



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

FREEZING THE FRAME: TRADITIONAL COSTUMES OF THE JAAT COMMUNITY IN HARYANA

Sonika Siwach

Assistant Professor

Department of Fashion Management Studies

National Institute of Fashion Technology, Jodhpur, India

Abstract

Costumes fulfil a function beyond simple utility. Clothing symbolises status, occupation, sex and religion. Among men and women in all parts of India there are similarities and differences in their clothing, ornaments and hair styles. Under the impact of rapid development people of Jaat community of Haryana are shedding off their unique and age old traditional costume. The present study was an attempt to popularise the costumes of Jaat community of Haryana, which have reached on the verge of its extinction. Urbanisation, modernisation, migration and influence of media, higher education, occupation and economic status could have been the major factors responsible for the change. They have adopted contemporary dress which is causing a threat to their age-old heritage.

Keywords: Jaats, Haryana, Traditional costumes, Ornaments, Jaat community

INTRODUCTION

Traditional costumes may be defined as the collection of garments, jewellery, and accessories rooted in the past worn by an identifiable group of people. Each state of India has its heritage that is a source of its costumes and clothing. Costume of people differ from one community to another. The clothing of traditional India is rich in artistry and uniqueness. The citizens take pride in their ethnic wear, style, and ornamentations. The traditional dresses of Indian states, worn by the diverse set of people in the country reflect the depth of the rich history and culture of India.

Haryana is a North Indian state surrounding New Delhi on 3 sides. The name of Haryana instantly conjures up the image of a State which astonishingly combines both-antiquity and plenty. The Vedic land of Haryana has been a cradle of Indian culture and civilization. The majority of the tribes of Haryana are Indo-Aryan and Indo-Dravidian. A number of related agricultural communities are also included in Haryana's whole tribal population. There are several significant tribal groups in Haryana, including the Jats, Rajputs, Ahirs, Rors, and Gujjars. The majority of the tribes in Haryana are involved in agriculture as well as trade and commerce.

The Jaat community in Haryana constitutes around 27% of state's population. Majority of Jaat community is engaged in cultivation of lands. The Jats have pure Aryan physical features. Jaats usually speak Haryanavi dialect. The traditional costumes of the Jaat community have now got contemporize to such an extent that the traditional costumes are at a verge of extinction. Older generation are the only people who wear traditional costumes, that too occasionally. Majority of the Jaat population of Haryana has developed and modernized in the past few decades resulting in a loss of traditional cultural heritage at an increasing rate. Jaat community is shedding their traditional customs and costumes causing a threat to their unique and age-old tradition of dressing and grooming. These changes might have occurred due to introduction to modern technology, education, development of transport facilities and industrialization, increasing communication facilities, urbanization and migration. Such a situation is likely to bring a complete change in traditional costume of the particular area. It was discovered that there is a lack of information on the traditional costumes of Haryana; hence, documentation of the costumes of major communities of Haryana was a felt need.

OBJECTIVES:

- To document the traditional costume of Jaat community of Haryana.
- To study the changes occurring in the traditional costume of the Jaat community in Haryana.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Literature on dress and costumes indicates that there are many ways in which people identify with their ethnic groups or nationalities, and that dress has an important link with culture. Studies from different ethnic groups have for a long time shown that certain types of people's preferences of dress were those clothes whose meanings were in agreement with their sense of identity. For example, the traditional dress of Highland in Scotland (Chapman, 1995), and burial societies' dress seaparo' in Botswana (Ngwenya, 2002). They assert that different ethnic groups and sub-cultures have dress that denotes their culture. Edensor (2002) supports this observation by indicating that dress becomes a marker of cultural identity and is used to express identity in national ceremonies or cultural activities. In this regard, material culture artefacts are then manipulated unconsciously or consciously as a way of ensuring that they are aligned to ethnic group or nation's values and beliefs (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1989)

Gill, P. (2020) stated that the state of Haryana is known for cattle, agriculture, milk and ghee production as well as wrestling, also has some interesting handicrafts to offer. Since the folk-art objects in Haryana were primarily designed and produced to serve the needs of the artist's family, the value of handicrafts of Haryana has not been recognized even by its own people. Traditional garment pieces of Haryana were art pieces. Women of Haryana were expert in making these garments without any formal training. These garments included aangi, daaman, fargal, chadar, leh etc. Only skillful hands could prepare these articles as these traditional garments may appear simple but their making involved various delicate processes e.g. aangi was prepared using ten to twelve colorful pieces of fabric. Decorations like magji in daaman and kingri, fundane, falwe gundana, cut work, crochet work, gotta work, embroidery in other garments can be done only with expertise. Although diminishing, this art and the articles are still fascinating, beautiful and have functional utility. They also have great adaptability and can be easily modified to meet the style and interest of modern times. Therefore, this art can be used for empowering rural women of Haryana. Rural women who have the basic skill of this art can be trained and assisted to prepare and market articles of contemporary use, using this traditional craft. This certainly can be a very effective entrepreneurial opportunity for them.

As per Dhar, N. (2018) Clothing research under the purview of anthropology of dress and fashion attracted reward interest over the past two decades. Basically, dress is an important component of our material culture. Through clothing as well as dress, individuals establish their sense and place in society and culture. The relationship between dress and both individual and culture identities in the different sphere of life and culture continue to be of interest to scholars in the world of dress and fashion. The pattern of dress in culture consists of a network of symbolic codes that enhance norms, values, beliefs, worldviews and ideologies within a society.

METHODOLOGY

To achieve the objective of the study a descriptive research design was planned. An interview schedule was used as a tool to collect the data. On the basis of the available literature a structured open cum closed ended interview schedule was formulated. The study was conducted in Rohtak district of Haryana. Purposive sampling method was used for the selection of Rohtak district based on the existing traditional costumes and its population density. The related information was collected from secondary sources of information, books and booklet from libraries and primary sources from people who still had interest in retaining their cultural heritage. The relevant data was collected using interview and observation method. Description of each garment was given along with diagrams and pictures.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Costume of Jaat Women

Traditional Jaat women wore constructed garments known as Kurta and Daaman/Ghaagra. Traditional head dress Chundri/Odhni was also worn by women along with Jutti as the traditional footwear. This traditional dress was replaced by saree and salwar kameez for day-to-day wear whereas; the traditional dress was still worn by few women only during certain occasions.

Long-sleeved shirts or kurtas made of cotton are worn by women. Broad, free, flared skirts called Daaman are worn by women. Daaman has numerous designs and patterns on them, and they have several bright colors. An elongated piece of fabric that women wear over their attire is Chundri. With various designs, the chundries have colorful and shiny silver or golden lace borders. One end of the chundri is used by females to cover their heads. The other end is tucked in the front of their waistline.

Ornaments worn by Jaat Women

Jaat women were fond of various ornaments. Women used to wear Chhaaj, Borla and Sahr on head. Chhaaj is usually made of silver and hangs on forehead. Borla, also known as Raakhadi is spherically shaped with a string of gold. It is mostly of gold studded with some gems and generally is worn with Sahr. Sahr (sringar patti) is silver jewelry which is attached with the Borla. Bessar is another type of jewellery which hangs on forehead. Women also wear a bindi.

Nath and Laung are usually worn on the left nostril and joined to the left ear. The nath is of gold and the laung is a chain type with motifs making a design. Purli and Kokka are other types of jewellery worn in nose.

The designs of the earrings are quite simple. In Haryana, they are known as Jhumki (daande- made of silver)/ Magar and Kundal. Bali, Karanphool and Bujni were also some popular types of earrings.

Panchmora is a necklace which was usually worn by women who are married. They are still worn today. Hasla is made of gold which was heavy but loose around the neck. Hasli is similar to Hasla but it is thinner. Jhalra is a coin necklace which has a series

of silver coins strung together with a thread. Aged women used to prefer Hansil ornaments. Unlike normal jewellery, they are not foldable. Instead, they are stiff and shaped to fit around the neck in a particular form. There is a special segment of neck wears in this culture where the mode of stringing of beads is crucial to the design. For instance, Mohan Mala/ Matar Mala is an ethnic marvel that was made by stringing together a series of golden beads. Then, Kanthi/ Galsari which is also made by stringing the gold beads together but is rounded off. Another type of necklace which hangs till the chest is known as Hameliya or Timaniya.

Rings are commonly worn by Jaat women. But Aarsi is typical to their culture. Worn on the thumb, this ring comes with a mirror as the centrepiece. What's interesting is that when not in use, the mirror can be covered with a lid attached to it. Panchongale (hathphool) used to be of gold. It was for the brides and worn in all the fingers. The five rings are attached to the flower on the palm with strings and the other chain is connected to the bracelet around the wrist. This jewelry added beauty to the hands of brides and still is very popular. But today the gems and Kundan work hathphool had replaced this gold hathphool.

Ponche are the bangles worn on wrists. They are slightly more in area than bangles and had small round-shaped balls on them. Various types of bangles and kadas made of silver or gold are worn on wrists.

Tadiye are the bajubandhs that were worn earlier in Haryana. They were made of silver and used to be very heavy.

Tagdi is a belly chain or waist chain usually made of silver. Another jewellery that hangs on one side of the waist is called Nau daandi ka baajna.

Kadi and Chalakde were worn by women around ankles. Kadi used to be heavy while Chalakde were light in weight.

Charlie is the toe rings which were then worn in three fingers. They were made of silver and were primarily like bands worn on rings. Payal was also made of silver. Earlier women used to wear heavy silver payals known as Jhaanjar or Ramjhol.



Fig 1: Galsari



Fig 2: Ganthi



Fig 3: Hasla



Fig 4: Jhalra



Fig 5: Matar mala



Fig 6: Silver Jhalra



Fig 7: Taagdi



Fig 8: Boojni



Fig 9: Jhaanjar



Fig 10: Kadi



Fig 11: Costume of Jaat Woman



Fig 12: Costume of Jaat Man

Costume of Jaat Men

Traditionally Jaat men wore Kurta, Dhoti and Jutti. Additionally, a turban known as Khandwa was also worn and sometimes, they used to tie a cloth around the waist which is known as Gamecha or Aangoccha. They also used to carry a stick in hand known as Lath. Traditionally garments were restricted only to ceremonies and occasions.

Over their torsos, the men wear a kurta. Dhoti is a long piece of rectangular fabric wrapped around the waist and legs from the middle of the waistline and tucked in. For a better fit, the loose ends are tucked in from behind. As a white status symbol for them, the men of Haryana dresses wear white dhoti and kurta. Khandwa is a turban or headgear for the men. It is a rolled piece of long cloth wrapped around the head. However, in recent times, only the older men are found wearing khandwas. Juttis are closed shoes up to the front half of the feet and are made of leather.

There was a downward trend in the usage of the traditional garments. Traditional footwear Jutti is still in use. Also, lot of men still wear Kurta but the dhoti has been replaced with Pyjama. Contemporary garments like Kurta Pyjama, trousers, shirts, T-shirts and Jeans have replaced the traditional garments.

Ornaments worn by Jaat Men

Jaat men used to wear gold rings, gold earrings known as Moorki/ karanphool/ baali. In neck they used to wear Ganthi, maala and sometimes a black thread with gold tabeez (talisman). Some men used to wear kada in hand. These days married men of younger generations on marriage wore gold chains and rings.

CONCLUSION

It was noted that usually constructed garments were worn by Jaat men and women. The costume of Jaat men was entirely in white without any surface ornamentation. This depicts the simplicity in the living standards of the Jaat as most of them used to be farmers. There was a shift among the Jaat men from traditional costume to the contemporary wear. Traditional costumes which were earlier a part of day-to-day life of people were limited to only occasions and ceremonies. The reason could be their occupation and impact of media. It can also be attributed to the younger population wanting newer styles and fashion to be adopted in their day-to-day dressing. Most of the women of generation I and generation II own the ornaments but were worn only during occasions such as puja, marriage and traditional dance. This could be attributed to the type of occupation and to keep pace with the change in society. As the respondents had adopted the contemporary style of clothing they use accessories accordingly. Modernization and migration might also have led to the change. However, videos on social media like Instagram, Facebook and YouTube and popular Haryanvi songs are helping in bringing back the craze of these traditional costumes.

REFERENCES

- [1] Chapman, M. 1995. Freezing the Frame: Dress and Ethnicity in Brittany and Gaelic Scotland in Eicher, J. B. Ed. Dress and Ethnicity: change across space and time. Oxford: Berg: 7-28.
- [2] Dhar, N. Das, A. and Mondal, J. 2018. Dress in Culture: An ethnographic study in academic institutions in Rural and Urban areas of North 24 Parganas, West Bengal. International Journal of Research in Social Sciences. Vol.8 Issue 1
- [3] Edensor, T. 2002. National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life. Oxford: Berg.
- [4] Gill, P. Saroj, S. and Singh. 2020. 'Traditional Haryanvi Garments: An Entrepreneurial Opportunity', paper presented at the DGHE Sponsored National Seminar. Yamunanagar, India, 23 February 2018.
- [5] Hamilton, J. A. & Hamilton, J. W. 1989. Dress as a Reflection and Sustainer of Social Reality: a Cross Cultural Perspective. Clothing and Textile Research Journal 7 (2): 16-22.
- [6] Ngwenya, B.N. 2002. Gender, Dress and Self-Empowerment: Women and Burial Societies in Botswana, African Sociological Review, 6 (2):1-27.

