Traditional designs of meitei community of Manipur: adaptation on Salwar-Kameez

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■**ABSTRACT :** Various motifs collected from traditional textiles and costumes of Meitei community of Manipur were documented followed by screening of designs in terms of suitability for adaptation on apparel items by the researcher. In this, 30 motifs were selected. Adaptation of designs on Salwar-Kameez was done on computer by using suitable software. Out of 15 developed designs, three designs for Salwar-Kameez were selected by judges to develop final products. Stencil and hand block printing techniques were used in printing apparel items. The six designed apparel items were highly acceptable and have enough market potential.

■ **KEY WORDS :** Traditional, Design, Motif , Salwar-Kameez, Adaptation

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The human race universally wears articles of clothing-also known as dress, garments, or attire-on the body in order to protect it against the adverse climate conditions. Clothing has been recognized as one of the primary needs of mankind. People wear clothing for functional as well as social reasons. Apart from the practical functions of placing a piece of garment above the skin, wearing clothes also carries specific cultural and social meanings. A style of dress, including garments, accessories and hairstyle, especially as characteristic of a particular state/country, period or people is known as costume. The rich textiles and costumes of Manipur showcase the great heritage of traditional and indigenous garment making in the whole of North-Eastern region of our country. It has the potential to become an established cottage industry and even go further into realms of large scale merchandising. Knowing about the traditional richness and the expertise of the Meitei, one will understand that the contribution of this little state in the development of the contemporary textile designing is phenomenal. In view of this, the researcher has formulated the proposed investigation on "Traditional designs of Meitei community of Manipur: Its adaptation on Salwar-Kameez", to collect the traditional motifs/designs from textiles and costumes of Manipur, develop the apparel items using those motifs/designs and to assess the market potential.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

The present research work was based on the traditional textiles and costumes of Meitei community, hence, the study was conducted purposively in Imphal East and West districts, as the majority of Meitei community is settled in these districts for data collection and in Udaipur, Rajasthan for assessment of market potentials of developed designs on Salwar- Kameez.

Selection of the sample :
Three types of sample were selected for the present study *i.e.*
– Sample for collection of information about textiles and costumes of Meitei community of Manipur.
– Samples for design evaluation.
– Sample for assessment of market potential.

Development of tool :
For the present study, two types of tool were developed for data collection. interview schedule and rating scale.
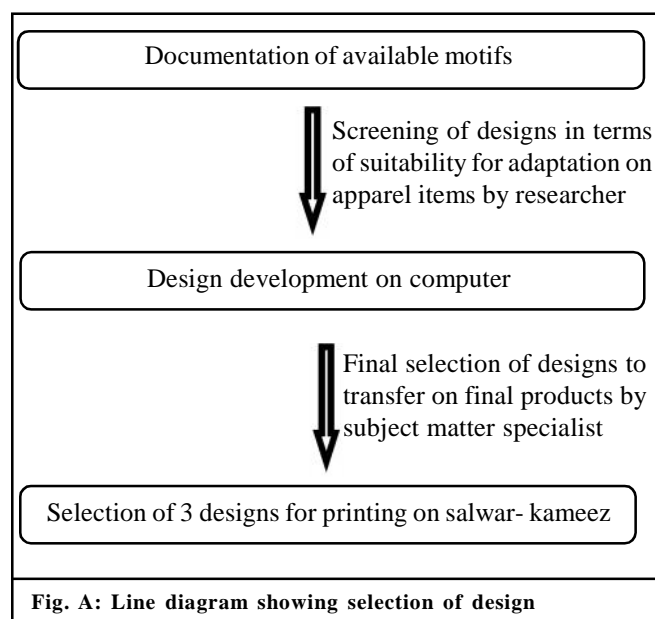
Procedure of data collection :

The study was conducted in two phases.

Phase 1:

Survey and collection of information about the traditional textiles and costumes of Meitei community of Manipur with the help of interview schedule.

Phase 2:

The various motifs collected from traditional textiles and costumes of Meitei community were documented followed by screening of designs in terms of suitability for adaptation on apparel items by the researcher. In this, 30 motifs were selected and developed using traditional Manipuri motifs with the help of suitable softwares. These designs were shown in four different colour ways and were evaluated by a panel of judges to select the three designs in terms of five parameters, *i.e.* suitability of combination of motifs to the end use, suitability of colour scheme used in the motifs, suitability of colour combination of motif with the background, suitability of motif to the technique (block/stencil) and overall appearance.

Documentation of available motifs

Screening of designs in terms of suitability for adaptation on apparel items by researcher

Design development on computer

Final selection of designs to transfer on final products by subject matter specialist

Selection of 3 designs for printing on salwar- kameez

Fig. A: Line diagram showing selection of design

Development of apparel items :

The selected motifs from three designs were transferred to blocks and stencils to develop the final products.

Printing of apparel items :

Hand block printing, and stencil printing methods were used for developing final products.

Assessment of the market potential of the apparel items :

In order to assess the market potential of the apparel items, researcher estimated the production cost and profit percentage keeping a range of 20 per cent to 60 per cent. Responses obtained on rating scale developed were analyzed to assess market potential.

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The main aim of study was adaptation of Traditional designs of Meitei community of Manipur on Salwar-Kameez, which includes documentation of traditional designs followed by design development using CAD and lastly its adaptation by Hand printing methods on Salwar- Kameez.

Profile of the traditional textiles and costumes of Meitei community of Manipur :

The traditional dresses of Meiteis men were *pheijom, khudei, pumyat, moja phurit, khaon phurit, phurit, kokyet and phi* etc. The traditional dresses of Meiteis women were *phurit, blouse, phanek achamba, phanek mayek naibi, pumngou phanek, innaphi, khudei matek, rani phi, wangkhei phi, kwangchet, kokset,* etc. *Salai kokyet* and *ningkham samjin* were used as head gear by the males and *kajenglei* and *thapa* were used by females during ceremonial occasions. The practice of wearing traditional ornaments like *marei, naathang, chomlaang* (varieties of neck ornaments), *taan, khuji* (bangles), *khudop (finger ring)* were common among the women and worn according to their financial abilities and social status. The marriage costumes of Meitei were also very attractive as the groom wore *pumyat* (white kurta), *pheijom* (white dhoti), *innaphi* (chaddar) and *salai kokyet matek* (turban), whereas the bride wore *kumin, reshom phurit* and *innaphi* with *thapa.* The widow also wore simple dresses like *phanek* with a *hija mayek* border design, *pumngou phanek, phi angouba,* etc. with black coloured *chandan tilak* on the forehead. The Meitei community uses a variety of textiles for various purposes. The most common textiles used by them were *phadi, ngabongphi, nahong, monpakphidak, monkhum, leirumphi, pomphi, kangkhan,* etc.

Motifs, designs and colours used in traditional textiles and costumes of meitei community :

Manipur may be characterized by their primitive design, quality and colour, but they are strangely attractive all the same. Most of the traditional Meitei motifs are inspired from the pattern of snake scales. And it is also said that floral motif is the mother of all motifs in Manipuri clothes. The traditional motifs and designs used in costumes of Meitei were *akoibi or khoi mahum, teel tongba, hija mayek, moirang phijan, Kheiroithek, Thabi maru, kabok chaiba, leirong, lanthang khut hat, lindu mayek, nga mamei, khamenchatpa, phantup,* etc. The traditional motifs and designs used in textiles of Meiteis were floral motifs like *leirong*, geometrical motif like *chithek, cheikhei, likli mayek*, etc.

Selection and development of designs :

The various motifs collected from the traditional textiles and costumes of Meitei community were documented followed by screening of designs in terms of suitability for adaption on apparel items by the researcher. Various motifs selected from the traditional textiles and costumes of Meitei community were categorized in the following manner:

Animal motifs :

Samu (elephant), Sagol (horse), Akoibi/khoi mahum, Khamen chatpa, Lairen, Hija mayek, Nga mamit, Nga mamei, Nga maku and Teel tongba/ Teel mayek.

Birds motifs :

Peacock and cock.

Human figure :

Highly stylized human figure and Dancing doll.

Floral motifs :

Leirong, Leihao, Lei mana, Kundo, Thambal Yensin, Karot mana and Kewa mana.

Miscellaneous motifs :

Kheiroithek, Moirangphijan, Thabi maru (cucumber's seed), Kabok chaiba (scattered puff rice), Likli mayek, and Phantup

Adaptation of designs was done on computer by using suitable softwares *i.e.* Adobe Photoshop and Corel Draw. The designs developed were used on Salwar-Kameez in different placements and colour combinations. Out of 15 designs, three designs which were more appealing aesthetically for application on Salwar-Kameez using stencil and hand block printing were selected by judges.

Evaluation of Salwar-Kameez :

The developed designs of Salwar-Kameez were evaluated as per the four criterias *i.e.* suitability of colour scheme used in the motifs, suitability of technique, suitability of colour combination of motifs with the background and overall appearance.

Evaluation of selected three developed designs of Salwar-Kameez :

The varied scores obtained in rating performa for judging the suitability of 15 developed designs of Salwar-Kameez in four backgrounds were compiled and mean per cent scores were calculated to select top three designs in order of ranking as rated by the judges.

It was found that developed designs of Salwar-Kameez (SK5), Salwar-Kameez (SK7) and Salwar-Kameez (SK14) of set 1(*i.e.* white background) scores the highest among all developed designs of Salwar-Kameez. Hence, these three developed designs of Salwar-Kameez were selected.

Table 1 depicts that Salwar-Kameez (SK5) was most preferred with the scores of 91 out of 100 points, Salwar-Kameez (SK7) stood second with scores of 89 out of 100 points followed by Salwar-Kameez (SK14) with scores of 84 out of 100 points. All the selected three developed designs of Salwar-Kameez were of set 1 *i.e.* white colour background.

The overall MPS was found more than 80 for three Salwar-Kameez which showed that all the designs were accepted by by the judges on the basis of various parameters selected, and out of these three Salwar-Kameez, SK 5 was most acceptable by the judges.

Evaluation of market potentials of the apparelitems :

In order to assess the market potential of the apparel items, the actual cost of the apparel items were found out. Cost is one of the important factors of any designed article.

The costs of the designed items were not found expensive when compared to other readymade sarees and Salwar-Kameez available in the market. Table 2 shows that cost of SK14 was maximum followed by SK7 and SK 5, respectively. The efforts was well appreciated and found acceptable. The finding was well appreciated and found acceptable.

Table 1: Mean scores of selected three developed designs of salwar-kameez				(n=5)
Sr.No.	Criteria of evaluation		Mean score	
		SK 5	SK 7	SK 14
1.	Suitability of colour scheme used in the motif	21 (84)	21 (84)	21 (84)
2.	Suitability of colour combination of motif with the background	23 (92)	22 (88)	22 (88)
3.	Suitability of motif to the technique (stencil/ block)	24 (96)	23 (92)	21 (84)
4.	Overall appearance	23 (92)	23 (92)	20 (80)
5.	Suitability of colour scheme used in the motif		23 (92)	21 (84)
	Total scores obtained by each article	91	89	84
	Acceptability index	91	89	84

Data in parenthesis depict percentage

Estimation of profit percentage :

The calculated cost of each of the developed apparel items was also used to find out the approximate percentage of profits that can be gained, if sold in the market. The data collected showed a bright prospect in terms of profit margin. The profit percentage found to be varied for different developed apparel items.

Distribution of respondents according to per cent of profit that can be gained from sell of developed items and have been presented in Fig. 1 to 3. Figures showed that all the

respondents assigned variable profit percentage for the designed items.

Fig.1 showed that 63.3 per cent of respondents agreed for profit of 60 per cent that can be added to design code SK 5, followed by 40 per cent profit by 23.33 per cent respondents.

Fig.2 showed that 76.6 per cent of respondents agreed for profit of 20 per cent that can be added to design code SK 7, followed by 40 per cent profit by 20 per cent respondents.

Fig.3 showed that 93.3 per cent of respondents agreed for profit of 20 per cent that can be added to design code SK 14.
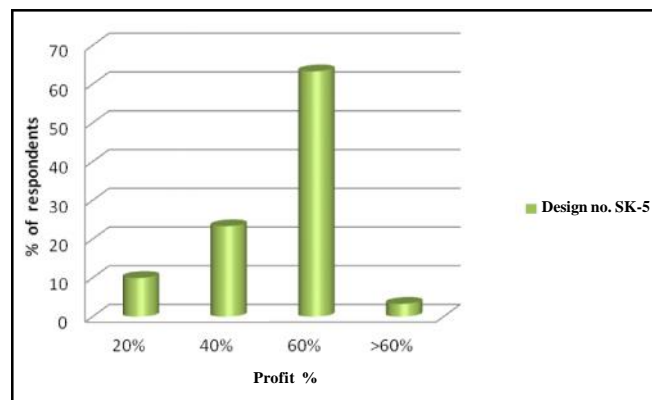

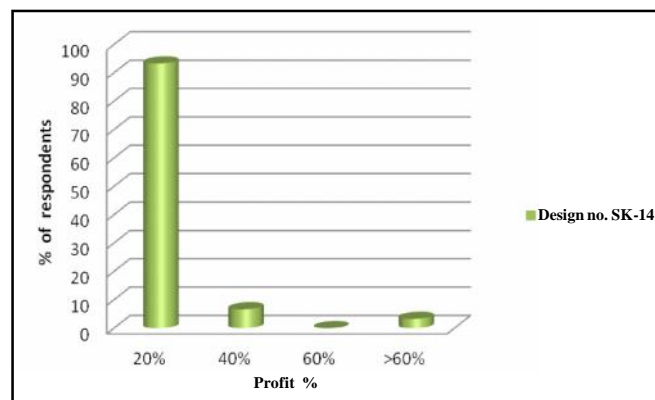Fig. 1: Distribution of respondents by profit percentage margin in developed apparel items

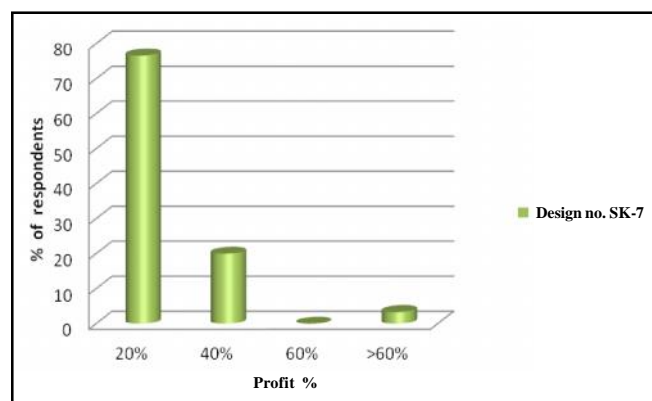Fig. 3: Distribution of respondents by profit percentage margin in developed apparel items

Fig. 2: Distribution of respondents by profit percentage margin in developed apparel items

Thus, it is apparent from analysis of figures that developed design for these three apparel items were highly acceptable and have enough market potential, inferring that design developed, being inspired by designs from traditional textiles and costumes of Manipur was liked by the customers and documenting our rich culture and creating new innovations from them holds a bright future in fashion and textiles. Bahadur (2000) and Dave (2005) have also made some contributions related to the present investigations.

Conclusion :

Thus, it can be concluded that developed designs on Salwar-Kameez were highly appreciated and liked by the customers and market personnels, adaptation of designs from traditional textiles and costumes of Meitei community of

Table 2: Estimation of cost of the apparel items		Apparel items (Rs.)		
Sr. No.	Criteria of cost estimation	SK-5	SK-7	SK-14
1.	Cost of raw material (fabrics)	217	245	245
2.	Cost of blocks and stencils	B- 35	B- 30	B- 75
		S- 3		
3.	Cost of dyes, etc.	25	20	20
	Actual cost Rs.	280	295	340
	Overhead charges which includes labour charge, cost of miscellaneous items, etc. (20%)	56	59	68

Manipur give a new way to discover something which is unique and give an opportunity to the customers an alternative to choose. On the other hand, this study gives a guideline in developing innovative creations and knowledge for contemporization of traditional designs of Manipur state.

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