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# Adaptation of traditional *Phulkari* embroidery on clothing and knowledge assessment of trainees

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### Abstract

Ever since humans started dressing, embroidery has been one of the oldest methods of decorating textiles. The history of embroidery as an art form dates all the way back to the Iron Age. When used as a technique for adorning apparels, embroidered patterns emerged as the product of laborious efforts and attention to details. While the stitches utilised in Indian embroidery may originate from many areas of the world, they have been adapted with little modifications in various regions of our nation. The purpose of the present study was to transform traditional *Phulkari* embroidery designs onto *kurtis*. For this purpose, *Phulkari* embroidered motifs were gathered from marketplaces in Hisar and Patiala and classified into three groups: geometric, floral, and animal. Stylized designs for *kurtis* were then created using certain themes, and each design was then divided into two. Using Coral Draw, a total of thirty designs were created after that. Out of which five best-ranked designs were chosen. For every design, three positions were created. The top five positions of each chosen design were then embroidered in *Phulkari* embroidery to create *kurtas*. In the end, five *kurtis* were created. The most positive assessment of the produced designs, positions, sizes, shapes, and colour combinations was sought from experts. A training for the same was organised and after the trainees had received fifteen days of instruction, their knowledge was evaluated. This study aims to provide guidance for a novice designer to create items with the same appearance as traditional embroidery techniques using quicker methods. It will provide women entrepreneurs with new opportunities to produce in-demand, low-cost items.

Keywords: Phulkari embroidery, magical transformation, design, motif, kurti

### Introduction

Ever since humans started dressing, embroidery has been one of the oldest methods of decorating textiles. The history of embroidery as an art form dates all the way back to the Iron Age. When used as a technique for adorning apparels, embroidered patterns emerged as the product of laborious efforts and attention to details. While the stitches utilised in Indian embroidery may originate from many areas of the world, they have been adapted with little modifications in various regions of our nation. India possesses a wealthier legacy of exquisitely embroidered garments and textiles than any other nation on Earth. Each region of our country has contributed much to the style of embroidery in character of its own tradition and culture. In contemporary times, Punjab (Phulkari), Gujrat (Kutch), Kathiawar (Bead Work), Karnataka (Kasuti), Uttar Pradesh (Chikankari), Bengal (Kanthas), Bihar (Kashida) and Himachal Pradesh (Chamba) still continue the tradition of embroidering beautiful pieces for their costume.

Several academics believe that Gulkūri, the art form of phulkari, originated in Iran. It finds mention in the Vedas, the Mahabharata, the Guru Granth Sahib, and some Punjabi folk melodies. This needlework has been around since the 15th century AD in its current form, although the late 19th and early 20th centuries are likely when the art form reached its peak. Women in Punjab (North West India and Pakistan) continued to do it as a means of subsistence throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. Phulkariis a traditional hand needlework from the countryside that is constantly in style. Punjab and Haryana are, historically, the home of this needlework. Punjab, however, is now most commonly linked with it. Phulkari literally means "flower craft." Punjabi ladies use this traditional embroidery technique on important events and festivities. It is well renowned for its elaborate designs and cheery, brilliant hues. Mostly, it involves creating a basic, minimalist design on shawls, kurtis and dupattas. *Baghs* (a garden of flowers) in certain instances, is the design where the pattern is

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worked over extremely precisely, covering the material completely so that the base fabric is not visible. Numerous items, including sarees, dupattas, women's shirts, pillow covers, even terrible sheets, are decorated with this needlework. The market is currently overflowing with numerous patterns of this embroidery technique, but in order to increase its popularity for modern purposes, to make it more attractive to customers, ingenuity, creativeness and a thorough comprehension of distinct designs is required. Traditional women's dress of Punjab and Haryana is kameez-salwar or suits. Various styles of kameez-salwar are now in trend based on client desire. Incorporating phulkari to women's outfits might help augment a family's income. The amount of income earned from this art form can be increased much more if phulkari designs are created in line with contemporary fashion trends. The use of this embroidery, may enhance a wearer's attractiveness and make the kurtis appear lovelier. The application of traditional motifs on kurtis will contribute to a stunning conversion of traditional needlework and give it a fresh, trendy appeal. These days, embroidered kurtis as a dress have become fashionable, hence chosen by women and teenage girls. The phulkari has, as of now, advanced to a new level, providing work to many women in Punjab. The process of designing is not easy or informal however. The traditional design processes were difficult, time-consuming, and tiresome. Computer Aided Designing has made the labour-intensive process of designing less difficult. The enormous benefits of using a digital sketching and modelling technology enable designs to be quickly altered in terms of colour, texture, and other aspects, as well as to be viewed from any angle. CAD is a user-friendly and highly effective technology for product design and development. In light of these factors, the following goals guided this research aimed at transforming Phulkari embroidery for kurtis:

- 1. To explore *Phulkari* motifs from markets of Patiala and Hisar.
- 2. Creation of Phulkari embroidery designs through CAD.
- 3. Assessment of developed Kurti.

### Methodology

To learn more about how Indian embroidery motifs have been adapted for usage in modern times, an experimental project was conducted. The exploratory work approach used in this study is based on a review of several studies that used a similar methodology. Unstructured interviews and firsthand observations were used in the study project to determine the current state of traditional needlework expertise. In order to gather information on the resuscitation of traditional themes from Punjab's *Phulkari* needlework for usage in modern times, a research was carried out in the cities of Hisar and the surrounding villages. The task was to investigate the potential for the traditional needlework of *Phulkari* to be revived.

### **Market Survey**

In order to learn about the current *phulkari* embroidery techniques, the marketplaces in the cities of Hisar (Haryana) and Patiala (Punjab) were investigated with regard to the motifs and placements on various apparels.

### Selection of motifs for embroidery on kurti

A preferable index was created to help with motif choosing for *kurtis'* embroidery. From the Department of Textile and Apparel Designing at I.C. College of Home Science CCS HAU, Hisar, fifteen experts helped to choose the best fifteen motifs from a collection of forty-five motifs based on their appropriateness for embroidery on *kurtis*.

### **Design development**

To create stylized designs, fifteen motifs were chosen based on their weighted mean score, which determined their top ranks. Coral Draw was used to create stylized motifs based on pre-existing *phulkari* patterns that go well with *kurtas*.

### Product development

### Selection of size

The size of pattern for *kurti* was selected from the range of developed and standardized paper patterns of shirt by the Department of Textile and Apparel Designing at I.C. College of Home Science CCS HAU, Hisar.

### Cutting of kurtis

The commonly used bust size, 34", was chosen for *kurtis* cutting, based on standardised measurements and paper patterns created in the state scheme of the Department of Textile and Apparel Designing, I.C. College of Home Science, CCS HAU Hisar.

### Embroidery of design on selected fabric

Selected designs were embroidered on piece of selected fabric (Khaddar) as per placements with the help of selected threads.

### Embroidery on Kurtis

*Phulkari* technique was used to embroider five *kurtis*, with the designs and placements created in Corel Draw and chosen by specialists and members of the advisory committee. After that, the *kurtis* were sewn.

### Assessment of developed products

The developed products were displayed in a brightly lit lab of the Department of Textile and Apparel Designing at CCS HAU, Hisar, and were evaluated by twenty-five professionals from the I.C. College of Home Science based on their overall look and design. Expert opinions on the articles were sought using a self-created opinion scale. Three quantum scales were used to evaluate each attribute.

## Knowledge assessment of trainees after imparting the training

The trainees were shown *phulkari* embroidery following an introduction to Punjabi traditional craft. A fifteen-day training on *phulkari* embroidery was then imparted to the rural women. Before and after the instruction, their understanding of the *phulkari* embroidery designs was evaluated.

### **Results and Discussion**

Data on modern-day *phulkari* embroidery motifs was collected from the markets in the cities of Patiala and Hisar. It was investigated to learn about the current *phulkari* stitching techniques in use with reference to motifs and

animal, and geometric. Coral Draw was used to create a

total of thirty drawings, two for each motif that was chosen. These designs were given the names a and b. The top fifteen chosen motifs were divided into two designs per, their WMS evaluated, and the experts determined the top five designs based on their WMS. *Phulkari* embroidery on *kurtis* was developed using these top five designs.

#### Selected traditional embroidery designs for kurti



Plate 1: Selected designs for transform into fabric embroidery according to preference

After the development of thirty designs with selected fifteen motifs, experts' preferences were sought and ranks were given on the basis of WMS. All the thirty developed designs, two of each motif are presented in table 5. The results revealed that out of geometrical design number 25a (2.61) got 1<sup>st</sup>rank, followed by design no.14b (2.46) got 2<sup>nd</sup> rank, design no 26a (2.30) got 3<sup>rd</sup> rank, design no.17a (1.92) got 4<sup>th</sup> rank, and design no. 5a (1.84) got 5<sup>th</sup> rank. The other designs in descending order were 13b (1.80) got 6<sup>th</sup> rank, design no. 19a (1.74) got 7<sup>th</sup> rank, design no. 22a (1.53) got 10<sup>th</sup> rank. Floral motif with design no.7a (1.71) and Animal motif with design no. 3b (1.61) were ranked 8<sup>th</sup>& 9<sup>th</sup>. The least preferred design by experts was design no. 26b (0.07) got rank 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Development of Kurtis**

As a result of the top five placements selected, five *kurtis* were then developed for product development. *Phulkari* technique was used to embroider them using carefully chosen pat thread colours. Counting threads was employed to embroider on the wrong side of the cloth.

### **Developed** Kurtis



Placement No. 2nd of Design No. 5(a)



Placement No. 3rd of Design No. 14(b)



Placement No.3rd of Design No. 17(a)

### https://www.extensionjournal.com



Placement No. 3rd of Design No.25 (a)



Placement No. 3rd of Design No. 26(a)

### Evaluation of developed kurtis

Expert opinions about created kurtis were collected from

experts. Their recommendations were sought based on design size, form, and colour combinations.

Table 1:	Experts	preference	regarding	developed	designs for	developed a	<i>kurtis</i> n=25
		*	0 0		0		

<b>C</b>		Kurti with Phulkari Embroidery										
Sr. No	Statements/ Reasons		Design 5a		Design 14b		Design 17a		Design2 5a		Design 26a	
190.			Rank	WMS	Rank	WMS	Rank	WMS	Ranks	WMS	Ranks	
1	Developed design is suitable for embroidery	2.84	IV	2.92	Ι	2.64	II	2.64	V	2.56	Х	
2	Developed design is suitable for selected kurti	2.92	II	2.56	IX	2.60	III	2.48	VIII	2.64	VIII	
3	Colour combination used is appropriate	2.88	III	2.60	VIII	2.16	XI	2.60	VI	2.60	IX	
4	Size and shape of the designs are proportionate for kurtis	2.96	Ι	2.68	VII	2.28	Х	2.56	VII	2.96	Ι	
5	Placement of designs is appropriate	2.80	V	2.72	VI	2.52	V	2.44	IX	2.80	IV	
6	Size, shape, placement & repetition of design created harmony	2.68	VIII	2.80	IV	2.72	Ι	2.20	Х	2.72	VI	
7	Developed designs maintains the beauty of embroidery	2.60	IX	2.84	III	2.44	VI	1.76	XI	2.44	XI	
8	The developed kurtis are attractive	2.56	Х	2.76	V	2.56	IV	2.80	II	2.76	V	
9	Designs developed have been highlighted by embroidery	2.48	XI	2.88	II	2.20	VIII	2.96	Ι	2.88	II	
10	Use of developed designs gives an elegant and sophisticated look to <i>kurti</i> .	2.76	VI	2.40	Х	2.32	VII	2.76	III	2.84	III	
11	Related repeated shapes used in developed <i>kurti</i> added unity in the form	2.72	VII	2.32	XI	2.00	IX	2.68	IV	2.68	VII	

### Experts preferences regarding developed designs for *kurtis*

The data in Table 1 displays the expert's choices with relation to created kurtis designs. Preferences were recorded for the developed designs in this table based on a variety of features and parameters, such as "developed designs were suitable for embroidery," "colour combination was appropriate," "shape and size of designs was proportionate for kurtis," and so on. The data in this table indicates that kurti design no. 5a was most favoured by experts due to its "developed designs which were suitable for embroidery (2.92)"; this was followed by the features "developed designs had been highlighted by embroidery," "developed designs maintains the beauty of embroidery," and "size, shape, placement, and repetition of designs created harmony." The weighted mean scores for these features were 2.92, 2.88, and 2.84, respectively. Meanwhile, kurti design no. 14b was most favoured due to its "developed designs which were suitable for embroidery (2.92)," developed designs which were suitable for embroidery, "developed designs maintained the beauty of embroidery," and "size, shape, placement, and repetition of designs created harmony." Experts chose designs 17a, 25a, and 26a because they were the most harmonious in terms of shape, size, placement, and repetition; they also highlighted the embroidery and had developed designs that were suitable in terms of shape and size for *kurtis*, scoring a weighted mean of 2.72, 2.96, and 2.96, respectively. The findings of Nameeta (2012), who found that the arrangement, size, and form of the design produced harmony in designed quilt covers with appliqué, patchwork, and stencil printing, corroborated the findings of this study.

Positive results were obtained along Devi's (2017) lines, which said that experts' choices for produced jackets based on a variety of characteristics showed that the fabric painting approach was the most favoured technique in terms of overall look.

The experts reached a consensus based on the weighted mean score, which indicates that they agreed on the following points: "developed designs are suitable for embroidery," "size and shape of the designs are proportionate for kurtis," and "size, shape, placement & repetition of designs created harmony."

### Knowledge acquisition regarding *phulkari* embroidery from traditional embroidery through Training/ demonstration by trainees

The trainees were shown ideas for *phulkari* embroidery before receiving instruction in the craft. Before and after the instruction was given, their understanding of the *phulkari* embroidery designs was examined, as seen in figure 1:



Fig 1: Knowledge acquisition regarding *phulkari* embroidery through training/demonstration

The findings shown in Figure 1 showed that the mean score of trainees' pre- and post-knowledge differed significantly. With the exception of two, all of the t-values were determined to be significant: using traditional patterns aids in the survival of the craft of traditional embroidery and choosing designs for surface embellishments of products/*kurtis* must take customer preferences into account. The claims that *kurtis* were sewn in accordance with standard measurements and that a database of patterns should be created by taking pictures and tracing the items

for later use are significant at the 1% level. In order to meet consumer demand for further improvements related to *phulkari* embroidery from traditional embroidery designs, assessment of the product is helpful in analysing the work done for developing the product for future use. Results show that respondents gained sufficient knowledge at 0.01 and 0.05 levels. According to Kumar (2015) also, training facilities where women have enrolled with the NGO are the ones that taught *Phulkari* and educated them about the variety of themes, colour schemes, and threads. In addition to dupattas, *Phulkari* embroidery is done by artists on clutches, blouses, tablecloths, runners, and bags.

### Conclusion

- It is found that the local markets of Hisar and Patiala mostly use geometrical themes in their modern designs, followed by floral and animal motifs.
- Experts favoured fifteen designs in all for *phulkari* embroidery.
- Majority of the experts picked the designs which were primarily geometric in nature.
- The development of *kurtis* was based on geometrical designs which ranked in the top five.
- In terms of evolved design and overall look, the developed *kurti* with design no. 26a was deemed the most appealing.
- It is determined that most expertsopined the price of created *kurtis'* was reasonable.
- It is concluded that experts' opinions for the developed designs were that the patterns' size and form complemented the *kurti*, that their location and repetition produced harmony, and that the developed designs were appropriate for *kurtis*.

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