

Traditional ornaments and accessories of Rajput community of Mewar region

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ABSTRACT

Rajasthan is a land of rich tradition, it enjoyed the privilege of being a Rajput kingdom for several centuries and in the later ages become a princely state under the British colonial rule. It's also the largest state of the republic of India in terms of area. It is often called the shoppers "paradise", as it is famous for textiles, semi precious stones and handicrafts. The attractive designs of costumes and coiffure are eye catching and inviting to any shopper. As Rajputs are known for their rich treasure of culture in which accessories is one of important aspect. Heavy gold, Kundan and Diamond jewellery is worn by Rajput males and females in their different body parts. The present study deals with the documentation of rich heritage of Rajputs in terms of traditional and contemporary accessories used with their costumes.

INTRODUCTION

In the colourful Indian state of Rajasthan, many communities are living and in each community different style of traditional and contemporary accessories are used. Rajputs have a great identity and substantial contributions to the Indian culture. In present time accessories are used as an expression of personality and also as status symbol (Kothari, 1995; Bhandari, 2004).

Rajputs are sub sect of Hindi speaking "Kshatriyas". In older times the term was applied only to kinsmen of ruling dynasties. The present research paper is an outcome in part of the study undertaken "to study and document the traditional costumes and coiffure of male and female of Rajput community of Rajasthan".

METHODS

Preliminary survey was conducted to collect information

about traditional and contemporary accessories used by Suryavanshi Rajputs from their heavily populated native place of Udaipur and Bhilwara district of Mewar region. A sample of 60 respondents was selected from each district comprising of 30 male and 30 female respondents of Suryavanshi Rajput community to fulfill the purpose of present study. The data were collected and analyzed in the light of the objectives of present study.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Rajput community is really very fond of using ornaments on various parts of body as per gender and age groups.

Ornaments:

Human being is fond of ornaments since very beginning. There are many ways to decorate the body by various types of ornaments meant for each part of body. There are two types of apic "Ang-Vijja" describes two types of ornaments from the

source they were made:

- Praniyonik (living source) shankh, horn, ivory and pearls.
- Dhatoyonik (metallic) – gold, silver, bronze iron, copper, gilt etc.

The permanent ornaments are made by metals like gold, silver copper, gilt etc.

The rich and high society usually use ornaments of silver and gold but poor and middle class wear ornaments of cheap metals.

In Rajasthan, there is very much attraction towards ornaments among Rajput community. These people use ornaments lavishly to decorate themselves in comparison to other community.

The Traditional and modern ornaments used has been depicted in Fig. 1.

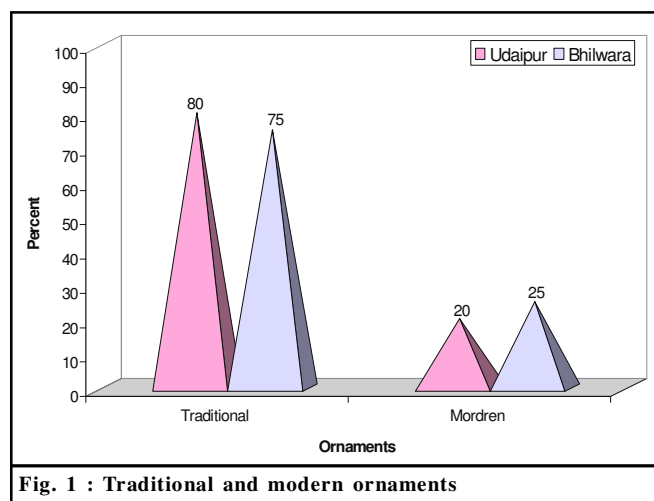


Fig. 1 : Traditional and modern ornaments

It is clear from Fig. 1 that in Udaipur 80 per cent families wear traditional ornaments in comparison to 75 per cent in Bhilwara, remaining percentage preferred modern ornaments in both Udaipur and Bhilwara districts, respectively.

The trend of wearing traditional ornaments in body parts was found more prominent as revealed by 77.5 per cent respondents wearing traditional ornaments in both districts and 22.5 per cent respondents were wearing modern ornaments

in both districts.

Respondents used traditional ornaments during family, religious and ceremonial functions and modern ornaments in other casual social activities. The traditional ornaments have been presented in Table 1.

Table 1 shows the kind of metal used in ornaments. As per their economic status, Rajput women mostly used both gold and silver ornaments. 38.33 per cent Rajput women used the ornaments of both metals, 15 per cent used gold ornaments, 10 per cent used silver ornaments, 20 per cent used diamond ornaments and 16.66 per cent used Kundan ornaments in Udaipur district.

Similarly in Bhilwara district, 41.66 per cent Rajput women used the ornaments of both costly metals, 18.33 per cent women used gold ornaments, 6.6 per cent used silver ornaments, 15 per cent used diamond ornaments and 18.33 per cent use Kundan ornaments.

Perusal of Table 2 shows the observation regarding common ornaments worn in different body parts. Rakhdi, Aad, Timaniya, Chuda, Angudhiya, Nath and Rimhol, Punaj Bajuband, Bichiya, Pagpan/Payal are commonly used among Rajputs female in both districts. In morden times, Rajput girls have also started to put “Tika” on their forehead in place of Rakhri. Rajput women wear Hathi daant Chuda (made from ivory).

Table 2 : Type of ornaments worn in different body parts among Rajput women (n=120)

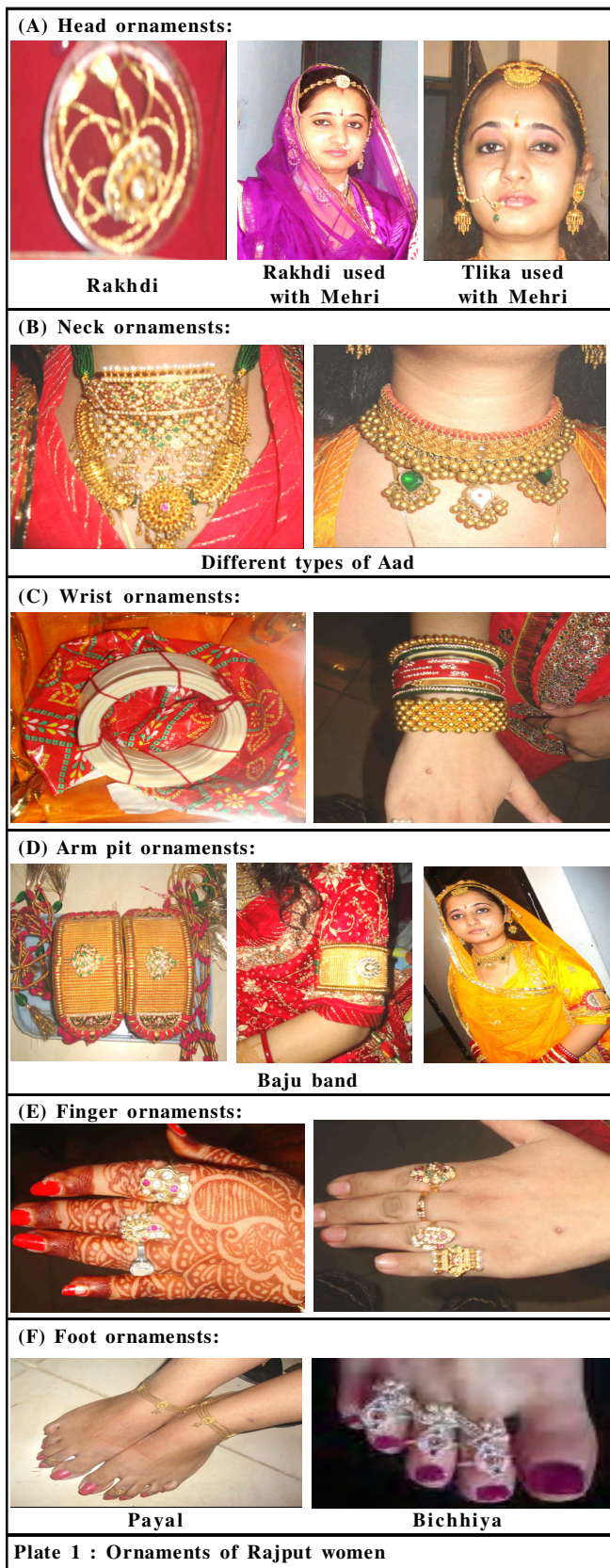
Sr. No.	Ornaments	Body parts
1.	Rakhdi, Tika, Sishfhu and Mehri	Head
2.	Aad, Timaniya, Chain, Devtafool	Neck
3.	Bali, Jumke and Tope	Ear
4.	Nath and Nose ring	Nose
5.	Punaj, Chuda, Chudi and Kades	Wrist
6.	Bajuband	Armpit
7.	Finger rings	Finger
8.	Bichhiya, Pagpan/Payal	Foot

The ornaments are major part of their guise, they wear the ornaments especially on the marriage, engagement and on special functions which reflects about their status in society.

The bride on her marriage wear Rakhri, Mehri (a thin flat

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by kind of metal used in traditional ornaments (n=120)

Sr. No.	Ornaments uses	Respondents					
		Udaipur		Bhilwara		Total	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1.	Gold	9	15	11	18.33	20	16.66
2.	Silver	6	10	4	6.66	10	8.3
3.	Gold/Silver	23	38.33	25	41.66	48	40
4.	Diamond	12	20	9	15	21	17.5
5.	Kundan	10	16.66	11	18.33	21	17.5



band gold attached with Rakhri), Sishphul (same as Mehri but some hanging beads used in it) Aad, Tops Churi, Payal, Moti ki mala, Timaniya, Kara, Chura, Gajra, Kach Koli, Mundri, Payal, Karnfhul, Bajuband, Bichiya, Anguthiya, etc. as per the financial positions and status of bride's parents. Ornaments for legs are mostly of silver they are Kadla anvala, Nevri, Payal, Pajaniyas etc. married women wear "Bichiyas" on the toes. Cent-per cent respondents said that the young and old women use lengha, kurti, kanchli and odhani (Plate 2).



Ornaments used by male Rajputs:

The observation in Table 3 reveals that Rajput men are also fond of wearing jewellery in their different body parts. Main ornaments used are of heavy goldchains, golden buttons, chain, Kantala, Murkia/Bali, Tops, Angudya and Serpeach.

Table 3 : Type of ornaments used on different body parts Rajpur men (n=120)

Sr. No.	Ornaments	Body parts
1.	Serpeach.	Head
2.	Chain, Kantala	Neck
3.	Murkia/Bali and topes	Ear
4.	Angudya and finger rings	Fingers
5.	Bracelets	Wrist
6.	Lenger	Leg

The ornaments are major part of their guise, they wear the ornaments especially on the marriage, engagement and on special functions which reflects about their status in society.

Similarly the groom also put on various types of ornaments like Kara, Gokhru, Chain, Loong, Binti (rings), Wrist watch, Kandala, Murkiya, Devta fool, Serpeach and Lenger etc.

The observation of Table 3 reveals that Rajput men are also fond of wearing jewellery in different body parts. Main ornaments used are heavy gold, chains, golden buttons, chain, Kantala, Murkia/Bali, Tops, Angudya and Serpeach (Plant 3).

Hair style:

The data revealed that hair cutting was preferred by cent per cent respondents in the young age group while in middle



Different types of Serpeach and Kanthala

Plate 3 : Ornaments of Rajput men

age group, it reduced and totally absent in old age group. The Rajput females use to keep their hair long they have long Braid, but some females keep hair long from back and cut only from front.

Hair decoration:

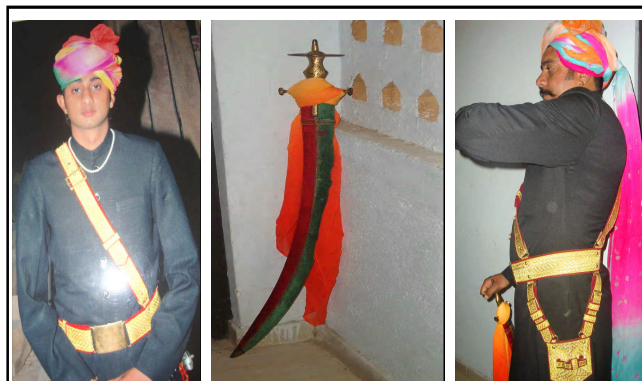
Rajput females gave extra attention towards their hair decoration specially when they go outdoor. They are very fond of using bright coloured hairpins also, tie ribbon in braid. Now a days these females also use rubber bands and hair bands of various style.

Accessories :

The type of accessories used among Rajput wopmen has been described in Table 4.

Regarding Table 4 accessories of women shows that the 53.33 per cent used Potali purse, 35 per cent leather purse and 11.66 per cent prepared other varieties available in local market of Udaipur district.

Similarly in Bhilwara also, 48.33 per cent respondents used to carry Potali purse, 38.33 per cent leather purse and 13.33 per cent used other type of purses. Rajput women use purse of different colours. Mostly women use matching purse to their “poshak”. The handkerchief *i.e.* "Rumal", these were very colourful and having different design. Different colour Saree pins, golden/silver hair pins, key and key chain are also used.



Cross belt, Sward and buttons

Plate 4 : Accessories of Rajput men

Accessories of men included - Key chain, chain watch, sward, cross belt, rumal, golden/silver buttons on shirts and Ginnes.

Tattooing:

Tattooing is the commonly preferred body decoration among Rajputs. Tattoos are permanent marks of green or of blue colour engraved on body skin with fine needle. The most common reason said by old males for being tattooed was that these marks of tattooing shows their social status in the society. But these days, adult men do not prefer tattooing only young boys in the family inspired by fashion go for tattooing.

In response to the question asked about tattooing done on the body parts and at which age and part of body being tattooed and common motifs of tattooing, it was found that tattooing was mainly done on hands. In general it was done at the age of 5-8 years though it varies according to individual preference. Young boys preferred tattooing to be done in the fairs and festive seasons for want of latest designs.



Tattoos

Footwear:

People of the *mochi* community have practiced the traditional craft of making the ‘juti’ (foot wear) for centuries

Table 4 : Distribution of respondents by use of bag/purses (n=120)							
Sr. No.	Types of purse	Respondents					
		Udaipur		Bhilwara		Total	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1.	Potali purse	32	53.33	29	48.33	61	50.83
2.	Leather purse	21	35	23	38.33	44	36.66
3.	Other	7	11.66	8	13.33	15	12.5

and continue to do so even today. *Regar* and *Bambhi* community prepare the leather, from which the 'juti' is made. Jutis are alltime favourite footwear among Rajput community in Mewar region. There are different styles and varieties available in market these days.

Findings showed that cent per cent Rajput men and women use simple footwear. But during festivals, marriage function, ceremonial functions, they used to wear decorative 'Juti'. Elderly person of Rajput community preferred to wear simple leather 'juti' (foot wear) for comfort purpose, they do not prefer decorative foot wear.

But now-a-days according to fashion, style of footwear wearing also changed in Rajput communities. At present Rajput men use shoes and women use chappals and sandals'. But on ceremonial functions, Rajput men and women still use traditional "Juti to match their ensemble.

Conclusion:

Rajputs males and Female are fond of wearing different ornaments used in jewellery. The Rajput females generally wear all the jewellery they possess, the most common are "Bor" or "Rakhdi", "Badla", "timaniya", "Chuda", "Angudya" "Bichhiya". These are the symbolic of the women's marital status in rajput community. Other ornaments are also used profusely such as "Machi-Suliya "Tevata", "Patta" "Aad". "Nath" and "Chuda" "Jod" "Rimhol" "Bajuband" and the "Pagpan" etc.

In morden time Rajput girls have also started to put "Tika" on their forehead in place of Rakhri. The male generally



wear golden buttons, Chain, Kantala, Murkia, Angudya and Serpeach. The females used to keep their hair braided or open.

The tattooing was the commonly preferred body decoration from past time. Some boys use tattooing inspired by fashion and styles. Previously it was done on various body parts with voluminous design, but now it has been considerably reduced.

Traditionally accessories used by Rajput women are Potali purse, "Satka" (Key chain made of silver and gold), 'Rumal' and watch. Rajput males also use wrist watch, chain watch, cross belt, sword and 'Rumal'. Rajput male and female wear leather shoes (with turn up toes) and "Mojadies" as footwear.

Hence, it can be concluded that in Mewar, Suryavanshi Rajput community still follow the rich tradition of wearing heavy gold, silver and Kundan ornaments in their different body parts along with other accessories especially the mojadies as footwear, to complete their ensemble.

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