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Explore the development of Indian textiles through the comparison of two Indian cotton producing traditions

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India held world monopoly in the manufacturing of cotton textiles for about more than 3000 years from B.C. 1500 to A.D. 1500. It has been observed that in the Middle Ages, Indian cotton textile products were in great demand in Eastern and European, both the markets. There has been vast development observed in cotton industry as the way of producing products is now changed (Wolbers, 2009) ^[12]. Earlier, the Indian industry seems to be using traditional ways in manufacturing clothes and cotton. However, after agriculture, textile industry is the only sector in India that has generated huge employment for both skilled and unskilled labours in textile. From economic point of view, textile industry is considered as the second largest employment generating sector in India and this has been recorded that it offers direct employment to over 36 million in the country. The Indian industry continued to progress till the outbreak of First World War in 1914. This also increased the number of textile firms especially in India.

India has been well known for the textile goods since ancient times and the traditional of India is virtually decayed during the colonial regime. However the modern textile industry took birth in India in the early 19th century when the first mill in the country was established near Calcutta. After independence, the cotton textile industry made rapid growth plans with number of spindles (Lal, 2006) ^[8]. The great Mughal Emperor brought carpet weaving to India in 16th century and thus it is named as Mughal carpets. It is said when Babur came to India and when he felt disappointment from the luxury facets. At that time, he was actually missing the luxuries of Persia, which included the famous Persian carpet. Hence Akbar laid the foundation of carpet weaving tradition in India in 1520 AD when he actually brought some carpet weavers from Persia.



Illustration 1: *Multimedallion Carpet of Kirman*

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Cotton in India is considered as one of the principal crop, which aids in exploring employment opportunities and make significant contribution in generating export earnings. As per statements marked by FICCI, Cottage industry presently engages around six million farmers besides associating it with around 40-50 million people that perform activities relating to cotton

cultivation, cotton trade and cotton processing. Domestic textile industry is built with 1608 spinning and 200 composite wheels, with an installed capacity of 35.61 million spindles, 448000 open-end rotors and 69000 looms in organized sector. Though, India has brought qualitative transformation in producing cotton since independence, yet it is far behind many countries like USA and China (Fletcher, 2013) [15]. The main reason for such under growth is on account of that 65% area under cotton is rain fed.

In contemporary market place, there are certain companies in the same industry that produces products through weaving and spinning over hundreds of years ago. However on the other hand, innovations and developments are being generating up to a higher extent. The present research has been made with an attempt to ascertain development in Indian textile industry and time as well as concept of producing products has changed over years (*The Tradition of Textiles in India*, 2005). The industry would not be able to survive in strong competition from the modern mill industry of UK, which usually provides cheap and better goods as a result of Industrial Revolution in the subsequent country. Hence, during that time, British textile industry enjoyed huge political advantage. The real expansion of cotton textile industry took place in 1870's since at that time, the number of mills enhanced over 60% especially in Mumbai. The essay has further also discussed list of all modern developments that were held in the same industry along with the techniques that are currently in use (Barnes, 2004) [3].

Textile industry in India plays a vital role in Indian economy and it also contributes substantially to the export regions. The region nearly represents that modern form of production has taken industrial place and the discussion also states that wide variety of natural and synthetic fibers are used to produce fabrics. The phenomenal growth in textile industry has been a striking feature in the economic development of country since independence (*Technology Development in the Indian Textile Industry: Interaction between Government Policy, firms and cooperative Research Associations*, 2012). The traditional way of producing fabrics is entirely different with that to the modern way of production, which uses large pool of diversified machines, which produces different types of designer and casual fabrics. On the other hand, weaving and spinning of clothes lies under the traditional way of fabric production however, in the present scenario as well. Most of the organizations have been using the same technique for producing finished fabrics. This is also a time consuming process however fabrics are quite different in quality, which further enhances the value of traditional ways in textile industry.

The record of ancient medieval Indian textile exists mostly in literature and sculptures; hence there is an archaeological evidence of cotton textile at Mohenjo daro in the Indus valley around 3000 BC. Indian textiles were more important to Dutch and the English than to the Portuguese (Sukaadas, 1992) [11]. Carpets, shawls and other textile materials are still made in India as they have been for hundreds of years. Most of the materials are made with knotted wool and with cotton pack. However patterns are strongly Persian but it also shows a preference for naturalistic plants and animals.

India has a diverse and rich textile tradition and the origin can be traced to the Indus Valley Civilization. It has been observed that the people of that civilization used homespun cotton for weaving their garments and this is quite concerned with Indian tradition and history. Excavations at Harappa and

Mohenjo Daro have stipulated the use of certain modes for weaving designs in fabrics such as needles made up of wood and bones (*An analysis of growth and development of textile industry in India*, 2015). This make sure that people have been spinning cotton at home to make yarn and finished garments. Fragments of woven cotton have also been found in this category, which alternatively produces best fabrics as required. In *RigVeda*, information about textile industry and about the concept of weaving has been stated. As per the Hindu epics, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharat*, information about the variety of fabrics in vogue during those times is also included. From the history of *Ramayana*, the concept of rich garments worn by the aristocracy can be identified which is not often in modern textile industry. India has numerous trade connections with the outside clients and the cotton textiles in India are also populous in other countries of the ancient world.

Ancient way of producing fabrics is quite dissimilar as compared with the contemporary style since that is probably integrated with various sculptures belonging to *Mauryan* and *Gupta* ages. This also showcases that ancient history testifies to the technical achievements of the antediluvian Indian weaver. For instance- Indian silk is quite popular in Rome especially in the early centuries of Christian era. Several fragments of the cotton fabrics have been coming directly from the topographic point of Fostat, which is one of the oldest places of Gujarat (Barnard, 2013) [2]. Cotton fabrics and all the related materials have also been exported to China at the time of heydays of silk route. The past tradition about the textile industry and handlooms is still discernible in the motifs, designs and patterns (specifically in weaving technique), which is probably used in the current industry as well. Surat in Gujarat is one of the oldest centers of trade in cotton textiles and the city then exports this to further parts of the world. Huge development has been taking place in textile industry as now in the modern time period, many machines and devices have entered in the market place that further aids in producing the requisite fabric as required.

In the 19th century, Kashmir shawl was one of the rarest and most beautiful gifts, which could be offered to woman. This romantic appeal was started in the Vale of Kashmir and brings nobility to India. Woolen blankets and shawls were woven and exported to Roman Empire and brought in Turkestanni weavers (Sinclair, 2012) [10]. Indian shawls are also considered as the soft fabric draped beautifully with colorful shimmers and pine patterns. There are several stories that has given origin to core designer shawls and it is as old as processes of 16th century. Mughals not only used Persian technique for weaving shawls and carpets but also they were highly influenced by traditional designs and motifs from Persia.

However, as compared to the oldest form of textile companies, weaving, printing and spinning has facilitated numerous other designs as well in fabrics, which are quite different from traditional textile. *Chintz*¹ is also a popular tradition in India. The types of fabrics can be categorized into varied types, which further are imported to Europe and other parts of the country. Long cloth can also be painted in similar fashion by using wooden blocks and motifs, which reflects Indian history and properties

¹ *Chintz* is a different category of stained calico cloth in which people imprints the designs and flowers with most popular features of Indian tradition

(Comparing Technological Innovation of Textile Industries in India and China, 2006). The crowning glory of Indian textile was Kinkhab or Brocade, which currently is in demand. This is indeed useful for males and females both for designing purposes. This is such a fabric that is being woven out of silver threads and then plated with gold and thus, it makes the fabric expensive and quality concerned. Therefore, the expensive dresses that are made up of brocade can be used for special occasions like weddings and religious functions. For the Mughals, this fabric epitomized the refined taste and high level of indulgence. The literal meaning of Kinkhab is fewer dreams and the fabric is made up of abrasive texture that makes the material more enticed. The textile known as Patola forms to be a traditional garb of Gujarati bride and this is one of the most common forms of fabrics in contemporary scenario. It is quite difficult to imprint the design, as certain sorts of machines and equipment are required to do so.



Illustration 2: Indian fabric design

Hence, from the above study, it is clear that these different forms of fabrics are most commonly used for traditional purposes. The weft and warp are dyed separately prior starting from weaving and this further makes it a designer material. These are also the traditional forms of fabric but are widely used in current scenario. Amid the entire population, most of the people in modern world has been demanding for traditional fabrics since they are highly influenced about the traditional work patterns and imprints (*Cotton Textile Industry in India: Production, Growth and Problems*, 2015). The cost of these fabrics is very large but despite the cost factor, design matters with the color combinations, which increases popularity of the fabric. Most of the companies have been considering fabric-manufacturing process as a source of employment in which they put huge efforts for meeting the actual specifications of design and material both. Hence, it can be said that history is repeating the concept in all grounds and that has been facilitating innovation and development in textile industry. Therefore, there are many other sorts of fabrics that are prepared under modern concepts and that can be compared to the current textile industry.

Shah Jahan, the 17th century Indian ruler who built Taj is always been considered as an crucial patron of architecture. Despite from the patterns prevailing in Persian manner, a large range of series of Indian designs has developed that includes scenic, animal carpets and other spirited chases back for elaborated architectural latticeworks. King Akbar who himself was a great propagator of arts and culture flourished

the artifacts and culture of India and because of that so many reforms also get started in the same period (Cluckie, 2008)^[4]. Between the period of 1520 to 1530, Akbar instructed the carpet weavers from the well-known workshops of Persia to teach the prisoners the art of weaving designer and attractive carpets. The carpets at that time usually made up for the palaces of India and some were also sent to abroad in terms of gifts. As there are no shortages of money, labor and time, so almost it took 15 years to make a single carpet. This entire process is not refurbished in current scenario and now carpet-weaving process require only 15 to 20 days. The famous jails for carpets were Agra jail, Lahore jail and Bikaner jail



Architecture of Fatehpur Sikri

Thus, all these above mentioned facts can be related to technological concerns as because of technology, only textile industry is able to meet the specifications of all designer fabrics. Latest machines² and devices are used by the industry wherein they manage production of fabrics timely and accurately. Earlier, the use of technology was very less and hence, the industry is entirely³ dependent on handwork. On the other side, the value of this handwork has been increasing and people are even ready to pay extra amount for this handwork. The entire process of designing and weaving is based on hand efforts. However in the current scenario, these processes can be easily conducted through machines and other devices. Thread spinning machines are also available whereby requisite threads can be prepared and this is also useful in saving time for further processes. Hence, from the discussion, it is clear that technological innovation in textile industry has also encouraged the value of export and import and now all the related industries have entered in international markets for diverse reasons.

Compared with the countries competing in international markets, productivity level and growth rate is low in India as other nations like China and Europe are quite advanced about fabric designer. There is also a considerable variation in productivity between mills in the country; but India has been selling right kind of cotton fabric to the right market with reasonable price. As per the research of International

² Medieval Indian Architecture commenced by Muslim Invaders with the invasion of Delhi Sultanate. The Sultanates of Delhi were succeeded by the Mughals whose architecture was a blend of Indo- Islamic and Persian architecture.

³ Due to lack of technology hand work was preferred. Many examples of handwork can be seen.

Research Institute, China and India are the two top areas for textile industry in the world that proceeds from textile and apparel exports and that further greatly contributes to the economic development of both the countries. This is the oldest form of employment for many people and thus, textile industry is continuously adopting different models of divergent growth tracks (Singleton, 2013) ^[17]. Since technology always develops the possibilities of growth and success; therefore it is must to include in all types of industries for further processes. Textile is also considered as the source of reference for the cultural studies because of their universality. The industry presumes to be benefited from many sources even for longer period since it produces basic amenities for people. All the fabrics are useful for different purposes and as per the use people prefer to buy the same. On the other hand, there are so many changes that are taking place while manufacturing the same sort of fabric, which makes the product more valuable and different. Mughal carpets used to be of bright colors knotted with silk threads and the size used to be broad which further intricate their miniatures often reflecting types of decorations. Some sorts of exclusive carpets were created during the Mughal reign for Mughal emperors and their courts and each carpet is unlike the others with use of common colors and styles (Barnes, 2004) ^[3].



Illustration 3: *Kashmiri Shawl*

Before the time of Akbar, it seems that few carpets were produced in India due to climatic changes but on the other hand, historians records that royal workshops in the capital of Fatehpur Sikri, Lahore and Agra are some of the places that brings the same thing into action.

Today Chinese apparel companies aspire to enter in the high-end market but they face one key obstacle that is lack of high quality textile fabric. Though, China is the largest apparel export country, which also imports large amount of high quality textile fabrics every year. China and India both together has been exporting modern fabrics, but these fabrics are mainly little processed and low costs products. US and some European countries have been using these cheap primary fabrics for further processing and then sell them back to China at a much higher price. The core reason behind this is that Chinese companies often compete in low end market for long time and this recently also produces more fabrics so as to move up the value chain for manufacturing advanced textile industry (Holman, 1980) ^[7]. Hence, from the data, it is clear that the level of export and import in textile industry has been increasing and the trends in

producing different types of works in the fabric can be adjusted by the same materials. It is also observed that textile industry has been managing latest trends by emphasizing majorly on Research and Development Department, which also aids them in predicting the market trends. The improvement of engineering and application of IT are the major focus areas in the related productivity research (Kasi, 2012) ^[18].

Modern and traditional both the methods in textile industry have been contributing great effort in enhancing the value of designing in apparel industry and this is also most common aspect of constantly upgrading the value of development in same aspect. Meanwhile with the advancements, the textile industry has also emphasizing on traditional methods so that they can

promote the value of historical imprints on fabrics. There are so many industries who all have been emphasizing on block printing and other sources which also aids in enhancing the value of imprinting on fabrics (Lipovetsky, 2002) ^[9]. This is the oldest form that commonly used to arise in villages; however now the phenomena has been changed as the work processes of imprinting is also conducting in local places which further manages employment opportunities. At present the textile industry of India is the largest and organized modern of India. The industry is also growing exponentially during the last decades and about 16 percent of the industry capital, 20% of the industrial labor is engaged in this subsequent industry. This is graphically expanding the value of textile industry that further makes the processes more innovative and about large number of spinning mills are categorized from proper handloom perspectives.

As far as technological development is concerned, textile industry has been investing huge resources so that former they can produce all sorts of fabrics for customers. It is quite apparent that when any of the entity or sector wishes to emphasize on development then they have to pay consideration towards technological factors as through that they can manage barriers and constraints as well. Through this, modern forms of producing fabrics can be promoted within the entire industry and that further also manages growth factor (Pandey, 2014) ^[14]. During the proto-historic and ancient period, a large variety of indirect evidence is found in sculptures, paintings and literature to infer usage and trade of textiles. Apart from this, there have been other advancements as well which encourages the industry towards growth and prosperity and hence this depicts that textile industry is highly concerned about traditional types of fabrics. Textile industry is always a greater part of people's lives in India and many more aspects related to industrialization, hand weavers and hand loom workers contributed to the growth of that industry. In respect to that, certain types of policies have been framed by the government especially for Small Scale Sector and for the development and hence this probably decentralises with traditional and modern forms of fabric designing.

From the above discussion, it is clear that market size of India has been growing at a very high pace and this is the main reason that foreign investors are flocking to India for investment purposes. Textile industry has been facilitating much effort in managing traditional fabrics, which also reflects that the whole process is quite considering

⁴ Kashmir Shawl also casemere, is a type of woollen shawl woven in Kashmir.

developments and innovations. Thus from the above discussion, it is clear that cotton industry has been contributing huge resources in augmenting the trends in apparel manufacturing (Bhattacharyya, 2014) ^[13]. Traditional and modern are the two basic types in textile industry that though does same process but with different manners; however in current scenario, all the industries have been managing growth perspectives by integrating the ways together. The textile firms uses modern fabric and imprints traditional style of designs on it, which makes it highly attractive and designer too. This has been greatly demanded for several occasions and alongside it also promotes tradition and artefacts of the nation. The Indian textile industry has set a benchmark for strong growth that is buoyed by strong domestic consumption as well as export demand (Cluckie, 2008) ^[4].

One of the most significant changes in textile industry is the invention of man-made fibres and India is the only country that placed its innovation in most of the textile firms all over the globe. Thus this has yet recorded an increase of three percent during past many years. One of the most different types of business in this context is cotton production that ultimately produces more than 80% of production every year and hence it registered a growth of 12% in total production under textile industry. The ratio of investment from this industry has been rapidly boosting by the ways of facilitating developments and invention, thus this sector has witnessed a spurt in investing during last many years (McCormick, Kimuyu and Kinyanju, 2013) ^[16]. Despite of that, there are some global factors that affects textile industry while modernising the business processes such as Multi Fibre Agreement as when it came into force it suspended all existing arrangements that earlier had been governing trade in cotton textiles since 1961. The main reason of such act is to expand the ratio of trade in different countries and also to reduce the barriers of progressive liberalization of world trade in textile products.

Country	1990		1997
	Billion US\$	Billion US\$	% share
China	9.41	31.8	21.06
Hong Kong	15.37	23.11	15.30
Italy	12.07	14.85	9.83
USA	2.57	8.68	5.75
Germany	7.82	7.29	4.83
Turkey	3.44	6.7	4.44
France	4.65	5.34	3.54
UK	3.08	5.28	3.50
South Korea	8.11	4.19	2.77
Thailand	2.86	3.77	2.50
Total (top 10)	69.38	111.01	73.52
World	103.00	151.00	100.00

Thus from the data, it can be clearly stated that trade between India, China and US has been increasing since last 10 to 20 years which is a form of achievement for all the countries. The total production of cotton cloth has been increasing considerably and on the other side the share of mill sector has been drastically reducing (Wolbers, 2009) ^[12]. Therefore it indicates the decentralization in the industry, which further generates employment opportunities. Hence from the entire discussion, it is clear that textile industry has been managing growth and success due to traditional and modern both the types of developments in fabric produc

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