

Chapter 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION



Summary and Conclusion

5.1. Introduction:

Gujarati textiles in Indian as well as in international market had a critical function in material exchange and relations. The function was the product of the particular communal, cultural, political and symbolic meanings which cloth attained through complex processes of domestication. In their journey from a weaver's loom to the hands of the local ruler, trader or patron client, a piece of cloth endured a transformations as it became engraved with meanings that reflected local expressions of taste. Provincial and communal clothes in India since ancient times have worked as a strong repository that talked about its culture, beliefs, geography and social status. This visual language also essayed about the designation of basic details like age, marital status and socio-cultural status. Again, the weavers populating the spaces in and around the trading centers faced the multiplicity of changes in the organization of production. The sector that got encroached by the technology and grave needs of changing times, lost its value in the milieu of present day urban and rural requirements.

Most of the fragments of this visual vocabulary has been intensively investigated, recorded, diversified and revived, while a limited range of the textile tradition have died a slow death. Some of the rare existent kinds of such threads have survived as mainstream article of clothing; simpler, apparent and as a product for daily life yet unique in their own kind. One such textile under study was identified for the purpose of investigation. The research encompassed for inquiries pertaining to the weaving craft;

- The socio-cultural and economic profile of the languishing craft producers.
- Development of material culture database on the textile under study and cataloguing as well as representation of their different forms, formats and patterns.
- Textiles as dress, their cultural expressions and use as commodities.

5.2. Objectives:

5.2.1. To trace and evolve meaning and historical accounts on the *Pachhedi* textile used in Gujarat.

5.2.2. To execute craft mapping investigation on *Pachhedi* textile for studying;

- a. *the current socio-economic profiles of the weavers*
 - b. *the weaving process, technique and motif vocabulary, and emergent supply chain structure with kinship between stakeholders involved.*
- 5.2.3. To engender material culture database of the textile by means of;
- a. *Studying consumption patterns, cultural meanings and significance of Pachhedis used by different communities and sects in Gujarat and Rajasthan.*
 - b. *Analyzing and cataloguing extinct and existent forms of textiles available with the consumers, museums and private collectors.*
- 5.2.4. To propose contemporary designs in *Pachhedi* weaving technique.

5.3. Methodology:

The broader goal of the research was to identify and study the lesser known weaving textile of Gujarat. This aim was answered by studying *pachhedi* textile as to how it was produced, consumed and distributed at the local level set-up. Moreover, each textile had its own form that determined its function and it inevitably possessed a visual language, like other folk textiles in India. This visual grammar of each textile based on the use of colour and arrangement of motifs spoke about the community it was designed for.

Both qualitative and quantitative ethnographic research methodology formed the basis of present research. For the successful accomplishment of the same multi-method approach was adopted, facilitated by descriptive and exploratory research. The methods implemented in the present research encompassed case study method, interview method, discussion method, observation method, content analysis method, and grounded theory method.

The methodology thus, adopted was inclusive of literature study teamed up with field survey method. Visual as well as textual references were taken into consideration in order to interpret the history and evolution of *pachhedis*. The current information was gathered through the interview and observation method. The data, thus, collected was presented in terms of detailed case narratives, the quantified information from field survey was presented in terms of tables and charts. The evidence and material database

was analysed, processed and discussed in areas pertaining to production and consumption patterns of the subject under study.

5.4. Results and Discussions:

Pachedi: Its history, meaning and evolution:

Pachedi or Pichodi has also been explained in the glossary of terms in the textile trade as Pitcharies or colored calicoes, exported mainly to the Malay Archipelago. The varnakas or stock lists of stuff compiled by Gujarati writers explains that in the fourteenth and fifteenth century, it was also used as bedspread called khata pachedi and if it had closely printed patterns, it was termed as nijhari. If it had golden stripes, then was termed as sonadori while the tie-dye ones were called chunadi. Moti Chandra points that pachedi was, therefore, much richer stuff for home consumption than present times. Moreover, the visual language and functional principle of this textile under was so strong that it associated its inspirations from *sashes*, *paktas*, *dhotis* and *paghdis* used by Indian men since ancient times. Results reflected that the textiles are the conglomeration of different periods and influences. Its origin can be linked with the rooted ancient tradition of draped garments in India while continuity can be part of the cultural exchange, expressions of communal designation and conformity and dynamic socio-cultural and political conditions.

Accounts on existent socio-economic profiles of the weavers:

The conducted field visits brought to the light that the pachhedi weaving craft for the local market was being carried out in only eighteen villages of the six blocks in Gujarat. There were only seventy-one practicing families interspersed in the districts of Surendranagar, Ahmedabad, Mehsana, Kachchh, Jamnagar and Porbandar. The concentration of the population of the practicing weavers were highest in Surendranagar district i.e. 69% followed by Ahmedabad with 23.9% families residing in the district. The results reflected that the concept of nuclear family had started becoming acceptable amongst people in the village. However, it was observed that some of the families, preferred staying with the first generation and that is how there existed sixteen families with six members in each.

It was also validated that the number of males practicing the craft were more than the females and the standard of education had barely improved over the years. It was further discerned that the lack of education and better career amenities had been one of the reason for prolonged sustenance of the craft. During field visit 19.72% families were recorded to have converted their religion to Christianity.

The observations recorded at the time of field study showed that majority of the respondents resided in semi *pakka* houses or the houses with thatched roofs. The gathered information conveys that there existed reasonable percentage of families out of the total population into consideration that earned less than or equal to Rs. 5000 per month. This fact explicates the current financial situation of the practicing weavers from the community. 35.2%, families grossed marginal amount between Rs.5000-Rs.10,000 per month while 32.4% earned Rs. 10,000 to 20,000. Only, 15.5% of the families asserted making above 20,000 per month. The reported fact was inclusive of the income generated by the families through other means of income. The data thus reflects that the economic status of the practicing community was poor and tight-fisted.

Weaving activity, happened as a rotational activity for some of the weavers' families in the Saurashtra region. Most of the weavers and the members in the family, especially women, work in the field on daily wage basis. The daily income earned from the field was stated to be Rs. 400 per day and hence helped earn comparatively more than what one earns after weaving a set of Pachhedi, in a day.

The region of Saurashtra is also popular for cotton cultivation. Most of these weavers worked as cotton pickers in the field during the month of April and June. Data collected revealed that 54.84% of the practicing families were also engaged as seasonal field labours. Another popular occupation was masonry with 25.81% subjects followed by working as migratory labourers.

It was atypical to note that only 2.82% respondents had continued to accept the craft as a traditional livelihood prospect. Rest, 40.85%, 30.99%, and 25.35% respondents had furnished reasons like weaving serves as ancillary means of income generation, and to the lack of employment generation opportunities as well as to the poor standard of education.

Taking loans also attributed majorly to the reasons of requiring money for social obligations followed by improvement in lifestyle, education and illness.

Loom typology, process and motifs:

The loom typology more or less remained same across Gujarat. Textiles like *Tangalia*, *Dhabla* and *pachhedi* were the broad classification of textiles produced on such looms for local consumption. The loom used for *pachhedi* weaving was fly-shuttle pit loom. Most of the looms were installed in the interior of the household. The portable nature of loom made it easier for the loom to be bed in and dismantled based on the convenience. Whenever not at work, it left roominess in the house. This was the main reason why weavers still preferred pit loom over frame looms and pole for supporting yarns in place of warp beam. This type of loom required installation of just rectangular frame, two poles or stumps and a pit. Rest each part of the loom could be easily dismantled and required to be assembled stepwise at the time of setting-up of loom. The height of the frame varied from 48-50 inches and it was 42 inches wide. The depth of the pit was 25 inches which had two treadles placed.

The loom in the Saurashtra region was termed as *Khataro* or *Hancho* (*Sancho*). The loom comprised of four shafts and the weavers operated with broken draft- 1,3,2,4. The patterns were generated by two major methods; by means of cross beating technique and the other by supplementary weft insertion method. The extra wefts were introduced by means of pattern rods or by counting specific numbers of yarns. Although, the textiles produced appeared somewhat similar in the regions of Ahmedabad, Surendranagar, Jamnagar and Vadnagar, there existed distinct motif vocabulary in each of the regions. The motifs used in Kachchh, were appeared to have been influence by the *dhabla*'s weaves.

Kinship between weavers, traders and middlemen:

The system of *pachhedi* craft production comprised of three major stakeholders- weavers, traders and cooperative society.

A weaver studied in the present study belong to the *vankar* community in Gujarat. Gujarat state gazetteer of Ahmedabad and Surendranagar explains that they wove *khadi*, *chofal* and *dhoti* in coarse strong texture. They were different from *Maru vankars*, *dheds* and *dhangasia* and wove only cotton. They claimed to be the

descendants of Kshatriyas and bore surnames like Parmar, Chavda, Chauhan, Chudasma, Dabhi, Gohel, Makwana, Solanki and Vaghela (Patel G.,1977). The concentration of community's population was high in the district of Surendranagar followed by Ahmedabad. Field interactions and case study analysis showed that they had inadequate exposure, low education and very poor socio-economic status. It was observed that there existed weavers who wove as part of the cooperative, there were those who wove both as part of the cooperative and wove for the traders, ones who wove only for the weavers and those who wove and sold the textiles themselves either to the trader or to the consumers.

The traders acted as the mediator between users of textile and its producers. They have had played a vital role in sustenance or existence of the craft so far. They belonged to the *Vania* community termed as *vyapari* by the artisans. There existed two major players in the business of *pachhedi* production and distribution. The other merchants from smaller blocks and cities procured textiles from them. They have fixed number of artisans working for them and their major role was similar to the master weavers, in lieu of other textile crafts. The traders though not skilled in the techniques but were well versed with it. They had also directed the course of the introduction of newer formats and designs in the market. Traders practiced ethics and would not try to break each other's weavers when if weavers approach them.

Formation of society required minimum of 51 members out of which at least 10 should be weavers working on loom. The other members contribute in subordinating activities like door to door selling, arranging for raw materials, and creating alliances with the traders. The development of society seems to have failed here for many of the reasons. The charge paid by the cooperatives are no better than those paid by the traders. In most cases the members of the society that were responsible for diffusing goods to the traders or communities, gradually began to think high of themselves. Some felt that the secretary and his inmates shared the major portion of the profit. Many times cooperative societies were found to be formed on submitting false documents and the appointed secretary availed benefits from that.

Consumers of textiles:

A manufactured good is essentially determined by its marketplace as well as the culture where it is located. One of the values of the social product is that it endows meanings

in its consumer's life. A textile commodity provides identities to its wearers which becomes medium of communication for them. Eight sects of Rabaris, two sects of Bharwads, Ahirs, Charans, and patels consumed the textile under study. Some of the textiles which were rare and extinct existed in the trunks of its consumers. The forms of textiles used were headgear, shoulder cloth, loin cloth, waist and a scarf. Pacchedis not only determined the community of the wearers but its use and application spoke about the age of its consumer. The length of cross border, the colour used, motif, patterns, lengths and other dimensions illustrated the brief note about its wearer. The more primitive the community was said to have been, it was anticipated to have retained the culture. Based on the use, textiles were termed as Khes, Pacchedi, Phariyu, and Dhotali in their generic terms. However, the intonation and regional nomenclature of the same also differed from region to region.

Conclusion:

The investigation has taken into consideration vernacular items of apparels of males in Gujarat that were utilized as unstitched clothes in conjugation with stitched garments. This textile has been classified under the umbrella term called Pachhedi which was extensively used in the Surendranagar, Ahmedabad, Jamnagar, Kachchh, Porbandar, Mehsana, Banaskantha districts of Gujarat as well as in the Sirohi district of Rajasthan. The form and function of the textiles transcends from the traditional and omnipresent use of dhoti, paghdi and shawls. But the visual and aesthetic formats have been the derivative of the rich and sumptuous sashes of ancient India. The pattern generation techniques are due to the simple and crude exploitations of the available tools with adoption of cross beating technique and pattern rod insertion methods sometimes employed in patkas woven in the ancient Ahmedabad. There exist only 71 practicing families of weavers in the districts of Ahmedabad, Surendranagar, Kachchh, Mehsana, Jamnagar and Porbandar with highest concentration in Surendranagar. The weavers belonged to the vankar community that has engaged in weaving only cotton textiles except in the case of Kachchh where Maru Vankars wove both wool and cotton for the local consumption. The count approves of the languishing stage of the craft that requires immediate attention in context of preservation of technological expertise as well as skill. It was discerned that the socioeconomic status of the practicing weavers was pitiable and weaving as an activity was carried out for earning humble wages for living in absence of other vocational prospects. The stakeholders tied up in the craft ecosystem

comprised of the weavers, wholesalers, local merchants, secretaries of cooperative societies and local tailors for machine embroidery. The investigation also recorded loss of understanding and symbolic expressions of motif vocabulary amongst the young weavers. The formats were proposed by the wholesalers and the weavers were compelled to work only as the wage earners. Moreover, the poly-cotton mill spun yarn was provided to the weavers that lead to the slashing of the pre-loom processes which were traditionally the integral part of the weaving technology. Hence, even the skill and the technological know-how exists as a destitute propelled by the occasional communal requirements. The forms, formats and use of these textiles were multifarious. The textiles were used abundantly by Rabaris and Bharwads, followed by Ahirs, Charans, Satwara and Patels. The draping style, colour and patterns used described the function as well the community of the wearers. Certain textiles were intended for the specific occasions such as marriage while some denoted the age and marital status of the wearer. Each region of Gujarat offered distinctive class of the pachhedis that were meant for the local communities only. A particular region would not have more than two traders selling the textiles. Surendranagar was the hub for the production of pachhedis in bulk specially bori pachhedi and deteriorated version of lal pachhedi. The textiles produced were so influxed by the wholesalers of Surendranagar that production of authentic pachhedis died with availability of cheaper alternatives in the different zones of Gujarat. The phenomenon thus resulted in adoption of few common forms of pachhedis by the wearers of different communities.