



Exploring The Current Status Of Kantha Embroidery

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ABSTRACT

Kantha is embroidery of West Bengal which has its origin in the reuse of old saris and dhotis worn by women and men of West Bengal. This study was conducted at West Bengal. A total of 60 respondents were selected and a systematic survey method was adopted to collect the information regarding respondent's general information their gender, education, marital status, type of family, and occupation of the family. A Questionnaire was prepared in two sections; first section covered general information of the respondents and second section focused on the specific information related to Kantha embroidery in terms of material used, colour designs, motifs and techniques. The survey covered various aspects of textiles and apparel designing-related skills, including fabric, identification cutting, sewing, and embroidery and embellishment techniques, comparing the respondent's current skills with the desired one for the skill training. The designs will also be collected from secondary sources including internet, and available literature. The information regarding Kantha embroidery were analysed using percentage & weighted mean score.

Keywords: Kantha embroidery, Motifs, Designs and current status

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the earliest methods of reusing clothing is to employ kantha stitching to create rugs and other embroidered home goods, like blankets and plate covers. The Indian states of West Bengal and Orissa are home to a large population of rural women who stitch Kantha, one of the most traditional and well-liked types of Indian embroidery. Kantha embroidery techniques are famous dowry customs that are passed down from mother to daughter. In truth, Kantha embroidery was a domestic art that flourished into a well-known trend in Indian clothing and home furnishings because rural housewives in West Bengal performed it throughout history. The most attractive feature about Kantha work is that it may be worn as an accessory on its own and doesn't require any more adornment to look good. This is due to the fact that it has several applications and forms.

India boasts a rich needlework legacy, and its people are knowledgeable about traditional embroidery designs. Women have historically used folk embroidery as a means of self-expression. It is a mirror of their innermost hopes and wishes as well as an expression of the customs, culture, and religious beliefs of the community to which they belong. As such, it reflects their lives. Every area, nation, and civilization has a unique embroidery style that embodies its history, customs, and culture. In kantha embroidery, a basic running stitch is used. It is the way the embroidery has been used that makes it extra ordinary. It is a classic illustration of how intricate designs may be made using a basic stitch. Typically, the motifs include floral and geometric designs, gods and goddesses, and animals like ducks, fish, and peacocks.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in West Bengal. A total of 60 respondents were selected and a systematic survey method was adopted to collect the information regarding respondents' general information their gender, education, marital status, type of family, and occupation of the family. A structured questionnaire consisting of two sections was prepared in which the first section gathered demographic details (general information) including gender, age, type of family, and income of family while the second section focused on specific information including preferred material, color designs, motifs and techniques. The survey covered various aspects of textiles and apparel designing-related skills, including fabric, identification cutting, sewing, and embroidery and embellishment techniques, comparing the respondent's current skills with the desired ones for the skill training. The designs will also be collected from secondary sources including the Internet, and available literature. The information regarding Kantha embroidery was analyzed using percentage & weighted mean scores.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study are summarized under the following heads.

- General information of the respondents
- Specific information related to their colours, Designs and motifs

3.1 GENERAL PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

General profile of the respondents was recorded and accordingly, respondents were classified according to their gender, education, marital status, type of family, and occupation of the family. The data of the general profile of respondents are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to their general information (n=60)

Respondents	F	%
Gender		
Male	10	16.66%
Female	25	41.66%
Marital Status		
unmarried	30	50%
Married	30	50%
Academic qualification		
Illiterate	30	50%
Up to primary	25	41%
Higher Secondary	20	33.33%
Graduate	11	18.33%
Postgraduate	10	16.66%
Family occupation		
Service	25	41.66%
Business	25	41.66%
Professionals	20	33.33
Type of the family		
Nuclear	25	41.66%
Joint	30	50%
Extended	10	16.66%

Table 1 provides information on the distribution of respondents based on their gender. It shows in Table 1 that a majority of the respondents (16.66%) were male and the rest (41.66%) were female respondents. It was observed that the majority (41.66%) of respondents were unmarried and (50%) were married. It was found that in Table 1 respondents, (50%) were Illiterate, (41%) were up to the primary, (33.33%) were higher Secondary, (18.33%) were Graduates, and (16.66%) respondents were postgraduates. It was found in Table 1 that, (41.66%) of respondents' family occupations were services and (41.66%) were engaged in private services. However, (33.33%) of the respondent's families were involved in professional services. The

information collected regarding their family type. Table 1 revealed that a maximum (41.66%) of respondents lived in nuclear families, (50%) in joint families, and (16.66%) in extended families.

3.2 SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Respondents were asked for specific information about their craft-related questions. The source of acquiring the skill, motivational factors for initiating the work of folk arts, the base material used, common techniques used, types of motifs used, etc., and the results are discussed below. The data of the specific information of respondents are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to their specific information

Respondents	f	%
Kantha embroidery your main occupation?		
Yes	35	58.33%
No	29	48.33%
From whom did you learn this embroidery?		
Parents	25	41.66%
Spouse	5	8.33%
Relatives	20	33.33%
Neighbours	15	25%
Friends	10	16.66%
At what age did you start doing embroidery?		
10-20	10	16.66%
20-30	20	33.33%
30-40	35	58.33%
40-50	31	51.66%
What kind of stitches do you used in kantha embroidery?		
Running Stitch	35	58.33%
Stem Stitch	25	41.66%
Chain Stitch	28	46.66%
What kind of threads do you used in Kantha embroidery?		
Cotton	35	58.33%
Wool	25	41.66%
Silk	32	53.33%

What type of fabric do you used for Kantha embroidery?		
Natural	31	51.66%
Synthetic	25	41.66%
Bleached	15	25%

Table 2. Shows Distribution of respondents in which related, (58.33%) of respondents selected that Kantha embroidery and (48.33) of respondents is not selected. Kantha embroidery is there main occupation and (41.66%) of respondents highlighted that they learned this embroidery from their parents. (8.33%) of spouse, (33.33%) of relatives, (25%) of neighbours and (16.66%) of respondents friends. At the age of 10-20, (16.66%) respondents are starting this embroidery. 20-30, (33.33%), 30-40 (58.33%) and 40-50 (51.66%) highlighted that they start doing embroidery. The stitches use in kantha embroidery running stitch (58.33%), stem stitch (41.66%) and chain stitch (53.33%). The thread used in Kantha embroidery Cotton (58.33%), wool (41.66%) and Silk (53.33%). This type of fabric used in kantha embroidery natural (51.66%), synthetic (41.66%) and bleached (25%).

Table 3. Rate your preferences about Kantha embroidery

S.NO	Motivation Factors	F	%	S	%	N	%	Weighted score	Rank
1.	Urge to creativity	35	58.33	18	30	7	11.67	147	II
2.	Urge to independent work	40	66.66	10	16.67	10	16.67	150	I
3.	Better utilization of free time	17	29.33	32	53.33	11	18.34	126	IV
4.	To earn money	35	58.33	15	25	10	16.67	145	III

It is evident from the above table 3 that have been ranked according to the preferences of the Kantha embroidery Urge to independent work have the highest score and being ranked (I), followed by Urge to creativity (II), to earn money is (III), and Better utilization of free time. Additionally respondent have also suggested urge to independent work.

Table 4. SEASON/ PERIOD PREFERENCE

S.NO	Season	F	%	S	%	N	%	Weighted score	Rank
1.	Summer	34	56	19	32.66	7	12.67	147	I
2.	Winter	19	31.67	32	53.33	9	15	130	III
3.	Rainy	4	6.66	40	66.67	16	26.67	108	V
4.	Festival	17	28.33	32	53.33	11	18.34	126	IV
5.	Ceremonies /Rituals	38	63.33	16	26.67	6	10	152	II

It is evident from the above table 4 that have been ranked according to the preferred of the season /period for summer season have the highest score and being ranked (I). Ceremonies/ rituals (II) ranked. Winter is (III) ranked. Festival is (IV) ranked. And rainy is (V) ranked.

Table 5. COMMON TECHNIQUES PREFERENCE

S.NO	Common techniques	F	%	S	%	N	%	Weighted score	Rank
1.	Machine embroidery	40	66.66	10	16.67	10	16.67	150	I
2.	Hand embroidery	35	58	18	30	7	12	148	II

It is evident from the above table 5 that Kantha embroidery have been ranked according to preferred common techniques for hand embroidery have the highest score and being ranked (II). Followed by machine embroidery is (I) ranked.

Table 6. COMMON MOTIFS PREFERENCE

S.NO	Types of motifs	F	%	S	%	N	%	Weighted score	Rank
1.	Natural	30	50	22	36.66	8	13.34	142	III
2.	Stylized	18	30	31	51.66	11	18.34	127	V
3.	Abstract	19	31.66	32	53.34	9	15	130	IV
4.	Geometrical	8	13.34	42	70	10	16.66	118	VII
5.	Human figure	17	28.33	32	53.33	11	18.34	126	VI
6.	Animal figures	40	66.66	15	25	5	8.34	155	I

7.	Combination of two or more type	40	66.66	11	18.34	9	15	151	II
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According to table 6 motifs was the most important factor. With a score of 155 (1) ranked. According combination of two or more type with a score of 151 have been ranked (2). Natural motifs is score 142 have been ranked (3). Abstract is score 130 have been ranked (4). Stylized is score 127 have been ranked (5). Human figure score is 126 have been ranked (6). Geometrical is score 118 have been ranked (7).

Table 7. DESIGNS PREFERENCE

S.NO	Sources of designs	F	%	S	%	N	%	Weighted score	Rank
1.	Make your own new designs	34	56.66	19	31.67	7	11.67	147	II
2.	Copy other designs	19	31.66	32	53.34	9	15	130	III
3.	Continue with making the traditional designs	38	63.33	16	26.67	6	10	152	I
4.	From literature	8	13.34	42	70	10	16.66	118	IV

It is evident from the above table 7 that Kantha embroidery have been ranked according to preferred get the designs for Continue with making the traditional designs have the highest score and being ranked (I), Followed by Make your own new designs is (II) ranked, Copy other designs is (III) ranked and From literature is (IV) ranked

Table 8. BASE MATERIAL PREFERENCE

S.NO	Base material	F	%	S	%	N	%	Weighted score	Rank
1.	Cotton	38	63.34	16	26.66	6	10	152	II
2.	Markeen	8	13.34	42	70	10	16.66	118	IV
3.	Casement	17	28.33	32	53.33	11	18.34	126	III
4.	Silk	40	66	15	24	6	10	155	I

It is evident from the above table 8 that Kantha embroidery have been ranked according to preferred base material for Silk work have the highest score and being ranked (I), Followed by Cotton is (II) ranked, Casement is (III) ranked and Markeen is (IV) ranked.

4. Conclusion

India is among the world's youngest countries, and compared to other emerging nations, it has one of the lowest rates of female literacy. Our youth is our greatest asset. India's traditional hand embroidery holds a prominent position in the country's cultural legacy.

If Kantha, West Bengali folk needlework, is used to establish an industry, women are trained to execute the embroidery. Then, this may work as a catalyst to improve women's economic development and standard of living. Women can develop their confidence and have a unique personality in society even in the workplace.

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