



HARNESSING THE POWER OF COLOUR: THE IMPACT OF COLOUR ON VISUAL PSYCHOLOGICAL PERCEPTION IN INDIAN HANDICRAFTS

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Abstract: This review studies the effects of colour on visual psychological perception in the case of Indian handicrafts. It throws light on the importance of colours in gathering attention, effects on memory and perception and stresses on the cultural significance of colours in Indian handicrafts. The study also explains the potential implications of these findings in various contexts for the design of visual materials stressing on the role that colour plays in shaping visual psychological perception.

The following study reveals that Indian handicrafts use bold and vibrant colours for attracting attention, to enhance memory and for shaping perception also any cultural significance associated with colours helps in adding symbolism and meaning to artworks. The unique choice of colours in Indian handicrafts adds to their beauty. The geographical factors also play an important role in determining the colours and material of handicrafts.

This paper also highlights the potential and reasons for preserving and promoting handicrafts industry in India also the field of view of this study is not limited to India itself but studies other countries including China, Peru, Japan, Mexico, and Morocco which have their distinct styles and methods for creating handicrafts, use of various materials such as porcelain, silk, wood, leather, and dyes. Despite displaying similarity in techniques or materials used each country has its unique style infused with their cultural values, history, and social norms.

Lastly, the study throws light on the idea of using international tools and methods in the field of Indian handicrafts to further improve the finished products and their methods while maintaining traditional techniques. This fusion of traditional methods with modern ones will help in creating exceptional pieces of crafts which will reflect both tradition and innovation. Overall, this study aims to suggest that further studies of colours in field of art and design and intermingling with modern techniques has much to offer both researchers and practitioners in the field of handicrafts.

Index Terms - Color, Indian Handicrafts, Visual Psychological Perception, Cultural Heritage, Tools.

INTRODUCTION

Barber and Krivoslykova (2006) conduct an assessment in the global market for handicrafts. *Kreps (2008)* throws light on the importance of curating indigenous crafts and the conservation of intangible cultural heritage. On the other hand, *Bal and Dash (2010)* discuss the factors which help in determining the behaviour of buying of handicrafts with reference to handicraft businesses in Odisha; further *Dash (2010)* look into the preferences of buyers for the buying of specific handicrafts. *Singh and Srivastava (2011)* have provided detailed information on the impact which colours have on the psychology of the market and highlight the various ways by which colours affect consumers' behaviour. *Dash (2011)* studies the behaviour of the handicraft market in Odisha stressing on the challenges and opportunities associated with the market. *De Bock, Pandelaere and Van Kenhove (2013)* analyze the effect of colour cues on moral judgement and suggest that color can sometimes backfire in marketing contexts. *De Silver and Kundu (2013)* study the various factors that influence the buying decision of customers in the context of handicraft products; *Mogindol and Bagul (2014)* traverse the perceptions of tourists and investigate the impact of demographic variables on the intention of buying of tribal handicraft products. *Hunjet and Vuk (2017)* highlight the psychological impact of colours on the market and studying the effects of colours on consumer

behaviour and perceptions. *Song et al. (2021)* conducted a review and meta-analysis of the various impacts of color-coded and warning nutrition labelling schemes. *Pani (2021)* discusses the effect of attitude towards handicrafts and cultural motivation of the consumer on their buying intention. *TK (2022)* throws light on the opportunities and challenges involved in conceptualizing cultural heritage information systems (*CHIS*) with respect to Indian context. *Singh, Singari, and Bholey (2023a)* traverse the unique visual and psychological effects of Jaipur blue pottery, while *Singh, Singari, and Bholey (2023b)* discuss the impact of colors on human behaviour and Indian cultural heritage. Finally, these studies aid in providing valuable insights into the cultural heritage, and the behaviour of consumers associated with buying of handicrafts.

Impact of Color on Visual Psychological Perception in Indian Handicrafts

Colors significantly impact the visual psychological perception which is clear in the case of Indian handicrafts where the choice of colours is the top priority which also helping in shaping the visual appeal of the product. The following essay will traverse the various methods through which colour effects the visual psychological perception.



Fig.1 Colour palette handicraft threads

Firstly, it is significant to note that colours greatly influence human attention. Different colours are known to attract attention more than others and this factor is utilized while designing visual materials to highlight specific elements. This technique is widely seen in the case of Indian handicrafts where bright and bold colours are used to highlight certain aspects of the product. For example, in Rajasthani miniature paintings, the use of vibrant reds and yellows is common, which serves to highlight the intricate details of the artwork and make it more visually appealing.

Secondly, color has a profound impact on memory which has been further proved by extensive research which asserts that information presented in colours excluding black and white is retained more easily. This is since colour stimulates the brain by making it easier to grasp and retain information. For example, the Madhubani paintings of Bihar are known for their intricate use of bright colours which are more likely to be remembered by the viewers.

Thirdly, colours also aid in shaping the perception in numerous ways; different colours are associated with invoking different feelings and emotions and this can be applied to while designing products to extract a particular emotion or response from a particular viewer. In the case of Indian handicrafts, colours also hold cultural significance which further adds visual significance to the product. For example, in Hindu mythology, red is associated with love, passion, and fertility, which is reflected in the use of red in traditional Indian bridal wear and for religious purposes. In India colours are utilized in such a manner that their cultural significance is maintained along with their visual appeal. For example, during the festival of Holi, which celebrates the arrival of spring and the triumph of good over evil, people throw coloured powders and vibrancy of the season.



Fig 2. Varanasi, Government of U.P.



Fig 3. Jute Handicraft, Varanasi Soft Stone Jali Work

<https://indianfolkart.org/10-indian-handicrafts/>
<https://indianfolkart.org/10-indian-handicrafts/>



Fig 4. Metal Handicrafts



Fig 5. Kashmiri Pashmina Shawls

<https://indianfolkart.org/10-indian-handicrafts/>
<https://indianfolkart.org/10-indian-handicrafts/>

Cultural and Artistic Influences on the Use of Color in Indian Handicrafts

India is famed across the world for its exquisite cultural heritage and diversity of traditions, where its handicraft industry reflects these diverse traditions and is known for the use of vibrant colours, intricate designs and exceptional craftsmanship. Each type of handicraft is unique which are of exceptional looks and quality and these traits are often passed down through generations. The extensive use of colours in Indian handicrafts gives them their uniqueness and beauty; Indian handicrafts are also known worldwide for their use of natural dyes and synthetic colours. For example, the artisans of Kutch in Gujarat use natural dyes made from vegetables, fruits, and roots to color their embroidery work. This practice not only adds an earthy tone to the artwork but also ensures that the colours are eco-friendly. The region or district where a particular handicraft is being produced also plays an important role in determining the raw materials and looks of the product. For example, the block printing of Jaipur is known for its bright colours, such as pink, yellow, and blue, while the embroidery of Lucknow is known for its subtle shades of white and cream. On a larger scale the state or province also have an equal share in determining the features of the handicraft and in India's case, each state have their unique products with numerous techniques and styles. For example, the bright colours of the Bandhani fabric of Gujarat and Rajasthan reflect the vibrant culture and festivities of the region. The bright colours used in the Pattachitra paintings of Odisha are inspired by the colourful temples and architecture of the state. Further, state governments undertake numerous policies and initiatives for the promotion and upliftment of artisans and their handicrafts; some states have established dedicated ministries and departments to promote and preserve traditional handicrafts and provide support to artisans. For example, the state of Rajasthan has set up a separate department called the Department of Industries, which focuses on the development of the handicraft sector. This department provides various schemes and incentives for artisans, such as subsidized loans, skill development programs, and marketing support.



Fig.6, International Indian Folk Art Gallery. Pipli Art on Garden Umbrella, Rajasthan

<https://indianfolkart.org/10-indian-handicrafts/>



Fig.7, Moonj Basket, Uttar Pradesh

Fig.8, Pattachitra Bengali Painting

<https://gaatha.com/>

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Table 1. Indian Handicrafts			
Type of Handicraft	District	State	Review
Pottery	Khurja, Uttar Pradesh	Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat	Clay work on wheel, hand-formed clay products. The clay work on wheel and hand-formed clay products of Khurja, Uttar Pradesh are highly admired in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Gujarat.
Embroidery	Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh	Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab	Hand-stitched designs on textiles. Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh is famous for its hand-stitched designs on textiles, which are highly sought after in Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Punjab
Weaving	Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh	Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh	Handloom and power loom textiles. Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh produces exquisite handloom and power loom textiles that are popular not only in Uttar Pradesh but also in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh
Wood Carving	Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh	Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Karnataka	Intricate designs carved onto wood. The intricate designs carved onto wood in Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh are highly praised and widely recognized in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Karnataka
Metal work	Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh	Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal	Hammered and engraved metal products. The hammered and engraved metal products from Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh are highly valued in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal.
Leatherwork	Agra, Uttar Pradesh	Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Rajasthan	Leather bags, shoes, and accessories. Agra, Uttar Pradesh is famous for its leather bags, shoes, and accessories that are highly appreciated in Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Rajasthan

Banarasi Silk Sarees	Varanasi	Uttar Pradesh	Banarasi silk sarees are a traditional form of Indian handicrafts that have been produced in Varanasi for centuries. These sarees are known for their intricate designs and vibrant colors, and are highly sought after by consumers both in India and around the world.
Madhubani Paintings	Madhubani	Bihar	Madhubani paintings are a form of folk art that originated in the town of Madhubani in Bihar. These paintings are known for their bright colors and intricate designs, which often depict scenes from Hindu mythology. The unique style and cultural significance of Madhubani paintings have made them a popular form of Indian handicrafts both within India and abroad.
Jaipur Pottery	Jaipur	Rajasthan	Jaipur pottery is a traditional form of Indian handicrafts that has been produced in the city of Jaipur for centuries. These pottery pieces are known for their intricate designs and vibrant colors, and are often used for decorative purposes in homes and gardens. The cultural significance of Jaipur pottery has made it an important part of the city's cultural heritage
Kalamkari Textiles	Machilipatnam	Andhra Pradesh	Kalamkari textiles are a form of hand-painted or block-printed cotton fabric that originated in the town of Machilipatnam in Andhra Pradesh. These textiles are known for their intricate designs and vibrant colors, and are often used for clothing and home decor. The unique style and cultural significance of Kalamkari textiles have made them a popular form of Indian handicrafts both within India and abroad.
Pattachitra Paintings	Purii amthere	Odisha	Pattachitra paintings are a form of traditional art that originated in the town of Puri in Odisha. These paintings are known for their intricate designs and bright colors, which often depict scenes from Hindu mythology. The cultural significance and unique style of Pattachitra paintings have made them a popular form of Indian handicrafts both within India and abroad
Papier Mache	Sculptures and decorative objects made from paper pulp	Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir	Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh

Beadwork	Intricate designs made from beads and sequins	Nagaland, Mizoram	Manipur,	North Eastern states of India
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Similarities and Differences between Indian and Global Handicrafts

All around the world handicrafts are produced in various countries with their own distinctive styling and importance. However, India is acclaimed for its rich handicraft industry known for their use of bright colours and rich fabrics and raw materials. The following are some of the countries that bear resemblance to or have different handicrafts than India in their use of materials or cultural value.

China - handicrafts in China are known for their use of complex designs and usage of various materials such as jade, porcelain, silk and bamboo. Some known products include calligraphy, embroidery and paper cutting.

Japan - as a country is known across the world for its simplicity in life and this characteristic is also present in its handicraft industry. Japanese handicrafts are often based on the principles of elegance and simplicity with due emphasis on natural resources such as wood, bamboo and paper. For example, origami, pottery, and textile arts such as shibori (tie-dye).

Mexico – bears greater resemblance to India in terms of its use of vibrant colours and bold designs which are often inspired from nature or cultural values and beliefs; examples include pottery, textiles (such as woven blankets and embroidered clothing), and papel picado (cut paper decorations).

Morocco – the handicrafts industry in Morocco is known for its featuring of intricate designs and patterns inspired by the Islamic art and architecture. Some of the materials used include leather, ceramics, and metalwork. Examples include mosaic tile work, textiles (such as woven rugs and tapestries), and traditional leather goods such as poufs and bags.

Peru – Peruvian handicrafts are characterized using geometric designs and vibrant colours that are inspired by the textiles of Andean region. Some of the raw materials used are wool, cotton and natural dyes. For example, woven textiles such as ponchos, blankets, pottery, and silver jewellery.

These are some of the examples consisting of regions and countries with rich traditions and diverse cultures which have an everlasting impact on the handicraft industries and traditions established in these regions. While there may be similarities in techniques or materials used, each country and culture have its unique style and approach to handicrafts.

Table 2. Similar handicrafts available in different countries in comparison to Indian city's crafts along with their colour significance:

Country/Region	Handicraft	Similarity to Indian City's Craft	Colour Significance
Ghana	Kente Cloth	Jaipur Block-Printed Fabric	Each color in the Kente Cloth has a symbolic meaning related to a proverb or historical event.
Turkey	Iznik Ceramics	Khurja Blue Pottery	Traditional Turkish ceramic designs often include shades of blue, red, and white.
Indonesia	Batik Textiles	Gujarat Bandhani Fabric	Batik textiles often feature intricate patterns and designs in shades of blue, brown, and yellow
Peru	Textiles	Varanasi Banarasi Silk	Peruvian textiles often feature bold geometric patterns and bright colors, such as red, orange, and purple

Mexico	Talavera Pottery	West Bengal Terracotta Pottery	Talavera pottery is known for its vibrant colors, including shades of blue, green, and yellow
Japan	Origami	Kashmiri Paper Mache	Origami paper comes in a range of colors, and the finished designs can have symbolic meaning in Japanese culture
China	Porcelain	Pondicherry Ceramic Pottery	Chinese porcelain is known for its delicate blue-and white designs and intricate patterns.
Italy	Leather Goods	Agra Leather Goods	Italian leather goods often come in shades of brown, black, and tan, and are known for their quality and durability
Egypt	Papyrus Art	Orissa Palm Leaf Art	Papyrus art often features hieroglyphics and other ancient Egyptian symbols in shades of brown, yellow, and green
Nigeria	Adire Textiles	Rajasthan Shibori Fabric	Adire textiles often feature bold, abstract designs in shades of blue, indigo, and white

Tools used in international handicrafts and their potential use in India

Handicrafts reflect a country's culture, history, and traditions, and are often made using unique tools and techniques. India, possessing a rich heritage of handicrafts has a wide variety of tools and methods which are used for these handicrafts. Also, with due advancement of technology more efficient tools are available in the international market which if incorporated into Indian handicraft market will do wonders. In the following study, we will discuss some of the tools of the international market and their application in the Indian market. Pottery wheels – the usage of pottery wheels is prevalent in many countries such as Turkey, Morocco and Mexico which is used to create ceramics and pottery. However, in India's case, potters often use hand building techniques rather than a pottery wheel. Nevertheless, the introduction of pottery wheel can greatly reduce the production time and will also aid in creating more uniform pieces. Looms – are essentially used for weaving textiles and are common to countries such as Peru, Indonesia, and Thailand. In India, handlooms are in prevalence for a very long time which consume time and energy and to eradicate these problems mechanical looms are gaining popularity across countries which are more efficient in terms of production and reduce labour costs; and the incorporation of mechanical looms in the textile industry in India will really help the industry to grow further.

Sewing machines – are a common tool around the world for stitching and sewing of cloth pieces and are commonly used in Japan and Italy. In India, artisans still sew and stitch by hand which is not perfect and consumes lot of time. By introducing sewing machines, could aid in speeding up the sewing process and reduce production costs.

Kilns – are used in China and Turkey to fire ceramics and pottery. In India, traditional kilns are still in uses which are not environment friendly. With the introduction of modern kilns, the quality and finish of fired products could be greatly enhanced and these kilns are designed to adhere to environmental norms are values.

Metalworking Tools – are prevalent in countries like Morocco and Peru for creating jewellery and other metal artworks. In India, artisans still use traditional or rather obsolete methods for metal designing, but the adoption of modern means of metal cutting tools would greatly enhance the accuracy and production speeds of metal designing and artworks. Cutting tools - such as scissors and knives are prevalent in many countries, including Mexico and Indonesia, to create textiles and paper crafts; whereas in India, traditional cutting tools are still in use, but the introduction of more modern cutting tools could help improve the accuracy and speed of the cutting process.

Dyeing tools – consisting of pots and brushes, are used in many countries such as Ghana and Indonesia, to create colourful textiles. In

India, traditional dyeing methods are still used, but the introduction of more modern dyeing tools could help improve the quality and consistency of the colours. Printing tools - include blocks and screens, are used in Japan and Indonesia, to create intricate patterns on textiles and paper. In India, traditional block printing is still widely used, but the introduction of more modern printing tools could help improve the accuracy and speed of the printing process.

Conclusions

The aim of this study was to channel the impact of colours in handicrafts and their effects on the visual psychological perception of the individual and to present it in a simpler way. The conclusion of this study is as follows:

The extensive use of colours in Indian handicrafts has a significant impact on the visual psychological perception of any individual. The use of bold and vibrant colours in these artworks entices attention, amplify memory, and shape perception. Also, the cultural significance associated with different colours adds another layer of meaning and symbolism to these artworks. This research throws light on the potential implications of these findings for the design of visual materials in various contexts and emphasizes the important role that color plays in shaping visual psychological perception. Overall, the study of colour in the field of art and design has much to offer to both researchers and practitioners specialized in a wide range of fields.

The wide use of colours is an essential element in Indian handicrafts that adds to their beauty and uniqueness. The region where the handicraft is being produced also plays an important role in moulding the style and colour combinations to be used in the artwork. The presence of basic infrastructural facilities and various government initiatives is deemed as crucial for the growth and development of the handicraft industry. The Indian handicraft industry packs immense potential, and by preserving and promoting these unique traditions, India can lead the path to showcase its rich cultural heritage to the world.

The production of handicrafts is a global phenomenon where each country has its unique traditions and methods. India is known around the world for its rich diversity in handicrafts, with a wide range of materials and methods being used across the country. Countries like China, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, and Peru also have their distinct styles and techniques for creating handicrafts, incorporating materials such as porcelain, silk, wood, leather, and natural dyes. Despite having similarities in techniques or materials used, each country and culture has its unique style, reflecting its history, culture, and values.

The use of international tools in Indian handicrafts has the potential to enhance the finish and to increase the efficiency of the production process. However, it is necessary to maintain a balance between the introduction of new tools along with the preservation of traditional techniques and methods. By incorporating modern tools along with honouring the rich and diverse heritage of Indian handicrafts, artisans can create exceptional pieces of art that will reflect the fusion between tradition and innovation

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