

Madhubani: A traditional Art form from walls to Apparels

Dr. Kavita Patil

*Associate Prof., Head, Textile Science & Apparel Design
SMRK-BK-AK Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Nashik-422005
Corresponding Author: Dr. Kavita Patil*

Date of Submission: 05-12-2018

Date of acceptance: 22-12-2018

I. INTRODUCTION

The essence of Indian society lies in its traditions and culture. Painting is a mode of creative expression, and the forms are numerous. It can be naturalistic and representational or be loaded with narrative content. Numerous types of paintings have emerged in the due course of time in different geographical locations as a result of religious and cultural impact. The style and variety of Indian paintings is as vivid as the colorful Indian culture. Right from tribal to rural to urban manifestations, it has achieved magnificence in all forms.

Traditional paintings and art often reflect the culture and tradition of the place from which they originate. They tend to be a reflection of the times in which the art was created. Madhubani is a traditional art from a Ranti village, Madhubani district in Bihar originated about 2500 years ago which is very much thriving. Madhubani art is also called Mithila painting which is practiced in the Mithila region of India and Nepal. This Painting is done with fingers, twigs, brushes, nib-pens, and matchsticks, using natural dyes and pigments, and is characterized by eye-catching geometrical patterns. There is ritual content for particular occasions, such as birth or marriage, and festivals, such as Holi, Surya Shasti, Kali Puja, Upanayana, Durga Puja.

Madhubani painting/Mithila painting was traditionally created by the women of the Brahman, Dusadh and Kayastha communities. This center has become major export centre of these paintings. This painting as a form of wall art was practiced widely throughout the region; the more recent development of painting on paper and canvas mainly originated among the villages around Madhubani, and it is these latter developments that led to the name Madhubani art being used alongside the name "Mithila Painting."

Objectives:

The major objectives of this study:

- To study the history, colors, motifs and technique used.
- To create awareness about traditional art amongst young generation through training.
- To revive traditional madhubani painting by adopting and contemporizing process.
- To diversify this art from wall to fashion apparels for value addition.

History of Madhubani:

Madhubani painting originated in a small village, known as Maithili, of the Bihar state of India. Initially, the womenfolk of the village drew the paintings on the walls of their home, as an illustration of their thoughts, hopes and dreams. The first reference to the Maithili painting of Bihar dates back to the time of Ramayana, when King Janaka ordered the paintings to be created for his daughter, Sita's, wedding to **Ram**. And thus this art was practiced on the mud walls and floors of homes all over the **Mithila region**.

With time, the paintings started becoming a part of festivities and special events, like marriage. Slowly and gradually, the Madhubani painting of India crossed the traditional boundaries and started reaching connoisseurs of art, both at the national as well as the international level. The traditional base of freshly plastered mud wall of huts has now been replaced by cloth, handmade paper and canvas. Since the paintings have been confined to a limited geographical range, the themes as well as the style are, more or less, the same. Indian Maithili paintings make use of three-dimensional images.

Colours of Madhubani :

Original Madhubani is painted using natural colors. Natural colors are those extracted naturally from plants, stones, vegetables and other things found naturally in nature. The original art when done on mud walls or hut floors is done by natural colours and natural dyes.

These may include dry rice powder or paste, vermilion, turmeric powder, sandalwood powder and other natural colours extracted from flower and fruits.

Black colour is obtained from soot. It is a soft thick deposit of captured smoke from the village Chulha. **Yellow is obtained** from turmeric, pollen, lime, milk of banyan leaves.

Blue from Indigo, **Deep Red from** Kusum flower juice or red sandalwood, **Green from** Wood apple tree leaves or leaves of creepers, **White from** Rice powder, **Orange from** Palasha flower. The vibrant colours created with natural dyes are a source of positive energy. Colours give warmth and the paintings energize the atmosphere in the household. Flora and Fauna symbolize fertility and life. Madhubani paintings showcase these beautifully.

Motifs of Madhubani:

The themes on which these paintings are based include nature and mythological events. The themes of drawings and paintings are mainly based on Gods and Goddesses, Sun, Moon, Stars, religious symbols like Om, good luck symbols, auspicious signs and others. These paintings also highlight various birds and animals that have religious importance in Hindu religion such as elephants, peacocks, fishes and others. Bamboo plants, Tulsi plants, mango leaves, lotus flower, Banyan and Peepal trees and other flora, fauna also have their significance in **Madhubani** art. **Madhubani** art is a combination of certain floral and geometrical designs and they also give a two dimensional view.

Technique of Madhubani:

Basically the paintings are done with wooden twigs, fingers, matchsticks or any such thing found in homes. Generally no space is left empty. Whatever space is left after drawing the main subject; whether it is wedding: a bride or bridegroom garlanding each other, a peacock or a fish or any other thing, the rest of the space is filled with flowers leaves, or any other geometrical design. Usually a border is drawn all along the painting. This could be square, round, rectangular or any other shape but everything is within a well decorated border. One very popular way of doing this art is covering the edge of a thin wooden twig with a little piece of cotton and then draw with water and Ocher soil (*Gerumitti in Hindi*) paste. A double line border is used with simple geometric designs or with ornate floral patterns on it, Symbols, lines and patterns supporting the main theme. The faces of the figures have large bulging eyes and a jolting nose emerging out of the forehead.

II. METHOD

A study was planned to achieve the formulated objectives. In the present era, where fashion changes every day, more and more demand increases for new and novel fashions. On the other hand ,it is a need of an hour to revive traditional art and give new look to it by adopting and contemporizing the procedure of application of this traditional art and to make young generation aware of this traditional art of India.

To achieve the stated objective, efforts have been made to train 75 student trainees in Madhubani painting. Trainees have successfully prepared samples of painting by using fabric colors on unbleached fabric. Motifs selected for painting were traditional like two headed peacock, single headed peacock, fish motif, lotus motif etc. and the tool used was fine painting brushes. The samples prepared by the trainees were analyzed by the experts of Textile science & Apparel Design Department and renowned fashion designers of Nashik. It was concluded that the selected samples can be used for value addition on apparels. Considering the suggestions given by the experts the researcher decided to prepare fashion apparels viz. Crop top, Palazo, Kurti, Sari Blouse etc.

Following samples with traditional motifs were prepared by the trainees:

Two headed Peacock



Single headed Peacock



Lotus Motif



Fish motifs with different placement



These traditional motifs have been adopted on the fashion apparels constructed by the trainees.

Sari Blouse: all over floral motifs



Crop top and Palazzo



III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

A preference schedule was structured to evaluate the constructed fashion Apparels. In total 100 respondents/ students of U.G. college were randomly selected as sample. The evaluation was based on the overall aesthetic appeal, placement of traditional motifs, cost effectiveness and market acceptability.

Display of fashion apparels were exhibited in Srujan Exhibition of college. The display also included painted exhibits of other states. These were kept alongside to visualize the products of similar type available in the market. The feedback from the respondents with respect to aesthetic appeal, cost effectiveness and acceptability of the created apparels was elicited to check the apparel competitiveness.

It can be said that Palazzo and crop top was found to be highly appealing to at least 70% of the respondents due to design, color combination, placement of design, traditional look of apparel in contemporized form and pattern of apparel. Sari blouse was found to be appealing by 68% respondents. Respondents opined that palazzo and crop top was aesthetically appealing at a glance because of use of motifs, layout and color combination.

The respondents gave their preferences for the constructed apparels which reflected their taste and appreciation for the constructed apparels.

IV. CONCLUSION

It can thus be concluded that this study is an attempt in creating awareness about the traditional art among the present generation and at the same time fostering the traditional art for contemporary utilization in future. The constructed garments can be thus become a way to preserve this traditional art and also a way to reach to masses of today at an affordable price.

REFERENCES:

- [1]. Helen Joseph Armstrong "Pattern Making", pp. 25-38
- [2]. Mulk Raj Anand, "Madhubani Painting"
- [3]. Rustom J. Mehta, "Master pieces of Indian textiles", pp. 17-20
- [4]. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madhubani_-_Mithila_Painting
- [5]. www.craftsvilla.com/blog/history-of-madhubani-art-paintings

Dr. Kavita Patil. " Madhubani: A traditional Art form from walls to Apparels. " IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS). vol. 23 no. 12, 2018, pp. 73-76.