotional materials highlighted the intricate traditional process, the craftsmanship of carved wooden blocks, and the cultural relevance of the Bela Printing. These materials played a crucial role in broadening outreach and engagement.

To further extend the outreach, a dedicated Instagram page was created for Bela printing, serving as a digital platform to share the journey of the craft. This platform showcases

artisan stories, various stages of the printing process, intricately carved wooden blocks, and the final printed materials.

The promotional materials were circulated both physically during workshop and digitally through online platforms to maximize engagement. The primary goal was to create impactful visual storytelling that would resonate with a diverse audience, including students, educators, designers, and craft enthusiasts. These awareness strategies played a significant role in cultivating interest, appreciation, and concern for the survival of Bela printing.

4.3.1.1 Interactive session with hand on Workshop.

An interactive session with a hands-on workshop was organized to provide participants with practical exposure to Bela printing. This initiative allowed students, academician, and craft enthusiasts to engage directly with the traditional block printing process, fostering a deeper understanding of the craft.

Objective of workshop

By organizing a hands-on workshop, the primary objective was to create awareness about the traditional craft of Bela printing and emphasize its cultural and historical significance.

With only one artisan is currently practicing this craft in Bela village, Kutch there is an urgent need for its promotion and preservation. The workshop was open to all and aimed to introduce participant to the fundamental process, tools and technique of Bela printing.

By educating participants through direct interaction with the artisan, live demonstrations and hands-on activities, the workshop provided an immersive learning experience that deepened their understanding of the effort, skill and cultural value embedded in Bela printing. Through this engagement, participants gained knowledge of the intricate craftsmanship involved and developed insight into the challenges faced by the last remaining artisan in Bela village.

When individuals become familiar with such heritage practices, they are more likely to support them through conscious consumer choices, such as purchasing handcrafted products. This form of awareness and engagement plays a vital role in the revival and long-term sustainability of traditional crafts like Bela printing.

About workshop

A hand-on workshop on Bela printing was organized as part of the awareness and promotional activities on 20th March 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., at the WSRC Lab, Department of Clothing and Textiles, Faculty of Family and Community Sciences, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara. The workshop was open to all and aimed at educating participants about the traditional Bela block printing technique, a heritage craft practiced in Bela village, Kutch, Gujarat.

The session began with a brief introduction to Bela printing and Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri, the solo custodian of this endangered craft. This was followed by a felicitation ceremony, where the Head of the Department of Clothing and Textiles honoured Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri in recognition of his invaluable contribution to preserving and practicing this traditional art form.

The interactive session commenced with Shri Mansukhbhai Khatri sharing his personal journey, highlighted the history, cultural significance, and gradual decline of the Bela printing tradition, he emphasized the challenges of sustaining the craft in the face of modernization and diminishing artisan participation.

Following this, a live demonstration was conducted, where Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri showcased the intricate process of carving wooden blocks, preparing natural dyes, and executing the Bela printing technique on fabric. He introduced the essential tools, wooden blocks, and natural dyeing ingredients, providing participants with a comprehensive understanding of the traditional process.

To enhance the learning experience, brochures and physical catalogue were displayed to explain the motifs, process steps, and traditional elements associated with the Bela printing. The workshop served as a platform for meaningful interaction between the artisan and the attendees, fostering a deeper appreciation for this endangered textile tradition.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, faculty members, design professionals, and craft enthusiasts. All of whom actively engaged in learning and exploring the craft.

Through this initiative, the workshop successfully highlighted the importance of preserving Bela printing and encouraged the participants to support and promote such rare crafts in their own capacities.

Glimpse of Workshop







Plate 4.170 – Glimpse of Workshop

Outcome of workshop

The Bela printing awareness workshop, combined with promotional strategies through print, digital, and media platforms, proved to be a significant step toward preservation and promotion of this endangered craft. The interactive nature of the workshop provided participants with direct engagement with the artisan and offering practical insights into Bela printing process. This hands-on exposure increased their understanding and appreciation of the skill, tradition, and cultural significant embedded in the craft.

As a result of these efforts, several positive outcomes were observed. Firstly, the participants developed a sense of connection with the craft and expressed a willingness to support such handmade products in the future. Through direct interactions and media coverage, the artisan gained wider recognition, potentially leading to new market opportunities, collaborations, and recognition.

During the workshop, a Bela product exhibition showcased sarees, stoles, dupattas, and bedsheets for sale. Many participants purchased these handcrafted pieces, providing direct economic support to the artisan. This tangible outcome demonstrated how awareness can translate into action, reinforcing the importance of sustaining heritage crafts through market-driven initiatives. This also demonstrated the participants' genuine interest and willingness to support the craft beyond the learning experience.

The impact of workshop, extended beyond the event itself. Coverage by local news channels and print media helped spread awareness to a wider audience. The creation of a

dedicated Instagram page further ensured ongoing digital engagement and outreach. These collective efforts contributed to the larger goal of craft sustainability by increasing public awareness, encouraging responsible consumer behavior, and reviving interest in heritage crafts.

The workshop and its associated promotional activities acted as a bridge between tradition and modernity, enabling Bela printing to gain the visibility and appreciation it needs to survive and flourish in today's world.

4.3.1.2 Evaluation of Awareness Activities

To assess the effectiveness of the interactive lecture session, a pre- and post-questionnaire evaluation was conducted. The pre-session questionnaire measured participants' existing knowledge and awareness of Bela printing prior to the session. Following the lecture, a post-session questionnaire was administered to evaluate the knowledge gained, engagement levels, and any shift in perception regarding the craft.

By comparing both sets of responses, the impact of the session was analysed to determine its effectiveness in enhancing awareness and appreciation for Bela printing. The findings provide valuable insights that can guide improvements for future sessions, ensuring they are more informative and impactful.

Pre- and Post-Questionnaire Evaluation Method

To evaluate the impact of the interactive workshop on Bela block printing, a pre- and post-questionnaire approach was implemented. A total of 42 participants took part in this assessment.

The pre-workshop questionnaire was designed to gauge the participants' initial understanding, awareness, and perception of Bela printing as a traditional textile craft. This helped in establishing a baseline of their knowledge before the session.

After the workshop, which included interactive, live hand-on workshop, the same participants were asked to fill out a post-session questionnaire. This follow-up assessment focused on measuring the knowledge acquired, the level of engagement during the session, and any changes in perception or attitude toward the preservation of traditional

crafts, particularly Bela printing. Additionally, it aimed to understand their interest in future participation or support for such heritage practices.

The questionnaires were thoughtfully structured with a combination of objective questions to assess learning outcomes, and reflective components (including Likert scale and short answers) to evaluate personal engagement and attitudinal shifts. By analysing the responses, the overall effectiveness of the workshop was critically examined and statistically analysed.

Pre – Workshop Questionnaires

This pre-workshop questionnaire was created to understand the participants' current knowledge, perceptions and thoughts, and expectations about the traditional craft of Bela block printing. It aimed to assess awareness of the craft's history, techniques, and cultural significance. The responses helped identify learning needs and areas of interest, enabling better alignment of the workshop content with participants' expectations to ensure a meaningful and enriching experience.

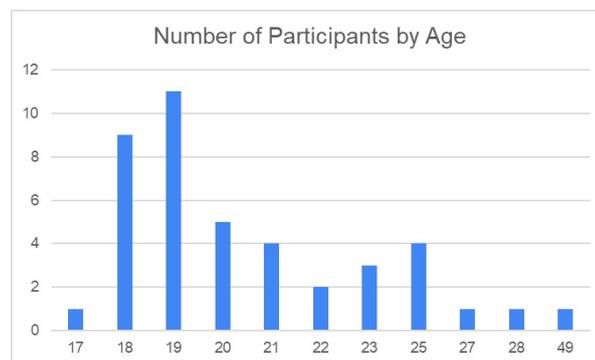
4.3.1.2 Evaluation of Awareness Activities

Analysis of Pre- and Post-Workshop Questionnaire Responses

To assess the effectiveness of the workshop on Bela printing, a structured pre- and post-test questionnaire was administered to 42 participants. The responses were analyzed under the following thematic areas aligned with the objectives of the workshop:

A. Participant Demographic

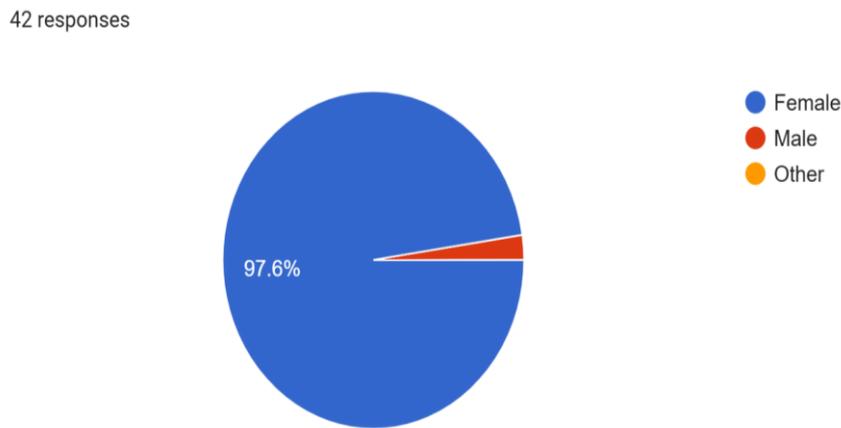
I. Age of the workshop participant



Graph 4.1 – Age of workshop participant

The age of the participants ranged from 17 to 49 years, with the majority falling between 18 to 25 years, indicating that most attendees were young individuals, primarily students. This suggests that the workshop successfully reached a youthful and potentially influential audience, aligning with the objective of promoting traditional crafts among the younger generation and encouraging their involvement in cultural preservation and awareness.

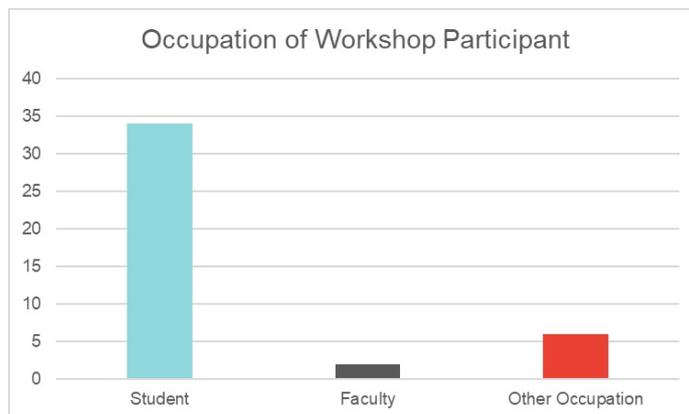
II. Gender Profile of the workshop participant



Graph 4.2 – Gender Profile of the participant

Out of the 42 participants, 41 were female and only 1 was male. This highlights a strong female interest in traditional textile crafts like Bela Printing, possibly reflecting the gender distribution within the field of clothing, textiles, and craft studies.

III. Occupational status of the workshop participant



Graph 4.3 – Showing occupational status of participant

Out of the 42 participants, the majority—30 individuals—were students from different academic levels, including first-year, second-year, and third-year undergraduate programs. In addition to the student participants, the workshop also saw the presence of academicians, doctor, textile designer, and a freelancer. This mix of participants reflects both academic engagement and professional interest in the traditional craft of Bela printing.

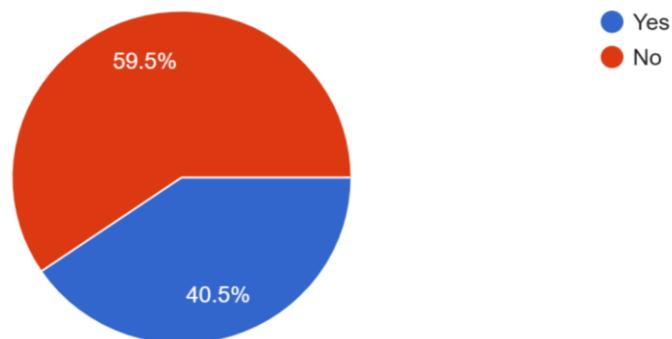
B. Pre – Workshop Questionnaires

This pre-workshop questionnaire is created to understand the participants' current knowledge, thoughts, and expectations about the traditional craft of Bela block printing. It aims to find out how much they know about its history, techniques, and cultural value. The responses will help identify what the participants are interested in and what they need to learn. This information will be useful in planning and adjusting the workshop content to make it more meaningful and helpful for everyone.

Analysis of Pre Workshop Questionnaire Responses

I. Awareness of Bela Printing Prior to Workshop:

42 responses

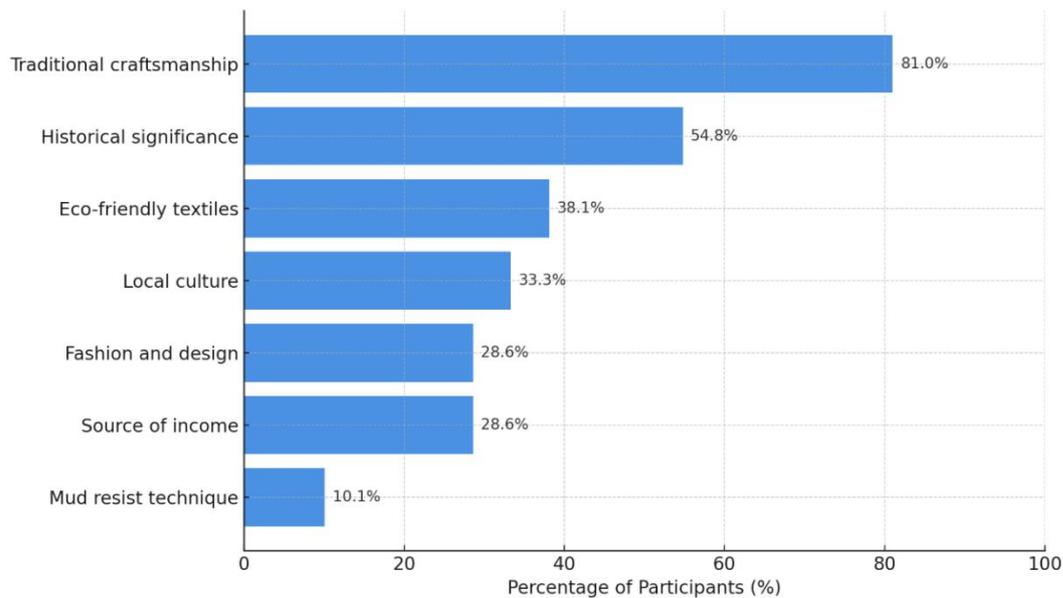


Graph 4.4: Awareness of Bela Printing Among Participants Before the Workshop

Out of 42 participants, 17 (40.5%) had heard of Bela Printing, while 25 (59.5%) had not. Interestingly, all 17 who were aware of Bela Printing mentioned that they had first encountered it during the department's Creations 2025 department ramp show, this finding underscores the impact of academic and creative platforms in initiating exposure to traditional crafts.

That data indicates that although some efforts have been made to introduce Bela printing to academic audiences, comprehensive awareness and understanding remain limited. This aligns with the workshop's first objective, emphasizing the need for structured educational interventions to broaden knowledge about such culturally significant, yet underrepresented, crafts.

II. Participant Perceptions Regarding Bela Printing



Graph: 4.5 Perceptions of Bela Printing Among Participants

Participants were allowed to select multiple responses that reflect their understanding and associations with Bela Printing. Among the 42 respondents:

- **81% (34 participants)** associated Bela Printing with traditional craftsmanship,
- **54.8% (23 participants)** identified its historical significance,
- **38.1% (16 participants)** connected it to eco-friendly textiles,
- **33.3% (14 participants)** linked it with local culture,
- **28.6% (12 participants)** viewed it through the lens of fashion and design,
- **28.6% (12 participants)** also saw it as a source of income for artisans,
- Only **10.1% (4 participants)** identified the mud resist technique, which is a core component of Bela Printing.

This distribution shows that while participants strongly associate Bela Printing with cultural heritage and craftsmanship, technical awareness remains limited. Despite the

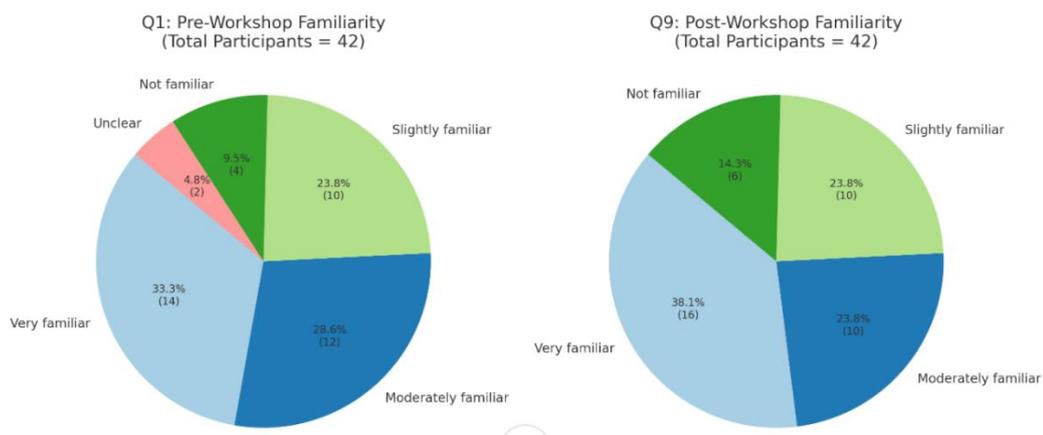
mud resist technique being central to the process, it was recognized by only a small fraction of respondents.

These findings underscore the need for targeted educational and awareness strategies that go beyond cultural appreciation and emphasize the unique technical and process-based elements of Bela printing.

C. Analysis of Post Workshop Questionnaire Responses

This post-workshop questionnaire is intended to evaluate the overall impact and effectiveness of the Bela block printing workshop. It focuses on assessing what participants have learned about the process, techniques, and cultural relevance of the craft. The questionnaire also captures the participants' feedback on the workshop's content, structure, and delivery. It aims to understand how the workshop has influenced their perception of traditional crafts and whether it has inspired further interest or application. Additionally, it provides an opportunity for participants to share their suggestions for improvement. The insights gained will help in planning better and more impactful future programs.

I. Impact of the Workshop on Participants Familiarity with Gujarat's Textile Traditions and Bela Printing



Graph 4.6 Change in Participant Familiarity with Bela Printing Pre- and Post-Workshop

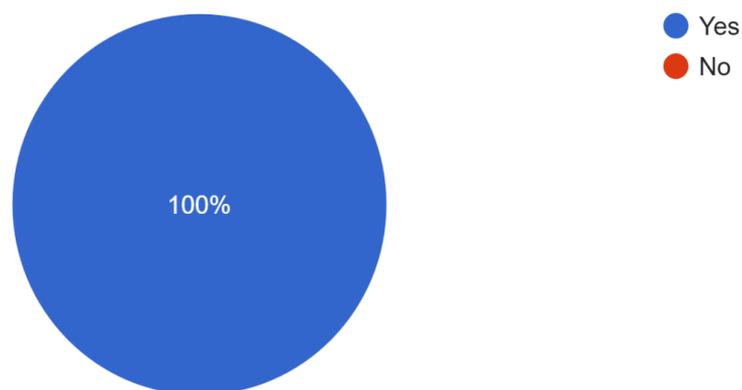
Before the workshop, a considerable number of participants already possessed a fair understanding of Gujarat’s textile traditions: 14 out of 42 (33.3%) identified as very familiar, 12 (28.6%) as moderately familiar, and 10 (23.8%) as slightly familiar. Only 4 participants (9.5%) admitted to being not familiar, while 2 responses (4.8%) were ambiguous or unclear. This indicates a generally well-informed group, yet still with room for growth in awareness and depth of knowledge.

After attending the workshop, there was a noticeable improvement: the number of very familiar respondents rose to 16 (38.1%), and 10 participants each (23.8%) rated themselves as moderately or slightly familiar. Interestingly, the number of not familiar participants slightly increased to 6 (14.3%), possibly indicating that the workshop helped some participants realize the depth and complexity of Bela printing, leading to a more honest reassessment of their prior knowledge.

Overall, the comparison highlights a positive shift in participant understanding and familiarity. The workshop successfully fulfilled its first objective—raising awareness and understanding of Bela printing as a culturally significant craft—by deepening knowledge and sparking curiosity among a diverse audience.

II. Impact of Workshop on Participants’ Willingness to Support Traditional Crafts

42 responses



Graph 4.7 – Showing interest in supporting traditional textiles

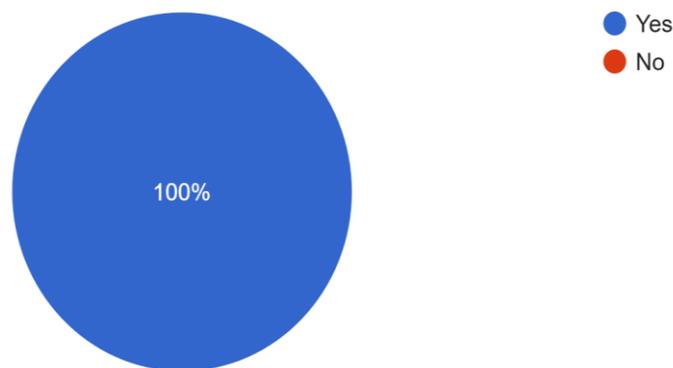
All 42 participants responded "Yes" when asked whether the workshop had increased their interest in purchasing or supporting traditional textiles like Bela printing. This

unanimous affirmation reflects the workshop's strong influence on shaping positive attitudes toward indigenous crafts. It highlights the success of the awareness initiative in bridging the gap between cultural appreciation and consumer behaviour.

Such results are significant in the context of craft sustainability, indicating that hands-on, contextual learning experiences can effectively motivate participants to value and support artisanal work. This interest also opens pathways for ethical consumption, cultural preservation, and increased demand for heritage-based products, which are vital for the livelihood of traditional artisans.

III. Perception of Workshop's Role in Preserving Traditional Crafts

42 responses

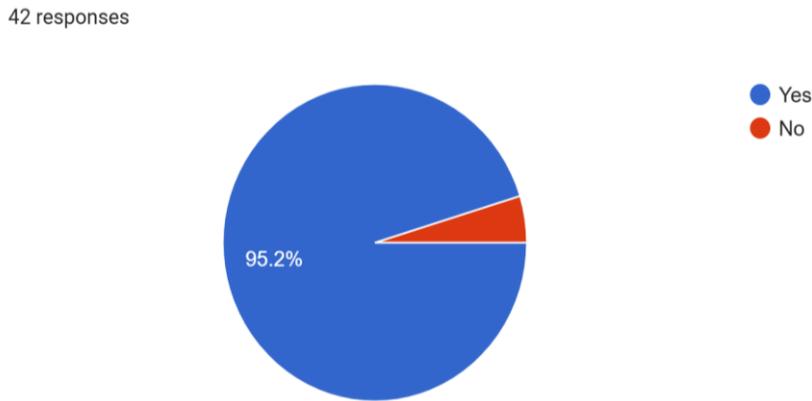


Graph 4.8 – Increased Interest in Supporting Traditional Textiles

The pie chart clearly shows a unanimous response from all 42 participants, with 100% affirming that such workshops significantly contribute to the preservation of traditional crafts like Bela Printing. This strong consensus indicates the success of the workshop in creating a sense of responsibility and appreciation among attendees. It also highlights the perceived value of hands-on experiences, which connect participants with artisans and heritage practices in meaningful ways.

This outcome reinforces the relevance of interactive, craft-based education as a tool not just for awareness, but for active engagement in cultural preservation, bridging gaps between tradition and contemporary interest.

IV. Post-Workshop Understanding of Bela Printing

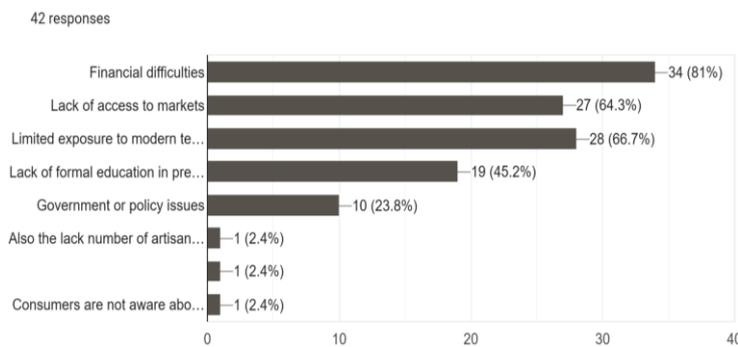


Graph 4.9 - Participants’ understanding of Bela printing after the workshop

Following the workshop, feedback from the 42 participants indicated that 39 individuals (92.9%) experienced a better understanding of the Bela printing tradition, while only 3 participants (7.1%) felt there was no significant change in their comprehension.

This strong positive outcome highlights the value of hands-on and interactive learning experiences in increasing awareness and appreciation of traditional crafts. The results affirm that workshops serve as a powerful medium for promoting and preserving indigenous art forms, and suggest their broader use in educational and outreach programs related to heritage crafts.

V. Perceived Challenges in Craft Preservation



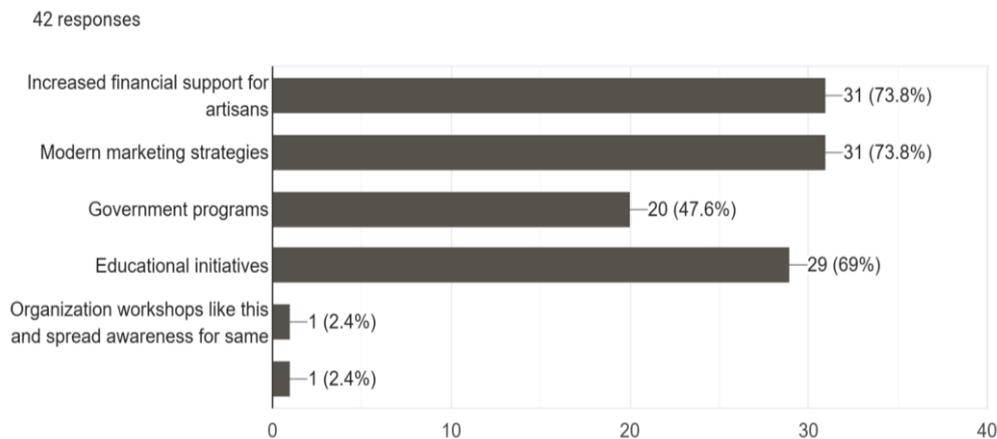
Graph 4.10 - Participants’ perception of challenges in preserving Bela block printing

Participants were asked to select all challenges they believed artisans face in preserving Bela printing. The results were as follows:

- **38 participants (90.5%)** cited financial hardships
- **32 participants (76.2%)** pointed to limited market access
- **28 participants (66.7%)** noted insufficient exposure to contemporary techniques
- **20 participants (47.6%)** mentioned the absence of formal education in craft preservation
- **16 participants (38.1%)** identified issues related to governance or policy support
- **5 participants (11.9%)** selected "Other," with responses including reduced demand in the fashion industry, lack of youth involvement, and minimal promotional activities.

These insights highlight that economic constraints and infrastructural gaps are perceived as the most significant barriers to preserving the craft. The data underscores the urgency for strategic interventions—such as financial aid, market linkage, and policy advocacy—to ensure the continuity and sustainability of Bela block printing.

VI. Suggested Preservation Actions



Graph 4.11 - Participants' recommendations for preserving Bela block printing

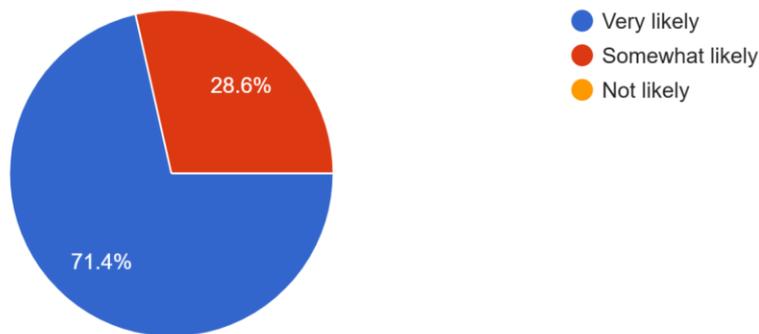
Participants were asked to identify multiple strategies they believed could support the preservation of Bela printing. The responses were as follows:

- **36 participants (85.7%)** recommended increased financial assistance for artisans
- **34 participants (81.0%)** emphasized the need for modern and innovative marketing strategies
- **30 participants (71.4%)** supported the introduction of targeted government programs
- **28 participants (66.7%)** highlighted the importance of educational interventions
- **4 participants (9.5%)** provided other suggestions, which included integrating Bela printing into academic syllabi and hosting exhibitions or fashion-based promotional events

The findings clearly advocate for a comprehensive preservation strategy, combining financial aid, educational outreach, policy support, and creative promotion. This integrated approach is essential for ensuring the long-term survival and relevance of Bela block printing in contemporary society.

VII. Willingness to Share Knowledge

42 responses



Graph 4.12 - Participants' likelihood of sharing knowledge about Bela printing

When asked about their willingness to spread awareness of Bela block printing following the workshop:

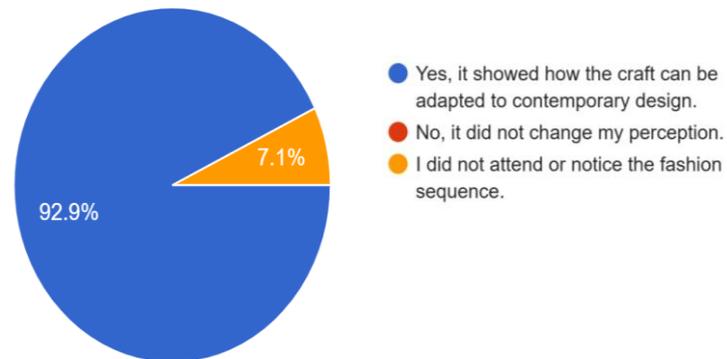
- **30 participants (71.4%)** stated they were very likely to share their knowledge
- **11 participants (26.2%)** were somewhat likely
- **1 participant (2.4%)** responded as not likely

These results reflect a strong inclination toward knowledge dissemination, with the majority of participants showing enthusiasm for advocating Bela printing within their

own circles. This suggests a positive attitudinal shift sparked by the workshop and highlights the role of experiential learning in cultivating ambassadors for heritage craft promotion.

VIII. Fashion Influence on Craft Perception

42 responses

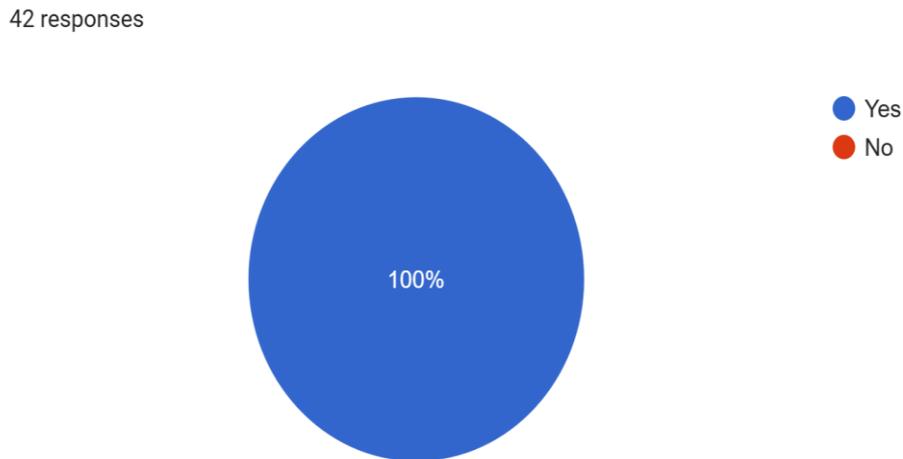


Graph 4. 13 - Impact of fashion showcase on participants' perception of the craft

- **35 participants (83.3%)** reported that the fashion sequence helped them see how Bela printing can be integrated into contemporary design.
- **3 participants (7.1%)** said it did not alter their perception.
- **4 participants (9.5%)** mentioned they either did not attend or were unaware of the fashion presentation.

These findings demonstrate the impact of creative formats like fashion sequences in transforming public perception. By presenting Bela printing in a modern design context, the showcase successfully bridged tradition and innovation, reinforcing the relevance and adaptability of the craft in today's fashion landscape.

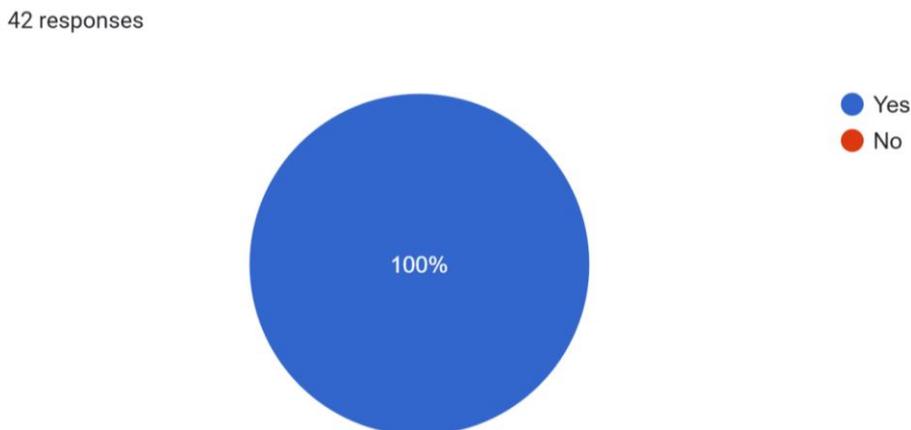
IX. Craft Preservation as a Source of Employment



Graph 4.14 – Perception of craft preservation as a potential employment opportunity

All the 42 participants (100%) agreed that preserving crafts like Bela printing can serve as a valuable source of livelihood. This unanimous response highlights a shared understanding that craft preservation holds strong potential for generating employment. It underscores the importance of promoting traditional crafts not only as cultural assets but also as viable economic opportunities, especially when integrated with collaborative platforms, skill development, and modern market access.

X. Importance of Artisan–Designer–Academic Collaborations



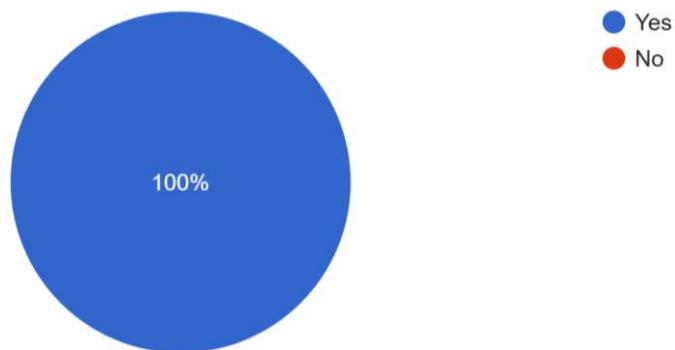
Graph 4.15 – Perceptions of the value of collaboration among artisans, designers, and academics

- **42 Participants (100%)** – Yes
- **0 Participants** – No

All 42 participants (100%) agreed that collaborations between artisans, designers, and academic institutions are important for preserving traditional crafts like Bela printing. They felt such partnerships help in giving the craft more visibility, sharing knowledge, and creating new, modern designs. It also helps artisans earn better and stay connected with current trends. Participants believed this teamwork makes the craft more valuable and relevant today.

XI. Support for Craft Integration in Fashion

42 responses

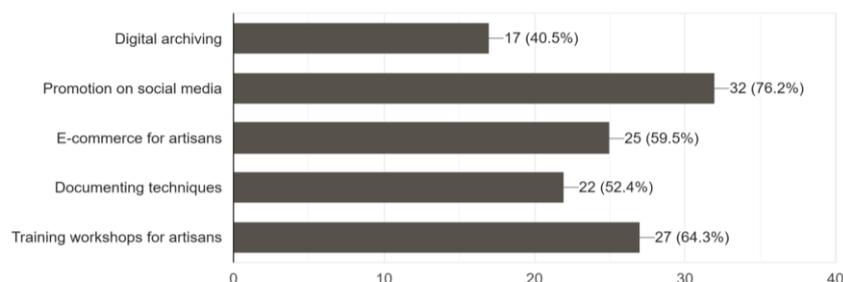


Graph 4.16 – Support for craft integration in fashion

Graph 4.15 shows that all 42 participants supported the inclusion of traditional crafts such as Bela printing in modern fashion, highlighting the seamless fusion of cultural heritage with contemporary design aesthetics.

XII. Role of Modern Technology to Craft Preservation

42 responses



Graph 4. 17 - The role of modern technology for craft preservation

Graph 4.16 showing sheds light on the significant role that modern technology plays in the preservation and promotion of traditional crafts.

- **Promotion on Social Media (95.2%)**: The majority of participants recognize social media as a powerful tool for expanding artisan visibility.
- **E-commerce for Artisans (85.7%)**: E-commerce platforms provide artisans with direct access to a global marketplace.
- **Digital Archiving (78.6%)**: Digital archiving plays a crucial role in preserving craft techniques and history.
- **Training Workshops for Artisans (81.0%)**: These workshops enable artisans to enhance their skills and embrace modern technology.
- **Documenting Techniques (73.8%)**: Documenting traditional techniques ensures that the craft knowledge is passed down to future generations.
- **Other (7.1%)**: Includes innovative methods like mobile learning apps and virtual museums.

The chart highlights the widespread belief in digital tools' potential to both preserve and promote traditional crafts

4.4.1.4 Presentation of Research Paper on Bela Printing at Prestigious Forums

The significance of Bela block printing has been effectively highlighted and acknowledged through its presentation on prestigious academic platforms. The research, titled “Preserving the Languishing Craft of Bela Block Printing: A Heritage of Kutch, Gujarat”, was first presented at the National Conference on “Fashion, Textiles & Crafts: A Global Perspective” organized by the Department of Fashion & Textiles, IIS (Deemed to be University), Jaipur on 26–27 September 2024. This event served as a foundational platform to introduce the heritage and challenges faced by this traditional craft.

Further, it was presented at the National Conference on Preserving the Handicrafts Heritage of India, held on 24th January 2025 at Symbiosis Institute of Design (SID), Pune. Supported by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), this event offered an opportunity to engage in broader discussions on safeguarding Indian handicrafts under the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047.

At the international level, the research was presented as a poster at the Functional Textiles and Clothing (FTC) Conference 2025, hosted by IIT Delhi from 31st January to 2nd February 2025, in collaboration with the World University of Design. This global platform brought together researchers, designers, and academicians, and provided an ideal space for discussing Bela printing's cultural value, its present challenges, and strategies for revival. The poster presentation highlighted the urgent need to preserve this heritage craft and was well-received by experts from both India and abroad.

Through these presentations, awareness about Bela block printing was significantly enhanced among diverse audiences—including students, researchers, academicians, and design professionals. The sessions sparked engaging discussions and encouraged participants to reflect on the importance of heritage craft preservation. By presenting the historical context, current status, and potential revival strategies of Bela printing, the research succeeded in drawing attention to the urgent need for collective action to support and sustain this endangered art form.

4.3.2 Promotion strategies

To promote Bela printing and ensure its sustainability, both offline and online strategies will be adopted. Informative catalogues highlighting the craft's history, motifs, and techniques will be distributed to museums, NGOs, for awareness purposes. These will serve as tools to connect artisans with potential buyers and collaborators. Simultaneously, a strong social media campaign will be launched on platforms like Instagram and YouTube, featuring reels, images, and interviews with artisans like Mansukh Bhai Khatri. Gurjari and Gujarat Tourism will also be approached to promote the craft through their official platforms. This combined approach will help expand Bela printing's reach, attract designers and craft enthusiasts, and generate new market opportunities, ensuring the long-term recognition and preservation of the craft.

4.3.2.1 Catalogue distribution (Kutch Museums, KHAMIR, Artisan Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri))

As part of the initiative to preserve and promote the traditional craft of Bela printing, informative catalogues were thoughtfully designed and developed. These aimed to spread awareness about the unique art of Bela block printing practiced in Bela village, Kutch,

Gujarat, and to make information about this craft accessible to a wider audience including students, researchers, artisans, NGOs, and visitors interested in Indian textile heritage.

To cater to different needs and ensure maximum reach, both physical and digital versions of the catalogue were created. These served as educational tools and promotional materials, highlighting the artistic, cultural, and historical importance of Bela printing beyond its local context.

A. Physical Catalogue

Two physical catalogue was meticulously prepared to highlight the authenticity and traditional craftsmanship of Bela printing. It included fabric swatches printed using traditional Bela blocks that were still functional and capable of producing clear imprints on fabric. This ensured the accuracy and authenticity of the traditional motifs. The prints were created using natural dyes and resist-dyeing methods and were carefully documented through field observations of artisan work.

The printed motifs featured in the catalogue were systematically categorized based on the communities that traditionally use them. Since different communities in the Bela region have distinct symbolic motifs, this classification helped in understanding the cultural relevance and purpose behind each design. The community-based segregation of motifs added depth to the catalogue and increased its value as an educational resource.

Shri Mansukhbhai Khatri: A Guardian of the Bela Printing Legacy

Shri Mansukhbhai Khatri is currently the only practicing artisan of the traditional Bela printing craft. With the support of KHAMIR, he has sustained his work despite various challenges, including a significant decline in demand and a dwindling number of artisans willing to take up the practice. His unwavering dedication positions him as a crucial custodian of this endangered craft.

To honour his contribution and support the continuation of Bela printing, a physical catalogue was developed and presented to Shri Mansukhbhai Khatri. It serves as a valuable reference tool during workshops, exhibitions, and craft demonstrations, allowing him to share deeper insights into Bela printing and its community-specific motifs. He was

also encouraged to display the catalogue at his workspace for the benefit of visitors, researchers, and students.

Kutch Museum: Showcasing Heritage and Educating Visitors

As the oldest museum in Gujarat, the Kutch Museum plays a vital role in preserving and showcasing the rich cultural and artistic heritage of the Kutch region. Given that Bela Printing is a traditional textile craft rooted in this very region, the museum was purposefully chosen as a key site for the dissemination of the physical catalogue developed during the dissertation.

B. Digital Catalogue

Alongside the physical versions, a detailed digital catalogue was also developed and shared. This digital format allowed for broader dissemination and easier access to information about Bela printing. It included clearly structured sections that covered:

- A comprehensive account of the history and evolution of Bela Printing.
- An analysis of the factors contributing to the decline of this rare and traditional craft.
- Detailed technical documentation of Bela block dimensions, offering valuable insights for researchers and designers.
- Symbolic interpretations of traditional motifs, supporting their preservation and ongoing relevance in the context of Indian textile narratives.

The content in the digital catalogue was written in simple and engaging language, supported by visuals and documentation photographs, making it easily understandable to readers from academic as well as non-academic backgrounds.

This digital catalogue was shared with the following institutions:

1. Khamir: A Sustained Initiative for Bela Printing's Survival

Over the past six years, Khamir has been a steadfast supporter of Shri Mansukhbhai Khatri, the last known practicing artisan of Bela Printing. Acknowledging the significance of this endangered craft, Khamir has played a vital role in its sustenance by:

- Providing a dedicated workspace for Bela printing activities.
- Ensuring access to essential resources such as natural dyes, fabrics, and washing facilities for uninterrupted production.
- Encouraging contemporary adaptations of Bela motifs and designs to help the craft gain relevance in modern markets.

2. Kutch Museum: Showcasing Heritage and Educating Visitors

Since Bela Printing originates from the Kutch region, the Kutch Museum—renowned for its extensive representation of local crafts and culture—was purposefully selected as a key distribution site for the catalogue. Its strong regional relevance makes it an ideal platform to promote awareness and appreciation of this rare textile tradition.

- The museum attracts visitors from various parts of India and abroad, offering a unique opportunity to showcase Bela Printing to a diverse and culturally interested audience.
- The catalogue was formally handed over to the museum authorities to serve as an educational resource for visitors.
- By situating the catalogue within a heritage institution rooted in the region where the craft evolved, it reinforces the cultural and geographic authenticity of Bela Printing.
- The inclusion of detailed block dimensions and motif explanations enhances its academic and archival value, especially for researchers, students, and craft revivalists.

3. A copy of the same catalogue was also shared with the Textile Art Museum of the Department of Clothing and Textiles, Faculty of Family and Community Sciences, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, where it serves as a teaching and reference resource. Through this catalogue, students, faculty and visitors can engage with Bela printing in a more tangible and meaningful way, fostering appreciation for this rare and culturally significant textile tradition.

4.4.2.2 Social Media Promotion

As part of this research initiative, a dedicated digital campaign was launched to promote and raise awareness about Bela printing—a traditional block printing craft historically practiced in Bela village, Kutch, Gujarat, and currently sustained at Khamir NGO in Kukma. The goal of the campaign was to engage a wider audience, especially youth, fashion enthusiasts, textile students, and designers across India and globally.

A new Instagram page was created exclusively for Bela printing. The page consistently featured rich visual content including photos, reels, and videos that showcased the printing process, use of natural tools and materials, and final crafted products. A key highlight of the campaign was a series of interview videos with Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri, the last practicing artisan of Bela printing. In these videos, he shared valuable insights into the traditional techniques, while also discussing the contemporary challenges faced by artisans. These personal narratives helped establish an emotional connection with viewers and emphasized the importance of preserving this heritage craft.

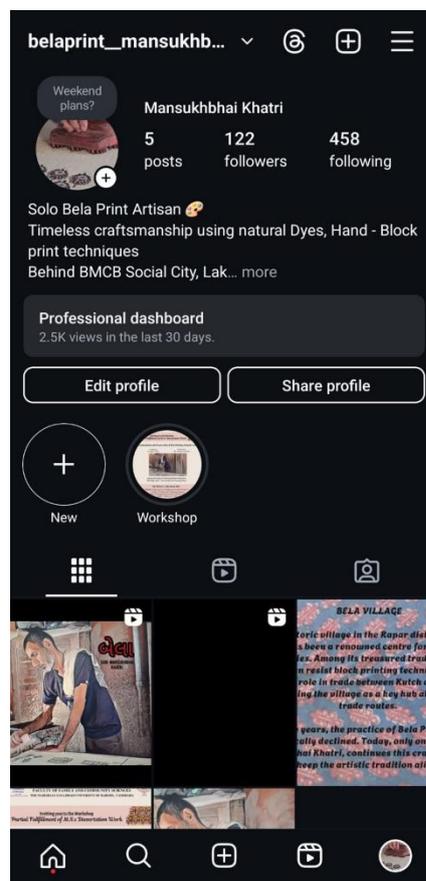


Plate 4.171 – Instagram account

Initially the Instagram account had 100 followers. As more content was posted, people started engaging by liking, commenting, and sharing the posts. Time-lapse videos of the printing process and dyeing methods were especially liked by users. The Instagram page became a digital platform where people could learn about Bela printing in an easy and visual way.

Along with Instagram, YouTube and Instagram Reels were also used to share longer content. These included mini-documentaries and educational videos about Bela printing. This helped reach more people and made the craft more understandable and interesting, especially for the younger generation.

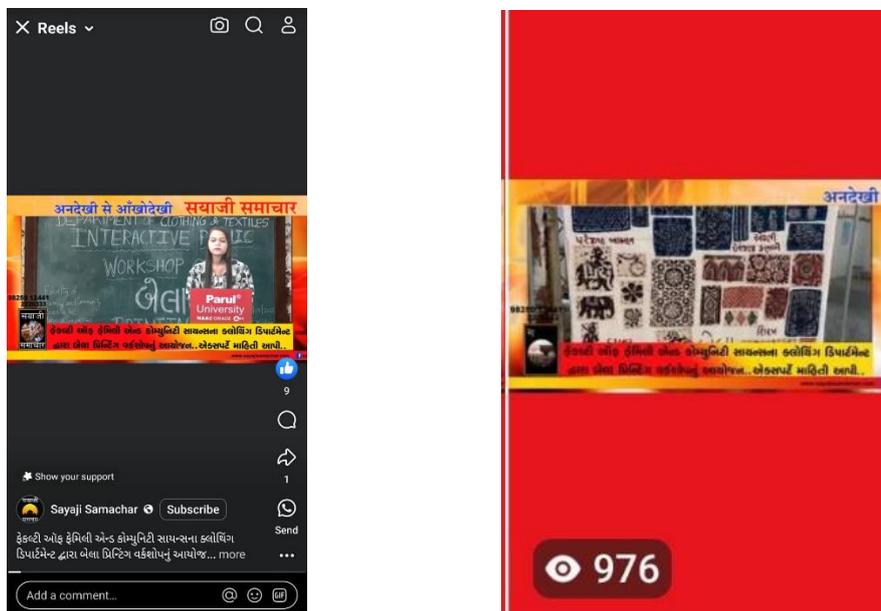


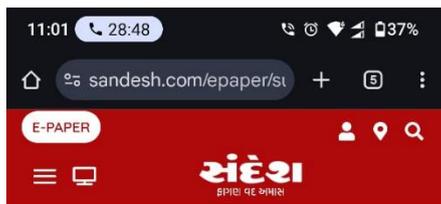
Plate 4.172 – Sayaji Samachar (Facebook Channel)

The digital outreach was further amplified through local media coverage. A Bela printing workshop conducted as part of the research was promoted across various platforms. On 20th March 2025, the Sayaji Samachar Facebook page featured a post about the workshop, which garnered 976 views, boosting visibility within both the local community and broader online audiences.



Plate 4.173 – Nation Plus News (YouTube)

On the same day, Nation Plus News YouTube channel uploaded a video covering the Bela printing workshop. The video received 80 views, adding to the digital visibility of the project. Though the numbers were small, they showed genuine interest from people who are curious about traditional crafts.



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25 Mar 2025

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Plate 4.174 – Sandesh News Paper

4.3.3.3 Collaboration with the Gujarat State Handloom and Handicrafts Development Corporation

As a part of the initiative to promote Bela printing and create sustainable opportunities for artisans, communication was established with the Gujarat State Handloom & Handicrafts Development Corporation Ltd. (GSHHDC). The objective was to seek institutional support for the dissemination of Bela printing through platforms such as Gurjari.

During discussions with representatives of the corporation, a verbal indication of interest was received regarding two possible actions:

- Showcasing the documentary on Bela printing on the Gurjari website, as a means to increase digital visibility and cultural outreach.
- Providing exhibition space to Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambardas Khatri, enabling him to directly connect with buyers and showcase his craft at Gurjari platforms.

The verbal response was encouraging, regular follow-ups are being conducted to formalize the collaboration and realize its potential benefits for Bela printing and its artisans.

CHAPTER – V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

India's textile heritage is globally celebrated for its diversity, historical richness, and regional specificity. Hand block printing, one of the oldest surface ornamentation techniques, holds a significant place among traditional textile practices. While Ajrakh, Bagru, and Sanganer printing traditions have gained wider recognition, Bela Block Printing—originating from Bela village in the Rapar block of Kutch, Gujarat—remains on the verge of disappearance.

Practiced traditionally by the Hindu-Khatri community, Bela block printing is distinguished by its use of natural dyes, eco-friendly techniques, mineral-rich water, and motifs that reflect regional identity and cultural symbolism. This craft once flourished, sustained by the collective efforts of 40–50 artisan families in the village. However, over time, socio-economic challenges, natural disasters, and industrialization have led to a significant decline in its practice. Today, the tradition survives solely through the dedicated efforts of one remaining artisan, Shri Mansukh Pitambar Khatri, who stands as the last bearer of this rich legacy.

The decline of Bela Block Printing can be attributed to a series of socio-economic and environmental disruptions—including the Partition of India, industrialization, the 2001 Gujarat earthquake, and the COVID-19 pandemic—along with diminishing interest among younger generations.

This research was therefore initiated to document, conserve, and promote Bela Block Printing.

5.2 OBJECTIVES

The study was guided by the following key objectives:

1. To document the historical origins and evolution of Bela Block Printing in Gujarat.

2. To record and analyze the traditional techniques, processes, materials, and motifs associated with Bela printing.
3. To raise awareness and promote Bela Block Printing through educational outreach and advocacy initiatives.

Delimitation of the study

1. Limited to Bela village of Kutch, Gujarat, India.
2. Only traditional wooden blocks that are over 50 years old have been considered for documentation.

5.3 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature for the study was presented in the areas of theoretical review and research review. The theoretical review focuses on textile printing and its various types including resist printing, the historical background and development of resist block printing, the Hindu-Khatri community and their craftsmanship in Bela printing, and the role of digital media in promoting traditional crafts. The related research review includes studies on hand block printed and resist-dyed textiles, challenges in preserving traditional crafts in India, and research focused on the revival of craft traditions.

5.4 METHODOLOGY

To explore and preserve the traditional craft of Bela block printing from Kutch, Gujarat, a descriptive and exploratory research design was employed. The study combined field visits, interviews, and literature review and ethnographic documentation to holistically understand the craft's historical evolution, technical processes, and cultural significance.

The research commenced with reconnaissance surveys and a review of relevant literature, which provided contextual understanding and identified research gaps. Primary data collection involved semi-structured interviews and real-time observation, focusing on technical and cultural aspects of the craft. The study centred on Shri Mansukhbhai Pitamber Khatri, the last remaining artisan practicing this heritage technique. His firsthand insights were crucial in documenting traditional methods and challenges associated with Bela Block Printing.

Data collection involved extensive fieldwork was conducted in Bela village, artisan interviews, and high-resolution photo and video documentation. A key component was the development of documentation materials and ethnographic visuals using high-resolution photography and videography tools. Key components of documentation included:

- The complete process from fabric preparation to natural dyeing and printing.
- A catalogue of 81 traditional motifs with dimensions, cultural meanings, and its usages.
- Documentation of block characteristics, including age, usage, and design intricacy.
- High-resolution visuals using Samsung Galaxy S24 Ultra for educational dissemination.

To enhance outreach and awareness, various promotional and educational materials were created, including brochures, bookmarks, postcards, a block motif catalogue, and a short documentary capturing the artisan's narrative and techniques.

A hands-on awareness workshop was conducted on March 20, 2025, targeting students, academicians, and craft enthusiasts. The session included live demonstrations and interactive dialogue, significantly increasing participant awareness and appreciation, as evident from pre- and post-session feedback.

In addition to physical outreach, a digital awareness campaign was launched through platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and Reels. This campaign featured process videos, artisan interviews, and behind-the-scenes footage, enhancing the craft's visibility among broader audiences.

Further, print and digital catalogues were shared with stakeholders including KHAMIR, the Kutch Museum, and Shri Khatri himself. Institutional dialogue was initiated with the Gujarat State Handloom & Handicrafts Development Corporation Ltd. to explore long-term collaborations through the Gurjari platform.

This mixed-methods approach not only facilitated in-depth understanding and documentation of Bela Block Printing but also laid the foundation for its promotion and preservation through academic, community-based, and digital channels.

5.5 RESULTS

5.1.1 Documentation of Craft

The finding of the study have been discussed in the following subsections:

5.5.1 To document history and evolution of Bela printing of Gujarat.

The historical and geographical analysis of Bela village and its textile traditions reveals that Bela block printing is not just a craft but a cultural legacy shaped over centuries. The review of secondary sources and field documentation indicates that Bela printing evolved through influences of ancient trade routes, regional rulers, and artisanal communities, particularly the Khatri community.

Findings show that the geological formation of Bela Island provided natural resources like limestone and fertile land, supporting early human settlement and vernacular architecture. Over time, Bela developed as a centre of artisanal and agricultural activity, with the establishment of the village during the reign of Rao Tamachiji in the 1600s. Block printing flourished under local patronage and cross-border trade with Sindh, Persia, and Africa.

However, events such as the 1819 earthquake, the Partition of 1947, and the 2001 Bhuj earthquake disrupted Bela's economy, infrastructure, and artisanal continuity. These shifts led to migration, weakening the intergenerational transfer of skills and reducing the number of active block printers.

The current state of Bela reflects a decline in traditional craft practices, with only a few artisans, like Mansukhbhai Khatri, continuing the legacy. Although efforts by institutions and NGOs have initiated conservation and promotional activities, challenges persist in sustaining the craft due to lack of formal training, declining artisan numbers, and market competition from mechanized textiles

The case study conducted in Bela village, Kutch, focused on documenting and analyzing the lived experiences, oral histories, and cultural landscape surrounding the endangered tradition of Bela Block Printing. Through field visits, interviews, and ethnographic observations, multiple layers of insights were uncovered:

1. Mansukhbhai Pitambar Khatri

Mansukhbhai stands as the last practicing artisan of the original Bela Block Printing tradition. With decades of experience, he continues to use the mud-resist (rekh) technique, natural dyes (like indigo and alizarin), and hand-carved wooden blocks. His commitment to authenticity has preserved this fragile knowledge system.

- He is the sole custodian of this tradition today, as other artisans have moved on due to lack of market demand and better economic opportunities.
- Environmental changes, particularly the drying of the Sarang River, have made natural dyeing more difficult.
- His collaboration with organizations like Khamir has helped gain limited exposure through exhibitions and training programs.
- Despite minimal financial returns, his work remains a living archive of Bela's craft heritage.

Mansukhbhai also expressed concern about lack of succession, as his own son has not taken up the craft. He fears the art form may disappear entirely with him.

2. Ethnographic Conversations – Community Voices

During a field visit, conversations with villagers such as Pravinbhai (sweet shop owner), Mahavir Sinh, Munabhai Gumansinh, and Narsubha Fatehsinh revealed how Bela once functioned as a self-sufficient village. The main street was once bustling with shops and skilled workers, such as blacksmiths, potters, and goldsmiths.

- The community described Bela as a flourishing rural economy, with all essential services like schools, hospitals, and markets.
- The decline of block printing was attributed to migration, changing fashion trends, and economic pressures, leading younger generations to pursue other careers.
- These oral narratives reflect a shared concern for the vanishing tradition and the need to revitalize the craft.

3. Parbhaben Bavaji – Oral History from the Temple Priest

Parbhaben Babuvan Valvan Varsani (Bavaji), a 68-year-old temple priest, recalled that during her childhood, four artisans from the Hindu Khatri community practiced Bela printing. Today, only Mansukhbhai continues the tradition.

Her testimony confirms the decline in artisan numbers and illustrates how integral Bela printing was to the village's cultural fabric.

4. Retired Indian Army Captain Bahadur Singh Vaghela – Origin Myth of Bela

Captain Vaghela shared the legendary origin of Bela village, tied to the Bileshwar Mahadev Temple. According to local lore, a cow miraculously released milk over a buried Shivling, prompting the villagers to settle there and build the temple.

- This legend emphasizes the spiritual roots of Bela, adding cultural depth to the village's identity.
- Such oral histories contextualize the village as not just a geographic location but a spiritual and artisanal hub.

5. Textile Dealer Salim Wajir – Historical Artefacts and Market Insight

During a visit to Salim Wajir's private textile collection, rare Bela-printed textiles such as *Sadlas* and *Shirakhs* were examined. These dated back 50–60 years and featured traditional chakliya, ekla kor, gadebandhi block designs.

- These items highlight Bela printing's historic usage in everyday rural life, especially among the Lauva Kanbi community.
- Salim also explained the barter system, wherein villagers exchanged printed textiles for household goods—preserving old fabrics through trade.
- He lamented the craft's decline due to modern machinery, low demand, and a lack of new learners.

5.5.2 To document traditional techniques, processes, material and motifs of Bela print.

The study aimed to document the traditional techniques, processes, materials, and motifs of Bela block printing—an ancient resist-dye textile art from Bela village, Kutch, Gujarat. Based on field observations, artisan interviews, and photographic and motif documentation, the research offers a detailed view of this endangered craft.

Traditional Techniques and Processes

The Bela printing process involves several methodical and time-honored steps:

1. Fabric Preparation:

Raw cotton fabric is thoroughly cleaned by boiling in a detergent solution to remove impurities. It is then treated with Harda (*Terminalia chebula*), a natural tannin that enhances dye absorption and helps develop deeper tones, particularly black.

2. Preparation of Printing Pastes:

- **Black Paste:** A mixture of fermented waste iron, jaggery, and tamarind seed powder.
- **Red Paste:** Made using alum and tamarind base with a small quantity of direct dye to enhance visibility during printing.

3. Printing Process:

These pastes are applied using hand-carved wooden blocks on a padded printing table. After printing, the fabric is sun-dried and later fixed using:

- **Dhawadi Phool** for black tones
- **Alizarin** for red tones

4. Indigo Dyeing: Practiced using the traditional vat reduction method, which includes:

- Caustic soda and sodium hydrosulphite to reduce the indigo
- Post-dyeing oxidation and fixation steps that turn the fabric blue

Making of Resist Paste

The resist paste, crucial for creating undyed sections, is made from clay (Matti), Bajara flour, and natural wax. The ingredients are mixed in specific ratios and heated to create a thick paste. This is applied with blocks to protect parts of the fabric from dye. Once dyed, the paste is washed off, revealing intricate designs. This method emphasizes sustainable and eco-friendly craftsmanship, as all materials are natural and locally sourced.

Documentation of Motifs and Blocks

Over 81 block motifs were catalogued, each tied to specific communities like Anjana Kanbi, Lauva Kanbi, Darbar, Rajput, Meghwar, and others. These motifs represent cultural identity, age, community uses. Blocks such as Phool Butti, Ghodo, Sipahi, and Nagvel etc.. were documented along with their names, dimensions, usage, and estimated age. This classification helps preserve valuable cultural knowledge and highlights the connection between craft and community identity.

Development of Promotional Materials

To further the goals of **awareness and preservation**, two key promotional tools were developed:

- Informative brochure, designed in Canva, detailing history, tools, dyeing methods, and motifs for educational use.
- A short visual documentary film capturing the complete process, tools, materials and interviews with Mansukhbhai Khatri, the last known practitioner, was produced for visual archive and awareness tool.

5.5.3 To create awareness and promotion of Bela craft.

The third objective of the research focused on spreading awareness and promoting Bela block printing through strategic initiatives and documentation efforts. A series of activities—both on-ground and digital—were carried out to reach diverse audiences while simultaneously contributing to the preservation and economic support of this heritage craft.

Awareness Initiatives

- Awareness initiatives included the creation of Informative brochures and a motif catalogue to serve as educational resources, summarizing the process, tools, motifs, and history of Bela printing. A dedicated Instagram page “**belaprint__mansukhbhaikhatri**” was launched to reach a wider and younger audience, utilizing visual content such as documentary , reels, artisan interviews, and process documentation to generate interest and cultural curiosity.
- A key highlight was an interactive workshop conducted on 20th March 2025, featuring a live demonstration by Shri Mansukhbhai Pitamberdas Khatri, the last known practitioner of this traditional technique. The workshop offered hands-on learning, creating a tangible and emotional connection with the craft among the 42 participants. Feedback collected before and after the session showed a marked improvement in awareness, appreciation for handcrafted textiles, and willingness to support artisan-made products—some participants even made direct purchases from the artisan, supporting his livelihood.
- Complementing field-based initiatives, academic and institutional promotion played a vital role. The research was presented at prominent platforms such as IIS University Jaipur, Symbiosis Institute of Design Pune, and IIT Delhi, thereby contributing to scholarly discourse on endangered crafts and positioning Bela printing within national conversations on cultural preservation.

The combined efforts of interactive sessions, print and digital outreach, and academic presentations significantly enhanced the visibility of Bela printing. The study not only educated participants but also built a bridge between traditional artisans and modern audiences. The initiative empowered the sole practicing artisan through exposure and economic support, while also fostering a sense of cultural appreciation among participants.

Promotional Strategies

To promote Bela Block Printing and create wider awareness, the research strategically focused on digital outreach, dissemination of educational materials, and institutional collaboration.

- **Social Media Campaign:** A dedicated Instagram page was launched to document and share the process of Bela printing, artisan narratives, and cultural context. Through reels, behind-the-scenes videos, and interviews with Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambar Khatri, the campaign effectively engaged younger audiences, design professionals, and craft enthusiasts. This platform served as a contemporary archive while enhancing the craft's visibility in the digital space.
- **Catalogue Distribution:** Informative catalogues featuring detailed documentation of motifs, printing techniques, and cultural relevance were created and distributed both physically and digitally. Stakeholders such as KHAMIR, the Kutch Museum, and the artisan himself received these materials, which now serve as valuable educational and promotional tools for ongoing engagement and reference.
- **Collaboration with government organisation :** Initial dialogues were established with the Gujarat State Handloom & Handicrafts Development Corporation Ltd. (GSHHDC) to explore potential collaborations through the Gurjari platform. These discussions aim to facilitate future exhibitions, product development opportunities, and digital promotion, thereby contributing to the sustainable revival of the craft.

Together, these targeted promotion activities played a critical role in bridging traditional knowledge with modern platforms, amplifying outreach, and fostering long-term support for the preservation of Bela Block Printing.

Conclusion

This research dissertation has explored and documented the endangered traditional textile craft of Bela Block Printing from Bela village, Kutch, Gujarat. Through an ethnographic approach combining field visits, artisan interviews, photographic documentation, and hands-on observation, the study successfully captured the intricate processes, unique motifs, traditional materials, and cultural significance embedded in this centuries-old resist-dye technique.

At the heart of the research lies the story of Shri Mansukhbhai Pitambar Khatri, the sole practicing artisan of Bela printing today. His mastery and dedication have preserved this heritage despite growing challenges such as environmental degradation, reduced artisan

interest, market shifts toward fast fashion, and the near-disappearance of local infrastructure once integral to the craft's ecosystem. The craft's decline is deeply tied to socioeconomic changes, migration, and generational disinterest, as echoed by villagers and local stakeholders during field visits.

The documentation of over 81 distinct block motifs, each associated with specific communities and cultural practices, has added valuable insight into the deep interlinkage between design, identity, and tradition. Additionally, the recorded step-by-step process of fabric preparation, resist paste making, and natural dye application provides a critical archive for future generations, designers, and researchers.

The study not only focused on documentation but also emphasized promotion and awareness. Key outreach efforts included:

- A **dedicated Instagram page** and social media campaign to engage youth and craft enthusiasts digitally;
- Catalogue distribution to Kutch museum, KHAMIR NGO, Shri Mansukhbhai Khatri and educational institutions to promote academic and cultural engagement;
- And collaborations initiated with the Gujarat State Handloom and Handicrafts Development Corporation Ltd. to explore future possibilities for exhibitions, digital promotion, and product development.

By blending traditional fieldwork with innovative awareness strategies, this research advocates for the awareness, promotion, and sustainable preservation of Bela printing. It also underlines the importance of supporting remaining artisans, documenting fading traditions, and integrating such crafts into modern narratives of sustainability, design, and cultural identity.

Scope for Future Research

The study on Bela Block Printing has laid a strong foundation for further exploration and intervention. To ensure the long-term preservation, promotion, and sustainability of this heritage craft, the following areas can be pursued for future research:

- **Developing Structured Training Modules:** Future work can focus on designing formal training modules that facilitate artisan skill transfer to the younger

generation. These modules can be integrated into community workshops, design schools, and government-run training programs.

- **Policy-Level Advocacy:** Research can support advocacy efforts aimed at incorporating endangered crafts like Bela printing into school and university-level curricula. This would increase cultural awareness and encourage educational institutions to engage with traditional crafts as part of their pedagogy.
- **Creation of Sustainable Marketing Platforms:** Further initiatives can explore collaborations with tourism departments, design institutions, and digital marketing experts to develop sustainable and ethical platforms for selling and promoting Bela-printed products, both locally and globally.
- **Exploring Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and Geographical Indications (GI):** Future research can investigate the potential for securing legal protections for Bela Block Printing through collective mechanisms such as IPR and GI tagging. While GI tags cannot be awarded to individual artisans, collaborative efforts involving multiple practitioners, local NGOs, and government bodies could lay the groundwork for community-based applications. Such recognition would not only help preserve authenticity but also enhance the economic value and visibility of the craft.
- **Comparative Studies with Other Resist-Dyeing Traditions:** While initial comparisons have been drawn in the present research, deeper studies could analyze socio-economic models, motif evolution, and innovation in crafts such as Dabu, Bagru, and Ajrakh, providing richer insights into regional practices and sustainability models.

These directions not only extend the impact of this study but also align with broader goals of heritage conservation, design innovation, and rural development.

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Appendix 1

Support for Promotion - Gujarat State Handloom and Handicraft Development Corporation Ltd.

4/4/25, 6:48 PM

Gmail - Fwd: Support for the Documentation and Promotion of Bela Printing



Krishna Ardeshta <ardeshnakrishna18@gmail.com>

Fwd: Support for the Documentation and Promotion of Bela Printing

1 message

Rajni Yadav <rajni.yadav-ct@msubaroda.ac.in>
To: Krishna Ardeshta <ardeshnakrishna18@gmail.com>

Fri, Apr 4, 2025 at 6:21 PM

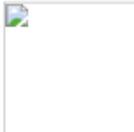
----- Forwarded message -----

From: Assistant Manager Marketing <mktgshhdc@gmail.com>
Date: Tuesday, April 1, 2025
Subject: Support for the Documentation and Promotion of Bela Printing
To: Rajni Yadav <rajni.yadav-ct@msubaroda.ac.in>
Cc: pddindextcpmu@outlook.com

Hello,

Thank you for approaching us, we are working on it, after getting necessary approval, will send you confirmation.

Assistant Manager Marketing
Gujarat State Handloom & Handicrafts Development Corporation Ltd.,
Handloom Technology Institute Building, Near Mahatma Mandir, Sector-13,
Gandhinagar, Gujarat -382011
Phone:- +91 9978407598, 9909939808
Fax:- +91 79 232 30738, 232 47059
website: www.gurjari.co.in, email:- mktgshhdc@gmail.com, dgm-gshhdc@gujarat.gov.in
Visit www.garvigurjari.in for online purchase
GSTIN: 24AAACG5598G1ZH



On Thu, 27 Mar 2025 at 10:01, Rajni Yadav <rajni.yadav-ct@msubaroda.ac.in> wrote:

Dear Madam/Sir,

I am writing to seek your valuable support in documenting and preserving Bela Printing, a traditional resist block printing technique from Bela, Rapar district, Kutch. This historic craft once played a significant role in trade between Kutch and Sindh, but today, it is on the verge of extinction, with Shri Mansukhbhai Khatri as its sole practitioner*.

The M.Sc. dissertation titled "Documentation and Preservation of Bela Printing", undertaken by Ms. Krishna Ardeshta under the guidance of Dr. Rajni Yadav at the Department of Clothing and Textiles, Faculty of Family and Community Sciences, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, aims to:

- Document the history and evolution of Bela Printing in Gujarat.
- Record its traditional techniques, processes, materials, and motifs.
- Create awareness and promote the craft for its survival and recognition.

Given the critical state of this craft, we seek your esteemed organization's support in promoting Bela Printing and helping sustain this valuable textile heritage. Your involvement can provide visibility, awareness, and market opportunities, ensuring that this craft is not lost to time.

We look forward to the opportunity to discuss how we can collectively contribute to its revival. Additionally, we seek your support in fulfilling one of the key objectives of this dissertation—promoting Bela Printing—so that this traditional craft continues to thrive and is preserved for future generations.

4/4/25, 6:48 PM

Gmail - Fwd: Support for the Documentation and Promotion of Bela Printing

To aid in this effort, we have designed **a brochure, postcards, and bookmarks** that highlight the significance of Bela Printing and its rich heritage. These materials serve as tools for awareness and promotion, and we would love to collaborate with you to expand their reach.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We hope to work together to ensure the survival and recognition of Bela Printing.

Best regards,

Dr. Rajni Yadav
Assistant Professor (Temp)
Department of Clothing and Textiles
Faculty of Family and Community Sciences
The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda

Appendix 2

Request for Promotion - Kutch Museum

4/4/25, 5:29 PM

Gmail - Request for the Promotion of Bela Printing & Visitor Data for Bela Printing Promotion



Krishna Ardeshna <ardeshnakrishna18@gmail.com>

Request for the Promotion of Bela Printing & Visitor Data for Bela Printing Promotion

1 message

Rajni Yadav <rajni.yadav-ct@msubaroda.ac.in>

Thu, Apr 3, 2025 at 3:35 PM

To: curator-syca-kut@gujarat.gov.in

Cc: Krishna Ardeshna <ardeshnakrishna18@gmail.com>

Dear Sir,

I hope you are doing well. I am reaching out to seek your esteemed support in promoting Bela Printing, a rare resist block printing technique from Bela, Rapar district, Kutch. This historic craft, once an integral part of trade between Kutch and Sindh, is now on the verge of extinction, with Shri Mansukhbhai Khatri as its sole practitioner.

As part of our initiative to document, preserve, and promote this craft, we have developed a catalog featuring Bela Print blocks along with detailed information about the technique, motifs, and cultural significance. Since the Kutch Museum attracts visitors from across India and abroad, your platform can play a vital role in providing visibility, awareness, and market opportunities for this endangered craft.

To support this effort, we would like to present a copy of this catalog to the Kutch Museum, ensuring that visitors can learn about Bela Printing and its rich heritage.

Additionally, we would appreciate your support in providing information on:

- The average number of visitors to the Kutch Museum per day.
- The origin of visitors (regions within India and international countries).

This data will help us understand the museum's outreach and explore further awareness initiatives. We sincerely look forward to your valuable support and the opportunity to collaborate in preserving this unique textile tradition.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your response.

Warm Regards

Dr. Rajni Yadav

Assistant Professor (Temp),
Department of Clothing and Textiles,
Faculty of Family and Community Sciences,
The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara.

4/4/25, 5:32 PM

Gmail - Respected Sir/Madam,



Krishna Ardeshta <ardeshnakrishna18@gmail.com>

Respected Sir/Madam,

1 message

Krishna Ardeshta <ardeshnakrishna18@gmail.com>

Thu, Mar 27, 2025 at 9:12 AM

To: mktgshhdc@gmail.com

Cc: pddindextcpmu@outlook.com, rajni.yadav-ct@msubaroda.ac.in

I am writing to bring to your esteemed attention the urgent need to document, preserve, and promote Bela Printing, a centuries-old textile tradition of Kutch, Gujarat, which is now on the verge of extinction.

Bela Printing is a traditional resist-dyeing block printing technique from the historic village of Bela, located in the Rapar district of Kutch. Once a flourishing craft, it played a significant role in trade between Kutch and Sindh, positioning the village as a key hub along ancient trade routes. The technique involves applying a natural mixture of mud and gum to create intricate geometric, floral, and animal motifs, reflecting the region's rich cultural heritage. However, over time, this craft has drastically declined, and today, Shri Mansukhbhai Khatri remains its sole practitioner.

As part of my MSc dissertation, titled "Documentation and Preservation of Bela Printing of Gujarat," I, Ms. Krishna Ardeshta (M.Sc. Clothing & Textiles), under the guidance of Dr. Rajni Yadav, am conducting extensive research to document the history, techniques, materials, and motifs of this craft. This study aims not only to revive interest in this endangered craft but also to contribute to its preservation and promote traditional Indian textile techniques among future generations.

Given your organization's dedication to Gujarat's cultural and craft heritage, I sincerely request your support in:

Promoting Bela Printing through exhibitions, artisan showcases, and tourism initiatives.

Providing visibility to the craft via digital platforms, craft fairs, and heritage tourism campaigns.

Exploring sustainable revival opportunities through design collaborations, training workshops, and market linkages.

Your esteemed institution's involvement would be instrumental in ensuring that this valuable textile tradition does not fade into obscurity. I look forward to your support and an opportunity to discuss this initiative further.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Appendix - 3

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE for Artisan

Respected Madam /Sir,

The undersigned is a Masters student at the Department of Clothing and Textiles, Faculty of Family and Community Sciences, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara.

The title of the master's dissertation is "Documentation and Preservation of Bela Printing of Gujarat"

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to document and preserve the traditional techniques, motifs, and cultural significance of Bela Block Printing from Bela village in Kutch, Gujarat. This traditional art form is on the verge of disappearing, with only one artisan currently practicing it and the younger generation showing little interest.

It is crucial to preserve the knowledge and techniques of Bela Printing by documenting its history and traditional practices. This research aims to protect the legacy of this ancient craft, raise awareness about its unique value, and promote its revival in contemporary society through lectures, workshops, and social media to increase its market presence.

Objectives of the study:

1. To document the history and evolution of Bela printing of Gujarat.
2. To document traditional techniques, processes, material and motifs of Bela print.
3. To create awareness and promotion of Bela craft.

Attached herewith is a copy of the questionnaire, which will be used as a tool to collect primary information from the artisans. I request you to validate the questionnaire. Your valuable suggestions shall help to add value to the body of information collected.

Thanking you to anticipation.

Krishna Ardesbna

Guide by: Dr. Rajni Yadav

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Questionnaire for Documentation and Preservation of Bela Printing of Gujarat

Part 1: Background Information

1. Name of the Artisan:
2. Age:
3. Gender:
4. Community:
5. Address (Home/Workshop):
6. Contact Number:
7. Educational Level:
 - No formal education
 - Primary schooling
 - Secondary schooling
 - higher secondary
 - Graduate
 - Any other
8. Family Composition:
 - Type of family: Joint / Nuclear
 - Number of family members:
 - Number of earning family members:

Part 2: Artisan's Background and Craft Initiation

1. How long have you been practicing Bela printing? (Years)

2. Who taught you the Bela printing technique?

- Parent
- Grandparent
- Relative
- Friend
- Self-observation
- Professional training

3. What influenced you to pursue Bela printing?

- Family tradition
- Interest in craft
- Recommended by family/friend
- Any other reason (please specify)

4. At what age did you start practicing Bela printing?

Part 3: Craft Details

1. What type of motifs do you use in Bela printing? (Select all that apply)

- Natural
- Geometric
- Stylized
- Customized
- Any other (please specify)

2. Do you create your own blocks or source them?

- Create
- Outsource
- provided by customers/organizations

3. If you create blocks, what materials do you use?

- Wood
- Metal
- Other (please specify)

4. Have you noticed changes in motifs or designs over time? If yes, what kind?

5. What type of dyes do you use in Bela printing? (Select all that apply)

- Natural dyes
- Synthetic dyes
- Rapid fast dyes
- any other (please specify)

6. What fabrics do you primarily use for printing?

7. Do you incorporate any specific narratives or cultural significance in your motifs? If yes, please describe.

Part 4: Production and Techniques

1. How many hours do you work on Bela printing each day?

2. How many meters of fabric do you print in a day?

3. What tools or techniques have changed in your practice over the years?

4. What challenges do you face in the printing process?

5. How do you care for and store the blocks used for printing?

Part 5: Marketing and Sales

1. Do you sell?

- Printed fabric yardages
- finished products (e.g., garments, home decor)

2. Who are your primary customers? (Select all that apply)

- Retailers
- Wholesalers
- Direct customers
- NGOs
- Brands

3. Where do you market your products?

- Local markets
- National markets
- International markets
- Online platforms

4. If you sell online, which platforms do you use?

- WhatsApp
- Instagram
- Facebook

- E-commerce websites (please specify)

5. What strategies do you use to attract customers?

- Discounts
- Unique designs
- Customization
- Collaboration with designers/brands

6. Do you see a specific season or period when demand for Bela printed products increases? If yes, please specify.

Part 6: Preservation and Future of Bela Printing

1. Are you interested in teaching Bela printing to the next generation or others?

- Yes
- No

2. What steps do you think are necessary to preserve Bela printing for the future?

- Documentation of techniques
- Workshops and training programs
- Government support
- Promotion through social media
- any other (please specify)

3. Have you received any support from government or organizations for practicing Bela printing?

4. Are you aware of any government schemes or policies that support traditional crafts like Bela printing?

- Yes
- No

5. Would you be open to adapting new designs or techniques to keep the craft relevant in modern markets?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe (please explain)

Part 7: Impact of Modernization

1. Have you faced any challenges due to changes in market demand or customer preferences?

2. What changes, if any, have you made to adapt to the current market trends?

ઇન્ટરવ્યુ શેડ્યુલ કારીગર માટે

આદરણીય મેડમ/સર,

નીચે હસ્તાક્ષર કરનાર ક્લોથિંગ એન્ડ ટેક્સટાઇલ વિભાગ, ફેકલ્ટી ઓફ ફેમિલી એન્ડ કોમ્યુનિટી સાયન્સ, મહારાજા સયાજીરાવ યુનિવર્સિટી ઓફ બરોડા, વડોદરામાં માસ્ટર્સનો વિદ્યાર્થી છે.

માસ્ટરના મહાનિબંધનું શીર્ષક છે “ગુજરાતમાં બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગનું દસ્તાવેજીકરણ અને સંરક્ષણ.”

અભ્યાસનો હેતુ

આ અભ્યાસનો હેતુ ગુજરાતના કચ્છના બેલા ગામમાંથી બેલા બ્લોક પ્રિન્ટિંગની પરંપરાગત તકનીકો, ઉદ્દેશ્યો અને સાંસ્કૃતિક મહત્વને દસ્તાવેજીકૃત અને સાચવવાનો છે. આ પરંપરાગત કલા લુપ્ત થવાના આરે છે, હાલમાં માત્ર એક જ કારીગર તેની પ્રેક્ટિસ કરે છે અને યુવા પેઢી ઓછી રસ દાખવતી હોય છે.

બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગના ઇતિહાસ અને પરંપરાગત પ્રથાઓનું દસ્તાવેજીકરણ તેના જ્ઞાન અને તકનીકોને સાચવવા માટે નિર્ણાયક છે. આ સંશોધનનો ઉદ્દેશ્ય આ પ્રાચીન હસ્તકલાના વારસાને બચાવવા, તેના અનન્ય મૂલ્ય વિશે જાગૃતિ લાવવા અને તેની બજાર હાજરી વધારવા માટે વ્યાખ્યાનો, વર્કશોપ અને સોશિયલ મીડિયા દ્વારા સમકાલીન સમાજમાં તેના પુનરુત્થાનને પ્રોત્સાહન આપવાનો છે.

અભ્યાસના ઉદ્દેશ્યો:

1. ગુજરાતના બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગના ઇતિહાસ અને ઉત્ક્રાંતિનું દસ્તાવેજીકરણ કરવું.
2. બેલા પ્રિન્ટની પરંપરાગત તકનીકો, પ્રક્રિયાઓ, સામગ્રી અને હેતુઓનું દસ્તાવેજીકરણ કરવું.
3. બેલા હસ્તકલાની જાગૃતિ અને પ્રચાર માટે.

મેં આ સાથે પ્રશ્નાવલીની એક નકલ જોડી છે, જેનો ઉપયોગ કારીગરો પાસેથી પ્રાથમિક માહિતી એકત્રિત કરવા માટે કરવામાં આવશે. હું વિનંતી કરું છું કે તમે પ્રશ્નાવલીને માન્ય કરો. તમારા મૂલ્યવાન સૂચનો એકત્રિત માહિતીના મુખ્ય ભાગમાં મૂલ્ય ઉમેરવામાં મદદ કરશે.

આભાર

પ્રશ્નાવલી

ભાગ 1: પૃષ્ઠભૂમિ માહિતી

1. કારીગરનું નામ:

2. ઉંમર:

3. જાતિ:

4. સમુદાય:

5. સરનામું (ઘર/વર્કશોપ):

6. સંપર્ક નંબર:

7. શૈક્ષણિક સ્તર:

- કોઈ ઔપચારિક શિક્ષણ નથી
- પ્રાથમિક શાળાનું શિક્ષણ
- માધ્યમિક શિક્ષણ
- ઉચ્ચતર માધ્યમિક
- સ્નાતક
- કોઈપણ અન્ય

8. કૌટુંબિક રચના:

- કુટુંબનો પ્રકાર: સંયુક્ત / પરમાણુ
- પરિવારના સભ્યોની સંખ્યા:
- કમાતા કુટુંબના સભ્યોની સંખ્યા:

ભાગ 2: કારીગરની પૃષ્ઠભૂમિ અને હસ્તકલાની શરૂઆત

1. તમે બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગનો અભ્યાસ કેટલા સમયથી કરી રહ્યા છો?(વર્ષો)

2. તમને બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ ટેકનિક કોણે શીખવી?

- માતાપિતા
- દાદા-દાદી
- સગા
- મિત્ર
- સ્વ-નિરીક્ષણ
- વ્યાવસાયિક તાલીમ

3. બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગને અનુસરવા માટે તમને શું પ્રભાવિત કર્યું?

- કૌટુંબિક પરંપરા
- હસ્તકલામાં રસ
- પરિવાર/મિત્ર દ્વારા ભલામણ કરાયેલ
- કોઈ અન્ય કારણ) કૃપા કરીને સ્પષ્ટ કરો(

4. તમે કઈ ઉંમરે બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગનો અભ્યાસ શરૂ કર્યો?

ભાગ ૩: હસ્તકલાની વિગતો

1. બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગમાં તમે કયા પ્રકારના મોટિફ્સનો ઉપયોગ કરો છો? (લાગુ પડતા બધા પસંદ કરો)

- કુદરતી
- ભૌમિતિક
- શૈલીયુક્ત
- કસ્ટમાઇઝ્ડ
- કોઈ અન્ય (કૃપા કરીને સ્પષ્ટ કરો)

2. શું તમે તમારા પોતાના બ્લોક્સ બનાવો છો અથવા તેમને સ્ત્રોત આપો છો?

- બનાવો
- આઉટસોર્સ
- ગ્રાહકો/સંસ્થાઓ દ્વારા પ્રદાન કરવામાં આવે છે

3. જો તમે બ્લોક્સ બનાવો છો, તો તમે કઈ સામગ્રીનો ઉપયોગ કરો છો?

- લાકડું
- ધાતુ
- અન્ય) કૃપા કરીને સ્પષ્ટ કરો(

4. શું તમે સમય જતાં મોટિફ્સ અથવા ડિઝાઇનમાં ફેરફારો જોયા છે? જો હા, તો કયા પ્રકારનું?

5. બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગમાં તમે કયા પ્રકારના રંગોનો ઉપયોગ કરો છો? (લાગુ પડતા બધા રંગો પસંદ કરો)

- કુદરતી રંગો
- કૃત્રિમ રંગો
- ઝડપી રંગો
- અન્ય કોઈ) કૃપા કરીને સ્પષ્ટ કરો(

6. છાપકામ માટે તમે મુખ્યત્વે કયા કાપડનો ઉપયોગ કરો છો?

7. શું તમે તમારા મોટિફ્સમાં કોઈ ચોક્કસ કથાઓ અથવા સાંસ્કૃતિક મહત્વનો સમાવેશ કરો છો? જો હા, તો કૃપા કરીને વર્ણન કરો.

ભાગ ૪: ઉત્પાદન અને તકનીકો

1. બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ પર તમે દરરોજ કેટલા કલાક કામ કરો છો?
2. તમે દિવસમાં કેટલા મીટર ફેબ્રિક છાપો છો?
3. વર્ષોથી તમારી પ્રેક્ટિસમાં કયા સાધનો અથવા તકનીકો બદલાયા છે?
4. પ્રિન્ટિંગ પ્રક્રિયામાં તમને કયા પડકારોનો સામનો કરવો પડે છે?
5. પ્રિન્ટિંગ માટે ઉપયોગમાં લેવાતા બ્લોક્સની તમે કેવી રીતે કાળજી અને સંગ્રહ કરો છો?

ભાગ ૫: માર્કેટિંગ અને વેચાણ

1. શું તમે વેચાણ કરો છો?

- મુદ્રિત ફેબ્રિક યાર્ડ્ઝ
- તૈયાર ઉત્પાદનો (દા.ત., કપડાં, ઘરની સજાવટ)

2. તમારા પ્રાથમિક ગ્રાહકો કોણ છે? (લાગુ પડતા બધા પસંદ કરો)

- રિટેલર્સ
- હોલસેલર્સ
- ડાયરેક્ટ ગ્રાહકો
- એનજીઓ
- બ્રાન્ડ્સ

3. તમે તમારા ઉત્પાદનોનું માર્કેટિંગ ક્યાં કરો છો?

- સ્થાનિક બજારો
- રાષ્ટ્રીય બજારો
- આંતરરાષ્ટ્રીય બજારો
- ઓનલાઇન પ્લેટફોર્મ

4. જો તમે ઓનલાઇન વેચાણ કરો છો, તો તમે કયા પ્લેટફોર્મનો ઉપયોગ કરો છો?

- વોટ્સએપ
- ઇન્સ્ટાગ્રામ
- ફેસબુક
- ઇ-કોમર્સ વેબસાઇટ્સ (ફૂપા કરીને સ્પષ્ટ કરો)

5. ગ્રાહકોને આકર્ષવા માટે તમે કઈ વ્યૂહરચનાઓનો ઉપયોગ કરો છો?

- ડિસ્કાઉન્ટ
- અનન્ય ડિઝાઇન
- કસ્ટમાઇઝેશન
- ડિઝાઇનર્સ/બ્રાન્ડ્સ સાથે સહયોગ

6. શું તમે કોઈ ચોક્કસ ઋતુ કે સમયગાળો જુઓ છો જ્યારે બેલા પ્રિન્ટેડ ઉત્પાદનોની માંગ વધે છે? જો હા, તો કૃપા કરીને સ્પષ્ટ કરો.

ભાગ ૬: બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગનું સંરક્ષણ અને ભવિષ્ય

1. શું તમે આગામી પેઢી કે અન્ય લોકોને બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ શીખવવામાં રસ ધરાવો છો?

- હા
- ના

2. ભવિષ્ય માટે બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગને સાચવવા માટે કયા પગલાં જરૂરી લાગે છે?

- ટેકનિકનું દસ્તાવેજીકરણ
- વર્કશોપ અને તાલીમ કાર્યક્રમો
- સરકારી સમર્થન
- સોશિયલ મીડિયા દ્વારા પ્રમોશન
- કોઈ અન્ય (કૃપા કરીને સ્પષ્ટ કરો)

3. શું તમને બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગનો અભ્યાસ કરવા માટે સરકાર કે સંસ્થાઓ તરફથી કોઈ સમર્થન મળ્યું છે?

4. શું તમે બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ જેવી પરંપરાગત હસ્તકલાને ટેકો આપતી કોઈ સરકારી યોજનાઓ કે નીતિઓથી વાકેફ છો?

- હા
- ના

5. શું તમે આધુનિક બજારોમાં હસ્તકલાને સુસંગત રાખવા માટે નવી ડિઝાઇન કે તકનીકોને અનુકૂલિત કરવા માટે ખુલ્લા હશો?

- હા
- ના
- કદાચ (ફૂપા કરીને સમજાવો)

ભાગ ૭: આધુનિકીકરણની અસર

1. બજારની માંગ અથવા ગ્રાહક પસંદગીઓમાં ફેરફારને કારણે શું તમને કોઈ પડકારોનો સામનો કરવો પડ્યો છે?

2. વર્તમાન બજારના વલણોને અનુરૂપ થવા માટે તમે કયા ફેરફારો કર્યા છે, જો કોઈ હોય તો?

Appendix - 4



**The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda
Faculty of Family and Community Sciences
Department of Clothing and Textiles**

CONSENT FORM

STUDY TITLE: Documentation and Preservation of Bela printing of Gujarat

Guide

Dr. Rajni Yadav

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Research Scholar

Krishna Ardeshta M.Sc. Student,

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The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara (M) 9664984224

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to document and preserve the traditional techniques, motifs, and cultural significance of Bela Block Printing from Bela village in Kutch, Gujarat. This traditional art form is on the verge of disappearing, with only one artisan currently practicing it and the younger generation showing little interest.

It is crucial to preserve the knowledge and techniques of Bela Printing by documenting its history and traditional practices. This research aims to protect the legacy of this ancient craft, raise awareness about its unique value, and promote its revival in contemporary society through lectures, workshops, and social media to increase its market presence.

COSTS

Participation in this study requires only your time and cooperation. Any costs related to the product development will be covered by the researchers. However, no financial compensation will be provided for your participation.

POSSIBLE BENEFITS AND RISKS

The benefits of this study include the documentation and promotion of the Bela Printing craft, raising awareness of its cultural importance, and encouraging potential collaborations with artisans.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Consent form from the artisan. Structured Interview questionnaire for artisan. Voluntary Participation. Participant data will be kept strictly confidential and used only for research. Appropriate permissions will be sought at all levels as required for the successful conduct of the study. Secondary data will be cited and due acknowledgement will be given.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

Your decision to join this study is voluntary. You may quit at any time, for any reason, without notice. We hope you will take part in the entire study period because we need all the information to draw correct conclusions.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT

Your cooperation is important to the success of this study. Unless many Artisans like you agree to join; this study will not be possible.

AVAILABILITY OF RESULTS AND CONSULTATION

If you have any questions about any part of the study or your rights as a volunteer, you can contact the investigators.

RESEARCHER'S STATEMENT

As the researcher, I am committed to conducting this study with the highest ethical standards, ensuring the protection of your rights and well-being throughout the research process. I have explained the research program, the purpose of the study, and the potential risks and benefits to the participant, and I am available for any further clarification."

Signature of researcher with date

Appendix - 5

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR BELA WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Title of Dissertation: “*Documentation and Preservation of Bela Printing in Gujarat*”

Dear Respondents,

I am conducting research as part of my Master’s dissertation in Clothing and Textiles, focusing on the *Documentation and Preservation of Bela Printing in Gujarat*. Your participation in this workshop is essential to help gather valuable insights into the future of this craft.

Please note the following:

- Bela printing is a traditional textile art form from Gujarat that is on the brink of extinction. Only one remaining artisan practices it.
- The younger generation is not actively involved, leading to concerns about its continuity.
- This workshop aims to raise awareness about Bela printing and foster a deeper understanding among potential consumers and stakeholders.

Objectives of the Workshop:

1. To raise awareness and understanding of Bela printing as a culturally significant craft.
2. To promote and highlight the value of Bela printing to potential consumers and the younger generation.
3. To encourage discussions on the preservation and contemporary application of this ancient craft in modern society.

Participation in this interview will help us document your experience, awareness, and thoughts regarding Bela printing before and after the workshop. The findings will contribute significantly to the ongoing efforts to preserve and revive this art form.

Krishna Ardeshta (Sr. MSc.)

Guide by: Dr. Rajni Yadav

RESPONDENTS' PROFILE

Name:

Age:

Gender: (Select any one)

- Female
- Male
- Other

Educational Qualification:

Occupational Status:

PRE-WORKSHOP QUESTIONS:

1. How familiar are you with Gujarat's traditional textile crafts?

- Not familiar
- Slightly familiar
- Moderately familiar
- Very familiar

2. How did you learn about traditional textile practices? (Select all that apply)

- School/college
- Workshops/seminars
- Books
- Documentaries/TV/Media
- Internet (blogs, social media)
- Other (please specify)

3. Have you heard of **Bela Printing** before this workshop?

- Yes
- No
-

4. What comes to mind when you hear **Bela Printing** (Select all that apply)

- Traditional craftsmanship
- Local culture
- Eco-friendly textiles
- Fashion and design
- Historical significance
- Source of income for artisans

5. Are you aware of any resist block printing techniques?

- Yes
- No

6. If you are familiar with Bela Printing, can you describe its significance?

7. Have you attended other workshops or events related to traditional art forms?

- Yes
- No

8. If yes, describe your experience and the art forms you learned about:

POST-WORKSHOP QUESTIONS

9. After attending the workshop, how familiar are you with Gujarat's traditional textile crafts, especially **Bela Printing**?

- Not familiar
- Slightly familiar
- Moderately familiar
- Very familiar

10. What new knowledge or skills have you gained about Bela Printing from this workshop?

11. Has the workshop increased your interest in purchasing or supporting traditional textiles like Bela printing?

- Yes
- No

12. Do you believe workshops like this contribute to preservation of traditional crafts?

- Yes
- No

13. Do you feel the workshop improved your understanding of Bela printing?

- Yes
- No

14. Are you aware of any ongoing efforts to preserve or promote traditional textile arts like Bela printing?

- Yes
- No

15. If yes, please name any organisations or projects you are aware of:

16. Do you believe Bela Printing and other traditional practices are at risk of disappearing?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

17. What do you think are the biggest challenge artisans face in preserving their craft?
(Choose all that apply)

- Financial difficulties
- Lack of access to markets

- Limited exposure to modern techniques
- Lack of formal education in preservation
- Government or policy issues
- Other (please specify)

18. What actions do you think could help preserve Bela Printing? (Select all that apply)

- Increased financial support for artisans
- Modern marketing strategies
- Government programs
- Educational initiatives
- Other (please specify):

19. How likely are you to promote or share your knowledge of Bela Printing with others after the workshop?

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Not likely

20. During the workshop, a fashion sequence in CREATIONS 2025 featuring **Bela Printing** was showcased by students. Did this influence your perception of its relevance in modern fashion?

- Yes, it showed how the craft can be adapted to contemporary design.
- No, it did not change my perception.
- I did not attend or notice the fashion sequence.

21. Do you believe preserving traditional crafts like **Bela Printing** can create employment opportunities for artisans?

- Yes
- No

22. Do you think more collaborations between artisans, designers, and academic institutions can enhance the visibility of crafts like Bela Printing?

- Yes
- No

23. Would you recommend incorporating traditional crafts like Bela Printing into modern fashion designs?

- Yes
- No

24. How can modern technology contribute to the preservation of Bela Printing?

(Choose all that apply)

- Digital archiving
- Promotion on social media
- E-commerce for artisans
- Documenting techniques
- Training workshops for artisans
- Other (please specify)

25. What do you think was this workshop's most important contribution to increasing awareness of traditional crafts?

26. Please share any additional suggestions or comments.

બેલા વર્કશોપના સહભાગીઓ માટે ઇન્ટરવ્યૂ શેડ્યૂલ

નિબંધનું શીર્ષક: “ગુજરાતમાં બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગનું દસ્તાવેજીકરણ અને જાળવણી”

પ્રિય ઉત્તરદાતાઓ,

હું કપડાં અને કાપડમાં મારા માસ્ટરના નિબંધના ભાગ રૂપે સંશોધન કરી રહ્યો છું, જે ગુજરાતમાં બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગના દસ્તાવેજીકરણ અને જાળવણી પર ધ્યાન કેન્દ્રિત કરે છે. આ વર્કશોપમાં તમારી ભાગીદારી આ હસ્તકલાના ભવિષ્ય વિશે મૂલ્યવાન આંતરદૃષ્ટિ એકત્રિત કરવામાં મદદ કરવા માટે આવશ્યક છે.

કૃપા કરીને નીચેની બાબતોની નોંધ લો:

- બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ એ ગુજરાતનું એક પરંપરાગત કાપડ કલા સ્વરૂપ છે જે લુપ્ત થવાના આરે છે. ફક્ત એક જ કારીગર તેનો અભ્યાસ કરે છે.
- યુવા પેઢી સક્રિય રીતે સામેલ નથી, જેના કારણે તેની સાતત્યતા અંગે ચિંતાઓ ઉભી થાય છે.
- આ વર્કશોપનો હેતુ બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ વિશે જાગૃતિ લાવવા અને સંભવિત ગ્રાહકો અને ડિસેદારોમાં ઊંડી સમજણ વધારવાનો છે.

વર્કશોપના ઉદ્દેશ્યો:

1. સાંસ્કૃતિક રીતે મહત્વપૂર્ણ હસ્તકલા તરીકે બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ વિશે જાગૃતિ અને સમજણ વધારવાનો.
2. સંભવિત ગ્રાહકો અને યુવા પેઢીમાં બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગના મૂલ્યને પ્રોત્સાહન આપવા અને પ્રકાશિત કરવા.
3. આધુનિક સમાજમાં આ પ્રાચીન હસ્તકલાના સંરક્ષણ અને સમકાલીન ઉપયોગ પર ચર્ચાઓને પ્રોત્સાહન આપવું.

આ મુલાકાતમાં ભાગ લેવાથી અમને વર્કશોપ પહેલાં અને પછી બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ અંગેના તમારા અનુભવ, જાગૃતિ અને વિચારોનું દસ્તાવેજીકરણ કરવામાં મદદ મળશે. આ તારણો આ કલા સ્વરૂપને સાચવવા અને પુનર્જીવિત કરવાના યાલુ પ્રયાસોમાં નોંધપાત્ર યોગદાન આપશે.

ક્રિષ્ના આરદેશણા

માર્ગદર્શન: ડૉ. રજની યાદવ

(સિનિયર એમએસસી.)

1. પ્રતિભાવ આપનારાઓની પ્રોફાઇલ

નામ:

ઉંમર:

2. લિંગ: (કોઈપણ એક પસંદ કરો)

• સ્ત્રી

• પુરુષ

• અન્ય

3. શૈક્ષણિક લાયકાત:

4. વ્યવસાયિક સ્થિતિ:

વર્કશોપ પહેલાના પ્રશ્નો:

1. ગુજરાતની પરંપરાગત કાપડ હસ્તકલાથી તમે કેટલા પરિચિત છો?

• પરિચિત નથી

• થોડા પરિચિત

• મધ્યમ પરિચિત

• ખૂબ પરિચિત

2. પરંપરાગત કાપડ પ્રથાઓ વિશે તમે કેવી રીતે શીખ્યા? (લાગુ પડતા બધા પસંદ કરો)

- શાળા/કોલેજ
- વર્કશોપ/સેમિનાર
- પુસ્તકો
- દસ્તાવેજી/ટીવી/મીડિયા
- ઇન્ટરનેટ (બ્લોગ, સોશિયલ મીડિયા)
- અન્ય (ફૂલા કરીને સ્પષ્ટ કરો)

3. શું તમે આ વર્કશોપ પહેલાં બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ વિશે સાંભળ્યું છે?

- હા
- ના

4. જ્યારે તમે બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ સાંભળો છો ત્યારે તમારા મનમાં શું આવે છે (લાગુ પડતા બધા પસંદ કરો)

- પરંપરાગત કારીગરી
- સ્થાનિક સંસ્કૃતિ
- પર્યાવરણને અનુકૂળ કાપડ
- ફેશન અને ડિઝાઇન
- ઐતિહાસિક મહત્વ
- કારીગરો માટે આવકનો સ્ત્રોત

5. શું તમે કોઈપણ રેઝિસ્ટ બ્લોક પ્રિન્ટિંગ તકનીકોથી વાકેફ છો?

- હા
- ના

6. જો તમે બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગથી પરિચિત છો, તો શું તમે તેનું મહત્વ વર્ણવી શકો છો?

7. શું તમે પરંપરાગત કલા સ્વરૂપો સંબંધિત અન્ય વર્કશોપ અથવા કાર્યક્રમોમાં હાજરી આપી છે?

- હા
- ના

8. જો હા, તો તમારા અનુભવ અને તમે જે કલા સ્વરૂપો વિશે શીખ્યા તેનું વર્ણન કરો:

વર્કશોપ પછીના પ્રશ્નો

9. વર્કશોપમાં હાજરી આપ્યા પછી, તમે ગુજરાતની પરંપરાગત કાપડ કારીગરી, ખાસ કરીને બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગથી કેટલા પરિચિત છો?

- પરિચિત નથી
- થોડી પરિચિત
- થોડી પરિચિત
- ખૂબ પરિચિત

10. આ વર્કશોપમાંથી તમે બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ વિશે કયું નવું જ્ઞાન અથવા કુશળતા મેળવી છે?

11. શું વર્કશોપથી બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ જેવા પરંપરાગત કાપડ ખરીદવામાં અથવા તેને ટેકો આપવામાં તમારી રુચિ વધી છે?

- હા
- ના

12. શું તમે માનો છો કે આ પ્રકારની વર્કશોપ પરંપરાગત હસ્તકલાના સંરક્ષણમાં ફાળો આપે છે?

• હા

• ના

13. શું તમને લાગે છે કે વર્કશોપથી બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ વિશેની તમારી સમજમાં સુધારો થયો છે?

• હા

• ના

14. શું તમે બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ જેવી પરંપરાગત કાપડ કળાને સાચવવા અથવા પ્રોત્સાહન આપવા માટેના કોઈપણ ચાલુ પ્રયાસોથી વાકેફ છો?

• હા

• ના

15. જો હા, તો કૃપા કરીને એવી કોઈ સંસ્થા અથવા પ્રોજેક્ટનું નામ આપો જેના વિશે તમે જાણો છો:

16. શું તમે માનો છો કે બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ અને અન્ય પરંપરાગત પ્રથાઓ અદ્રશ્ય થવાના જોખમમાં છે?

• હા

• ના

• ખાતરી નથી

17. તમારા મતે, કારીગરો તેમની કારીગરીને સાચવવામાં સૌથી મોટો પડકાર કયો છે? (લાગુ પડતું બધું પસંદ કરો)

• નાણાકીય મુશ્કેલીઓ

- બજારોમાં પહોંચનો અભાવ
- આધુનિક તકનીકોનો મર્યાદિત સંપર્ક
- જાળવણીમાં ઔપચારિક શિક્ષણનો અભાવ
- સરકારી અથવા નીતિગત મુદ્દાઓ
- અન્ય (ફૂપા કરીને સ્પષ્ટ કરો)

18. તમારા મતે, બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગને સાચવવામાં કઈ ક્રિયાઓ મદદ કરી શકે છે? (લાગુ પડતું બધું પસંદ કરો)

- કારીગરો માટે નાણાકીય સહાયમાં વધારો
- આધુનિક માર્કેટિંગ વ્યૂહરચનાઓ
- સરકારી કાર્યક્રમો
- શૈક્ષણિક પહેલ
- અન્ય (ફૂપા કરીને સ્પષ્ટ કરો):

19. વર્કશોપ પછી તમે બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગના તમારા જ્ઞાનને અન્ય લોકો સાથે પ્રમોટ કરવાની અથવા શેર કરવાની કેટલી શક્યતા ધરાવો છો?

- ખૂબ જ શક્યતા
- થોડી શક્યતા
- શક્યતા નથી

20. વર્કશોપ દરમિયાન, વિદ્યાર્થીઓ દ્વારા CREATIONS 2025 માં બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ દર્શાવતો ફેશન સિક્વન્સ પ્રદર્શિત કરવામાં આવ્યો હતો. શું આનાથી આધુનિક ફેશનમાં તેની સુસંગતતા અંગેની તમારી ધારણા પર અસર પડી?

- હા, તે દર્શાવે છે કે હસ્તકલાને સમકાલીન ડિઝાઇનમાં કેવી રીતે અનુકૂલિત કરી શકાય છે.
- ના, તેનાથી મારી ધારણા બદલાઈ નથી.
- મેં ફેશન સિક્વન્સમાં હાજરી આપી નથી કે જોયું નથી.

21. શું તમે માનો છો કે બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ જેવી પરંપરાગત હસ્તકલાને સાયવવાથી કારીગરો માટે રોજગારીની તકો ઊભી થઈ શકે છે?

- હા
- ના

22. શું તમને લાગે છે કે કારીગરો, ડિઝાઇનરો અને શૈક્ષણિક સંસ્થાઓ વચ્ચે વધુ સહયોગ બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ જેવી હસ્તકલાની દૃશ્યતા વધારી શકે છે?

- હા
- ના

23. શું તમે બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગ જેવી પરંપરાગત હસ્તકલાને આધુનિક ફેશન ડિઝાઇનમાં સામેલ કરવાની ભલામણ કરશો?

- હા
- ના

24. આધુનિક ટેકનોલોજી બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગના સંરક્ષણમાં કેવી રીતે ફાળો આપી શકે છે? (લાગુ પડતું બધું પસંદ કરો)

- ડિજિટલ આર્કાઇવિંગ
- સોશિયલ મીડિયા પર પ્રમોશન
- કારીગરો માટે ઇ-કોમર્સ
- દસ્તાવેજીકરણ તકનીકો
- કારીગરો માટે તાલીમ વર્કશોપ
- અન્ય (ફૂલા કરીને સ્પષ્ટ કરો)

25. પરંપરાગત હસ્તકલાની જાગૃતિ વધારવામાં આ વર્કશોપનું સૌથી મહત્વપૂર્ણ યોગદાન શું હતું તે તમારા મતે?

26. કૃપા કરીને કોઈપણ વધારાના સૂચનો અથવા ટિપ્પણીઓ શેર કરો.

Annexure – 1

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE for Artisan

Respected Madam /Sir,

The undersigned is a Masters student at the Department of Clothing and Textiles, Faculty of Family and Community Sciences, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara.

The title of the master's dissertation is "Documentation and Preservation of Bela Printing of Gujarat"

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to document and preserve the traditional techniques, motifs, and cultural significance of Bela Block Printing from Bela village in Kutch, Gujarat. This traditional art form is on the verge of disappearing, with only one artisan currently practicing it and the younger generation showing little interest.

It is crucial to preserve the knowledge and techniques of Bela Printing by documenting its history and traditional practices. This research aims to protect the legacy of this ancient craft, raise awareness about its unique value, and promote its revival in contemporary society through lectures, workshops, and social media to increase its market presence.

Objectives of the study:

- 1) To document the history and evolution of Bela printing of Gujarat.
- 2) To document traditional techniques, processes, material and motifs of Bela print.
- 3) To create awareness and promotion of Bela craft.

Attached herewith is a copy of the questionnaire, which will be used as a tool to collect primary information from the artisans. I request you to validate the questionnaire. Your valuable suggestions shall help to add value to the body of information collected.

Thanking you to anticipation.

Krishna Ardeshta

Guide by: Dr. Rajni Yadav

ઇન્ટરવ્યુ શેડ્યૂલ - કારીગર માટે

આદરણીય મેડમ/સર,

નીચે હસ્તાક્ષર કરનાર ક્લોથિંગ એન્ડ ટેક્સટાઇલ વિભાગ, ફેકલ્ટી ઓફ ફેમિલી એન્ડ કોમ્યુનિટી સાયન્સ, મહારાજા સયાજીરાવ યુનિવર્સિટી ઓફ બરોડા, વડોદરામાં માસ્ટર્સનો વિદ્યાર્થી છે.

માસ્ટરના મહાનિબંધનું શીર્ષક છે “ગુજરાતમાં બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગનું દસ્તાવેજીકરણ અને સંરક્ષણ.”

અભ્યાસનો હેતુ

આ અભ્યાસનો હેતુ ગુજરાતના કચ્છના બેલા ગામમાંથી બેલા બ્લોક પ્રિન્ટિંગની પરંપરાગત તકનીકો, ઉદ્દેશ્યો અને સાંસ્કૃતિક મહત્વને દસ્તાવેજીકૃત અને સાચવવાનો છે. આ પરંપરાગત કલા લુપ્ત થવાના આરે છે, હાલમાં માત્ર એક જ કારીગર તેની પ્રેક્ટિસ કરે છે અને યુવા પેઢી ઓછી રસ દાખવતી હોય છે.

બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગના ઇતિહાસ અને પરંપરાગત પ્રથાઓનું દસ્તાવેજીકરણ તેના જ્ઞાન અને તકનીકોને સાચવવા માટે નિર્ણાયક છે. આ સંશોધનનો ઉદ્દેશ્ય આ પ્રાચીન હસ્તકલાના વારસાને બચાવવા, તેના અનન્ય મૂલ્ય વિશે જાગૃતિ લાવવા અને તેની બજાર હાજરી વધારવા માટે વ્યાખ્યાનો, વર્કશોપ અને સોશિયલ મીડિયા દ્વારા સમકાલીન સમાજમાં તેના પુનરુત્થાનને પ્રોત્સાહન આપવાનો છે.

અભ્યાસના ઉદ્દેશ્યો:

1. ગુજરાતના બેલા પ્રિન્ટિંગના ઇતિહાસ અને ઉત્ક્રાંતિનું દસ્તાવેજીકરણ કરવું.
2. બેલા પ્રિન્ટની પરંપરાગત તકનીકો, પ્રક્રિયાઓ, સામગ્રી અને હેતુઓનું દસ્તાવેજીકરણ કરવું.
3. બેલા હસ્તકલાની જાગૃતિ અને પ્રચાર માટે.

મેં આ સાથે પ્રશ્નાવલીની એક નકલ જોડી છે, જેનો ઉપયોગ કારીગરો પાસેથી પ્રાથમિક માહિતી એકત્રિત કરવા માટે કરવામાં આવશે. હું વિનંતી કરું છું કે તમે પ્રશ્નાવલીને માન્ય કરો. તમારા મૂલ્યવાન સૂચનો એકત્રિત માહિતીના મુખ્ય ભાગમાં મૂલ્ય ઉમેરવામાં મદદ કરશે.

આભાર

ક્રિષ્ના આરદેશણા

માર્ગદર્શક: ડૉ. રજની યાદવ

Annexure - 2



**The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda
Faculty of Family and Community Sciences
Department of Clothing and Textiles**

CONSENT FORM

STUDY TITLE: Documentation and Preservation of Bela printing of Gujarat

Guide

Dr. Rajni Yadav

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Research Scholar

Krishna Ardesna M.Sc. Student,

Department of Clothing and Textiles Faculty of Family & Community Sciences

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PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to document and preserve the traditional techniques, motifs, and cultural significance of Bela Block Printing from Bela village in Kutch, Gujarat. This traditional art form is on the verge of disappearing, with only one artisan currently practicing it and the younger generation showing little interest.

It is crucial to preserve the knowledge and techniques of Bela Printing by documenting its history and traditional practices. This research aims to protect the legacy of this ancient

craft, raise awareness about its unique value, and promote its revival in contemporary society through lectures, workshops, and social media to increase its market presence.

COSTS

Participation in this study requires only your time and cooperation. Any costs related to the product development will be covered by the researchers. However, no financial compensation will be provided for your participation.

POSSIBLE BENEFITS AND RISKS

The benefits of this study include the documentation and promotion of the Bela Printing craft, raising awareness of its cultural importance, and encouraging potential collaborations with artisans.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Consent form from the artisan. Structured Interview questionnaire for artisan. Voluntary Participation. Participant data will be kept strictly confidential and used only for research. Appropriate permissions will be sought at all levels as required for the successful conduct of the study. Secondary data will be cited and due acknowledgement will be given.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

Your decision to join this study is voluntary. You may quit at any time, for any reason, without notice. We hope you will take part in the entire study period because we need all the information to draw correct conclusions.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT

Your cooperation is important to the success of this study. Unless many Artisans like you agree to join; this study will not be possible.

AVAILABILITY OF RESULTS AND CONSULTATION

If you have any questions about any part of the study or your rights as a volunteer, you can contact the investigators.

RESEARCHER'S STATEMENT

As the researcher, I am committed to conducting this study with the highest ethical standards, ensuring the protection of your rights and well-being throughout the research process. I have explained the research program, the purpose of the study, and the potential risks and benefits to the participant, and I am available for any further clarification."

Signature of researcher with date

