



**A STUDY AND DOCUMENTATION OF RUMALA SAHIB AND
CHANDOA SAHIB OFFERED IN SIKH SHRINES**

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BY

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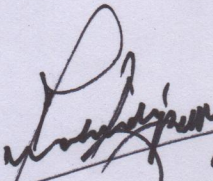


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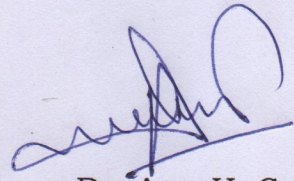
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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled “**A STUDY AND DOCUMENTATION OF RUMALA SAHIB AND CHANDOA SAHIB OFFERED IN SIKH SHRINES**” has been prepared by me under the guidance of Dr. Anu H. Gupta in the University Institute of Fashion Technology & Vocational Development, Panjab University, Chandigarh. No part of this thesis has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

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We certify that Mrs. **RATI ARORA** prepared her thesis entitled “**A STUDY AND DOCUMENTATION OF RUMALA SAHIB AND CHANDOA SAHIB OFFERED IN SIKH SHRINES**” for the award of Ph.D degree of the Panjab University, Chandigarh under my guidance. She has carried out the work at the University Institute of Fashion Technology & vocational Development, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

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Dedicated to

**My Mother and My Husband
the strong pillars of my life**

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



1. INTRODUCTION

Religion is a set of ideas, values, and practices that frequently include faith in supernatural beings or powers, such as gods, deities, or a divine presence. It offers a framework for learning about the meaning and purpose of existence, as well as morality and the nature of the cosmos. For ages, several major faiths, several indigenous belief systems, and religions like Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, etc. have emerged and coexisted in India. Each of these religions has its own set of doctrines, rituals, and customs that guide its believers' lives. The influence of Indian religions has been significant all over the world. In earlier times, people had believed in the power of nature that was to be worshipped; certain symbols were given to each power and were regarded as God or Goddess. Humans discovered the great effect of God in nature; therefore, trees, fountains, and mountains were revered as sacred or as the location where the deity lived. Religion always influenced the social activities of the various classes in different ways and always had a dominant position in each sphere of life of people (Gupta, 2004).

Hinduism, India's oldest significant religion, is distinguished by a diverse set of beliefs and practices. It includes ideas like karma (the law of cause and consequence), dharma (duty or righteousness), and rebirth. Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva are among the most important deities in Hinduism's pantheon of gods and goddesses. It also includes religious literature such as the Vedas, Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, and the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata. Buddhism, founded by Sidhartha Gautama in India, believes in the existence of men who became gods (*buddhas*) and of impermanent gods (*devas*) (Glasesnapp, 1970). Christianity first arrived in India in the 1st century CE, and the country is home to various ancient Christian communities. Sikhism, another religion, emerged in the 15th century in India's Punjab area. Sikhs, followers of Sikhism, adhere to their Guru-Guru Nanak's teachings and believe in one God. Jainism, founded by Mahavir, follows a path to enlightenment and spiritual purity through nonviolence toward all living creatures (Dundas et al. 2023). Islam was introduced to India in the 7th century C.E. through trade and later through conquest. The Five Pillars of Islam, which include the statement of faith (*shahada*), prayer (*salat*), fasting during Ramadan (*sawm*), almsgiving (*zakat*), and pilgrimage to Mecca (*hajj*), are major Islamic practices. The religious landscape is incredibly diverse, and there are practices and rituals associated with various religions in India.

It was revealed through research by the Pew Research Centre that a majority of Indian adults pray daily (60%), more than two-thirds visit a house of worship at least monthly (71%), and an overwhelming majority shared that religion is very important in their lives (84%). Belief in God is nearly universal in India (97%), and roughly eight-in-ten Indians (79%) say they believe in God with absolute certainty. Majorities of all major religious groups believe in God but the nature of the deities in which they believe varies. For many Indians, the high importance of religion is reflected in the religious practices they follow at home. Roughly eight-in-ten Indian adults (81%) have an altar, shrine, or religious symbol in their home for worship, and a similar share (78%) say they have invited a religious leader to conduct religious rites at their home. These religious practices are widely followed among both Hindus and members of other religious communities (Sahgal, 2021).

Many religions place a high value on worship. People in many cultures and religions have places of worship where people meet for religious or spiritual reasons to perform acts of devotion- prayer, meditation, singing hymns or chants, conducting rituals, making offerings, attending religious ceremonies or services, and other religious practices. Temples, church, mosque, gurdwara, Buddhist Temples and Jain Temples are a few examples of places of worship linked with various religions like Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism respectively. The place of worship in each religion has been given due importance. Entering a place of worship makes a devotee forget all his worries and worldly experiences, find himself in the presence of God, and express emotions and wishes while bowing his head in front of the sancta sanctorum. The following generation continues the custom of making tributes and prayers to the Almighty (Singh, 2006). The splendour and majesty of places of worship may astound people of any faith or culture, and textiles have always been important in the setting of places of worship. These serve a variety of functions, including symbolising religious themes, enhancing the visual attractiveness of holy spaces, and adding to a sense of reverence. Some of these textiles will be discussed in the later part of the chapter.

1.1 The evolution of Sikhism

The Sikhism or Sikh religion has evolved from the Gurus' teachings and from their followers' devotion into a world religion with its own scripture, code of discipline, Gurdwaras (places of worship), festivals, and life cycle rites (Nesbitt, 2019).

Sikh history begins with the first Guru, Guru Nanak Dev (1469-1539). He was born in Talwandi, a place now renamed Nankana Sahib, in the state of Punjab in present-day Pakistan. His father, Mehta Kalu Chand Bedi, a village accountant (*patwari*), and his mother, Mata Tripta, played an important role in his early life. He was believed to have a natural aptitude for meditation and contemplation. He frequently engaged in meaningful discussions with religious educators and had a deep interest in spiritual subjects. Though his family was Hindu, he showed an advanced interest in religion and studied Islam and Hinduism extensively. As a child, he had great ability as a poet and philosopher. In his early years, Guru Nanak acquired a basic education, learning to read and write in both Punjabi and Sanskrit. He was, however, not interested in formal schooling or the conventional rituals and customs of his period. During his lifetime, Guru Nanak Dev embarked on a series of extended voyages known as his "*Udasis*", or travels. These journeys were critical in disseminating his spiritual teachings and laying the foundations for Sikhism. Guru Nanak undertook four main *Udasis*, each of which spanned a different region of India and neighbouring regions.

In the end of the fifteenth century, Guru Nanak Dev founded the Sikh faith in the Punjab region of the northern subcontinent. He was the first of the ten Sikh Gurus. His birth is celebrated as Gurburb every year worldwide, and it is one of the most important religious festivals in Sikhism. His first commandment was that God was One, the father of all of us. The basic teachings given by Guru Nanak Dev to Sikhism are - 'chant the name (that is, remember the Lord); do *kirat* (work hard honestly); and *Vand chhako* (divide and eat), which the followers of Sikhism follow with their body, mind, and wealth (Singh, 2011).

ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰੇ, ਨਾਮ ਜਪੇ, ਵੰਡ ਛਕੇ

Kirat karo, naam japo, vand chhako

While describing his calling on earth, Guru Nanak Dev said that "he had been given the nectar of God's name so he could offer it to any person who would drink it. Those who

drink it will achieve peace and joy” (Cole, 1994). The Guru composed hymns in nineteen ragas. Some of his hymns are recited each day by the Sikhs at home or in the Gurdwaras that were later compiled by the fifth Guru, Arjan Dev.

The second Guru, Guru Angad Dev (1504-52) collected all the hymns of first Guru, scrutinised them, and wrote a new script in the form of a book called *Pothi*. He composed his own hymns too and fixed ‘Nanak’ at the end. This tradition of writing ‘Nanak’ was also followed by all other Gurus.

Guru Amardas, third Guru (1479-1574) composed 907 hymns during his period as a Guru ship. He collected all the hymns of the first and second Gurus, added his own also and bound in a book that was passed on to his son Baba Mohan after his death.

679 hymns were composed by the fourth Guru, Guru Ram Das (1534-81). His most popular composition is ‘*Lavan*’ the hymn read at the time of marriage. He bought a land about 40 kilometres northwest of Goindwal on which the foundation of the city of Amritsar was laid.

Son of Guru Ram Das, Arjan Dev, the fifth Guru of Sikhism (1563-1606) gave the holy book to Sikhs- *Pothi* Sahib, which was called Adi Granth and later as Guru Granth Sahib. More than three years were spent by him collecting , selecting, in arranging and compiling the hymns in the form of a Granth. The idea to prepare the Granth was conceived by him in 1600. He started working on it in 1601 and completed and installed it in August 1604 in the Harimandir Sahib (Golden Temple) at Amritsar.

After the death of Guru Arjan Dev, his son Guru Hargobind Singh was given the status of sixth Guru. He introduced the concepts of Miri (temporality, or shakti) and Piri(spirituality or *bhakti*) by wearing two swords. He built many Gurdwaras in different locations. The most important shrine built by him was the Akal Takhat at Amritsar in 1606.

The seventh Guru, Guru Har Rai (1630-61) made the daily prayers compulsory for every Sikh. He taught his followers the importance of correct reading of Gurbani(hymns from Guru Granth Sahib).

His son and the eighth Guru, Guru Har Krishan (1656-64) started the tradition of interpreting Gurbani along with the singing of hymns (*kirtan*).

The status of ninth Guru was given to the youngest son of Guru Hargobind, Guru Tegh Bahadur (1631-75). He taught the way of sacrifice for others to his followers. Guru Tegh Bahadur founded the city of Anandpur, where his son, the tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708) founded the Khalsa in 1699 (Kapoor, 1992). The status of a permanent Guru was given to the Granth by Guru Gobind Singh. He transmitted Guru Nanak's divine light into the divine word and declared that after him, the next Guru would be Guru Granth Sahib. He commanded the Sikhs that it was to be revered as the body and spirit of the ten Gurus.

Among Sikhs there is no place for idolatry or ritualism. For them, their Guru and *Shabad* (hymns from Sikh Scripture) are the utmost. The term *Guru* has a special meaning in Sikhism. It is used for the spiritual enlightener, divine master, in the sense of the cosmic personality - impersonal. Guru Nanak always takes care to say *Sat- Guru* i.e., true Guru - the divine spirit that lives for ever- and that is the Sikh ideal of Guru consciousness. The doctrine of Guru ship is a cardinal principle of Sikh religion and forms a part of the Basic Formula i.e., *Mul- Mantar* (Singh, 2012). The Sikhs are expected to bow to the *Shabad*, which carries the implication of bowing to the Granth. They are expected to sing no song other than the Guru's *Shabad* (Grewal *et al.*, 2005).

The word '*Sahib*' is used frequently in Sikhism and connotes honour. The Sikh Gurus, from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh and the present eternal Guru Granth, are considered supreme in Sikhism. In an article, Mann (2018) writes that Sikhs should only be calling *Sahib* to Guru ji such as Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS). This also provides them with spiritual wisdom and knowledge. In *Gurbani*, several verses clearly indicate that *Sahib* is only applied to divine, creator or lord.

ਸਾਹਿਬ ਮੇਰਾ ਇੱਕੋ ਹੈ

Sahib mera eko hai

My God is only one

(Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Page 350)

The word *Sahib* is gaining popularity in Gurdwara settings, especially when it's use should be limited to Shri Guru Granth Sahib, divine or creator. Other relics that Sikhs use Sahib with include Gurdwara *Sahib*, *Akhand Path Sahib*, *Chaur Sahib*, *Nishan Sahib*, *Khanda Sahib*, *Rumala Sahib*, *Peera (manji) Sahib*, *Chandoa Sahib*, *Ghorra (horse) Sahib*, *Bairr (fruit tree) Sahib* and *Jorra (shoe) Sahib*, etc.

1.2 Sikh Scripture- Guru Granth Sahib

Guru Nanak Dev, the first Guru of Sikhs, started writing the *Adi Granth*, which later emerged as *Guru Granth Sahib* after compilation. This Granth has been the source of spiritual, intellectual, and philosophical knowledge and wisdom for Sikhs. A remarkable feature of the Granth is that it contains the writings of the religious teachers of Hinduism and Islam (Singh & Fraser, 2007). It consists of the writings of six gurus (the first five and ninth guru), 14 Hindu Saints, 10 *Bhatts*¹, 5 *Pirs*² (including Muslims), and 5 other Sikhs. The Granth preaching of Sikh Gurus established a harmonic flow of Sikh teaching, and there is ‘belief of unity in the plurality of the Gurus’ in terms of their ethical precepts. It rejects all obstacles and prejudices based on caste, colour, and birth and emphasizes the equality of man and woman. It stands out against all forms of exploitation in society and opposes arbitrary governmental authority (Dhillon, 1988).

ਅਵਲਿ ਅਲਹ ਨੂਰੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕੇ ਸਭ ਬੰਦੇ ॥

ਏਕ ਨੂਰ ਤੇ ਸਭੁ ਜਗੁ ਉਪਜਿਆ ਕਉਨ ਭਲੇ ਕੇ ਮੰਦੇ ॥

Aval allah nur upaia kudrat ke sabh bande,

Ek nur te sabh jag upjia kaun bhale ko mande.

(Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Page 1349)

It means that initially Allah/God/*Parmatma* created the light; then, by his creative power, he made all mortal beings. The entire cosmos sprung into existence from a single light. In light of this, there is no such thing as being good or bad.

The complete edition of the *Guru Granth Sahib* was installed on a high podium at *Harmandir Sahib*, Amritsar. *Baba Buddha* was appointed the first *Granthi* (head priest) of *Harmandir Sahib*. From that very day on, regular worship, *kirtan*, and other religious services were initiated there (Singh, 2012; Dhillon, 1988).

The content of the scripture is commonly referred to *Bani* (an utterance), or *Gurbani* (the utterance of the Guru). On most of the occasions associated with the Sikhism, path of *Guru Granth Sahib* is held, followed by *Kirtan* from *Gurbani* (Singh, 2012). The term ‘*Bani*’ refers to the spiritual teachings and texts included in the *Guru Granth Sahib*,

¹ Bhatt Sikhs, were the poets from Punjab and were amongst the first followers of Guru Nanak.

² *Pir* is a Muslim spiritual guide or saint in India or Pakistan. The local people consider *Pir* Baba as their protector and they believe that as long as *Pir* Baba keeps an eye on them, no harm can come to them. The grave of such saints is *dargah* and people of all faiths, classes and ages visit to offer prayers at the *Dargah* to fulfil their wishes.

which serves as Sikhism's foundational scripture. '*Kirtan*', on the other hand, refers to the devotional singing or recitation of *Bani* and other Sikh hymns, which is frequently accompanied by music. While *Bani* gives spiritual content and lessons, *Kirtan* is the musical and devotional expression through which Sikhs connect with and feel *Bani*'s essence.

The Guru Granth Sahib is always carried on the head when it is moved from one place to another, and if it is brought along a road, caution is given to everyone who may see it pass to show appropriate reverence (McLeod, 2001; Singh, 1999; Singh, 2003). On every event for Sikhs, whether the birth of a son, the death of a friend or relative, a marriage, a send-off, a reception, or an inauguration, hymns from the Granth Sahib are recited, praises of God are sung, prayers are offered, and finally *prasad* is served. Some of the common ceremonies of Sikhs are child naming, the *Amrit* ceremony or Sikh baptism, *Dastarbandhi*, *Anand Karaj* (the Sikh wedding ceremony) (Kapoor, 1992; Dogra, 2000).

In Gurdwaras, the Guru Granth Sahib always rests on a high podium under a canopy called *Chandosa Sahib*, attended by Granthis. The Granth Sahib is always draped with a *Rumala Sahib*, a sheet of fine fabric, when not being read. Every morning, the holy Granth is opened with due respect at a ceremony -*Parkash* and it is even closed similarly at night with a recital of *Rehras*- the evening prayer, ideally during the twilight hours, to conclude the day and prepare for night.



Plate 1.1: Guru Granth Sahib adorned with Rumala Sahib

1.3 Sikh Shrines or Gurdwaras: The place of Worship

According to the accounts of Guru Nanak (*Janam sakhi*), wherever he went, he enjoined his followers to construct or set up a place or building to raise the praises of God and to discuss the matters of concern that were called *dharamsalas*. These functioned as the religious asylums, providing food and shelter to the needy along with a place for worship. These began to be called Gurdwara in the time of Guru Hargobind. The *dharamsala* where the Guru Granth Sahib was kept came to be called a Gurdwara. *Dharamsala*, as a Sikh institution is the precursor of Gurdwara. The designation became universal after the Guru Ship was passed to the holy book, the Guru Granth Sahib. Construction, maintenance, and running the *dharamsala* had always been the duty of the Sikh *Sangat*. The Sikh Gurus had directed their Sikhs to earn their livelihood honestly and share it with others. *Daan* (charity) in the form of voluntary contributions by the Sikh *sangat* was the major financial source of the *dharamsala*. *Dharamsalas* were guidance centers wherein the persons attending the *sangats* were taught the teachings of Sikh Gurus and the Sikh way of life. They also had arrangement to impart teachings in Gurmukhi, Sikh music, and scripture. For this purpose, *dharamsala* served as the most continuous and reliable centre of education for the students of Sikhism (Singh, 1999).



Plate 1.2: A Sikh Shrine/ Gurdwara

A Sikh Shrine or the Gurdwara, meaning ‘the doorway to the Guru’, is the place of worship for the Sikhs. According to Bhai Kahan Singh, the author of Mahankosh (the encyclopaedia of Sikh literature), Gurdwara is more than a place of worship (Nabha, 2010). It is a place of learning for a student, the Guru for a spiritual person, a hospital for the sick, and a rest house for a pilgrim. The word ‘Gurdwara’ is compounded of *guru* (spiritual master) and *dwara* (gateway or seat) and, therefore, has an architectural implication.

Gurdwaras enjoy an essential position in the lives of Sikhs; for them, it is the source of their life and inspiration, along with being the only place for worship. In addition to morning and evening prayers, Gurdwaras host special congregations to commemorate the anniversaries of the Sikh Gurus and other significant events in Sikh history. They are transformed into festive settings when the Gurus’ birth anniversaries are celebrated. (Dhillon, 2002; Singh, 1970). The Sikhs have been able to successfully put their Gurus’ teachings into practice and carry on the Gurus’ mission because of the Gurdwaras. A Sikh is expected to engage in the congregational prayer held in a Gurdwara since the Guru is manifested in the Sangat (Dhillon, 2002). In the Gurdwaras, devotees sit on the floor- spreads often *durries*, irrespective of their status, gender, and religion. Before entering the Gurdwara, everyone is expected to put off his shoes, wash his feet, and cover his head (Johar, 1976).

Since the Sikhs have migrated to almost every part of the world, Gurdwaras can be found everywhere in the world. Five Gurdwaras, namely, the Akal *Takht*, Anandpur Sahib, Patna Sahib, Hazoor Sahib, and Damdama Sahib, are respected as the ‘Five Thrones’ or ‘*Takhts*’ of authority, from which *Hukamnamas* (divine commands) for the guidance of the community are issued from time to time. The dictionary meaning of the word throne is a ceremonial chair for a king or for the sovereign power. The *Takhts* are the designated historical Gurdwaras with the power to legislate on the Sikh religion. Among these, the Akal *Takht* in Amritsar is considered paramount, and any instructions issued from there are considered binding on the whole Sikh community. All Sikhs are required to visit the Gurdwara on a daily basis to hear the recitations from the Guru Granth Sahib.

A Gurdwara usually has some major sections: The main congregation hall, a *langar* hall and a kitchen, a *serai* (a boarding and lodging place for the people visiting the Gurdwara from distant places), an office and a library in most of the Gurdwaras

(particularly in foreign countries), a school for teaching Punjabi language and Gurmukhi script, *Sukhasan* area, *Nishan Sahib*, *sarovar*, *parikrama*, *deodi*, *karah parsad* area, *jora ghar*, and *gathari ghar*.



Nishan Sahib



Sarovar



Deodi



Langar Hall



Kitchen



Parsad area



Jora ghar

Plate 1.3: Different sections of a Sikh Shrine

In a Shrine or Gurdwara, a hall called Darbar Sahib houses the holy book ‘Guru Granth Sahib’ resting on a raised platform, on top of which a canopy is hung. Devotees place their contributions in front of the Guru Granth Sahib in a box called a *golak*. Devotees gather here and can sit in a congregation to listen to readings from the Guru Granth Sahib, meditate, and sing and recite the verses. Most modern Gurdwaras have a big hall that can accommodate hundreds of worshippers.

Nishan Sahib : a flag is fixed on the top of the building or in the compound of Gurdwaras. An insignia (*Khanda*) is mounted on the top of the flag. This *khanda* represents the concept of the oneness of Miri (temporal) and Piri (transcendental) in the Sikh ideology.

Sukhasan Room (rest room for Guru Granth Sahib): After completion of the daily rituals in a Gurdwara, Guru Granth Sahib is taken for resting in a separate room overnight; this room is also called *Sach Khand* or *Sukhasan* Room. This room is provided in all Gurdwaras, whether large or small (Kalsi, 2007).

According to Bhai Kahan Singh, the word '*langar*' is derived from the Sanskrit word *anajgrah*, meaning 'the cooking place' (Nabha, 2010). In Sikhism, a *langar* is a Gurdwara's community kitchen that provides free meals to everyone regardless of religion, caste, gender, economic background, or ethnicity. *Langar* is considered a *Parshad* at Gurus Place. The kitchen is maintained and serviced by Sikh community volunteers who are performing *seva*, and everyone eats together while seated on the floor. *Langar*, in short, helps in teaching service, spreading equality, removing untouchability, and other such evils and prejudices that spring from social and racial distinctions. Maharaja Ranjit Singh made grants of *jagirs* to Gurdwaras for the maintenance of *langar*. Similar endowments were created by other Sikh rulers as well. Today, practically every Gurdwara has a *langar* supported by the community in general. The establishment of *langar* became a continuing tradition in the Sikh society (Singh, 1999).

Sarovar, or the holy ponds, are found in most of the Gurdwaras. The Harmandir Sahib is situated amidst the holy *Sarovar*. For Sikhs, the *Sarovar* is a source of spiritual purification. Sikhs are supposed to bathe in the *Sarovar* before entering the Darbar Hall to wash away their sins and impurities.

Parikarma (Circumambulatory): The *parikrama*, meaning the ambulatory passageway for circumambulation, is a passage that leads to the main Shrine. While walking the *parikrama*, one is supposed to be binding and uniting with the almighty. It consists of an enclosed corridor or open passage around the outside of Sanctum Sanctorum. *Parikrama* is provided in most of the Gurdwaras.

Deodi: Many Gurdwaras have a *Deodi*, which is a doorway or entryway through which one must pass before visiting the shrine. A *Deodi* is frequently a magnificent edifice with a magnificent entryway. The *Deodi* gives tourists their first look into the Sanctum Sanctorum.

Karah Parsad Area: *Karah Prasad* means a religious offering; it is a sweet flour-based recipe that is offered to all visitors to the Sikh Shrines. This is regarded as food blessed by the Guru. *Karah Parsad* area is a place where devotees receive *Karah Parsad* after being offered to the Guru.

Joda Ghar: It is a place where one can remove shoes before entering the Gurdwara. Devotees remove their shoes and give them to those conducting service (*sewa*) in the *Joda Ghar*. The shoes are collected by volunteers and stored on racks, with a token supplied for retrieval.

Gathri Ghar (Cloak Room): The visitors to Gurdwaras are required to deposit items that are either not allowed or that they themselves do not wish to carry inside Gurdwara deposit at the luggage store called *Gathri Ghar* (Singh, 2012).

1.4 Textiles and embellishments: An integral part of Indian culture

Textiles have always played an important role in religious and cultural traditions around the world. Many religious scriptures and traditions emphasise the use of certain textiles in religious rites, clothing, and sacred spaces. India is culturally rich in textiles and offers many ornamental textiles with varied surface embellishment techniques; some of these are also used in preparing religious textiles. This section focuses on the connection between India and textiles and highlights diverse textile decoration methods.

The story of textiles in India is one of the oldest in the world and goes back to prehistoric times. Waist garments in the cave paintings of the Mesolithic era are examples of this, but concrete evidence of textile production and use starts appearing in proto-historic times, i.e., the 3rd millennium BCE. The use of silk in the mid-3rd millennium BCE may be taken as evidence of wild indigenous silk moth species from Harappa and Chanhudaro. A stone sculpture recovered from excavations carved out in a relief also depicted a patterned cloth draped around the figure. The evidence is clear testimony to the mature textile craftsmanship existing in ancient Indian civilization. It is evident from the number of needles found at the site that the art of sewing was also practiced in ancient India. References to embroidery also surface in Vedic texts in the form of *pesas*, or an embroidered garment, which seems to have been used by female dancers. The earliest reference to the printed fabric is found in the word '*Chitranta*' in the *Apastamba Srauta*

Sutra from the Vedic era. The Mahabharata also refers to printed cloth. The usual word used for printed clothing is *chitra vastra*. This clearly shows that fabrics were also printed in ancient India. The Sanskrit epic Mahabharata mentions silk fabrics among the presents brought to Yudhisthira by feudatory princes from the Himalayan regions.

According to Valmiki's Ramayana, the trousseau of Sita consisted of woollen clothing, furs, precious stones, fine silk vestments of diverse colours, princely ornaments, and grand carriages of different kinds. The veil, bodice, and body clothes are repeatedly mentioned in the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata. In the Ramayana, there are numerous references to printed textiles like the ladies of Ravana wore garments of variegated hues; printed carpets, printed blankets, and printed dresses were distributed as gifts.



(Source - <http://indianculture.gov.in/node/2730142>)

Plate 1.4: A relief scene of the Ramayana depicting the costumes worn during 5th/6th - 3rd century BCE, Uttar Pradesh.

The Buddhist literature refers to different types of textile fabrics like linen (*khoman*), cotton (*kappasikam*), silk (*kosseyam*), etc. Other related words found in the text are the weavers (*tantuvaya*), the place of weaving (*tantavitatathanam*), weaving appliances (*tantabhandam*), and the loom (*tantaka*). Jatakas refers to tools for spinning and weaving.

Silk is mentioned in the Buddhist Jatakas, and the Pali literature presents a rich picture of textile art of the Buddhist period and describes fabrics, including the famous fabric of Banaras known as '*kaseyyaka*' (silk of Banaras) and woollen blankets of Gandhara of a bright red colour.

In the Gupta period, fine cloth with a beautiful goose pattern was referred to by Kalidas as forming the dress of Parvati. In the 7th century, *Banabhatta* refers to costly textiles manufactured by the tie-and-dye process in a variety of designs.³

The rich and diverse tradition of textiles and embellishments play a significant role in Indian life, encompassing clothing, home decor, religious ceremonies, etc. Fabric embellishments make fabrics more beautiful and attractive by adding decorative patterns. In India, embroidery has been the most popular means of embellishing garments. Bright embroidery makes clothes not only festive but also extremely refined. The first records of embroidery as a craft date back to the 5th century BC and can be found in the earlier Indian scriptures, 'The Vedas'.

Each state in India has a unique style to its tradition. The satin stitch is used in Kashmir. The darn stitch, which produces the '*bagh*' and '*phulkari*' stitches of Punjab, is vibrant like the people of the state. The interlacing stitches of Kutch and Kathiawar are as beautiful as they are intricate. The '*kasuti*' stitch of Karnataka, too, is popular due to its traditional value. The white on white '*chikan*' work of Uttar Pradesh is breath-taking and requires a lot of skill. The silk embroidery done in Surat has exquisite patterns.

Gold and silver embroidery, commonly referred to as *zardozi*, has been a part of Indian culture since the Rigveda. *Zardozi* is a combination of two Persian terms *zari* means gold and *dozi* means embroidery. *Zari* embroidery is done using gold and silver thread for embroidery work. Surat and Varanasi are the paramount centres for making the metal thread known as *Kalabathi*. This embroidery prospered during the Mughal period and was done on silk. It involves preparing complex designs using gold and silver threads, studded pearls, and precious stones (Munimji, 2021). Applique is another advanced embroidery method that involves attaching one piece of fabric to another by hand-sewing or by machine. The process involves cutting out small shapes of fabric, such as flowers, circles, or letters, and then stitching them onto a larger piece of material or canvas to create a beautiful design (Shah, 2023).

³ <http://indianculture.gov.in/node/2730142>

Another skill for ornamenting fabric is fabric painting. Fabric painting has been in existence since humans began weaving fibres together to form the first fabrics. As the earliest humans painted their bodies, they began using those same techniques to paint the fabrics that they created. Beading, the craft of stringing beads together, has been used as an embellishment for a long time. Beads can be made from the teeth of animals, stones, seeds, wood, metal, plastic, shells, and clay. They were used on both the clothing and jewellery.⁴

Dyeing, printing and quilting are some other embellishing techniques used for decorating textiles. While several embellishments are used simply to add beauty and make the piece attractive, others are used for their cultural symbolism. For example, cowrie shells are used to depict prosperity and fertility; coins are stitched on garments to symbolize prosperity; and cloves are used to depict health. While the reasons for their inclusion in the crafting of the textile vary, the result of their inclusion is the same: they make the textile artwork unique and more beautiful.⁵

Embellishments on religious textiles contribute significantly to their aesthetic and spiritual significance. Religious textiles are textiles and materials with religious or spiritual significance that are frequently used in religious rites, celebrations, and attire.

Religious textiles can serve as a way to visually express one's faith, connect with the divine, and engage in religious ceremonies. They frequently reflect the cultural and historical characteristics of a religious tradition and can be highly treasured and respected by followers. Different religious traditions and cultural groups have their own distinct styles and techniques for adorning religious textiles, which often feature symbolism and elaborate motifs.

1.5 Textiles at Religious places

Textiles in many parts of the world, whether woven, dyed, printed, or embellished, are valued by communities as cultural and sacred objects and used in ritual or ceremonial occasions. Cloth, considered as a sacred item, has been used since ancient times as an offering to God and is used to adorn them. For instance, the red and yellow pooja saris of South India have some symbolism associated with them. They are worn to protect a loved one, to fulfil a vow, or to ensure a bright future (Rao, 2010). Textiles are used in the worship of all religions- Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, and Christians. Some of them use

⁴ <https://www.cram.com/essay/History-Of-Embellishment/PJMSVY9U2UM>

⁵ <https://wovensouls.org/2014/10/03/embellishments-in-traditional-asian-textiles/>

textiles as hangings to decorate their sacred spaces, some as wrappings for their holy books and some as offerings to the idols of their deities. Buddhists lotus is woven into textiles to decorate the temples. In Chamba- a state of Himachal Pradesh, *rumals* (known as *Chamba rumals*) were also used in temples and homes as a backdrop to, or canopy for, a deity. Square shaped *rumals* were also used as a covering for gifts. When an offering was made to temple gods, or gifts were exchanged between the families of a bride and groom, an embroidered *rumal* was always used as wrapping (Gillow & Barnard, 2008). Chamba Rumal also involved a depiction of Lord Shiva's great exploits: annihilation of the elephant demon, widely known as *Gajantaka*, which means 'end of Gaja' or elephant. The embroidered *rumals* of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries depict different scenes from Hindu epics, especially from the legends of Krishna.

1.5.1. Tradition of offering textiles to Deities and covering Holy Scriptures

In order to protect the religious books along with their attached devotions and sentiments, it has been a tradition to cover them in a neat and clean cloth. It is evident from the ancient Pagodas, the ornamental gardens, sculptures, and images covered with silk found in many places of worship or temples. In each religion, the tradition of wrapping the holy books or even ornamenting the idols and statues has been very common. People often offer different types of textiles to their deities to show their devotion and respect towards them, certain examples of which are- offering of Red *chunri* to Goddesses, *chaddar* to *Pir Dargah* by Muslims and *Rumala Sahib* to Guru Granth Sahib by the Sikhs, etc. According to the *Mana-sara Shilpashastra*, the features of the image are determined by the relationship between the worshipper and the object of his worship; they are embellished with the devotional zeal of the worshipper and given true life and form lovingly by the devotees (Singh, 2006). Draping the deities with fabric or canopies was also prevalent among Buddhists. In earlier times, the main priest during religious ceremonies was covered by an umbrella to protect him from heat. So, Buddhists always use a canopy made of wood, metal, or studded with pearls over the statue of Buddha. It is an expression of their sanctity and respect.

Even in Hinduism, the statues of deities in religious places i.e., temples etc; can be seen draped in embellished clothes as per the season. The devotees change the clothes presented to the deities in each season. Woolen shawls, scarves, etc are presented to the deities in winter and cotton or silk clothes in summer (Plate 1.6).



Plate 1.5: Deities draped with silken clothes in summers



Plate 1.6: Deities draped with woollen clothes in winters

Hindu temples are frequently embellished with exquisite textile decorations. To create a bright and spiritual environment within the temple, colourful textiles, silk banners, and ornate hangings are used. The Nagar- Khera⁶ that is worshipped by the people as their protector is also draped with white embellished fabric, as can be seen in Plate 1.8. Even the ornate green or red sheet called *chaddar* is offered to Pir by the devotees.

⁶ A temple revered as the village / town's deity by the residents of that particular village/ town.



Plate 1.7: Embroidered fabric as the background of Deities on occasion of Janmashtami⁷



Plate 1.8: White cotton sheet draped to Nagar Khera

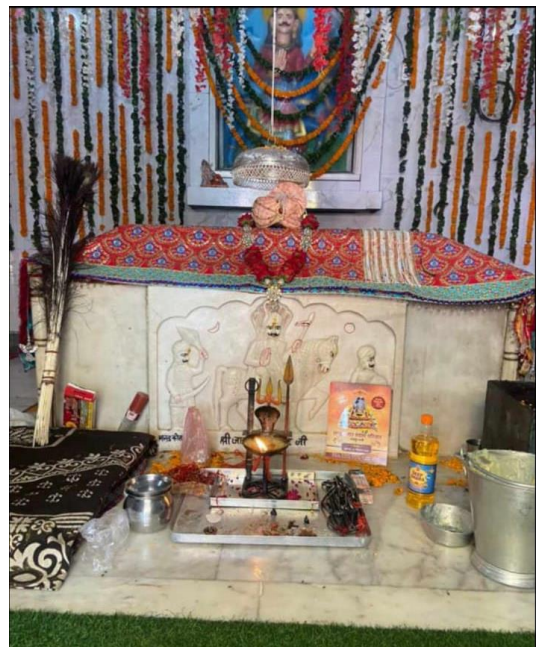


Plate 1.9: Embellished *chaddar* adorned on *Pir*

During the early Joseon dynasty (1392-1910) *Bojagi*, a traditional Korean wrapping cloth, was used as a tablecloth or covering for sutras in Buddhist context. It was used as wrapping for gifts, in marriages, and in Buddhists rites. Earlier *Bojagis* were made up of silk, ramie, or hemp. ‘Keeping something wrapped protected good luck’ was believed by traditional Korean folk religions. In many religions, cloth is used to cover

⁷ It is a Hindu festival that is celebrated annually to celebrate the birth of Lord Krishna.

Altars known as Altar cloth. It is used as a sign of respect for the Altar, along with protecting the surface of the Altar, because many of them are made of wood and are generally unique and highly decorated. In churches, Altars cloths are used during celebrations and are generally used to cover the surface when not in use, protecting it from dust and dirt. Formally precious stones studded with gold and silver Altar cloths were used, but at present, linen or hemp material is used because of its whiteness, cleanliness, and firmness. Altar covers are also finished with laces and embroidered with applique or some other technique.

Among the Muslims, it is common to spread a small carpet (*sajjada*) at the time of prayer, because they believe that the place of prayer should be ritually pure or free from any polluting substances (Katz, 2013). The common symbols found in the weaving of these carpets are the prayer niche, a recess in the wall indicating the direction of Mecca; also, a lamp, which is a reference to God; as well as flowers and trees that symbolize the abundance of nature in God's paradise.

Embroidered *Pichhavai* hangings are devotional pictures on cloth illustrating the Lord Krishna that decorate temples. These *Pichhavai* hangings are created with a fine embroidery called *aari* work by a community from Kutch, Gujarat, often referred to as *Mochis*. Wandering caste people, *Vaghris* from Gujarat, were famous for their hand painted and block printed shrine cloths, which are known as '*mata- ni-pachedi*' or '*mata- no- chandarvo*'. The shrine cloths always have an image of the '*mata*'-the mother goddess in her fearsome aspect- sitting on her throne or on an animal, brandishing in her hands the weapons needed to kill demons (Gillow & Barnard, 2008). A small village called Pipli on the main road between Puri and Bhubaneswar is very famous for its brightly coloured appliqué work articles used for the rites performed in Jagannath Temple. Pilgrims who come to Puri usually stop at Pipli and buy banners as offerings to the Temple Gods, and even while going back to their homes, they purchase souvenir bags or small canopies for their domestic deities and for festivals.

Thanjavur, a place in Tamil Nadu, is known for its appliqué hangings, banners, and decorations for temple carts. Articles are made in felt, cotton, and velvet with central motifs of Lord Ganesh, Goddess Lakshmi, or other deities surrounded by floral motifs. In Ladakh, the *khataq*, a ceremonial scarf usually white in colour and woven from cotton or silk, is used as a sacred symbol shared by both Buddhist and Muslim communities. They are offered to deities and the clergy, to the bride and her groom, to new-born babies, to visiting officials, and to respected elders (Rao, 2010).

1.5.2. Offering Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib at Sikh Shrines

The Holy Book of Sikhs is also always draped in white cotton sheets and then by colourfully embroidered Coverlets; both are referred to as 'Rumala Sahib'. As per the oxford dictionary- a *rumal* is a thin, usually patterned silk or cotton fabric of a type originally imported from India; a quantity of this (frequently in plural, sometimes treated as singular) or a piece of this fabric, typically used as a handkerchief or a head-covering.



Plate 1.10: Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib adorned in Darbar hall of Sikh Shrine

Rumala sahib is a Punjabi word used for a piece of fabric, either square or rectangular, that is used to cover the Sikh Scripture- Guru Granth Sahib, when it is not being read. Rumala Sahib is brought and offered as a gift to Sikh Shrines by people on various occasions. It is used during wrapping or unwrapping the Holy Book at different events everyday like-

Parkash – when Guru Granth Sahib is opened.

Hukam – when a random verse of Scripture is read out.

Sukhasan – when Guru Granth Sahib is put to rest.

Sukhasan is a ritual of taking the Holy Scripture to a place for rest at night. While carrying Guru Granth Sahib for *Sukhasan* and even at the time of rest, the Holy Book is wrapped in a white cotton sheet called *Sukhasan Rumala*.



Plate 1.11: Granthis wrapping the Holy Scripture with *Sukhasan Rumala Sahib*

Chandoa Sahib

A canopy is a decorated cover that usually hangs above a throne, or bed, or seat of divinity. Chandoa is also called *Chandva* in hindi and is a small canopy (*mandap*) of flowers or cloth. As per Hindi *Shabad kosh*, a Chandoa is called a *Chandavaa* or *Chandar chat*. It is a small *canopy* or pavilion that is mounted above the throne of kings with the help of four pillars of gold or silver.⁸

The Chandoa Sahib is a canopy (Plate 1.10) generally made with embellished fabric that hangs above Guru Granth Sahib in due respect. It is a mandatory element of Sikh code of conduct to have a Chandoa Sahib above the Guru Granth Sahib, whether at a Sikh shrine or at home. It is tied to either each corner of the ceiling or mounted on four metallic or wooden poles. *Chattar Sahib*, or *Palki Sahib*, is also used to cover Guru Granth Sahib, especially when people invite Guru Granth Sahib to their home (Kaur, 2021).

Offering Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in Sikh shrines is a common practice in Sikhism, particularly in Gurdwaras. These textiles hold significance and are used to show respect and devotion to the Guru Granth Sahib. The present-day trend shows that devotees offer ornamented Rumala and Chandoa Sahib at Sikh shrines. An endless variety of cloth and ornamentation can be seen in these religious textiles. Earlier, simple, neat pieces of fabric were used to wrap the Holy Book, but with the passage of time, people started offering heavily ornamented Rumala and Chandoa Sahibs.

The trend of offering these textiles at Gurdwaras has increased, which is also causing an overload of these religious textiles at many Sikh shrines. While presenting the annual budget of financial year 2023-24, several resolutions were also passed by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee regarding Sikh issues, including the abundance of Rumala Sahib offered by the devotees at Gurdwaras. The resolution stated that the devotees should offer only the required Rumalas and try to provide opportunities to the youth for administrative services and coaching of Gursikh youths for competitive exams like IAS, IPS, IFS, PPSC, etc⁹.

These ornate textiles add to the grandeur of the inner hall of Gurdwara. The lavishly embellished fabrics add to the visual appeal of the inner hall. Their vivid colours and

⁸ <https://www.shabdkosh.com/dictionary/hindi-english>

⁹ SGPC passes 1,138.14-crore budget for FY 2023-24 | Chandigarh News - The Indian Express

detailed motifs provide an inviting and welcoming environment, making it a peaceful place for prayer and meditation. They are not simply a form of artistic expression but also a way for worshippers to connect with Sikhism's religious and cultural legacy. These textiles contribute to the general ambience and devotion of people.

Substantial research has been done on a variety of embroidered, woven, and embellished textiles, as well as a various kind of religious textiles. However, despite being extensively embellished textiles and being connected with the intense devotion of the devotees, there has been no research done on the Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib offered by people in Sikh Shrines. This has inspired researcher to further explore and document these exquisite, expensive, and heavenly textiles, studying various changes in these textiles over the years, associated people in the marketing of these textiles, as well as to finding some solutions to minimise the increasing abundance of these textiles in the present time.

1.6 Documentation of Textiles: Preserving practices and heritage

“Our heritage is all that we know of ourselves; what we preserve of it, our only record. That record is our beacon in the darkness of time; the light that guides our steps. Conservation is the means by which we preserve it. It is a commitment not only to the past, but also to the future.”- Philip Ward.

Documenting and recording historical textiles are the only way to create a record of antiquities that can be referenced in the event of their loss. Textile documentation provides a written and photographic record of individual pieces and the artists who made them. Collecting all possible information adds to the value and meaning of any individual textile, whether in a museum or family collection. Documentation of textile artifacts serves as a resource material for academicians, researchers, weavers, art lovers, historians, fashion designers and textile designers interested in the field of traditional textiles. By documenting artefacts in detail, the knowledge of traditional textiles can be disseminated to the future generation, which may not have the privilege to see the artefacts physically and appreciate them (Amarnath, 2011).

Photographic documentation is the visual translation of written documentation and, at the same time, compliments it by capturing the subject quality of an artifact (Szczeanowska, 2013). Digitization and documentation hold incredible promise for both collections and researchers through greater access to interaction with, and

preservation of heritage for future generations. Textiles with a known history have more value to scholars, families, and museums than those with unknown provenance. Collecting all possible information adds to the value and meaning of any individual textile, whether in a museum or family collection. Textile artifacts are otherwise difficult to access due to time and distance constraints, but in the present situation, digitization of collections enables easier reference of art items, designs, and fusions of intercontinental cultural aspects of development. It eases the dissemination of art information to thousands of users in any part of the globe at a particular time. Digitization of traditional textiles offers the easiest and most user-friendly approach to enriching knowledge on rare material heritage and deploying it in a database accessible to a large audience. It also helps in prompt access and preservation of collections from previous years for future generations, resulting in a decrease in the handling of these surviving frail pieces of textile artifacts as well as sustaining the cultural heritage knowledge of the country (Manek, 2004).

Researchers across the globe have been working on research and documentation of various textiles and other cultural and heritage aspects. They have been referring the already documented data related to their work- visiting museums, collectors, archives, etc. This can further serve as resource material for academicians, art lovers, designers, and historians. Textiles act as the image of the cultural heritage of any place at a point in time. Being fragile in nature, textiles have a tendency to deteriorate over time, so they need to be preserved for future generations. Hence, documentation can be done as one of the alternatives to preserving the heritage.

As the design and manufacturing of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib have evolved very much with time, the present study was undertaken as an initiative to document the divine textiles. Documentation of these textiles, their designs, and their transformation with time is essential for research and cultural significance and it would serve as a valuable asset for future generations. Moreover, as earlier stated, no such study has been undertaken where extensive work on these textiles has been undertaken.

Title of the research- A Study and Documentation of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib offered in Sikh Shrines.

1.7 Objectives of the study

1. To study the tradition of presenting Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in Sikh Shrines and its history.
2. To study types of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib presented at Sikh Shrines on various ceremonies and occasions.
3. To explore the process of designing, manufacturing and marketing of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.
4. To investigate the variations in colour, fabric, stitching, decorations, and accessories of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib throughout time.
5. To study the preservation methods used in Gurdwaras for Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.
6. To gather people's perspective on the abundance of Rumala Sahib at Gurdwaras and to re-use the Rumala Sahib.

1.8 Limitations

1. Respondents were chosen from Northern states of India.
2. The manufacturers were selected from Amritsar, Ludhiana, and Patiala which are the main manufacturing hubs of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.

1.9 Scope of the study

1. The present research will be beneficial for the researchers who want to undertake the studies on religious textiles.
2. Documentation of textiles will help in preserving cultural heritage.
3. Documentation of the textile would serve as a resource material to academicians, art lovers, historians, designers and manufacturers interested in Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.
4. Documentation of Divine textiles, its designs and transformation with time would serve as a valuable asset for future generations.
5. The study will be helpful in making the people aware about the Rumala abundance in the Sikh Shrines.
6. The study will be useful to bring some ideas to re-use the offered Rumala Sahib in various Sikh shrines.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE



2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A literature review is a survey of scholarly sources on a specific topic. It provides an overview of current knowledge, allowing you to identify relevant theories, methods, and gaps in the existing research (McCombes, 2023).

A literature review generates a ‘landscape’ for the person reading it, providing an in-depth understanding of the field’s developments. This landscape informs those who read it that the author has certainly incorporated all (or the vast majority of) significant previous works in the field into his or her research.

The review is a significant part of research since it provides context for and justification of the research being carried out. This chapter presents a critical analysis of the relevant prior research that relates to the current research at hand. The literature on Indian faiths, especially Sikhism, was compiled in an effort to better understand the phenomenon. The literature on the Sikh holy book, its history, and the custom of covering it with fabric is brought into the research as it is directly relevant to the topic at hand. As the textiles under consideration, i.e., Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are manufactured in a wide variety of styles, studies have been conducted on the ornamentation, motifs, and symbols incorporated during embroidery, weaving, and other techniques. The chapter contains theoretical literature and relevant research studies collected from secondary sources such as books, journals, thesis, newspapers, and social networking sites. The collected review has been presented under the following headings-

2.1 India : Co existence of Religions

2.2 Textiles, Divinities and Religious observances

2.3 India: An eclectic mix of embellished textiles

2.4 The Symbolism of motifs, symbols and colours of embellished textiles

2.5 Custom of using fabric to cover Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh Sacred book

2.6 Reusing textiles in India : Customary and necessary

2.7 Related Studies

2.7.1 Motifs, textiles and ornamentation

2.7.2 Religious Textiles

2.8 Inferences drawn from review of literature

2.1 India: Co existence of Religions

Religion is universal. All known societies either have or have had religions (Carlton, 1973). All individuals have beliefs related to their religion, and they engage in certain practices as per their beliefs and religion that have significance for them.

India is a place where different religions co-exist. People following varied religions understand and follow some generalized ideas, beliefs and values. These beliefs, constitute the first dimension of a religion, and they are acquired through stories, songs, mythical tales, and sometimes religious authorities such as priests, shamans, etc. Rituals, the second dimension of religion, consist of activities such as reciting prayers, hymns, or *mantras* in order to connect with the Holy Spirit. People of all religions receive the divine's benefits through prayer. In Islam, for example, five daily prayers are performed in front of the Kaaba in Mecca. A third aspect of various religions is the promise of access to a unique spiritual experience or a sense/feeling of connection to a higher power. These experiences can come in varied forms, according to the ideas of religious founders like Buddha and Jesus. The formation of social organizations called communities is the fourth dimension of religion. Sociologists view these four dimensions as essential pillars of each religion (Vyain et al., 2014).

Throughout history and in societies across the globe, religious stories, symbols, and traditions have been employed in an effort to give life more meaning and comprehend the universe. Every known culture involves some form of religion, which is typically practiced publicly by a group. The observance of religion may involve feasts and festivals, a deity or gods, weddings and funerals, music and art, meditation or initiation, sacrifice or service, and other facets of culture. Despite the fact that religious beliefs can be highly personal, religion is also a social institution. Religion is acknowledged by social scientists as an organised and integrated set of beliefs, behaviours, and norms centred on fundamental social requirements and values. Religion is also a cultural universal shared by all social groupings. For example, funeral rites are practiced in every culture, although these customs vary across cultures and religious affiliations (Vyain et al., 2014).

There exists incredible diversity within each religion in terms of how members define their connections to it. Some have faith in religious beliefs and rituals of worship, whereas others do feel part of a religion's culture but do not participate in any rituals.

Some people feel they have the freedom to select their own religion or to reject religion entirely as a part of their identity, while others believe they have been following a specific religion since birth and are unwilling to change¹.

According to Durkheim, religion is the foundation of all the diverse societies in which we live. Durkheim's concept of religion is based on two things - the sacred and the profane, and the process of dividing the world into the sacred and the profane. 'The sacred' are the things that are set apart: and forbidden. These are connected to the supernatural. The sacred is anything that we set apart from the world and which does not have an exchange value, they are the totems, rites, and taboos that we honour above all else. A relationship of distance and fear is maintained with respect to these things. 'Profane' are the things apart from the sacred. It includes all the day-to-day things that people use in their lives. Sacred and profane are two worlds apart, and both are mutually exclusive².

"Of all the religions, the best religion is to repeat God's name and to do pious deeds. Of all the religious rites, the best rite is to remove the filth of evil intellect by association with the saints".

(Guru Arjan, Ashtpadi, page. 266).

Religion extends beyond written texts. They are also fabrics that conceal or disclose; they wrap and provide shelter, forming a permeable medium between the interior and exterior, the body and the world, between the hidden and the visible. Although religious scholars have long prioritised the study of texts, there exists a closeness between the two words text and textile (both are derived from the Latin word *texere*, to weave, to fit together, to braid, interweave, fabricate, and build) that has encouraged many scholars to view religious traditions as practices of skillfully interweaving words with the material world in numerous ways.³

Over the centuries, India has been home to a wide diversity of religions. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, and Christians use textiles extensively in their devotion. Textiles continue to play a vital role in religious observance in India, whether

¹ <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/religion-identity>

² <https://bigthink.com/thinking/durkheim-sacred-profane/>

³ <https://www.oiist.org/fabrics-of-devotion/>

they are donned for rituals, offered by devotees to temples and shrines, or hung to decorate sacred spaces.

As the current study pertains to the religious textiles used in Sikh Shrines, it seems essential to shed light on the use of diverse textiles in the worship practises of people from various regions and religions. The literature depicting the use of textiles by gods, goddess has also been discussed in the proceeding section.

2.2 Textiles, Divinities and Religious Observances

Textiles have always been an integral part of human societies. Humans historically covered their bodies with a variety of materials, including animal skins and bark. The materials used for covering bodies have evolved from skin to natural fibres to synthetic man-made fibres. One of the earlier instances of utilising textile by fishermen was through spinning of natural fibres into yarn for knitting finishing nets to catch fish for their survival. The Neolithic period, between 12,000 and 15,000 years ago, marked the first appearance of the cultural horizon that included the processing of fibre into thread and the transformation of those threads into garments, arguably the oldest human technology (Vollmer, 2018). Discovering different fibres and using it for different purposes evolved at different locations across the globe.

Linen, the cloth obtained from linseed trees, was first developed in ancient Egypt. After the Ancient Egyptians, linen continued to be a staple of clothing in the Western world for many centuries. Wool was developed in the Middle East, Afghanistan, and Kashmir Valley. Cotton was reported to have been developed in India and Peru. The prince of textiles, silk was reported have been developed first in China some 5000 years ago. Some of its varieties were manufactured in India (Ghosh & Ghosh, 2017). The wall paintings of Ajanta from the fifth to the eighth centuries provide an invaluable chronicle of the development of the Indian textile industry. The cave frescoes depict servants, dancers, nobles, and musicians wearing loincloths and garments that appear to be patterned by tie-dye, printing, and brocade weaving (Gillow & Barnard, 2008). However, textile artefacts from the sixth millennium BCE that were discovered in central Europe and the Middle East indicate that textiles were used in religious ceremonies (Vollmer, 2018).

Textiles- the process and the form are symbolic. In most societies that developed textile technologies, cloth and its production served as metaphors for life. Textiles possess both material and symbolic worth. Silk served as a significant political tool during Byzantine rule. Foreign traders who were favoured by the Byzantine emperors were rewarded with silk as it was symbolic of royalty. Fabrics have played crucial roles in the cultural, economic, and spiritual development of their respective communities.

"Every religious ceremony and ritual involve textiles." Esoteric philosophic concepts like Buddhist *sutra*, *granthi*, and *tantra* owe their origins to textiles, where *sutra* means 'to weave' and *tantra* means 'to spread the thread' (Dhamija, 2014).

Textiles are symbolic and are used in many religious or pious rituals, religious offerings. These have a spatial function, and are used in different forms in religious places, and are used for draping deities and covering religious scriptures.

Textiles are an important part of religious offerings- like when Tibetans offer rectangles of cotton cloth block-printed with prayers to the elements as acts of devotion. Textile offerings were important in rituals honouring personified deities. In Egyptian culture- the gods were woken up in the morning, fed, bathed, clothed, taken on celebratory outings, and put to bed at night. In Buddhist, Hindu, Daoist, and Confucian Asia, it was common practice to present garments to temple images. In late imperial China, for instance, where the giving of prestige cloths marked the New Year and birthday celebrations, many of the city gods were presented on these occasions with new robes that were cut especially large and frequently didn't have side seams, a fact that was frequently recorded in holy inscriptions by contributors. Imported Chinese silk scarves adorned with Buddhist motifs and the basic Indian cotton gauze scarves worn by Tibetan Buddhists convey a sense of offering and sacrifice. In the regions of the Tibetan Plateau that produce wool, these exotic imports were used as markers of commerce and as offerings to deities. Tibetans also offer rectangles of cotton cloth block-printed with prayers to the elements as acts of devotion. These textiles, which are flown from poles, suspended on lines, or affixed to the roofs of temples and sanctuaries, are actually destroyed by the winds that initiate prayers to the Gods.

Textile is also given high respect or is worshiped in many cultures. For example, the effigies of the hearth deities worshipped by nomadic Mongols, called as *Ongot*, were wholly fabricated from felt. Before the development of a rich figural iconography in

Buddhism after the second century CE, images of the Buddha's attributes, such as his mantle and his throne with its textile-covered cushion, served as a symbolic focus of worship for the devoted. Among the *Toraja* tribes of central Sulawesi, holy textiles known as *ma'a* and *sarita* represent supernatural power. These textiles are family treasures that are handed down through families and used on a variety of ritual and ceremonial occasions. In Tibet, applique worked textile *maṇḍalas* are donated to monasteries. These are prepared using Chinese silks and other exotic fabrics. These *mandalas* depict various deities in the Buddhist pantheon.

Textiles are connected to space and have spatial functions. Textiles have the ability to transform an area into a sacred space or an area that shows the presence of a god. The act of spreading a cloth, whether it is the simple linen textile that covers the top of the Christian altar or the elaborately patterned silk covers for the Buddhist incense tables, transforms a table into an altar. The repeated use of textiles or textile sets at a sacred place also imbues the sacredness into it and symbolizes the same. Red vestments and altar furnishings used in Churches are some examples.

Textiles have also been used to cover areas, especially with mats and carpets, for religious and spiritual activities. The usage of little square woollen carpets embroidered with Buddhist emblems is common by Buddhist monks. Fine textiles are used for a wide variety of coverings for reading desks, books, scrolls of paper, cushions, kneelers, and furniture. Valances made of textiles enhance architectural settings. The Torah shrine becomes the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant when the *kapporet* (cover) is laid over the Torah curtain. In East Asian religious contexts, niches containing image sanctuaries were frequently adorned with elaborately embroidered valances. Some of these were temple-donated special commissions. One popular form of Chinese Buddhist valance was created as a patchwork by congregation members using their own textiles or temple-donated textiles (Vollmer, 2018).

Theoxenia is an ancient Greek concept that involves hospitality towards a god who visits as a guest. It has a ritual in which stools, thrones, or couches are decorated with textiles for the reception of deities. Similarly, in Roman culture, one finds the *sellesturnium* ritual, in which richly draped and cushioned thrones and chairs were set up for the gods to witness spectacles performed in their honour.

To form and maintain good relationships with the gods and goddesses, ancient Greeks communicated with them through votive offerings, sacrifices, and prayers. As with most votive dedications, there were a variety of motives for presenting textiles as offerings to deities. Fulfilment of wishes has been motivating people to dedicate textile offerings to the deities. Dedication and sacrifice were both types of gifts, but while the sacrifice was devoured by the community or consumed by the gods as smoke, a dedication was preserved as a physical object in the sanctuary.

In Hinduism, deities are draped in textiles, and every deity has a distinct fabric. Lord Shiva, the Hindu deity and the yogi par excellence, wraps his waist with nothing but tiger hide. His neck is coiled with a serpent, and a crescent moon adorns his head. The sacred river Ganga flows from his hair, while Lord Vishnu and Brahma wear a silky cotton wrap over their shoulders and loin apparel, or sarong, draped around their waists. The three Hindu goddesses Lakshmi, Parvati, and Saraswati are adorned with rich saris and blouses. These garments are adorned with ornaments of gold and other precious jewels. Rock engravings and paintings of Ellora illustrate goddesses are with *dhoti* wraps. In Hinduism, there is a notion behind selecting appropriate clothing, and several types of clothing are recommended that not only protect one from negative energies but also bring in the good and spiritual energy already present within the devotees. A certain line of clothing is recommended for *dharmaacharan* 'righteous behaviour', which includes *dhoti*, *uparna* 'a shawl', *mala* 'rosary', *gandh* 'sandalwood paste', and so on. Wearing proper attire is supposed to draw positive energy from the environment. Hindu mythology and the apparel of our ancestors can be inferred from the divine attire of Hindu deities (Dwivedi, 1970).

On various occasions, a life-size statue of Lord Krishna sculpted from a single piece of black marble in the temple located in Nathdwara and popularly known as Shrinath ji Temple is decorated with precious gemstones, rubies, pearls, and stones. There, *Thakurji* wears a diversity of turbans, including the *Paga*, *Pheta*, *Dumala*, *Mukut*, *Morshikha*, *Tipara*, and *Gokurna*, among others. Even the fabric and embellishment vary with the season. During the month of *Vaisakh*, from April to May, for instance, vibrant and colourful *mulmul* fabric is used, while *moti* (pearl) and *chandan* (sandal) are used for *shringar* (adornment). During the months of *Ashad*, i.e., June and July, diamond-studded jewellery is popular. During *Phalgun*, the months of February and March, white cotton garments with gilded silver laces are worn. Throughout this month,

only gold and *meenakari* (the art of enamelling metal for ornamentation) *shringar* are used. As the month of *Kartika* (October-November) is distinguished by the presence of *Navratri*, weighty brocades of silk are used for clothes, and precious stones are used for jewellery (Sachdeva, 2020).

Mata ni Pachedi are religious wall hangings and canopies from Gujarat that illustrate a vivid folk-art style incorporating both block printing and free hand sketching. The centre figure of these pieces depicts one of the Hindu mother goddesses in a temple or similar enclosure. These mother goddesses are personifications of shakti, which is defined broadly as power or force. It also has worshippers and references to religious epics and folklore. Hindu gods and goddesses also have an animal vehicle that helps in the iconographic identification of the deity. These religious wall hangings often have a sequence of bands depicting worshippers making their way to the goddess' temple, as well as a range of motifs based on well-known folklore or religious stories. Religious story paintings are not just limited to Gujarat. The *Phad* story textiles of the adjoining state of Rajasthan, which narrate classic tales through narrative bands, are a related painting on fabric tradition. Kalamkari fabrics in South India also depict religious events through bands of drawings created with both block printing and hand painting (Johnson, 2014).

Religious scriptures are covered with textiles that are also considered sacred. In ancient times, sacred text books, such as the Bhagavad Gita, were covered with red cloth. A red silk cloth was used as an additional protective covering. There could be two reasons for this -one that red is a natural colour and in ancient times, natural colours or dyes were used; and another is that red is associated with auspiciousness and wealth. Aside from red, yellow is also an auspicious colour. As a result, *haldi - kumkum* (*haldi* or turmeric is yellow, and *kumkum* is red) was celebrated as a happy occasion. Thus, it is commonly found that items deemed fortunate are wrapped in red cloth, or red paper, or similar hues. The majority of gold jewellery has been wrapped in crimson paper. Palm leaf collections were wrapped in red silk as a natural dye since these were reasonably free of insect attacks (John et. al. 2014). Since wrapping isolates whatever is inside from the outside world and prevents the loss of qualities or properties, textiles can also be used as containers. The act of enclosing a cult image in textiles has two purposes: to allow the image to be diffused into an enclosing shape, a container in this case, a textile and to prevent the image's attributes from departing. Because the textiles took on the

qualities of the God they covered, the textiles used to adorn cult figures became sacred objects in their own right (Brøns, 2017).

Not only the covering of sacred texts is with textiles, but many ornamentations at religious places are with embellished textiles. In ancient times, flags, regal tents, and other symbols of authority were hand-imprinted with silver stamping, also known as *Chandi ki chhapai*, to represent the prestige and position of the holder. This technique is also referred to as ‘*Varak* gold or silver leaf printing’ because it utilises *varaks* made by flattening gold or silver into a paper-like consistency. It is a common ornament in temples and sacred sanctuaries (Pareek, 2020).

Banners and hangings announce the uniqueness of ritual spaces. They might be carried in processions or displayed indoors. Most of these things are flashy and made of lightweight materials; some, like Buddhist temple banners, have long streamers that bring movement as well as colour to ritual space. Banners with deities’ images convey popular iconography and may have an informal educational function, but they are difficult to distinguish from equivalent secular decoration in general (Vollmer, 2018).

In the ‘textile-conscious’ heritage of Tibetan culture, it is well-known that Buddha’s temple was historically decorated and adorned with exquisitely draped fabric. Religious hangings, such as *baldachins*, round silk banners, triple *banderols*, and *thangkas*, demarcate the sacred area of Buddhist structures. The pillars, doors, and ceilings are adorned with silk brocade woven with golden and silver threads in ritualistic colours. On special occasions, even the clay statues of deities embellishing the walls are ‘dressed’ in luxurious silk fabrics. Tabo wall paintings of deities and celestial thrones embellished with textiles depicted Buddhist consecration rituals and devotional practices (Kalantari, 2018). The most valuable religious textiles serve and continue to serve to honour the sacred sites in Mecca and Madina, as well as the tomb of the Prophet Mohammed in Madina. Even the calligraphic motifs are carefully chosen to reflect the function and location of a religious textile. Motifs from the Holy Quran play an important role in Muslim rituals and culture. One of the most intriguing examples is a golden-lettered green silk bag used to carry the key to the Kabba. Each year, a special bag is prepared to hold the key, and it is presented to the most senior representative of the Banu Shayba, the man selected by the Prophet Mohammed to protect the Kabba keys ‘until the days of judgement’ (Ghazal, 2021).

Textiles have historically transmitted both symbolic and economic importance. Prior to the industrial revolution, when most textiles were reduced to disposable consumer goods, all textiles had real worth as the result of the labour involved in farming, spinning, dyeing, and weaving. To make liturgical linens, many religious institutions relied on cloistered workshops. These businesses were frequently run by women, whose textile output is reminiscent of specialised dowry goods. Some of the time-consuming specialised practices involved with these workshops are similar to holy acts of worship that include repeated invocations and blessings. The majority of textiles used in religious ceremonies have no ceremonial function or meaning as religious symbols. Rather, they serve a purely cosmetic (decorative) function. These textiles, whether temporary or permanent, enhance ritual through magnificent presentation. These decorations often featured fabrics that had been transformed from secular uses for the purpose. Many churches encouraged believers to donate secular prestige textiles as a good deed, and this collection of luxury goods was available for recycling. Especially costly textiles were frequently used to wrap relics and other religious things before storing them in reliquaries. Many specimens of mediaeval silks exist solely in these contexts in the West.

Textiles that adorn the interior walls of worship halls, like the wall paintings many of them replaced, are commonly didactic. The painted cotton temple hangings from northern India, for example, often depict stories from Hindu mythology. Many of the tapestry sets woven for religious institutions in medieval Europe illustrate the lives of the saints or depict apocalyptic visions. In the West, the popularity of such monumental textiles lapsed with the rise of the Gothic architectural style. The Graham Sutherland tapestry at Coventry Cathedral is an outstanding example of the twentieth-century revival of tapestry weaving that has affected contemporary Western Christian Church decoration (Vollmer, 2018).

Various ornamentation techniques, including printing, embroidery, weaving, etc., have been employed to beautify or embellish Indian textiles. Each region of India is renowned for its distinctive ornamentation style. As the focus of the current research is on the designing and manufacturing of the Sikh's divine textiles, so under the following section, an overview of the dynamic and diverse textile art found in India is discussed.

2.3 India: An eclectic mix of embellished textiles

"Decoration nourishes and empowers us in an incalculable manner, providing physical, mental, and aesthetic stimulation. India is one of the few countries and civilizations that has consistently celebrated and practiced the decorative arts, and surface embellishment, and ornamentation. The Hindu belief system is basically linked to the natural world, as evidenced by the use of natural motifs in Hindu forts and palaces. In addition to their profound and enduring affection for nature, the Muslims also had a passion for the abstract world of geometry. Their religion forbade the depiction of figures, and artists, far from being constrained, excelled at this abstract art" (Wilson, 2011).

Ornamentation is the discipline or art of embellishing fabric or other materials with needles, threads, or yarn. Fabrics are decorated with feathers, horns, tassels, jewels, coins, buttons, shells, metal, and mirrors, etc. The role of embroidery goes beyond the decoration of fabric. In addition to embellishment, it has many symbolic meanings/connotations in different societies across the globe. It is hung outside the homes of a marriageable girl in Romania; embroidery done by a Turkish girl announces her talent as a prospective daughter in law; and forty days are marked with protective embroidery for the mother and child at the time of the birth of a child (Paine & Paine, 2010). After the birth of a child, the mother and the newly born are considered to be in a vulnerable state, so they are protected not only from evil spirits but also from exposure to illness.

In numerous cultures, including ancient Persia, India, China, Japan, Byzantium, and mediaeval and baroque Europe, elaborately embroidered clothing, religious objects, and domestic items were a sign of wealth and status. It is believed that embroidery and the majority of other needlework arts originated in the Orient and the Middle East. People at that time quickly discovered that the stitches used to join animal skins could also be used for decoration. This can also be observed in the Ajanta Murals and the Buddhist and Kushan sculpture. History, sculptures, paintings, and vases depicting the inhabitants of various ancient civilizations illustrate people wearing thread embroidered clothes.

The rich Indian heritage of textiles and their ornamentation is well-known all over the world. Glittering textiles with gold and silver embroidery is very famous and is practiced in many parts of India, like Delhi, Agra, Lucknow, Ajmer, Bhopal, Madras and

Hyderabad. There are many other places that are famous for their handwork like purses and other tiny bags, which are Bhopal's claim to fame, whereas Surat is known for its *karchobi* work, Delhi for its *chappals* and shoes, and Lucknow for its Zardozi and *Kamdani* embroidery. Metal embroidery on saris, *cholis*, and many other garments is quite popular. This *zari* embroidery employs a metallic thread called *zari* thread. There are different types of *zari* threads. Thinner thread is used to make lace for *batwas* (purses), neck strings, tassels, etc., while thicker thread, *kalabattu*, is used in borders. *Tirora*, a gold thread with a spiral twist, is used to emphasise the design's undulations. *Kora* refers to a dull *zari*, while *chikana* refers to a shiny one (Naik, 1996). Punjab is also well known for embroidery; the hardworking and inventive women of Punjab have been practicing this art. Historically, embroidery has been a requirement for a well-educated Panjabi woman. In the Holy Granth Sahib, Guru Nanak Dev has also quoted -

ਕਵਿ ਕਸੀਦਾ ਪਹਿਰੀਹ ਚੋਲੀ ਤਾਂ ਤੁਮ ਜਾਣਹੁ ਨਾਰੀ

Kadh Kasida Pehreh Choli, Ta Tum Janoh Nari

Only then you will be considered an accomplished lady when you will embroider
yourself your own blouse

Phulkari embroidery, considered a great treasure, has given fame and international recognition to Punjab (Hitkari, 1980). The earliest available articles of embroidery were *Rumal*, the kerchief, embroidered somewhere during the fifteenth century by the sister of Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak, which was similar to Chamba *Rumal*, Shamlā, a ceremonial costume of the fifth Sikh Guru (Naik, 1996).

Chamba, a small village in Himachal Pradesh, is well-known for its *Chamba Rumal*, an embroidered thin muslin *rumal*, kerchief. This *rumal* was always used as a covering or wrapping for gifts that were exchanged between the families of a bride and groom. Similarly, it was used as a covering for offerings made to temple deities/Gods. The finest white embroidery, also known as *chikan*, flourished in Lucknow and is still regarded as an important product. The quilted covers- *Kantha* from Bengal were also renowned worldwide. Weavers from Assam were well known for the beautiful and intricate patterns of the woven cloth. Mahatma Gandhi once commented, 'Assamese women are born weavers; they can weave fairy- tales in their cloth.' An Assamese girl was not considered marriageable until she had proved herself as a proficient weaver (Gillow & Barnard, 2008).

Orissa was very popular for its embroidered banners, canopies, and umbrellas made for religious processions. Bihar's applique work was renowned for its ceremonial use in canopies (*shamianas*), wall enclosures (*kanats*), and pavilions. *Sujanis*-quilts made by the women of Bihar were also widely used as a wrap or cover, as well as for covering books or musical instruments.

The craft of hand painting has been used in India since ancient times for ornamenting textiles. It is believed that this art on textiles dates back to the period of the Ramayana. It is evident that King Janaka instructed an artist to depict the wedding of his daughter on fabric. The craft of hand painting is indigenous to the Bihar region, Mithila or Madhubani, and is still practiced by artisans. In the Ramayana, Ravana's adorned garments are also described. Hanuman described Sri Lanka in *Sundar Kand*, where it is mentioned that Ravana's palace was furnished with a variety of decorated fabrics (Fabriclore, 2022).

Whether embroidery, printing, painting, dyeing, or any other technique of ornamentation, it is common to see motifs inspired by the surroundings. A significant amount of symbolic weight has been bestowed on a huge number of motifs of Indian plants, birds, and animals. Some of the motifs that are used repeatedly in Indian decoration are the lotus, the peacock, the turtle, the chevron pattern, the rose, the cypress tree, the pot with the overhanging leaves, the vase of flowers, and the Tree of Life (Wilson, 2011). Every pattern or ornamentation that is formed on textiles is accomplished by combining a number of motifs and symbols. Each motif communicates a different message or story, which will be explained in the following section.

2.4 The Symbolism of motifs, symbols and colours of embellished textiles

Motifs used in developing textiles reflect representations of thoughts, beliefs, and concepts. Like any other symbol, religious symbols evoke associations and emotions in people by way of the analogical process. As a matter of fact, religious symbols represent concepts with high societal value. However, the same object or image may have a different symbolic meaning in a variety of different cultures. Specifically, religious symbols represent something (a concept or an object) that believers find reassuring.

Religious textiles of Hindus have legends of Lord Krishna depicted through various ornamentation techniques- embroidery, dyeing, printing, etc. Stories of Krishna also

form an important element of *rumals* from Chamba. Some other motifs include the attributes of gods, such as the peacock as the vehicle of Saraswati, the goddess of arts and wisdom, and Shiva. Images of Ganesh are the most common motif in Gujarati folk embroidery. As Ganesh is the remover of obstacles to happiness, his image is frequently embroidered in the centre of *Ganeshtapana* (a pentagonal wall hanging) alongside a dish of sweets and his companion rat (Paine, 2010).

The peacocks are commonly used motifs on traditionally designed fabrics or religious fabrics used in temples or even on the dresses of a bride, as the peacock signifies the completeness of being a woman in some cultures. It is also believed that a sense of energy is carried, which comes from the renewal of feathers every year. A motif of a parrot represents passion and courtship and is also known as the *vahana* of Kamadeva, the god of love and desire, in India. It is even used as a symbol of good fortune in Chinese art. Banyan and *peepal* trees are said to be the tree of life in Hindu tradition and are depicted on numerous religious textiles because they are revered in Hindu rituals, and Mahatma Buddha attained enlightenment beneath a *peepal* tree (Prajapati & Tiwari, 2021).

The holy place Kanchipuram and the motif *Rudraksham* have an undeniable connection. *Rudraksham* is a bead resembling a dried blueberry; it is obtained from a tree grown in the foothills of the Himalayas. The bead is used as a prayer bead because of its medicinal and spiritual properties. The bead is known as Lord Shiva's tears because 'Rudra' means 'to cry' and 'Aksha' means 'eye' in Sanskrit. The aesthetic allure of sacred beads from Lord Shiva inspires weavers to incorporate them into intricate patterns on Kanchipuram textiles. Weavers create a variety of geometric, curvilinear, and free-flowing patterns using this motif with *zari*. In the majority of textiles, this motif is placed on the border, but in a few special pieces, it is also placed in the centre or field of fabric. It is considered to be the oldest motif of our civilization and is believed to protect the wearer from all evil, thereby imparting a spiritual sense.⁴

Doorway hangings, also known as *torans* and commonly seen in the northwest region of India, are not only used for the purpose of adornment; rather, there are certain rituals and symbolic meanings that are associated with 'Toran'. Toran symbolises devotion,

⁴ <https://www.sundarisilks.com/blogs/article/the-great-indian-fabric-rudraksham-the-holy-motif-from-the-himalayas>

fertility, regeneration, and wealth. The torans are prepared from a variety of vibrant coloured fabrics, and they feature pointed leaf-like pendants that are embroidered and decorated with mirrors. These pendants are attached to a horizontal band. It is a common belief that placing toran at the entrance neutralizes the harmful effects or negative energies penetrating inside the home or compounding from outside. *Torans* are used to ward off the effects of the evil eye and to bestow blessings.

In Ladakhi textiles, numerous motifs are utilised, each of which has a particular symbolic meaning. For example, the Swastika motif signifies good fortune; dorge, also known as lightning bolts, shows stability; and the *enis* knot demonstrates compassion. The *khataq*, a ceremonial scarf usually white in colour and woven from cotton or silk, is used as a sacred symbol shared by both Buddhist and Muslim communities. They are offered to deities and the clergy, and they are also presented as gifts to revered elders and officials. They are also given to newlyweds and newborns.⁵

Ikat is a powerful textile method used in creating patola or bandha that involves the tying of threads using dye-resistant material and then dyeing them after the threads have been tied. Because it was believed that ikat had the power to cure, heal, cleanse, and protect those who wore it, ikat was commonly used in traditional medicine. It was believed that it protected the child while it was still developing inside the mother's womb, protected the child after it was born, guided the child through the rites of puberty and marriage, and supported the spirit on its ultimate journey to rest with the ancestors (Dhamija, 2014).

On the textiles used in Sikh Shrines, Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, the religious motifs to be embroidered are *Ek Oankar* and *Khanda*. The *khanda* (☯) is the symbol of the Sikh faith, which attained its present form around the 1930s during the Ghadar movement. The khanda is like a 'coat of arms' for Sikhs. It was introduced by the sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind Singh. Another symbol of Sikhism, *Ek Oankar* (ੴ) represents the one supreme reality and is a central belief of Sikh religious philosophy. The meaning of *Ek Oankar* is that there is only one God, one creator, or one Om-maker (Cole, 1994).

⁵ <https://www.deccanherald.com/features/weaving-sacred-textiles-2482158>

Various colours are associated with each religion and culture. Karmakar (2023) conducted a study on beliefs regarding the use of colours, with a focus on green. He discovered that green is associated with a variety of religions. It is believed that the colour green represents vitality, rebirth, and fertility. Green is considered divine because it reflects the same tranquillity and serenity found in nature and the realm of the gods. Even in Hinduism, green is considered a sacred colour. Green is associated with vegetation, trees, and rebirth in Judaism. The regeneration associated with springtime is represented by the colour green. Red is viewed as a symbol of vitality and fecundity. In Hindu weddings, brides traditionally wear red. In India, saffron is regarded as the most sacred colour. In Sikhism, saffron is also regarded as the colour of happiness and contentment.⁶ Orange and navy blue are the traditional colours of the Sikh Khalsa, worn on religious observance days and special commemorative occasions. As the colour of the warrior and of protection, royal blue or navy-blue turbans are frequently worn by Sikh ministers and Gyani, particularly in India (Abdurahiman et al., 2018).

Orange is found in Sikh Shrines as *Nishan Sahib*, while the *cholas* worn by *Panj Payaras* and Sikh turbans symbolize profound joy and happiness. It absorbs trauma, unpleasant experiences, and disruptions. Orange is the colour of community, affiliation, and social aspects of being.

The colour blue is also associated with the qualities or traits that so many deities possess, such as bravery, compassion, resolve, and protection, such as Lord Krishna, Vishnu, and Shiva, who are therefore always depicted in blue. There are blue mosques in the Middle East due to the belief that blue is a protective colour. Numerous renowned blue mosques exist in Afghanistan, Malaysia, Egypt, etc. In Catholicism, the colour blue is commonly associated with the Virgin Mary and the celestial realm.

The collective colour association is more likely to be influenced by cultural convention and established tradition, according to Parikh's (2011) research. Colour preferences and associations are likely to differ from nation to nation and culture to culture. In his research, he also noted that the colour yellow is revered in Brahmanism. In India,

⁶ <https://study.com/academy/lesson/colours-in-indian-culture.html>

newlyweds choose to wear yellow, as they did in Roman times. The Chinese have a marked preference for the colour yellow, which is associated with divinity and nobility.

Yellow is frequently used in the sacred textiles and apparel of Hindu deities, such as Lord Vishnu, Krishna, and Ganesha, as a representation of learning and knowledge. As the colour of the sun, yellow symbolizes the sun's qualities of light, warmth, and contentment. Spring represents new beginnings and developments due to the sun's abundant presence (Crandall, 2017).

White is a combination of seven distinct hues, so it embodies a small portion of the characteristics of each hue. It is believed to symbolize cleanliness, serenity, and wisdom. Goddess Sarasvati, the Goddess of knowledge, is always depicted seated on a lotus and dressed in white. As white is associated with purity, temple priests and Brahmins frequently wear it. White is also used in Christianity for the vestments of angels and the throne of judgment, purity, and happiness. In Western culture, white also represents purity and serenity. In Sikhism, white coloured Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are offered preferably on the Martyrdom Day of Guru Teg Bahadur or other Gurus.

2.5 Custom of using fabric to cover Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh Sacred book

Guru Granth Sahib is always regarded as the Guru's living persona, and Sikhs accord it the utmost respect and reverence. "The origin of Sikhism can be traced to the Punjab region of North India five centuries ago. The term Sikhism was coined in the 19th century by Europeans, specifically the British. The term is similar to Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. The word Sikh is derived from the Punjabi verb *sikhna*, which means to learn. Sikhism describes the learning process as a lived experience. Sikhs are those who have embarked on a path of self-perfection under the guidance of a spiritual mentor, or Guru. Guru refers to a succession of ten Gurus who evolved the Sikhi path and a teaching or philosophy known as "*Gurmat*" (Mandair, 2013).

Sikh Code of conduct book, *Rehat Mayada*, published by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, the highest Sikh religious authority explains a Sikh as "A Sikh is any person whose faiths consists of beliefs in one God, the ten Gurus, the Guru Granth Sahib and other scriptures and teachings of the Sikh Gurus. Additionally, he or she must believe in the necessity and importance of 'Amrit' - the Sikh baptism" (Kapoor, 1992).

Fifth Guru, Shri Arjan Dev went to Shri Goindwal Sahib to collect *Pothi* (collections of Gurbani written by previous Gurus) from Baba Mohan Ji, and he respectfully placed the *Pothi* on a palanquin upon receiving it. Guru Sahib was not seated at the same level as the *Pothi* at the time. Guru Sahib walked barefoot, keeping the palanquin to the right and floating a *Chaur Sahib* (fly whisk) over the *Pothi* until they reached Amritsar. Guru Arjan Dev installed the divine Gurbani on a platform at the site of *Ath- Sath- Ghaat* (a location within Sri Harmandir Sahib known as the site of 68 pilgrimages). *Kirtan* (hymn singing) was recited with the following words:

ਪੇਥੀ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਕਾ ਥਾਨੁ ॥

Pothi parmesar ka than

These Pothia are the home of the Transcendent Lord God

(Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Page,1226)

After the compilation and completion of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the first Parkash ceremony took place at Sri Harimandir Sahib. This was the first time the Holy Scripture was placed on a throne to bless the congregation. After that day, Sri Guru Arjan Dev never sat on a pillow in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib and insisted on waving *Chaur Sahib* over the Scripture, rather than on himself. He would not even rest on a bed; instead, he would spread a white sheet on the floor and sleep beneath the Sri Guru Granth Sahib. A white cloth is still placed on the ground next to Granth Sahib's bed as a reminder of his devotion. After the ceremonies of the day, Guru Granth Sahib resumes the posture of ecstasy known as *Sukhasan* each night. Guru Granth Sahib and Gurbani were accorded the uttermost priority.

Three days prior to their ascension to Sachkhand, the true father, Sri Guru Gobind Singh bestowed the eternal guruship on Guru Granth Sahib, the spiritual light of the Ten Guru. the Holy Book was respected as the Master of *Chaur* (fan), *Chhattar* (royal canopy) and *Takht*(royal throne) for eternity and put the whole world under the protection and guidance of Guru Granth Sahib by following the command.

The status of a permanent Guru was given to Adi Granth by Guru Gobind Singh (tenth Guru of Sikhism). Guru Gobind Singh transmitted Guru Nanak's divine light into the divine Word and declared that after him, the next Guru would be Guru Granth Sahib. He commanded the Sikhs that it was to be revered as the body and spirit of the ten Gurus.



(Source - <https://qr.ae/pyYJ8n>)

Plate 2.1: Gurus carrying Guru Granth Sahib covered with *Chhattar* (canopy)

He then opened the Granth Sahib, placed five paise and solemnly bowed to it as his successor, Guru Granth Sahib, Saying-

ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ, ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਿਹ ॥

Waheguru ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru ji ki Fateh

The pure belong to the Wonderful Lord, victory is the Wonderful Lord's.

He then sang his self-composed hymn:

ਆਗਿਆ ਭਈ ਅਕਾਲ ਕੀ ਤਭੀ ਚਲਾਇਓ ਪੰਥ ॥

Agya Bhai Akal Ki Tabe Chalyo Panth

As was ordained by the Timeless, thus was established the Panth.

ਸਭ ਸਿੱਖਨ ਕੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਾਨਿਓ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ॥

Sabh Sikhan Ko Hukam Hai Guru Manyo Granth

All Sikhs are commanded to recognize the Granth as their Guru.

ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਮਾਨਿਓ ਪਰਗਟ ਗੁਰਾਂ ਕੀ ਦੇਹ ॥

Guru Granth Ji Manyo Pargat Guran Ki Deh

As was ordained by the Timeless, thus was established the Panth.

ਜੇ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੇ ਮਿਲਬੋ ਚਹੇ ਖੋਜ ਸਬਦ ਮੈਂ ਲੇਹ ॥

Jo Prabh Ko Milbo Chahe Khoj Sabad Mein Leh

Those that seek to meet with Waheguru, delve into the Shabad.

ਰਾਜ ਕਰੇਗਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਆਕੀ ਰਹੇ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥

Raj Karega Khalsa Aki Rahe Na Koye

The Khalsa will rule, and none will remain opposed to them.

ਖੁਾਰ ਹੋਇ ਸਭ ਮਿਲੇਗੇ ਬਚੇ ਸਰਨ ਜੇ ਹੋਇ ॥

Khuar Hoye Sab Milenge Bache Saran Jo Hoye

After wandering place to place (for spiritual guidance) everybody will unite, and those who fall under the protection of the One God will be saved⁷

Guru Granth Sahib or Adi Granth is more than just a scripture for the Sikhs and is treated as their living Guru.⁸

It is very forbidden to store or put the Granth Sahib in a trunk or cabinet of any kind. The Holy Book should be kept in an environment that is spotless and well ventilated, and it ought to be positioned on a throne (*palki*) or a palanquin. The clothing that is suitable for the current time of year needs to be set onto the throne. Because the Granth Sahib was revered as the King of the *Chhaur* (royal whisk), *Chhattar* (canopy) and *Takht*, the throne should be spacious and have a modest canopy; however, there should be a bigger canopy positioned directly over the seat.

ਤਖਤਿ ਬੈਠਾ ਅਰਜਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਖਿਵੈ ਚੰਦੇਆ ॥

Takht baitha Arjan guru Satguru ka khivey Chandoa

Guru Arjan Dev sits on the throne; and the royal canopy waves over the True Guru

(Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Page, 968)⁹

According to Sikh Scripture, “My God is like what I see in the mirror.” Man is made in the image of God. According to the Gurus, there is no need to fast or to go on pilgrimages to holy places. There is only one need to have faith in Him and remember Him day and night, and this practice will lead to Guru. And the Guru, as per the Sikh faith, is the Holy Granth- the living Guru (Duggal, 1993).

⁷ https://www.discoverikhism.com/sikhism/sikh_ardas.html

⁸ <https://www.quora.com/Do-Sikhs-believe-in-Vastu-Shastra-as-per-Shri-Guru-Granth-Sahib-Ji-If-yes-how-do-you-justify-with-real-logic/answer/Geet-Chawla-15>

⁹ https://www.damdaitaksal.com/history/historical-artefacts#!Angeetha_Sahib_Mai_Bhago_Ji

Adi Granth, which later evolved into Sri Guru Granth Sahib, was Guru Nanak's greatest gift to the Sikh religion. Guru Nanak himself contributed 974 hymns and seventeen musical measures, or ragas, that are currently included in the Holy Granth. Guru Arjan Dev organized the community in order to accomplish certain practical objectives. He established the places of worship and even dug large tanks at places of Sikhism. The Holy Sarovar was completed at Amritsar by him. He formally compiled the writings of all Gurus, elevated it to the status of the Holy Scripture for all Sikhs, named them the Granth Sahib, and ultimately installed it in the Harimandir Sahib (Singh, 2006). Granth Sahib is the only subject of prayer in Sikhism. Granth Sahib, with its theme of love and reverence for the one God, is a beautiful collection of the words of numerous eminent persons. The Guru Granth Sahib is comprised of 1430 pages and thirty- three distinct sections, containing nearly 6000 hymns.

In worship, as they recite the conclusion of the Ardas, the congregational prayer, Sikhs affirm the scriptures as the "bodily manifestation of the Guru":

All Sikhs are commanded to

‘Acknowledge as Guru the Granth
Acknowledge the Granth as Guru,
The manifest body of the Gurus.
You, whose heart is pure,
Seek the Guru in the word’.

The reverence with which Sikhs regard the Guru Granth Sahib enables us to comprehend why an occasional Sikh voice urges all Sikhs to venerate the content of the volume by reading it with due receptivity rather than merely worshipping its physical form (Nesbitt, 2005).

The Holy Book is wrapped in silk and kept in a specially designated room. Any room can be used, but it must be cleaned and carpeted before the Holy Book is installed. An altar is assembled by situating a small bed on a wooden *divan* (designed with a hollow wooden base where the mattress fits) and covering it with a canopy. The Holy Book is placed on the bed and its wrappings are arranged around it in the correct order before it is opened and read. The Sikh who opens and reads the book is known as the Granthi; any Sikh man or woman can carry out this responsibility (Singh, 2010).

Guru Granth Sahib's elevated status as the Visible Guru necessitates the observance and service of particular religious regulations. Guru Granth Sahib must be enthroned on a specially elevated plank with a canopy of cloth (*chandoa*) high up, a fly-whisk (*chavar*) waving over it, and the finest of robes draped over it. According to Sikh tradition, *Palki* was used for the first time when Guru Arjan Dev brought the *pothis*- the Sacred Books of Gurbani- from Goindwal Sahib to Amritsar.

It is believed that Guru Arjan Dev procured these *Pothis* from Baba Mohan(son of Guru Amar Das), that contained the hymns of the first three Gurus and some Bhagats, and used them in the compilation of the Adi Granth Sahib (Gogia, 2017).



(Source- <https://singhstation.net/2014/09/maryada-putting-big-chandoa-vanishing/guru-arjan-dev-ji-pothis-in-palki-sahib-from-goindwal-sahib/>)

Plate 2.2: Baba Mohan handing over the *Pothis* (religious books) to Guru Arjan Dev

Before sunrise, Guru Granth Sahib is taken from its resting place to the Gurdwara hall. Everyone present rises to their feet and bows their heads as a sign of respect. Guru Granth Sahib is placed on *Manji Sahib* (a small bed on which Holy Scripture is placed) with bedding on a raised pedestal in Gurdwara Hall. The Guru Granth Sahib is adorned with an exquisite Rumala Sahib. Also in the evening, after *Rehraas* (evening prayer), *Kirtan* (singing of hymns), *Ardas* (a prayer or an address to a superior authority), and the distribution of *Kadah Parshad* (a sweet vegetarian pudding), Guru Granth Sahib is ceremonially enveloped in Rumala Sahib and placed at its final resting place (Singh, 2010).

Even during the World War, while battling in the field, the soldiers having deep devotion, were seen carrying the Granth Sahib covered with Rumala Sahib and waving the fly whisk over the Holy Book (Nesbitt, 2005).



(Source- *Sikhism: A very short introduction*)

Plate 2.3: Sikh Soldiers in the Mesopotamia campaign march into battle behind the Guru Granth Sahib, held aloft

The sanctity was even preserved during the printing of the Sacred Book. Authorized printers must also respect the sacredness of the bound scripture, as it is a physical manifestation of the Guru. Most of the press staff at Gurdwara Ramsar in Amritsar are not Sikhs, but they have all committed to following the Sikh rule of not using drugs or alcohol. As per Sikh custom, any ‘waste paper’ is burned in an appropriate manner at Goindwal (a city in Panjab) after being treated with dignity after being printed on loose leaves. Every year, some 5,000 bound copies are printed and distributed to gurdwaras by planes, helicopters, and luxury buses. Each copy is wrapped in a Rumala Sahib before transporting (Nesbitt, 2005).

In recent years, the Sikh community has been concerned about an abundance of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib as a result of the practice of gifting these books to their Guru on certain occasions. Since the problem of an excess of Rumalas in Gurdwaras has been addressed in this research, it was essential to gather the literature on recycling textiles, especially those of a religious nature, as will be done in the following section.

2.6 Reusing textiles in India : Customary and necessary

Repurposing is not a novel industry practice. Stella McCartney debuted her first collection in 1996, which featured repurposed vintage lace and silk fabrics. During the same era, a number of designers, including J.J. Noki and Christopher Raeburn, used surplus fabrics, such as army parachute material, and repurposed vintage clothing to create new garments. In 1997, Orsola de Castro introduced the one-of-a-kind 'From Somewhere' label, which utilised only luxury designer remnants and discarded swimsuits to create new garments.

"The uniqueness of each repurposed item makes them more commercially viable," says Jadwani.

(Davies, 2021)

In the majority of Indian households, it was customary for older children to hand down their clothing to younger children. During the first few days/weeks of a baby's life, it was and still is customary to dress him or her in clothing passed down from an elder sibling or cousin, as these garments are softer and gentler on the skin. Some regal garments, such as sarees and kurtas, are handed down through the generations as heirlooms.

Using old linens to create rugs is a practice that continues to this day. In Jammu and Kashmir, rugs are woven from discarded comforters. The nomadic community involved in this project embroiders old woollen blankets with acrylic yarn to create handcrafted rugs. In accordance with Kashmiri custom, discarded garments are transformed into something beneficial.

Indian quilts, also known as *Godhadi*, are traditional patchwork quilts created by hand from old sarees and dhotis. Full-sized quilts are used on mattresses and also as shawls. The old sari is folded so that the pleats themselves create the quilt; filling is not necessary. The layers are joined using a running stitch. The saree's more decorative elements are used to create a colourful and vibrant border.

Kantha work from the Indian states of West Bengal and Odisha was traditionally created from strands extracted from sarees and dhotis. It is one of the earliest forms of Indian embroidery; its origins can be traced back to the pre-Vedic period (prior to 1500 BCE) (Ketki, 2021).

Ritu Jadwani, a sustainable Fairtrade entrepreneur and curator, notes that reusing deadstock fabrics and used garments reduces the quantity of fabric required for a new collection, thereby reducing costs. Fabrics can be refashioned into unique rugs, sound absorption systems, patchwork comforters, and even jewellery, in addition to garments.

The ideas of recycling and living in a sustainable manner have been around for centuries in India. An age-old method of recycling served as the inspiration for the development of the traditional embroidery technique known as Kantha. Several layers of previously used cotton cloth are stacked on top of one another and secured in place using this method. These are adorned with magnificent embroidery that is created by pulling threads out of the colourful borders of older fabrics and utilising those threads to create the embroidery. The method has evolved over time to incorporate more options that are practical from a business perspective. The skills of kantha embroidery are used to make a wide variety of items, including bags, wallets, cushions, and mats, amongst other things. This technique has found immediate application in quilts and bedspreads due to the softness of the used old cloth, and it has even played a vital part when it has been employed for the care of the infant and the mother. The *Waghri* traders in India have been extremely important contributors to India's efforts to reuse and recycle post-consumer garments. These *Waghri* women collectors go door to door to collect clothing. They make their living through a system of bartering in which used clothing is traded in for other household items (Norris, 2010).

The Sikh community in New Zealand has come up with an innovative way to lessen the number of Rumala Sahib without offending the feelings of any individual. Before they came up with this original concept, they were burning the used parts, which caused the emission of more than 3.6 tons of carbon dioxide into the environment. The Supreme Sikh Society of New Zealand now donates the fabric to a number of local organizations, including the group of retired Cook Islands women, so that it can be used in products that are utilized by the wider community. This partnership was developed between the Sikh community and a group of retired Cook Islands women and *tivaevae*-traditional quilts were made from used Rumalas.

The issue of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib offered to Sikh Shrines has frequently appeared in the news. In a news article published in Punjabi Jagran in 2022, Bhai Satnam Singh, the *Faraash (sevadar)* of Harmandir Sahib, stated that a receipt is given

to all those who offer Chandoa Sahib in Harmandir Sahib, and the sets of Chandoa Sahib and Rumala Sahib are identified using the same number. According to him, devotees from distant countries demand Chandoa Sahib for the local Gurdwara Sahib via the management and committees of Gurdwara Sahib on their letterhead, which is recommended by the member of the Shiromani Committee. After that, the office process begins, and a letter of office is issued with the permission of the Pradhan Sahib. The Gurdwara management and committees who want to take the decorated Chandoa Sahib have to wait until their turn to get it. Sulkhan Singh Bhangali, manager of Sachkhand Sri Harmandir Sahib, mentioned in the news that the record office for each Chandoa Sahib is present at the Shiromani Committee Sri Darbar Sahib (Thind, 2022).

In a separate article published in the newspaper Punjab Kesari (2022) on the topic of Rumala Sahib's disrespect, it was reported that Singh Sahib Gyani Gurbachan Singh (Sikh Preacher) issued orders prohibiting the use of Gurbani and historical symbols with Rumala Sahib. According to Singh Sahib, legal action will be taken against anyone who disrespects Rumala Sahib despite the order. The secretary of the Shiromani Committee stated in Amritsar that the committee periodically received updates on the matter. He stated that the companies that manufacture and sell Rumalas have been reprimanded numerous times. However, if they do so, they will face consequences.¹⁰

2.7 Related Studies

This section details various studies related to motifs, textiles and ornamentation and religious textiles.

2.7.1 Motifs, textiles and ornamentation

Mahale (1997) carried out extensive research on 'Folk embroidery of Karnataka'. The aim of this research was to trace the origin of embroidery, types of motifs, designs, threads, colours, and techniques of ornamentation. The significance of the motifs and colours was also studied, along with the factors that affect the socio-economic aspects of the embroiderers. The researcher found that embroiderers' embroidery techniques varied according to their age, level of education, and learning process. Only four percent of Karnataka's folk embroiderers were engaged in *kasuti* as their primary

¹⁰ रुमाला साहिब को लेकर शिरोमणि कमेटी ने जारी किए ये आदेश, नहीं मानने पर होगी कार्रवाई - shiromani committee issued these orders regarding rumala sahib (punjabkesari.in)

occupation. They were all referencing their grandmother's designs. Various types of articles were created using variety of fabrics. The traditional motifs, which were developed by computer design system, were accepted by the folk embroiderers. *Gindigida, Simbi flower, Bele Asan, Suruli gubbi, Gandol kamal, Godhi kamal, Gubbi kamal, Tengin hoovin patti. Shank murgi, Godambi patti, Peacock, Parrots, Elephant, Squirrel, Tulsi, Lotus, Mango, Gopuram, Chariot, Palanquin, Shivlinga, and Hanumantha* were found as popular motifs.

Bhatia (2005) carried out research on the present status of the *zardozi* craft in selected places in India and its market trends. The origin, history, materials and tools, methods and design and trends in *Zardozi* were studied. Further, the role of government and non-government agencies in uplifting and reviving the craft was examined. The researcher discovered that, despite the lack of patronage, the craft has self-regenerated over time. For both domestic and export markets, the tradition of *Zardozi* crafts has continued and expanded in demand. The *Zardozi* work is used for furnishing items, religious items, costumes, accessories and others. The designs for the production were sourced from trend magazines, artifacts, samplers, historic textiles and costumes, or a ready design sheet available in the market. Fabrics like crepe, net, organza, silk, satin, cotton, tissue, georgette and brocade were used as base fabric; exporters referred to these as *gunjan, zubeida, dupion silk*, etc.

Metal embroidery of Rajasthan '*Mukke-ka-kaam*' was documented and explored by **Ojha (2013)**. The researcher took the initiative for the preservation of cultural heritage by documenting the traditional motifs, tools, and techniques of metal embroidery in Rajasthan, as well as the socioeconomic profile of the artisans, and by developing a product in accordance with market trends. The traditional motifs of *Zardozi, Gota work, Danke-ka-kaam, Mukke-ka-kaam, and Aaritari* were gathered from diverse sources, including literature, museums, and Rajasthani artisans. Using a combination of two metal embroideries, 10 designs were utilised in the creation of stoles. Stole designed with *Zardozi* and *Gota* work got the highest acceptability score in comparison to the other stoles on criteria of quality of workmanship, acceptability of concept, overall appearance, cost of the product, and placement of motifs.

'The study of the tradition and evolution of ornamentation styles and motif vocabulary of the printed textiles from Gujarat' was undertaken by **Dua (1970)**. The objective was

to trace the history of printed textiles of Gujarat, document the motifs and patterns used in these textiles and identify factors that have influenced the development of a unique vocabulary of motifs and transformation in motifs and the patterns made by contemporary artisans in Ajrakh. She found that traditional Ajrakh is still produced, but only in small quantities for discerning traditional customers and special occasions. It has been replaced by vastly less expensive screen-printed textiles printed with synthetic dyes. The markets are saturated with them, and even within these categories, the product variety has expanded. The designs have been modified to accommodate the use of screen instead of block and synthetic dyes. Modifications have been made to the motifs and patterns to accommodate the newer product line. A thorough examination of the fragments and textiles revealed that they shared their motif vocabulary and style of decoration with the architectural style and painting style of the Gujarat region. The fact that design inputs are required for new motifs to be created and incorporated into the existing motif collection led to several insights into the evolution of this textile and its iconography. The craft has incorporated new opportunities by incorporating new materials and products into its design.

Dewan (1970) looked at the connection between art and culture as part of his study, 'Woven textiles as art : an examination of the revival of weaving in the Chittagong Hill tracts', to see if there was any way to isolate and pinpoint what makes hand weaving so special. The researcher wanted to investigate how indigenous people may cultivate a stronger appreciation for the skill. The study used an analysis of the connections between art and culture to pinpoint the distinctiveness of hand weaving. During the course of the research that was conducted in Bangladesh, numerous indigenous tribes' textile crafts were analysed in order to perform a comparative analysis and to demonstrate how they are comparable in both method and purpose. It was discovered that cloth continues to hold a very significant significance for indigenous tribes in the Chittagong Hill Tracts; yet, in order to conserve and resuscitate the craft of weaving, more inventive alternatives are required. An exhibition of fabric designs using traditionally hand-woven textiles was held to demonstrate the resiliency of cloth in a modern fashion and to urge the new generation of women to rediscover their legacy and weaving knowledge. The exhibition featured fabric designs using traditional hand-woven textiles.

A study titled ‘creative approaches to the art of hand embroidery design one outfit’ was conducted to identify various types of hand embroidery stitches, their methods of implementation, and the various innovative ways of applying the threads to a single outfit (**Shahera, 2017**). In creating new designs, different types of decorations, geometric, botanic, straight lines, curved lines were used. With the help of variations in the embroidery tools and materials, the aesthetic dimensions and excellent touch were achieved.

A research study titled ‘Inheritance and Innovation of Embroidery in Modern Design’ was conducted to devise the patterns, materials, and techniques of handmade embroidery in order to improve the development potential of handmade traditional embroidery and strengthen its development and inheritance. The study concluded that it was crucial to innovate the art of embroidery on a regular basis and to use contemporary design language to promote its development. To make greater use of traditional embroidery, it is essential to evolve embroidery from generation to generation and employ contemporary design language. Although some embroidery has started combining two or more embroidery techniques to enhance its form and substance in recent years, there aren't many people who grasp comprehensive embroidery (**Wang, 2019**).

Vaidya (2022) studied the sacred synergy between the motifs seen in the temple architecture of Kanchipuram and the motifs woven on the famed Kanchipuram silk sarees. Data was acquired through observing motifs in Kanchipuram temples, evaluating specimens in the author's collection and textile museums, and questioning weavers. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used. Kanchipuram sarees had religious motifs like *Yazhi*, *Iruthalaipakshi* and *Mayil*. These motifs were typically identical copies of those on Kanchipuram's 1400-year-old temples. She found that, over a millennium, Kanchipuram silk sarees have incorporated religious designs inspired by temple architecture. Kanchipuram weavers were inspired by the beauty and spirituality of temple carvings and replicated such motifs in their fabrics as a holy sacrifice to the Divine.

To evaluate the origin of the motifs and the symbolic significance of embroidery motifs from the Vedic period, qualitative research was conducted on ‘Indian traditional motifs’ by **Prajapati and Tiwari (2021)**. Hindu mythology was found to have a foundation

related to deeper meanings, patterns tied to traditional rituals, and identification of motifs beyond their meanings seen in folklore stories, displaying their sense of thought behind it. The researchers observed that there may be variations in motifs depending on the cultural context. They observed that the traditional style of development of a motif takes place in its surroundings. Each and every motif used for ornamentation had a historical background and was known for its design integrity. The motifs had added considerable value to the Indian Textiles. The craftsmen and weavers had inherited and kept alive the invaluable art of ornamentation.

Singh (2008) researched the profile of Banarasi silk sarees. One hundred weavers were personally interrogated to collect data on the historical context, prevalent weaving techniques, economic viability of various silk sarees, and socioeconomic status of weavers residing in the city of Banaras. It was discovered that the preponderance of weavers were Muslim wage weavers. The fundamental primary materials included silk and zari purchased from Bangalore, *Malda*, China, or local dealers on credit. Brocade, Chiffon, Jamdani, *Jangla*, *Kora* cut work, *Resham buti*, Satin border, Satin embossed, Tanchoi, and Tissue were the most popular sarees. Depending on the complexity of their design, brocade sarees were the most popular and costly. On a monthly basis, each loom produced an average of one to four sarees. Power supply, price increases, inferior quality, supply delays, lack of raw materials, transportation, marketing, and low earnings were the primary issues the weavers encountered.

Mishra (2015) carried research on changing trends in *kashmiri* shawls with special reference to designs and designing technique with the objectives of studying the changes in Kashmir shawl designs and techniques, as well as the factors accountable for these changes. In addition to assessing market need and demand, she identified the issues of manufacturers and exporters. To increase output and reduce costs, several manufacturers have begun employing power looms to make shawls, particularly the shawls made with mixed yarn, angora, or sheep wool yarn. In this age of trend consciousness, designing skills have been enhanced to satisfy consumer demand for variety, hence increasing demand and shawl sales. To make shawls of union fabrics, blended yarn is employed. Superfine merino wool is combined with pashmina fibre. According to the majority of makers, exporters, and merchants, demand for Kashmiri shawls has surged in both the domestic and global markets.

Ghosh (2020), in her article on ‘Madhubani Painting—Vibrant Folk Art of Mithila’ traced the historical journey of a unique art-form, Madhubani painting on walls, floor-spaces and on the medium of paper, referring to the region of Mithila in North Bihar. She also documented the main artists in the field, who have given their lives in preserving this form of painting and been applauded by the Government of India for their efforts. She explored that the traditional families continued to make the paintings during ceremonies and the art form to decorate the rooms of newly-weds, the *kohabara*. In addition to narrating a mythological event from the strong repertoire of Indian legends, or depicting daily life and rituals, or depicting social themes and motifs of animals and birds, the paintings were done in public spaces and elite drawing rooms, thus ensuring a market for survival. To expand the market, online e-commerce sites had begun selling the craft. Innovations done to create paintings on new surfaces, i.e., apparel, upholstery and home décor items, will find a way to keep the art thriving and fresh in the eyes of the discerning global buyer, who may also be an art enthusiast. The painting practice provided income and empowered women, which made them aware of their rights and gave them confidence to deal with other social issues.

Vimal (2017) studied the evolution of Kalamkari prints from history to present times. She also explored the process of kalamkari, market trends in prints and possibilities in these prints. She created a range of new age prints too. It was observed by the researcher that many industry experts resonate with the fact that it is not well known amongst youngsters, so she created prints targeted towards the youth. She concluded that the field of contemporary design had been saturated by many designers, but in spite of that, none had tried to create any design interventions in prints. The most that had been done was changing the proportions and placements of traditional prints. All the contemporary wear created out of kalamkari was expensive and unaffordable by the youngsters. As daily wear, one could only find a stole or a *kurti* in the market. New designs were created with a theme of birds. Birds were depicted against manmade objects giving it a quirky appearance. Colours were restricted to 2 or 3 rather than the traditional five colour designs to give a unique effect. The colours and technique used were traditional, as the ultimate aim was to be able to open up markets for the craftsmen.

The hand block printing process being practiced in various parts of India on textiles was discussed in an article by **Ganguly (2013)**. The researcher explored the dyes used for the printing and the techniques being used for application of the dyes to the textile

substrate. The SWOT analysis of block printing industry in India and the challenges before the Indian block printing clusters were also discussed by him. He explained that the art of block printing has been taken in different parts of the country with some particular aesthetic, like Kalamkari of Andhra Pradesh, mud resist printing method of Gujarat, Sanganeri prints of Rajasthan, Bagh prints of Madhya Pradesh, and others from Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Wooden blocks of *Shisham* and *Sagwan* wood and metallic blocks for outline and filling were used by all artisans. The blocks were in various shapes and sizes, depending on the design. The different techniques of printing like direct block printing, resist printing and discharge printing was also discussed by the researcher. During SWOT analysis, the strength of the block printing industry in India was discussed ; it had a very small carbon footprint, was done with vegetable dyes that are chemical free, practiced in many clusters all over India. A number of people are involved in the art and India is the largest manufacturer and exporter of block printed fabrics. Being time consuming and requiring skill and labour were concluded to be weaknesses.

The Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History hosted the fourth annual Smithsonian Sikh heritage lecture on July 4, 2004, followed by the exhibition 'Sikhs- the Legacy of the Panjab'. As a community of people interested in Sikh cultural history, the lectures, exhibitions, and related programmes attracted a large number of individuals from around the globe. The curator of the exhibition, Taylor (2004) explained his observations on the planning, development, presentation, and public events associated with the exhibition. He writes, "After explaining the origin of *khalsa* through the story of Guru Gobind Singh, the exhibits examined the meaning of *khalsa* and displayed five "k"s in that section. In that section, the transfer of spiritual authority from the last human Guru to Guru Granth Sahib was also discussed using a prop completely covered with a *Rumala*, as well as cushions, chauri, and tables under a canopy, with the exhibition text titled "Sacred Book becomes the Last Guru". In the exhibition, there was a disclaimer -"Sikh tradition requires covering the head and removing shoes when in the company of the holy book. Because it is not possible to comply with these practices in a museum environment, this display substitutes a prop for the holy book".

2.7.2 Religious Textiles

Bakhshandehfard et al. (2010) carried out research on ‘Religious Decorative Textile Belonging to Vank Church in Isfahan’. The research involved the investigation and study of a Persian sacrament sample, taking into account its religious significance. Research was focused on people in Iran from ancient minority religions. It was made with very delicate silver and gold thread embroidery. That four-panelled textile with a symbolic pattern was designed to be hung during religious ceremonies over the bishop's staff. The investigation was conducted taking into account the significance of technique and method of the production, diagnosis of deterioration, and its causes in order to determine the optimal restoration strategy. After laboratory study and analysis, conservation and restoration were performed. Operations included cleansing, bleed tests to determine the optimal method for washing the textile, and supporting and mending the object using various techniques such as sticky thread, couching, etc.

Neils (1970), in his article ‘Textile dedications to female deities: The case of the peplos’, analyzed various textile dedications in ancient Greek religious practice. A wide range of offering practices were possible: votives could be simple cloth or elaborate garments; new, worn, or even ragged; folded and stored in boxes or hung up on display; official state donations or private dedications; and, finally, a variety of deities could receive them, but Artemis and Hera are the most common. Some dedications were involuntary, as in the case of women who ignored the sumptuary laws and wore their finery into the sanctuary of Demeter Thesmophoria in Arcadia. The majority of the textile donors were women, but men and minors also contributed.

Bolajoko (2017), through her paper ‘Sacred Textiles of the Yorubas of South Western Nigeria’, explored the sacred textiles of the Yoruba people in south-western Nigeria. The community in south-western Nigeria was dominated by abstract patterns. He found that people there believed that evil spirits had the power to possess any artwork depicting a living creature, which is what influences the kind of design an artist does. Due to the influence of western culture, artists also began depicting living creatures, but in designing cultural objects, that law was still very much considered, so they began to accept factory-made modern textiles as suitable for sacred and traditional uses, as the dynamics of change, adaptation, and continuity significantly contributed to the resilience of traditions.

In research ‘Sacred Patchwork: Patterns of Textile Reuse in Greek Vestments and Ecclesiastical Veils during the Ottoman Era’, it was revealed that reusing textiles is a necessity, but it can also have social and theological significance. Sacrificing the material facilitates the wasting process rather than making it more challenging. Textiles in their second lives require close examination to grasp the additional meaning they acquire in different cases. While dogma remains central, the church’s practices demonstrate a firm grasp of the social significance of particular spolia. The term spolia is undoubtedly applicable, particularly in relation to secular Ottoman garments and their potential transformation into vestments. Expensive silks and velvets from the Ottoman Empire moved from their original cultural context into the church and acquired a new layer of symbolism. In other instances, textile reuse was more neutral and relevant to the notion of recycling in the same context (**Papastavrou & Vryzidis, 2019**).

Carroll (2017) found in his paper ‘Textiles and the Making of Sacred Space’ a perspective on fabric and its use in religious contexts, based on a comparative survey of critical literature originating primarily from anthropological writings on cloth and clothing, as well as ethnographic research among Eastern Orthodox Christians. While the character of Orthodox Christianity and the broad nature of comparative religion shape how the argument is presented, the focus of the paper was on the particular items of fabric in use and, more generally, the exact qualities of fabric that allow for its use in such diverse contexts. Paper was focused on a material culture approach to fabric. The main argument of the paper was that a fabric can be used to make a gift sacred because of the material qualities inherent in it.

Espada & León (2017) did a study on ‘Baroque textile art for the adornment of religious figures’ on dressed figures of the Virgin Mary, Christ, and other saints from the heavenly court and found that dressed religious figures emerged in late mediaeval sculpture. The Virgin Mary was the queen of heaven and earth, and in order to emphasise this authority over the faithful, her figure was adorned in a fashion befitting any other European monarch. The sculptor focused on heads and hands for these statues. Brotherhoods and followers favoured lustrous silk, velvet, damask, gold and silver threads, brocade, and beautiful needlework for the majestically attired figures of the Virgin and Christ. Symbolically rich floral and plant themes, including roses, thistles, acanthus, vines, and palm leaves, as well as the iconography of the Virgin Mary and Arma Christi, served as the major embellishments on this garment. These antique

textiles were more than just statue-covering clothes. They are important pieces of art with a rich history, embodied in and conveyed through decorative elements from each era.

Daas (2019) investigated ‘How religion affects consumer behaviour, consumer attitudes and seasonal demand for products.’ The study revealed that not all products are accepted across religions due to the fact that different faiths have various doctrines, tenets, and values. In addition, the various religious occasions determine the acceptable products for a particular season. Easter and Christmas constituted the two most important Christian religious holidays. On the other hand, significant events in Islam included Ramadan, Hajj, and Eid al Fitr, and on each of these occasions, religious principles dictated what was acceptable and what should be avoided by believers. In this study, it was discovered that religion influences consumer behaviour by influencing seasonal product demand and forming consumer attitudes towards commodities.

Marchese et al. (2004), through the study “Sacred Textiles: The Hidden Wonders of the Armenian Apostolic Church Collections of Istanbul”, discovered that textiles play a significant role in the celebration of the religious culture of Armenia. The importance of textiles in maintaining the social identity of the civilian community cannot be overstated. They played a significant role in the social and cultural milieu of modern and Ottoman Armenian life. Talented needle artists, particularly local women, created a number of objects that became symbols of Armenian nationalism and, as a result, outstanding accomplishments. Today, religious textiles are still manufactured, albeit with diminished capacity, complexity, and execution. This is due to the overall decline in the city's Armenian population. The ancient collections continue to inspire and adorn the Armenian Rite. They serve the community by reminding the dwindling congregations of their faith, cultural heritage, and the primacy of the church as the embodiment of the Armenian people.

Walsham (2017), in an article ‘Recycling the sacred: Material culture and cultural memory after the English Reformation’ explored the histories and subsequent uses of religious artefacts that had survived each stage of the English Reformation. It explains how objects that Protestants considered to be superstitious and idolatrous were saved from destruction by being repurposed for use in secular and religious contexts.

In a study titled ‘A new approach to the conservation of metallic embroidery threads in historic textile objects from private collections’, a textile object measuring 185 x 280 cm was examined closely so that a representative sample of metallic threads could be displayed and so that an appropriate conservation treatment could be planned (**Ahmed, 2014**). The textile was mounted on a wooden platform adorned with a variety of plant patterns in different colours. Discolouration of threads and fading in certain areas were among the several types of damage discovered by the team. Cleaning agents were tested on natural dyes, different solvents were employed to remove corrosion stains from metallic threads, and the object was dry cleaned to improve its durability. Once the object was clear of grime, wrinkles, and stains, it was remounted on a holder and placed on display in the Sheikh Yusuf Jameel Museum. Detailed notes were taken during the entire process of upkeep and repair.

The importance of textile conservation was demonstrated by the case study ‘Considerations regarding the research for the conservation of heritage textiles in Romania’. Some of the stunning antique textiles were discovered to be in a bad state or to have been ruined by human action or environmental factors. In order to preserve the materials for an extended period of time, the internal microclimate had to be carefully and continuously monitored. The place and the way in which the textiles were kept were found to be very important. There should be favourable environmental conditions for the conservation of textiles. Continuous and careful monitoring of the internal microclimate was found to be very essential. All the items to exhibit should be placed in special glass boxes to minimize chemical and mechanical damage to the cultural heritage items (**Camelia et al., 2020**).

Amin & Rashed (2013) conducted research on ‘Preservation and restoration of a piece of textile at the Egyptian Textile Museum’ and worked on the treatment and restoration of an Abbasid-era textile with inscriptions. That piece to be treated was found in a bad state with many missing areas, dirt and stains leading to weak fibres due to poor preservation conditions. Fibers and dyes used were identified by scanning electron microscopy and UV analysis. The main reasons for the degradation of textiles were found as acid-hydrolysis, oxidation, biodegradation, thermal aging due to high temperatures, light aging, and the presence of moisture. The piece was treated by supporting it with needle work. It was concluded by the researchers that conservation of textiles in the museum is very important because conservation improves the

appearance of textiles, which can lengthen their survival and minimize further deterioration.

A literature assessment was conducted on the various conservation methods and techniques for printed textiles in the study 'Conservation of printed textiles: To preserve what is established'. The researchers revealed that actions taken on the object should be both ethical and capable of preserving its originality and aesthetics while sustaining it. The original object should always take precedence. Before applying the final testing and restoration technique, all possible conservation methods must be examined and evaluated. Before wet cleaning, it is crucial, for instance, to evaluate the colour of dyed and printed textiles. Their investigation revealed that printing objects can be stored flat, coiled, or folded. To prevent layers from pilling, there must be sufficient space for the roller as well as the textile storage area. Individual envelopes made of cellulose acetate sheeting should be used when storing tiny archaeological artefacts. Large flat textiles should be padded along each fold line to prevent the formation of creases. The textile objects must be shielded from light, dirt, moisture, insects, and unneeded individuals. The cabinets must be checked for any cracks that may allow dust to enter. There should be adequate control over the humidity and ventilation of storage rooms. Regular checkup and cleanliness are the best methods to prevent insect infestations (**Gaur & Bhagat, 2016**).

A study, 'Understanding Sikh architecture through the Sikh shrines in East Punjab', was carried out on the art forms found in India's historic Sikh Shrines. *Jaratkari* (inlaid stone), *Mohrakashi* (frescos, murals, or wall paintings), *Gatch* work (a type of stone - lime stone or gypsum), *Tukri* work (pieces of glass), gold embossing, and floor patterns are among the numerous art forms. The researcher made an effort to identify, catalogue, and study significant Sikh shrines, as well as their different architectural features and symbolic significance. The findings of the dimensional analysis of the Gurudwaras were discussed and analysed. It also covered different plan types and architectural features, including domes, *chhatris*, arches, kiosks, cupolas, and pilasters, among others. It was determined that the current state of these artworks was pitiful and that they had not been properly restored. It was revealed by the researcher that Sikh architecture is unique, and Sikhism seems to be represented through the Sikh shrine. Low-cost documentation and documenting techniques were necessary so that these art forms, and frescoes in particular, could be restored to their original condition (**Singh, 2012**).

Chauhan & Prajapati (2019) undertook a study titled ‘Documentation of the traditional garments preserved in the textile art museum’ to catalogue and digitise the collection of traditional Indian garments in the Textile Art Museum of the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. The various museum artefacts were analysed, documented, and digitised based on their research findings. The origin, colour, seams and embroidery, surface ornamentation, and current condition of each item were meticulously documented. Photographs and catalogues were prepared. The catalogue was divided into four distinct phases, depicting the classification of traditionally worn garments by gender, the collection of pertinent data about artefacts and analysis of each artefact, drafting instructions and paper patterns of chosen blouses, and the digitization of all data.

2.8 Inferences drawn from the review of literature

A study of relevant literature in the preceding sections reveals that there is a considerable connection between the application of textiles and the practice of religious participation.

However, throughout each and every religion, numerous kinds of textiles have been used for a variety of purposes, including wrapping gifts and scriptures and as offerings and clothing for idols. There has been a substantial amount of work done on the various textiles, such as embroidered textiles, woven textiles, and religious textiles, but a comprehensive study and documentation of the textiles offered in Sikh Shrines, such as Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib was required. These elaborately embroidered, diverse, and precious textiles are associated with the extreme devotion of Sikhs, and in addition to this, a large number of people are involved in the manufacturing and marketing of these devotional textiles. These textiles have not been studied by any researcher, which highlights the significance of this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY



3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The design intricacy and aesthetic appeal of sacred textiles Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib have always intrigued the researcher to learn more about these textiles, particularly the fabrics, designs, and embellishments. This research study is an attempt to put together details regarding the design, production, and marketing of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib as a result of a profound appreciation for textiles. During her trips to Gurudwaras, the researcher has seen that the textiles offered in the shrines have become increasingly ornate over the years. The change of fabrics, decorations, motifs, and stitching methods across time was also investigated in the study. The Sikh community has been dealing with an immense overload of Rumala Sahib in Gurdwaras around the world for a long time. Some communities have been attempting to devise a solution for how these sacred textiles can be reused without hurting the sentiments of Sikhs; therefore, the current study also collected various ideas for reusing the Rumala Sahib. A great deal of work has been accomplished on woven, embroidered and textile craftsmanship, but nothing has been done on the vast, spectacular works done on Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, despite the fact that, in addition to their religious significance, they play a significant role in Indian and international business. Consequently, the researcher undertook the current investigation to study and document the Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib offered in Sikh Shrines.

3.1 Research design

Research design is a very important and essential step for collecting relevant information with the minimum expenditure of effort, time, and money (Arumugam, 2016). Research design enables a researcher to proceed on the right path without any deviation from the tasks taken. A research design works as a detailed strategy for the entire research process. A complete set of various plans and procedures that aim to collect and produce reliable and valid data are included in a research plan (Somasundaram, 2022). The current chapter discusses the research design and methodology used to conduct the present investigation. This chapter also explains the goal of the research, the conceptual structure of the study, the locale for the research, the sampling procedure, and tools to fetch the related data.

3.2 Methodology

A good research design serves as the foundation for the gathering of sufficient data and as a strategy for integrating the various components of the study in a logical manner. So, a

descriptive research design was formulated to select the respondents, the sampling method, and tools to approach the respondents for collecting the data. The present study is based on both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative research aims to get an in-depth comprehension of the investigated subject and topic. This type of study categorises data into patterns as the major foundation for organising and presenting findings; it requires smaller, but focused, samples rather than large random samples (Agarwal & Sharma, 2018). A survey was conducted where the chosen demographic was interviewed using a structured interview schedule to acquire primary data. The interview schedule comprised both open-ended and closed-ended questions in order to get information on different elements of these sacred textiles. As per the objectives of the study, books, journals, museums etc. were referred to collect secondary information.

3.3 Conceptual structure

The conceptual structure is described in terms of the research methodology. The present study seeks to provide a detailed account of the tradition of offering Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in the past and present, as well as the manufacturing and marketing process of these textiles, the people's perspective on the growing abundance of Rumala Sahib in Gurdwaras, and their ideas for reusing these textiles.

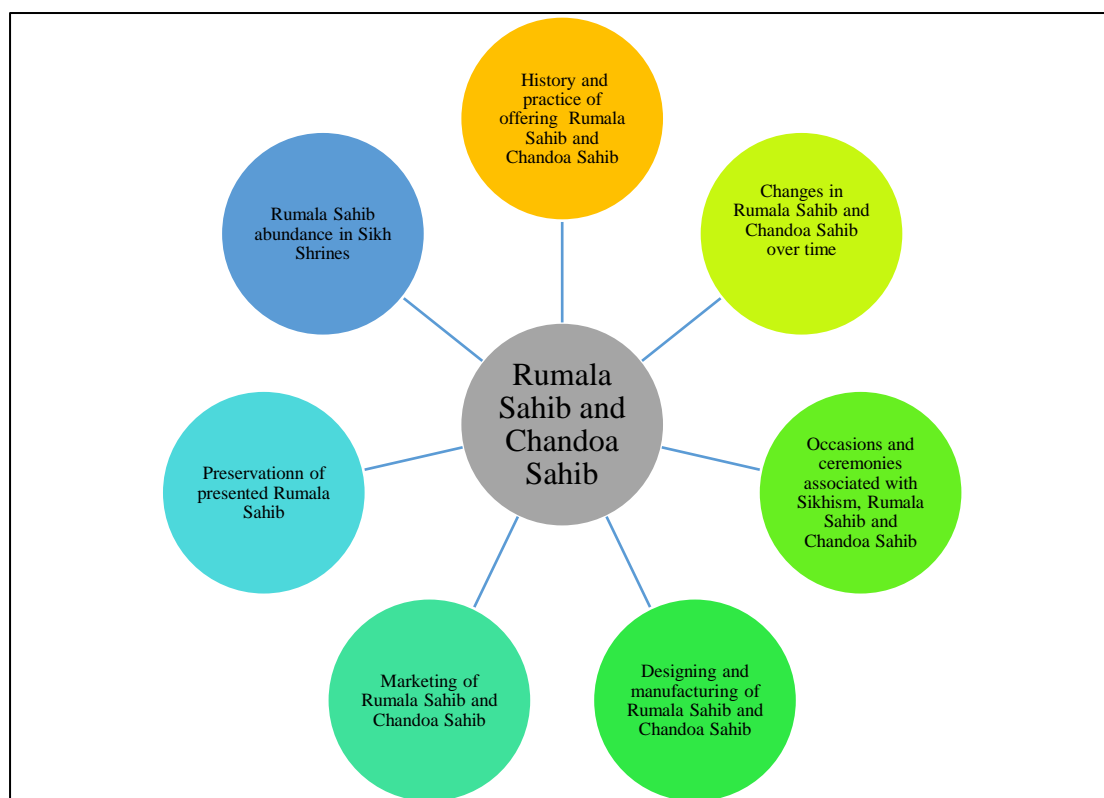
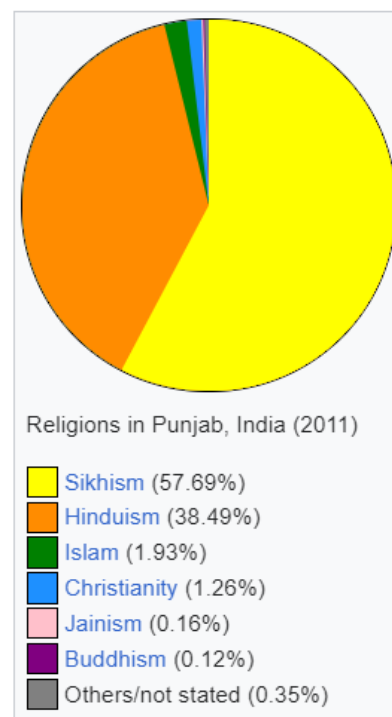


Figure 3.1: Conceptual structure for the study

3.4 Area of study

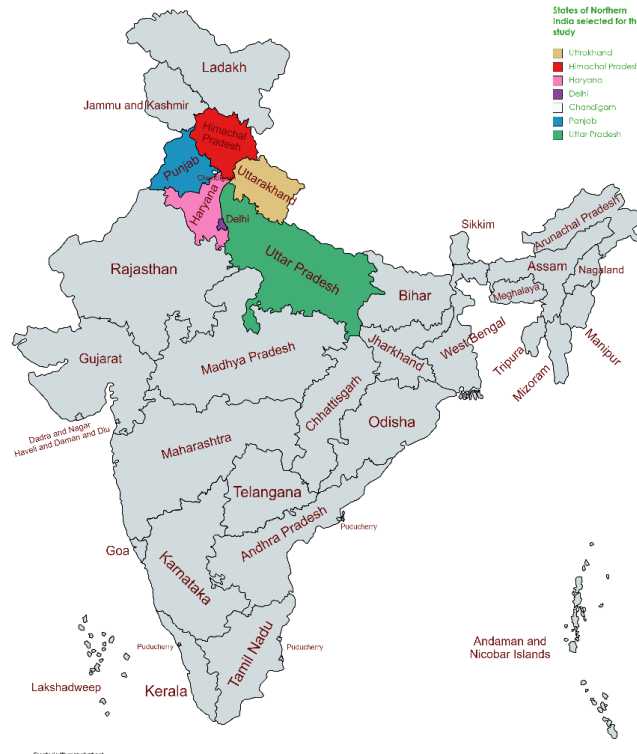
“The universe represents the entire group of units that is the focus of the study.” A population is the aggregate of all the cases that conform to some designated set of specifications (Asthana et al., 2010).

The study focused on the textiles offered in Sikh Shrines. Sikh shrines, also known as Gurdwaras, are of the utmost importance to Sikhs since they are central to their religious practice and play an important part in Sikh religious and community life. Punjab, a northern Indian region, is home to various Sikh temples, including the Holiest Shrine, Harmandir Sahib, situated at Amritsar, that serve as key religious and cultural centres for the Sikh population. According to the 2011 census, the majority of Punjab's population is Sikh (Figure 3.2). As a result, Punjab was selected as the study's primary locale. Although the majority of Sikhs live in Punjab, its nearby states from the northern region, particularly Haryana, Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Delhi, were also chosen to provide the study with diverse and representative data (Map 3.1).



(Source: <https://www.census2011.co.in/data/religion/4-sikhism.html>)

Figure 3.2: Population of Sikhs in Punjab



(Source: <https://www.mapchart.net/india.html>)

Map 3.1: States of North India selected for the study

As Punjab was chosen as the primary location for the study, districts from all of Punjab's regions, including Malwa, Majha, and Doaba, were included. Four out of eleven Malwa districts, one out of three Majha districts, and two out of four Doaba districts were selected purposively for data collection (Map 3.2.).



Map 3.2: Selected Districts of Punjab

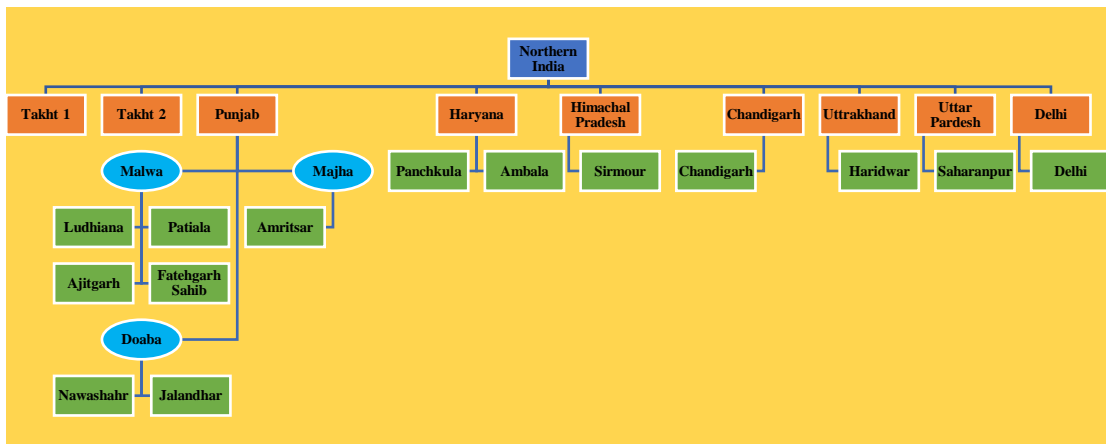


Figure 3.3: Area selected for research

3.5 Sample for the study

“Sampling is a plan drawn up to collect a sample from a given population for obtaining data (Arumugam, 2016). The sampling plan defines the process of data collection from the target population for the purpose of accomplishing the objectives of the research. A representative fraction of a population is taken as a sample for data collection. Sample size can be defined as the number of respondents selected from the entire population to represent the population itself.

Method of Sampling - Multistage sampling method was followed to select the sample for the present investigation. Multistage sampling is used to collect the data from a number of geographically dispersed people. As a sample, one or more distinct categories of individuals were selected.

In consideration of the study's aims and objectives, the relevant sample was chosen for collecting data. This study's sample population included the following:

1. Head Granthis of Gurdwaras
2. Visitors to Gurdwaras
3. Manufacturers of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib
4. Workers working in manufacturing units
5. Shopkeepers selling Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.

3.6 Size of selected sample

A total sample of 250 respondents was taken for the study. The sample was divided into five different categories.

Table 3.1. Distribution of total respondents taken for the study

Sr. No.	Sample/ respondents	No. of respondents interviewed
1	Head Granthis	20
2	People visiting the Gurdwaras	120 (6 from each Gurdwaras)
3	Shopkeepers	20
4	Manufacturers	15
5	Workers	75 (5 from each unit)
	Total	250

Category wise distribution of different respondents have been discussed below-

3.6.1 Head Granthis of Gurdwaras

The first stage was to select the places/Gurdwaras to be visited, following the selection of the study's areas and locale. Out of all the selected states, by referring to books and online sources, the researcher selected two *Takhts* of Sikhism, namely the *Akal Takht* in Amritsar and the *Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib* in Anandpur Sahib, as well as historical Gurudwaras.



Figure 3.4: Selection of Head Granthis for the study

Takht literally means 'the seat of divine power' and refers to the locations where the Sikh Gurus held numerous social and political settlements. There are five *Takhts* of Sikhism. From two selected *Takhts* and each selected Gurdwara Head Granthi or Head Official were personally interviewed by the researcher after getting an appointment or permission in advance. Granthi is a person who reads the Holy Scripture Sri Guru Granth Sahib ceremonially in a Gurdwara. In Sikhism, Granthi is regarded as a religious official. A Granthi is responsible for various aspects of the Granth, including its *Parkash* (installation at dawn), *Samapati* (closure at twilight) and *Paath* (reading, rendering, interpretation, teaching, and dissemination of its messages to the *Sangat*). Therefore, the Granthis were the most suited to collect information regarding the Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib. The researcher was able to witness and observe the auspicious prayers and the process of offering Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in various Gurdwaras due to their cooperation and guidance. It was a wonderful experience to speak with and listen to them about historical tales and facts. Some of them even recommended literature texts and other relevant sources for the research. Some officials and Head Granthis even blessed the researcher by presenting the Gurdwaras' written literature.

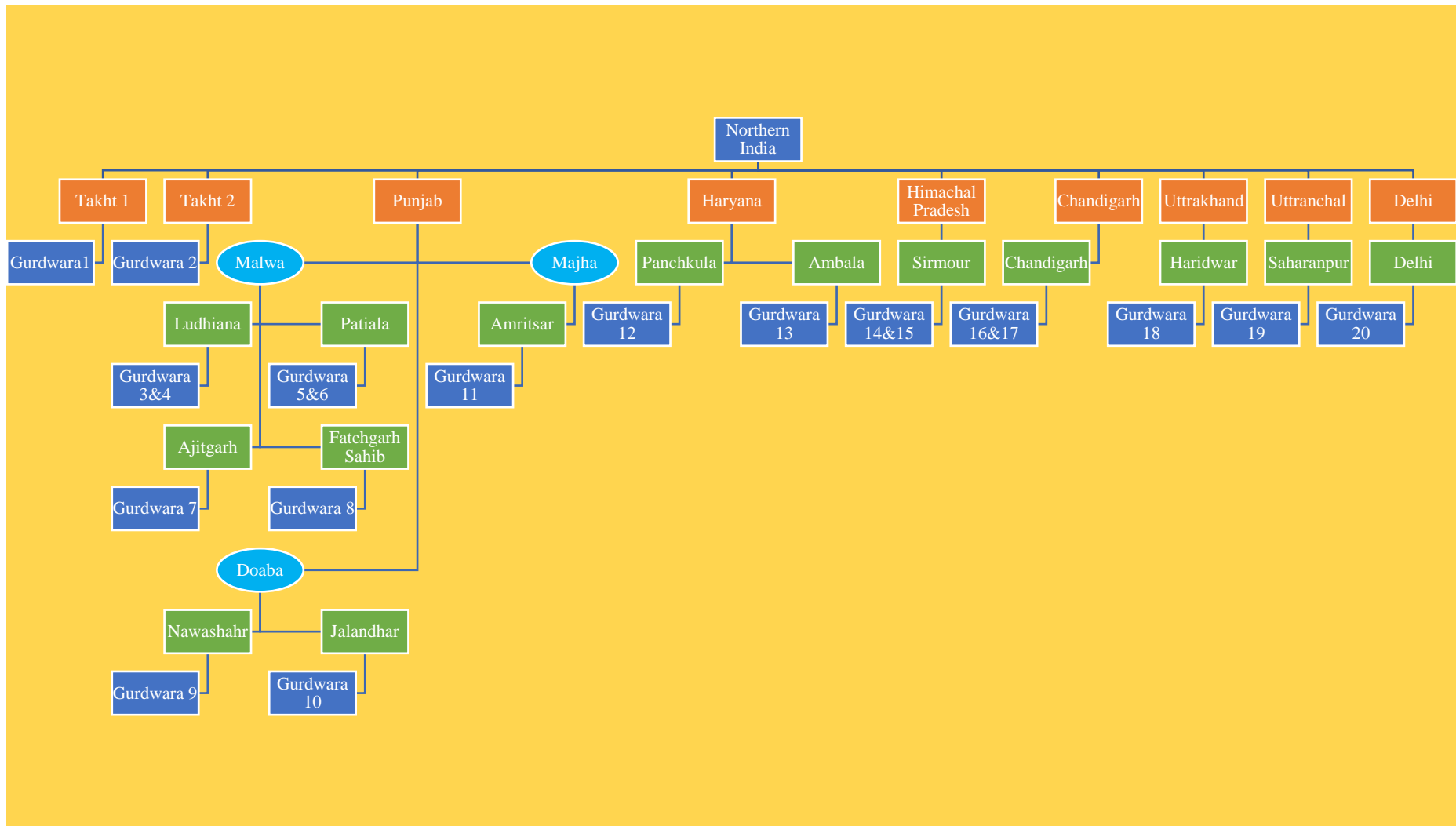


Figure 3.5: Selection of Gurdwaras for the study

Table 3.2. Distribution of respondents- Head Granthi of Gurdwaras

S.No.	Region	District/Place	No of Gurdwaras selected
1	Takht of Sikhism- Amritsar	Amritsar	1
2	Takht of Sikhism- Anandpur Sahib	Rupnagar	1
3	Malwa	Ludhiana	2
		Patiala	2
		Ajitgarh	1
		Fatehgarh Sahib	1
4	Majha	Amritsar	1
5	Doaba	Nawanshahr	1
		Jalandhar	1
6	Haryana	Ambala	1
		Panchkula	1
7	Himachal Pradesh	Sirmour	2
8	Chandigarh	Chandigarh	2
9	Uttar Pradesh	Saharanpur	1
10	Uttarakhand	Haridwar	1
11	Delhi	Delhi	1
	Total		20



Plate 3.1: Researcher with Head Granthis/ officials at different Gurdwaras

3.6.2 Visitors to Gurdwaras

A number of devotees visit Gurdwaras to pay homage to their Guru. During visits to various designated Gurdwaras, visiting devotees served as respondents for the collection of relevant data. In order to obtain pertinent data from them, they were first informed about the current study and persuaded of its significance in the forthcoming research. It was difficult to convince them and assure them that their responses would remain confidential. Personal interviews were conducted with six men and women (3 each) irrespective of their age group, from each of the twenty selected Gurdwaras, and group discussions were also held regarding issues such as the overabundance of Rumala Sahib in Gurdwaras. Some elderly respondents were extremely helpful in sharing their previous experiences with the designs and colours of Rumala Sahib. Even young children were interested in talking about the evolving trends in these holy textiles during group discussions.



Figure 3.6: Selection of visitors to Gurdwaras for the study

Table 3.3. Distribution of respondents –visitors to Gurdwara

No. of Gurdwaras	No. of Sample
20	6 from each Gurdwara (3men+3women)
Total	120 people



Plate 3.2: Researcher asking questions to devotees in Gurdwaras

3.6.3 Shopkeepers

Twenty shopkeepers from the same cities and regions who traded in Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib were chosen at random and personally interviewed to learn the facts linked to the products, the marketing process, various designs, and customers' demands. The majority of the stores that were considered for the study were situated in close proximity to the Gurdwaras. They were requested and talked about the importance of being respondent to the research. Some of them were quite cooperative, and some of them were even glad and enthusiastic to have a conversation with the researcher about the current study. They showed all of the various types of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib that they had in their shops and even permitted them to take photographs of the products.



Figure 3.7: Selection of shopkeepers for the study

Table 3.4. Distribution of respondents - Shopkeepers

S.No.	Region	District/Place	No. of shopkeepers selected
1	Takht of Sikhism- Amritsar	Amritsar	1
2	Takht of Sikhism- Anandpur Sahib	Rupnagar	1
3	Punjab-Malwa	Ludhiana	2
		Patiala	2
		Ajitgarh	1
		Fatehgarh Sahib	1
4	Punjab- Majha	Amritsar	1
5	Punjab-Doaba	Nawashahr	1
		Jalandhar	1
6	Haryana	Ambala	1
		Panchkula	1
7	Chandigarh	Chandigarh	2
8	Himachal Pradesh	Sirmour	2
9	Uttar Pradesh	Saharanpur	1
10	Uttarakhand	Haridwar	1
11	Delhi	Delhi	1
	Total		20



Plate 3.3: Researcher interacting with shopkeepers at different locations

3.6.4 Manufacturers of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

Fifteen manufacturers from the three major manufacturing centres of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in Punjab, namely Amritsar, Ludhiana, and Patiala, were selected for the study. There were many manufacturing units in these cities that manufactured Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib and delivered them on a national and international scale. Some Amritsar-based manufacturers worked exclusively on the elaborately adorned Rumala-Chandoa Sahib set presented to Harmandir Sahib by the devotees. The names of some of the manufacturers were referred by the Head Granthis of Gurdwaras, while others were found by browsing the internet. Prior permission was obtained to meet them in person at their convenience. As the main focus of the present study was on the fabric, design, and manufacturing process, manufacturers served as the primary data source. They were extremely helpful in answering the researcher's queries. They were extremely receptive and supportive of displaying the designed and manufactured items in their respective units. They discussed their experiences in this field, their progression from a modest business to expanded industries, and the cyclical shifts they

had observed in the fashion of these sacred textiles. Not only did they manufacture these textiles for a living, but they did so with devotion and religious spirit. In addition, all protocols, such as washing hands before handling textiles and covering the head, were strictly adhered to. Even visitors were required to cleanse their hands before entering the premises, and they were required to cover their heads when entering the units. There, the atmosphere was very peaceful, tidy, and religious.

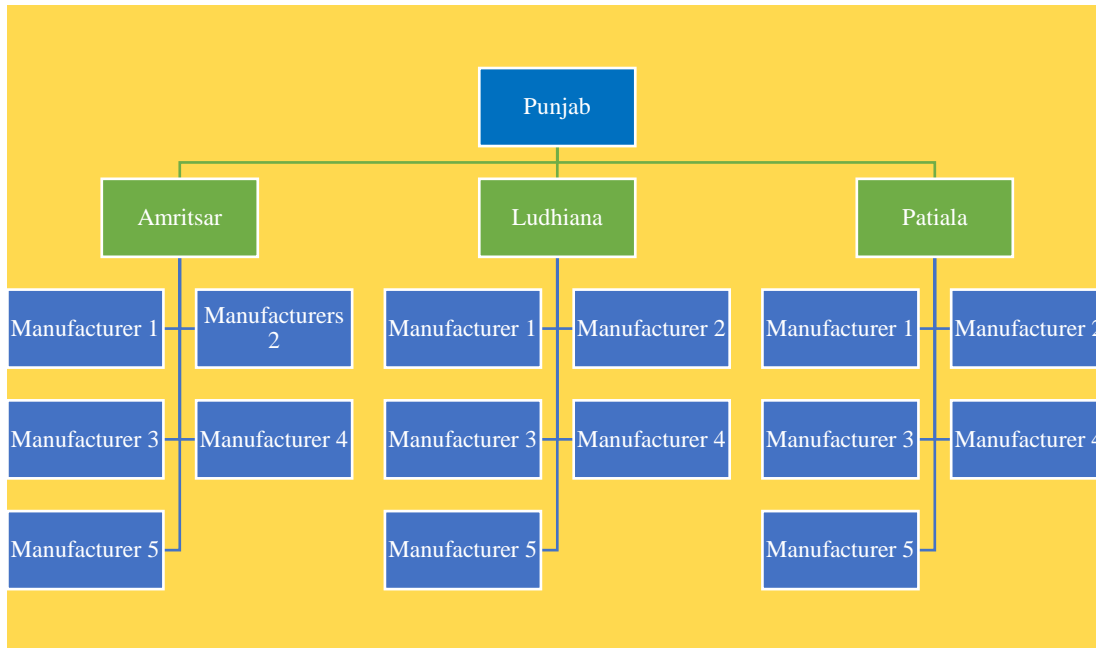


Figure 3.8: Selection of manufacturers for the study



Plate 3.4: The Manufacturer showing set of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib



Plate 3.5: Researcher interviewing the manufacturers

3.6.5 Workers working in the manufacturing units

In the same way, an additional sample of seventy-five workers from the same selected manufacturing units in Amritsar, Ludhiana, and Patiala were asked questions in an interview. This sample consisted of both men and women, regardless of their age group. Workers, both male and female, who were personally involved in the creation of Chandoa Sahib and Rumala Sahib at various phases were considered to be respondents for this study. Workers were engaged in a variety of activities, including cutting, stitching, embroidery, and finishing, among others. Sitting down and having a conversation with the workers provided a wealth of information regarding the production process. Additionally, in order to learn about the workers' perspectives and ideas in relation to the research, focused group discussions were undertaken with them.



Figure 3.9. Selection of workers for the study

Table 3.5. Distribution of respondents – Workers in manufacturing units

No. of manufacturing Units	No. of Workers
15(5+5+5)	5 from each unit
Total	75



Plate 3.6: Researcher interacting with workers doing embroidery and stitching

3.7 Pilot Study

A pilot study has its significance in the fact that it gives a researcher an opportunity to test the developed research instrument and refine it in order to receive the desired responses. It is generally done to have a test run of the developed questionnaire on a relatively smaller set of respondents in order to identify the loopholes in the questionnaire and improve it by eliminating the potential problems. Therefore, a pilot study was also conducted in order to filter the developed tool.

The developed interview schedules were tried out with a convenience sample of twenty-five respondents, including five Head Granthis, two manufacturers, four workers, four shopkeepers, and ten people (men and women) visiting the Gurdwaras.

The validity of the tools was checked by getting them assessed by a panel of experts, who suggested a few minor changes in the language and sequence of the questions used. Thus, the required changes were made accordingly and final the tools were prepared.

3.8 Methods of collecting data

For the investigation, both primary and secondary data were collected. Head Granthis and other officials of Gurdwaras, shopkeepers selling Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, manufacturers of these textiles, workers operating in manufacturing units, and

visitors to the various Gurdwaras provided the primary data. Through interviews, photography, videography, and group discussion, primary data was collected. Secondary data were collected from books, research papers, Gurdwara literature, publications, museums, and Sikh websites.

3.9 Tools of Primary Data Collection

Qualitative research typically relies on four methods for gathering the data i.e., participating in the setting, direct observation, in depth interviews, and analysis of documents and materials (Agarwal & Sharma, 2018). Interview schedules served as the primary method for obtaining data for the current study. Five distinct interview schedules, including both open-ended and closed-ended questions, were prepared for varying categories of respondents. The researcher visited all of the chosen areas whenever it was convenient for her and on special occasions like Baisakhi, Diwali, and Gurpurb. To minimise the possibility of error or bias, the researcher conducted personal interviews with all of the respondents. In addition to the interview schedule, personal observation and focused group discussion were employed to complete the study. The data collection instruments and their justifications have been described in detail.

3.9.1 In depth Interviews

“If we want to know how people feel, what they
Experience and what they remember, what their
Emotions and motives are alike, and the reasons
For acting as they do- why not ask them.”

- G. W. Allport

With the objective of exchanging ideas and experiences and eliciting information pertaining to a wide range of data, a personal interview was taken as the main tool of data collection. The data collected through a direct personal interview is original, reliable, authentic, and accurate (Arumugam, 2016). Questions were asked in Hindi, English or Punjabi to make the respondents feel comfortable, understand clearly, and respond well.

The Interview schedule prepared for Head Granthis included five sections based on the research objectives (Annexure I). Section I of the instrument comprised queries regarding demographic information such as age, marital status, education, gender, date

of appointment as Head Granthi, etc. The questions asked in Section II inquired about the origin, significance, and history of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib. Section III comprised questions regarding the fabric, patterns, sizes, embellishments, and the changes over the years in the design of the Holy Textiles. The queries in Section IV were designed to elicit information about the increasing number of Rumala Sahib in Gurdwaras and the respondents' perspectives on reusing these textiles. In Section V, there were questions regarding the preservation practices used for the Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.

Interview schedule prepared for People visiting the Gurdwaras consisted a total of four divisions, each of which was structured according to the objectives for the research work (Annexure II). In the first section of the questionnaire, participants were asked questions concerning their age, marital status, level of education, gender, and religion, etc. The second section of the questionnaire consisted of queries designed to elicit information concerning the ritual of offering Rumala Sahib in Gurdwaras and the significance of Chandoa Sahib and Rumala Sahib. In the third section, there were questions about the types, sizes, materials, colours, patterns, and embellishments used for the holy textiles and the changes that have come over the years in these textiles. In the fourth section of the survey, respondents were asked questions aimed at gathering information regarding the increasing number of Rumala Sahib at Gurdwaras and their perspectives on the possibility of reusing these textiles.

Interview schedule prepared for Shopkeepers comprised a total of six distinct parts or sections (Annexure III). In the first section of the questionnaire, respondents were asked questions about demographic information, including age, education level, gender, date of establishment, religion, etc. The questions asked in Section II were intended to elicit information concerning the various types, sizes, and prices of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib that are available in their store. In the third section, there were questions about the advancement of the Holy Textiles in terms of their fabric, designs, and embellishments. In Section IV, the questions were meant to gather information regarding the marketing and distribution of the textiles, and in Section V, the respondents were questioned regarding the amount of money that people spent on these textiles as well as the amount of profit that they earn. Questions in the concluding section VI included the increasing collection of Rumala Sahib at Gurdwaras and the participants' perspectives on the possibility of reusing such kinds of textiles.

The instrument that was constructed for the purpose of collecting data from manufacturers contained a total of seven sections, each of which was based on the objectives of the research work (Annexure IV). In the first section of the questionnaire, participants were asked basic inquiries about their demographic information, including their age, marital status, level of education, gender, income, religion, and address, among other things. The questions in Section II were aimed at gathering information regarding the origins, significance, and history of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib within Sikhism, as well as the background of their enterprises. In the third section, participants were asked questions on the materials, patterns, embellishments and process of designing and manufacturing of Holy textiles. The questions in Section IV were designed to learn more about the employees who were working in the respective units. In section V, they were questioned about the profit that they had made, and in section VI, they were asked about the marketing and distribution strategies that they had employed. In the final portion VII, they were enquired about their thoughts over the increasing overload of Rumala Sahib in Gurdwaras and asked for their feedback on the possibility of reusing these textiles.

The schedule prepared for collecting the data from the workers consisted of a total of four sections based on the objectives of the research work (Annexure V). The schedule comprised a total of four sections. In the first section of the survey, participants were asked basic inquiries about their personal information, including their age, education, gender, religion, income, type of work performed, type of training obtained, etc. In the second section of the survey, respondents were asked a series of questions designed to elicit information about their employment and the money they had earned, as well as the amount of time they had been working. In Section III, questions were asked about the materials, patterns, colours and embellishments used for the Holy Fabrics. In Section IV, there were questions that were designed to elicit responses from respondents regarding their perspectives on the increasing number of Rumala Sahib in Gurdwaras and their suggestions for repurposing these textiles.

3.9.2 Focus Group Discussion

This method of data collection was administered to groups of workers employed in various manufacturing units, as well as to those who were visiting at Gurdwaras. Sometimes the respondents feel hesitant to answer individually on a particular issue,

therefore it was extremely beneficial to converse to them in groups to know their ideas and perspectives.

3.9.3 Observation

Observation can be defined as the systematic perception of events occurring in selected situation (Asthana et al., 2010). The researchers can understand the behaviour and societies by getting to know the persons involved and their values, rituals, symbols, beliefs, and emotions. Observation was used as a data collection method when visiting Gurdwaras and manufacturing sites. Particularly, some of the female workers were reluctant to speak and express their views freely, so the researcher observed and recorded the various kinds of works being performed by them. Even during visits to Gurdwaras, the practice of offering Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib was personally observed in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the tradition. On special occasions such as Diwali, Baisakhi, and Gurpurb, researcher visited Gurdwaras to observe the Sikh ceremonies, colours, and patterns of the Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib. The researcher was able to attend the daily early morning ceremony of changing the Rumala and Chandoa Sahib at Shri Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar. Everyone present was full of faith and devotion. It was a divine experience to attend such an auspicious ceremony. Observational field notes were also taken by the researcher.

3.9.4 Photography

Visuals can communicate more than words. Photography proved to be an important tool in the

present study in capturing the beautiful designs, motifs, and manufacturing processes of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib. “Visual methods are an effective and acceptable method for qualitative research and are becoming more widely used in multiple disciplines” (Pain, 2012). To increase the accuracy of the observation, pictures were clicked, and, in some places, videography was also done with permission from the concerned authorities. At some of the places, photography was strictly restricted, so the researcher followed their rules religiously.

The combination of interviews, group discussion, observations, and taking field notes provided rich and in-depth information about the study.

3.10 Analysis of data

The most essential task following the collection of relevant data was the analysis of non-numerical data and information, such as interview transcripts, notes, video and audio recordings, images, and text documents. Content analysis and narrative analysis have been the most prevalent approaches to data analysis. Typically, content analysis is employed to evaluate the responses provided by respondents in interviews.

The method of narrative analysis entails the reformulation of narratives presented by respondents, taking into account each case and the unique experiences of each respondent. Initially, the entire information was organised by category. The researcher then selected particular themes or codes to organise the collected data. Several prevalent themes, responses, and associations within the sample responses were identified, and the results were analysed.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION



This research was undertaken to study and document the Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib offered in Sikh Shrines. A total sample of 250 respondents was chosen for this study, and data was collected via interviews, group discussions, and observation. The sample was divided into five distinct categories, and separate interview schedules containing both open-ended and closed-ended questions were created for each category. The respondents for the first category were 15 manufacturers from the three major manufacturing hubs of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in Punjab, namely Amritsar, Ludhiana, and Patiala. Similarly, a second sample of 75 workers from the selected manufacturing units was interviewed. Twenty historical Gurdwaras were selected from Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Chandigarh, and Delhi, and the state of Uttar Pradesh, and one Head Granthi from each of the twenty Gurdwaras was interviewed to gather the relevant data. In addition to this, another group or category of respondents consisted of 120 people visiting each of the selected gurdwaras. 20 shopkeepers from the same region who sold Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib were interviewed at random.

The results of the present study have been discussed in the following sub sections

- 4.1 Demographic profile of the respondents**
- 4.2 History and practice of offering Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib**
- 4.3 Changes in colours, fabric, embellishment, stitching, and accessories of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib throughout time**
- 4.4 Offering Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib on different ceremonies and occasions**
- 4.5 Designing and manufacturing of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib**
- 4.6 Marketing of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib**
- 4.7 Preservation of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib**
- 4.8 Rumala Sahib abundance in Sikh Shrines**

4.1 Demographic profile of respondents

4.1.1 Age group of respondents

Table 4.1 Distribution of respondents as per their age group

S. No.	Age (years)	Head Granthis		People visiting the Gurdwaras		Manufacturers		Workers		Shopkeepers	
		F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
1	Below 20	-	-	6	5	-	-	8	10.7	-	-
2	20-30	-	-	23	19.2	-	-	16	21.3	2	10
3	30-40	4	20	26	21.7	4	26.7	22	29.3	3	15
4	40-50	9	45	34	28.3	9	60	26	34.7	7	35
5	Above 50	7	35	31	25.8	2	13.3	3	4	8	40
	Total	20	100	120	100	15	100	75	100	20	100

(F- frequency, P-percentage)

From the data above, it can be seen that the majority of Head Granthis (45%) were aged between 40 and 50 years, while 35% were over 50, and 20% were between 30 and 40 years.

Majority of respondents (28.3%) who were visiting Gurudwaras were aged between 40-50 years, while 25.8% were above 50 years, 21.7% were in the age group of 30-40 years, and 19.2% were in the age group of 20-30 years. The majority of the manufacturers (60%) were between the 40 and 50 years, while 26.7% were between 30 and 40, and 13.3% were above 50.

Maximum number of workers (34.7%) who make Rumala and Chandoa sahib were between 40 and 50 years; 29.3% were between 30 and 40 years, 21.3% were between 20 and 30 years ; and 20% were under 20 years of age. Only 8% of them were more than 50 years old. Maximum shopkeepers (40%) were above 50 years, 35% were between 40 and 50 years, 15% were between 30 and 40 years, and 10% were between 20 and 30 years.

4.1.2 Educational qualifications of respondents

Table 4.2 Distribution of respondents as per their educational qualifications

S. No.	Educational qualification	Head Granthis		People visiting the Gurdwaras		Manufacturers		Workers		Shopkeepers	
		F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
1	Illiterate	-	-	12	10	-	-	7	9.3	1	5
2	Middle	-	-	2	1.7	-	-	5	6.7	2	10
3	High School	2	10	12	10	1	6.7	18	24	-	-
4	Graduation	12	60	41	34.1	9	60	26	34.7	9	45
5	Post graduation	2	10	40	33.3	2	13.3	3	4	6	30
6	Professional	4	20	13	10.9	3	20	16	21.3	2	10
7	Others	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	20	100	120	100	15	100	75	100	20	100

The above table shows that the majority of respondents were graduates. It is evident from the table that the majority of Head Granthis (60%) were graduates, followed by 20% with professional training. Some of them mentioned having a degree in B.Ed. and Gyani (a course in Punjabi), and 10% had postgraduate degrees. 10% of them had completed 10th grade.

The majority of visitors to Gurdwaras who volunteered as respondents had a bachelor's degree (34.1%), followed by 33.3% of respondents with a postgraduate degree. Some (10.9%) of them had professional degrees like B. Tech, MBA, etc., while 10% had completed high school, 10% were completely illiterate, and 1.7% were educated to the middle school level.

The majority of manufacturers (60%) had a bachelor's degree, while 20% had professional degrees, and 13.3% possessed a master's degree. Only 6.7% of them had completed high school education.

34.7% of the workers were graduates, while 24% had completed the 10th grade. 21.3% of the workforce was professionally trained in skills such as embroidery, needlework, and marketing, among others. 9.3% of workers were illiterate but engaged in manual

labour that they had learned from their families. Only 4% of them had acquired a postgraduate degree. 6.7% of the workers had attained a middle school education.

Majority (45%) of the selected shopkeepers were graduates, followed by 30% who had postgraduate degrees. 10% of them had earned a professional degree, 10% had completed middle school, and 5% were illiterate.

4.1.3 Religion of respondents

Table 4.3 Distribution of respondents as per their religion

S. No.	Religion	Head Granthis		People visiting the Gurdwaras		Manufacturers		Workers		Shopkeepers	
		F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
1	Hindu	-	-	43	35.9	-	-	10	13.3	2	10
2	Muslim	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	-	-
3	Sikh	20	100	77	64.1	15	100	62	82.7	18	90
4	Christian	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	20	100	120	100	15	100	75	100	20	100

The data from the table revealed that all the Head Granthis of Sikh Shrines were Sikh. Majority of respondents (64.1%) who participated in the interview during their visit to the Gurdwaras were Sikh, and 35.9% of respondents belonged to the Hindu religion.

All the manufacturers (100%) involved in designing and manufacturing Rumala Sahib were also Sikhs.

Majority of the workers (82.7%) involved in various tasks in the manufacturing units were Sikh, followed by 13.3% Hindu, and only 4% of them were Muslims who were involved in hand work.

Majority of shopkeepers (90%) were Sikhs, whereas 10% of them followed Hinduism.

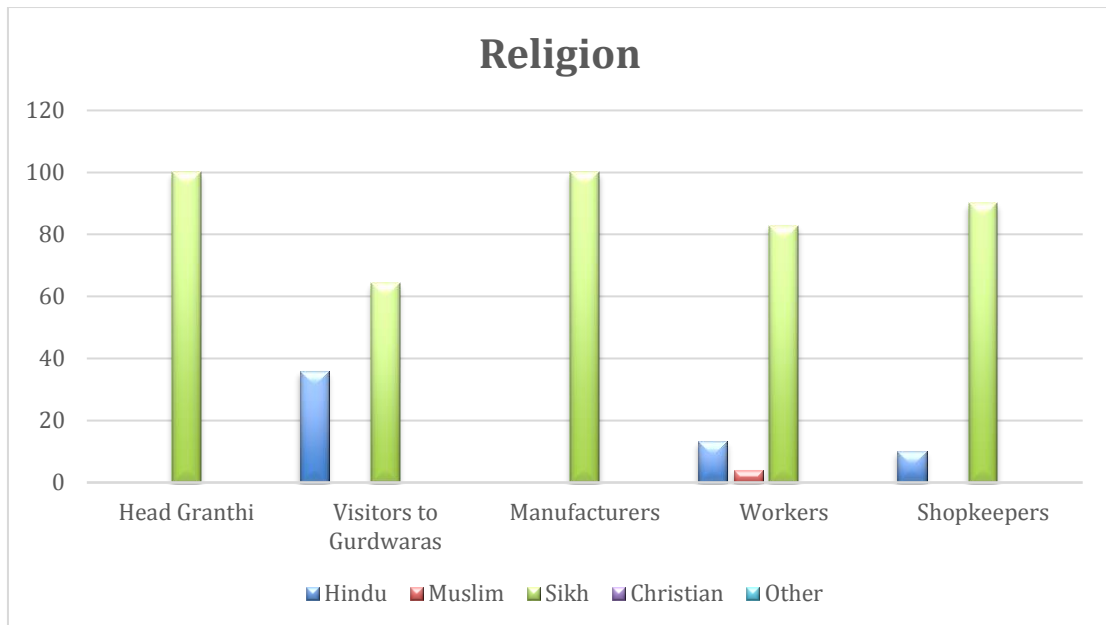


Figure 4.1: Distribution of respondents as per their religion

4.2 History and practice of offering Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

'Guru bin gat nahin'

This is a famous saying in Punjab, which means there is no salvation without a spiritual Guru. Gurus are regarded with the highest respect in Punjab. Gurus are revered as being very strong and, by virtue of their aura, presence, and wisdom, having the ability to transform the lives of their disciples and provide wealth. Offerings are given to the guru as a symbol of gratitude. In Sikhism, the Sikh Scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, has always been regarded as "The Living Guru." People offer their revered Guru textiles that have been intricately designed in order to express their respect, gratitude, and devotion to their Guru.

The history of Sikhism begins (1469–1539) around the end of the 15th century with Guru Nanak and continues for two centuries through a succession of nine Sikh Gurus, or successors. During the first two centuries (15th and 16th centuries), Sikhism as a religion developed its distinctive characteristics. During this time, three significant events occurred, the first being Guru Nanak's formal designation of a successor to the community's leadership.

In 1603 and 1604, the fifth Guru, Guru Arjan Dev, compiled the Sikh Scripture (verses by Guru Nanak and other Sikh Gurus) that was installed inside Harimandir Sahib at Amritsar on September 1, 1604. The establishment of Khalsa in 1699 by the tenth Guru,

Guru Gobind Singh, was the third event. There was no place for idolatry or ritualism among Sikhs. Guru Nanak Dev established Sikhism and emphasized the fact that, in the sight of the divine power, all humans are equal.

ਨਾ ਹਮ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਨ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ॥

Naa hum Hindu, naa Musselman

I am not a Hindu, nor am I a Muslim

(Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Page 1136)

The two syllables 'Gur' and 'Dwara' mean 'of God' and 'a house' correspondingly, so a Gurdwara or Sikh Shrine is a house of God. Guru Nanak Dev constructed the very first Gurdwara in Kartarpur, India, in 1523. There are two types of Gurdwaras: historical Gurdwaras and shrines, which were either constructed by the Gurus themselves or by their devotees at historical sites. The second were those constructed by devotees at their place of residence (Kapoor, 1992). Gurudwara can be as simple as a room or any other location where Guru Granth Sahib resides, and at that location, the community gathers to conduct more worldly affairs pertinent to the community's interests. All Gurdwaras are accessible to all individuals, regardless of caste or religion. Dharamsala, "place of dharma or righteousness" - a common term used to designate a place of shelter typically associated with a religious institution was likely the name given to the Sikhs' assembly halls, which were likely modest structures to use. Guru Arjan Dev organized the community in order to accomplish certain practical objectives. He established Sikhism's places of worship and even dug large tanks there. At Amritsar, he completed the Holy Sarovar. He formally compiled the writings of all Gurus, elevated them to the status of the Holy Scripture for all Sikhs, honoured them as the Granth Sahib, and then installed them in the Harmandir Sahib.

Adi Granth, which subsequently evolved into Shri Guru Granth Sahib, became Guru Nanak's greatest gift to the Sikh religion. Guru Nanak himself contributed 974 hymns and seventeen musical measures, or ragas, that are currently included in the Holy Granth. Guru Granth Sahib, regarded as the foundation of temporal and spiritual authority, was compiled by the fifth Guru, Arjan Dev. As the most important component of the Gurudwara's interior layout, the Sikhs were expected to conduct their lives in accordance with it. Guru Granth Sahib contains the unbroken readings of a group of contributors in a standard format of 1,430 pages, divided primarily into three

sections. The first section of the introduction comprises the liturgical hymns: Japji, prescribed by the Guru for morning recitation; *Rehras*, the evening prayer; and *Sohilla*, the night prayer. The second section, also known as the primary body, contains an extensive collection of hymns. The third section is known as the epilogue (Mandair, 2013).

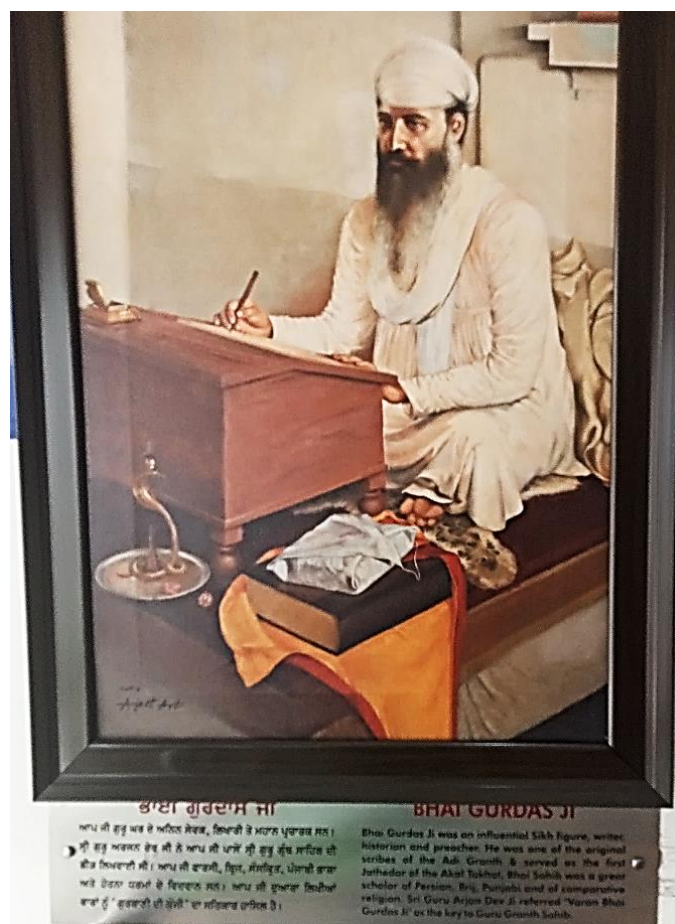
Questions on the history of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib were posed to each individual respondent that was selected for the current research. Some of the respondents stated that initially, Guru Nanak Dev Ji started using fabric to wrap the *pothis*, which was also followed by other Gurus. Guru Arjan Dev also began wrapping the Holy Scripture in white muslin/cotton material after its compilation. Since then, it has become a tradition to wrap the Holy Scripture into the fabric. In addition to white cloth, people started using colour fully adorned textiles to wrap the Sacred Book.

Many researchers also highlight the important use of textiles in various religious rituals. Gordon (2010) emphasizes that textiles contain sacred objects and energies. Jewish Torah scrolls and Buddhist sutras are kept wrapped in cloth. The *kiswah*, a 658-square-meter black and gold cloth that flows over the sides of the Kaa'ba, the Muslim "holy of holies" in Mecca, protects it. Ghana's Akan people use *kente* fabric to cover Tano spirit images and shrine structures. Native Americans protect their "heartbeat" drums. South American shamans carry stones, plants, and other potent things in a woven mesa. Cloth can trap and increase energy in the head. Turbans and feather-covered diadems show respect and boost spiritual potency.

Some of the people who participated in the survey were of the opinion that when Guru Sahib ji walked from place to place, his followers would cover him with a fabric canopy so that he was protected from dust, birds, or other elements. With the passage of time, people began employing beautiful canopies instead of plain white ones. At the same time, when Guru Granth Sahib was given the status of a live Guru, the same practice of using a cloth canopy to protect their Guru persisted, which is now known as Chandoa Sahib.

According to some Head Granthis, the Holy Book is wrapped in Rumala Sahib for primarily two reasons. The Guru's *Shabad* (doctrine of scripture) is of the utmost importance to all Sikhs. Rumala Sahib are used to maintain respect for the *Shabad* and to preserve the sanctity of their Holy Scripture. The second reason that might be

scientific was that, in order to preserve the written *Shabad* on paper, the book must always be wrapped in clean, dry fabric. In earlier times, the whole text was written with the hand alone, so it was essential to keep the written text safe while maintaining its sacredness. So, the Gurus started to wrap their holy texts in clean fabrics. According to some Granthis, the custom (*maryada*) of wrapping the holy text in fabric dates back to the time of Guru Nanak Dev, when he initiated the writing of Gurbani. When Guru Arjan Dev carried the *Pothi* to the Harmandir Sahib, he continued this custom. It was also revealed by respondents that the reason for covering the Holy Scripture may be to protect it from dirt and impurities and keep it clean.



(Source- Sikh Museum, Gurdwara Dukh Niwaran Sahib, Patiala)

Plate 4.1: A *pothi* wrapped in fabric kept near Bhai Gurdas Ji

A plate installed in Sikh Museum at Gurdwaras Dukh Niwaran Sahib, Patiala, also shows a *pothi* wrapped in fabric near Bhai Gurdas Ji, who remained in close association with the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth Gurus from 1579 to 1637.

Some of the respondents revealed that, in the past, white muslin was the only fabric that was used for the Chandoa Sahib and the Rumala Sahib. However, as time passed,

people began to use fabrics that were more vibrant in colour and texture and ornamented the same when they designed and presented these sacred textiles at the Sikh shrines. According to some Head Granthis, women used to make or sew these textiles in their homes using silk or cotton fabrics and adorning them with simple braids or laces.

As Plate 4.2 depicts, the Chandoa Sahib is made with simple cotton printed fabric and finished with cotton lace.



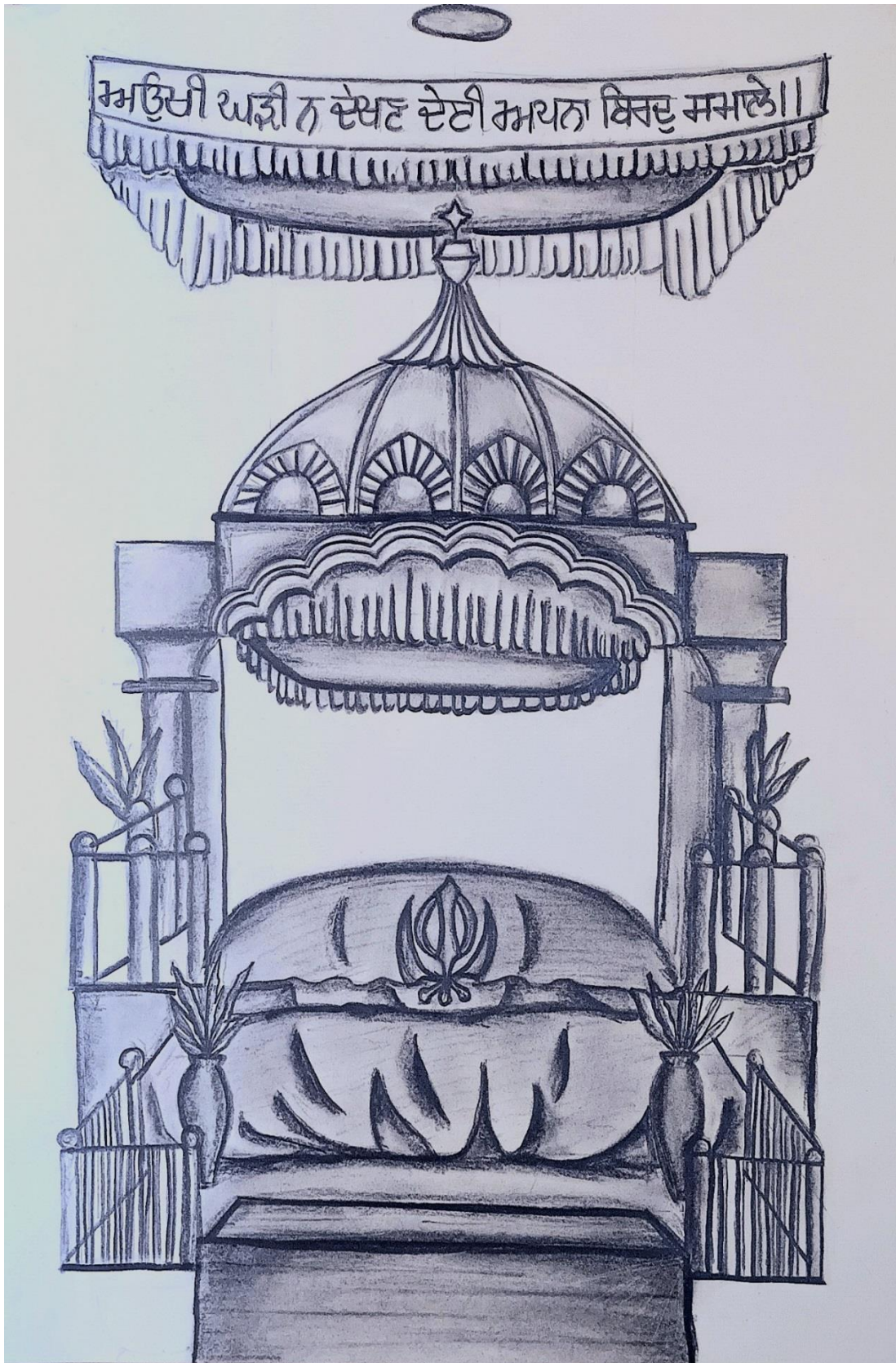
(Source- *Sekhan wala* Gurdwara at Raipur Rani, Panchkula)

Plate 4.2: A Cotton printed Chandoa Sahib stitched at home

Chandoa Sahib was also stitched by the family members themselves, with the addition of frills on all four sides and the completion of the textile was done with embroidery, binding, etc. Only Rumalas of the standard size were made so that they could be offered in any Gurdwara. The stitched Rumala Sahib was washed well, maintaining its sacredness, before being presented to the Guru Sahib.

Preparing a gift or offering made by oneself or with hands is symbolic of respect, dedication, and devotion. Goyal (2022) mentions handcrafted things as an expression of thought, affection, emotions, devotion, and creativity. The passion of the person who makes a gift for someone is evident in their work. Each hand-crafted piece is one-of-a-kind as a result of the personalized focus given during the process of creation. It is a beautiful way to express the recipient's importance. It facilitates the formation of an intense connection.

4.2.1 Tradition of covering Sikh Scripture

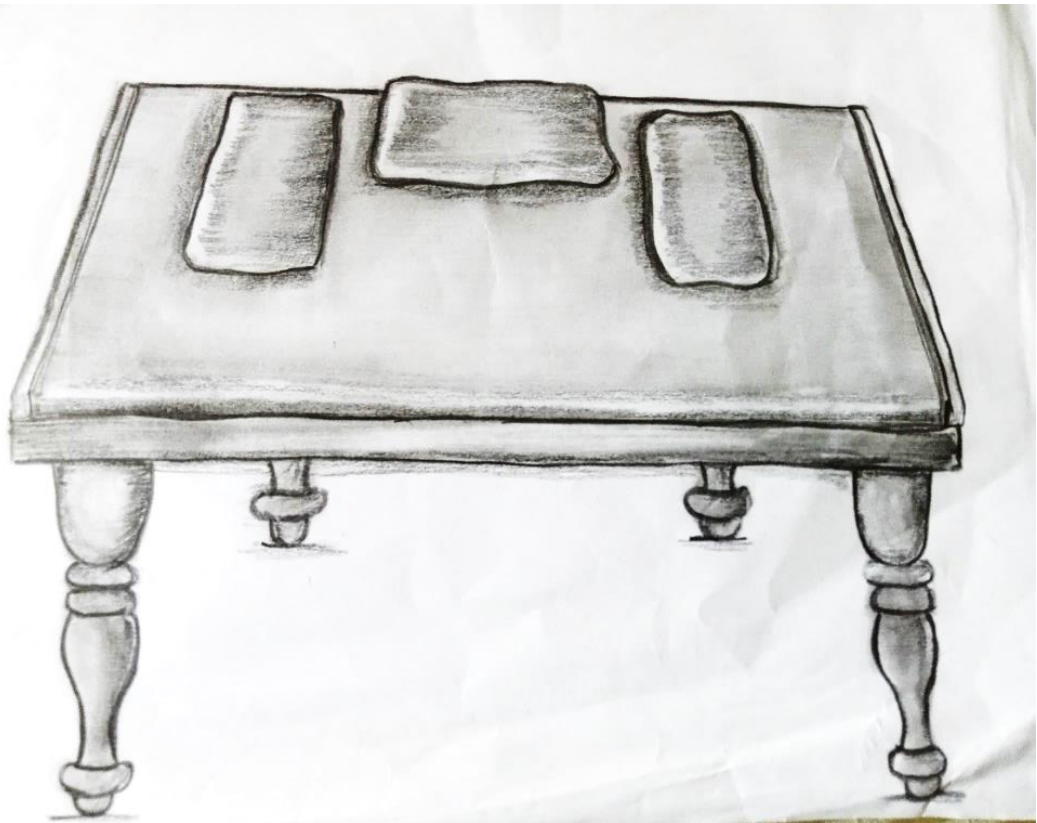


(Source- Sketch by Divjot Brar)

Plate 4.3: A Sketch of a Darbar of Sikh Shrine

The trend of offering Rumala and Chandoa Sahib has increased over the years. According to Gurdwara officials or Granthis, offering these textiles to Guru Sahib has become a trend, and people think that their path or prayer won't be complete until they present Guru Sahib with a Rumala. During assembly, they are told from time to time that they should only give these textiles if the Shrines need them, or they can give other things that the Shrines require.

The primary areas of a Gurdwara are the Darbar Hall, meaning the Imperial Court, and the main room within the Gurdwara, where the Holy Scripture is kept. There, devotees participate in a number of devotional activities, including the recitation (*path*) of Scripture, the singing of hymns from the Scripture to music (*kirtan*), and its explication (*katha*). Manji Sahib is a small bed on which the Holy Sikh Scripture is placed during the day in the main Darbar Hall of a Gurdwara. In general, *Manji Sahib* is a rectangular cot that may be either woven with any webbing material or flat wood with a wooden frame and wooden legs. The holy book is supported by white cotton sheets and three tiny pillows on the *Manji Sahib*.



(Sketch by Divjot Brar)

Plate 4.4: Placement of cushions on Manji Sahib

Palki Sahib (wooden or metallic) describes the object that accommodates the *Manji Sahib* and constitutes part of the Guru's Platform, or *Takht*, inside the Darbar Hall. The *Palki* may only be integrated into the platform to form a canopy over the *Manji Sahib*. *Palki Sahib* is not required to be present in all Gurdwaras. Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh Scripture, is revered as the Living Guru in the main Darbar Hall of a Gurdwara and is the centre of attention there. Guru Granth Sahib is always positioned on an elevated platform called the *Takht*.



Plate 4.5: *Palki Sahib*

The Sikh scripture Guru Granth Sahib is always draped with a white cotton textile and then with patterned or embroidered textiles known as Rumala Sahib. Rumala Sahib is a Punjabi term for a handkerchief, or *rumal*. A square or rectangular Rumala Sahib is offered by devotees to cover the Holy Scripture.

On top of *Palki Sahib* or *Manji Sahib*, above the Guru Granth Sahib, and close to the roof of the room, a richly embroidered and ruffled fabric canopy known as *Chandoa Sahib* or *Chanani* is always hung. A small *Chandoa Sahib* is hung just above the Holy Scripture within the *Palki*. A *Rumala Sahib* and *Chandoa Sahib* set may contain four to twenty or more components, depending on the interior or requirements of a Gurdwara's Darbar hall. Around the main platform, or *Palki*, small tables (square, round, or rectangular) may be set and covered with textiles that match the *Rumala Sahib* to make the Darbar hall more attractive and wider. Additionally, flower arrangements and pots are placed around or in front of the Guru Granth Sahib. Other elements, such as curtains, carpets, etc., are kept simple to make the throne area the main attraction and most significant section.

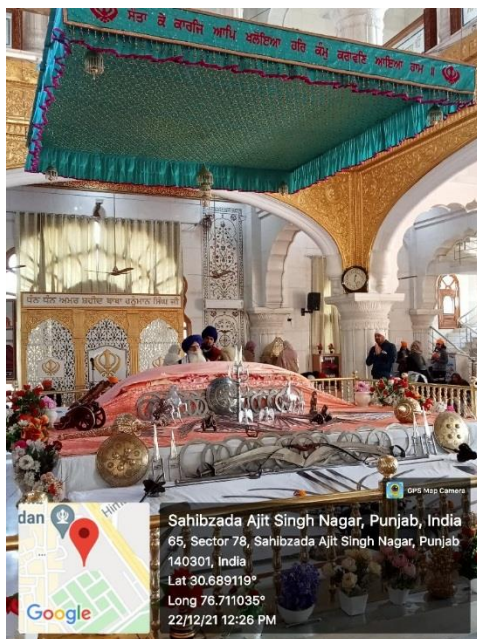


Plate 4.6: Guru Granth Sahib adorned on a platform without *Palki Sahib*



Plate 4.7: Guru Granth Sahib adorned inside a *Palki Sahib*

Rumala Sahib is prepared in standard sizes or according to the dimensions or specifications of the Gurdwara's hall. *Rumalas* of standard dimensions are primarily of two varieties: single and double.

Single *Rumala Sahib* includes one large sheet and two small sheets, known as '*Palkans*,' that are the rectangular pieces of fabric kept at the sides of Guru Granth Sahib, while double *Rumala Sahib* includes two large sheets and two components, i.e., *Palkans*.



Plate 4.8: Single Rumala Sahib



Plate 4.9: Double Rumala Sahib

The majority of devotees purchase these standard sizes, which can be presented to any Gurdwara. To pay homage to the Sacred Scripture, a cloth canopy is always suspended with metal rings and long ropes or cords just below the ceiling above the Manji Sahib, or the platform where the Holy Granth is placed. Some special sets of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, generally called Rumala Sahib sets, consisting of many pieces are also offered by the people, for example, in Darbar Sahib, Amritsar. These sets are prepared in accordance with the specifications of the main hall of the Gurdwara where they are to be offered.

A Gurdwara's administrative office can also provide dimension charts (discussed along with photographs in the next section). These Rumala sets can be customized according to the devotee's desired colour, material, embroidery style, and budget. The Rumala Sahib set consists of large sheets, two *palakans*, one small Chandoa to be hung inside the *palki* (if the Guru Granth Sahib is placed on the palki), one large Chandoa Sahib to be hung just below the ceiling over the *Palki Sahib* or Guru Granth Sahib on *Peera* or *Manji Sahib*, and one front panel, *Sehra Patti*, on which a *Slok* (a verse from the Gurbani text) is always embroidered, and other components to cover side tables or any additional piece of furniture.

4.2.2. Practice of offering Rumala Sahib by respondents (people visiting to Gurdwaras)

The researcher visited several Gurdwaras in order to collect data for the study. After receiving blessings from the Divine Guru and partaking in the holy *langar*, the researcher waited at the entrance of Darbar Hall and requested the visitors to the Gurdwaras to participate in her research by providing answers to specific questions. Before proceeding with the interview, the researcher ensured their comfort and

presented them with a brief description of the study. During the current research, 120 respondents visiting different shrines were asked about their frequency of visiting the Gurdwara. The majority of the interviewees (43.3% of them) occasionally visited the Sikh Shrines, followed by 29.2% of them who visited daily and 15% of the devotees who came weekly. The working hours of some of them made it hard for them to seek the Guru's blessing on a daily basis, so they primarily visited on Sundays. Some respondents used to visit Gurdwaras once a month.

Table 4.4 Distribution of respondents as per their frequency of visiting Gurdwaras

S.No.	Visit to Gurdwara by respondents	Frequency	Percentage
1	Daily	35	29.2
2	Weekly	18	15
3	Occasionally	52	43.3
4	Monthly	15	12.5
5	Other	-	-
	Total	120	100

When respondents were asked about the offering of Rumala Sahib on various occasions, it was observed that a majority of them (81.7%) had presented Rumala Sahib to Guru Granth Sahib and had an experience of offering these devotional textiles in Gurdwaras on some occasion when they organised Path at their premises, like at their residence, office, shop, etc. 18.3% of respondents had never offered Rumala Sahib in any Gurdwara or other place to Guru Granth Sahib.

Table 4.5. Distribution of respondents as per their experience of offering Rumala Sahib in Sikh Shrines

S. No.	Experience of offering a Rumala Sahib	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	98	81.7
2	No	22	18.3
	Total	120	100

Even though respondents were selected irrespective of age and religion, it was clear that they had a deep faith in Sikh Shrines. Some of the respondents stated that they were carrying on this family tradition of presenting these textiles. "*My grandmother always encouraged us to participate in Sikh rituals, perform seva in Gurdwaras, and present*

the Rumala Sahib whenever there was a special event or occasion in our family," said one visitor to a Gurdwara.

During the visit to Sri Harmandir Sahib, the researcher came across a family from Mansa, Punjab, who had come to present a set of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib that they ordered from a manufacturer from Amritsar.

During the conversation, they revealed that they had come to offer the devotional textiles because they had made a vow to God to fulfil their wish. They elaborated, "*We had made a vow to God to become grandparents, and Baba Ji has granted us what we wanted. Now, we have come with our grandchildren to thank Baba Ji for bestowing his blessings upon us. We had wished to present a complete set of Rumala Sahib Ji at His Seva.*"

It was found during the research that in some of the Sikh houses, Guru Granth Sahib is installed permanently in a separate room constructed on the upper floor of the house.

Case study 1

The researcher met a lady in Mohali who had installed Guru Granth Sahib in a room on the first floor of her house and devoted herself to her Guru. She revealed that after the death of her husband in 1997, she was in deep depression, due to which it was very difficult to involve herself in any work. She had three children to look after. To devote herself to the Guru and to come out of her sorrow, she decided to bring Guru Granth Sahib to her house and adorn the Holy Book permanently in a separate room. She recites the following verse while revealing her story-

ਜਿਥੇ ਬਾਬਾ ਪੈਰ ਧਰਿ ਪੂਜਾ ਆਸਣੁ ਥਾਪਣਿ ਸੇਆ ।

Jithe Baba Pair Dharey Pooja Aasanu Thapan Soya

Wherever Baba puts His feet, a religious place was erected and established.

(Bhai Gurdas: Vaar 1, Pauri 27, Page 4)

Since then, she has been involved in the daily prayers, including *Parkash* and *Sukhasan*. She gets up early in the morning and does Parkash herself. Her family, including her two granddaughters, also assists her in maintaining the sacred place. She has a collection of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, including the *Sukhasan* Rumalas (white sheets). She also changes the textiles as per the season and occasion, finding the Holy Scripture to be her Living Guru.



Plate 4.10: Guru Granth Sahib adorned at home

On the occasions of various festivals like Diwali (the festival of lights), Gurburb (birthdays or martyrdom days of Guru), Parkash Utsav (the first opening ceremony of Guru Granth Sahib), and Baisakhi (the spring festival), as well as the birthdays and anniversaries of family members, many of the devotees had presented the Rumala Sahib with their obeisance. Some of them had experienced the divine feeling on their wedding day, as it was custom for both bride and groom to offer the Rumala Sahib on their wedding day.

According to the Head Granthis or other Gurdwara officials, any individual irrespective of gender or religion, may present these textiles according to devotion. There are no specifications regarding colours for Rumala Sahib to be offered. Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib of any colour and design can be presented to the Guru. It is a matter of devotion, not money, so devotees can present these textiles as per their spending capacity. The devotees may also present the self-designed and prepared textiles. In the Gurdwaras where the special sets (the customized sets including many components) of these textiles were offered, the simple standard size of the presented Rumalas were offered to Guru Granth Sahib for some duration, then removed, folded, and kept aside.

4.3 Changes in colours, fabric, embellishment, stitching, and accessories of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib throughout time

During the field work, each participant or respondent was asked about their observation and experience with regards to Rumala Sahib or Chandoa Sahib offered during different seasons, special occasions, etc. The majority of respondents (90.4%) mentioned that the colours of these sacred textiles, when offered, depend upon the season and occasion or events (Table 3). Only 9.6% of them stated that the colour of Rumala and Chandoa Sahib does not change with the seasons and events. According to them, the season does not matter; these textiles of any colour can be offered in Sikh Shrines.

Table 4.6. Distribution of respondents according to their viewpoint regarding the change in colour of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib as per the season and occasion

S.No.	Colour of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib as per the changing season and occasion	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	226	90.4
2	No	24	9.6
	Total	250	100

Shopkeepers selling Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib responded that devotees specifically request for some specific colours of these textiles to be offered during special occasions and festivals. Certain hues, such as red, maroon, pink, and orange, are purchased by devotees for weddings and Guru Nanak's birth anniversary. Additionally, visitors to Gurdwaras stated that they purchase even these textiles depending on the occasion. Along with the colours, designs, embellishments, and fabrics used for these textiles, they have changed with the passage of time. The association between different coloured textiles has been discussed in the current section.

4.3.1. Different Colours associated with Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

"Colour is a power which directly influences the soul"- (Wassily Kandinsky)

Colour is an effective means of communicating. Numerous cultures and conditions can alter the significance of a colour. According to artists, colours have the ability to significantly alter the feelings and mood associated with a specific object, such as how the blue walls of a room immediately evoke a sense of tranquility and create a peaceful mood. Colours have distinct meanings and are used in different ways across this country. Jennifer and Stefka (2017) stated in their study that culture is intertwined with colour relationships as form, structure, or system.

This study investigates the various hues associated with Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib. As the Holy Scripture is regarded by Sikhs as the Living Guru, the fabric and colours of the Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are also chosen according to the seasons and occasions. In an interview, a Head Granthi elaborated that in the past, people were not much concerned with the kind of fabric and colours of these sacred textiles to be offered. The trend of choosing specific ornate textiles in specific colour choices as per the occasion, like orange during Baisakhi and white or off white on martyrdom days of Sikh Gurus has recently emerged. The practice of using coloured Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib was initiated entirely by the people, and Guru Granth Sahib does not specify a specific set of colours to be used on various occasions.



Plate 4.11: White coloured Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

Shri Guru Arjan Dev described the diversity of colours and their hues as limitless:

ਬਹੁ ਬਿਧਿ ਰੂਪ ਰੰਗ ਆਪਾਰਾ ॥

Bahu bidh roop rang aapaara

He fashioned it in various ways, with limitless colours and forms

(Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Page 746).¹

Guru Nanak Dev proclaims that God is all-pervading in the multiplicity of colours and forms in nature.

¹ <https://www.sikhdharma.org/colours-the-smiles-of-nature/>

ਸਰਬੀ ਰੰਗੀ ਰੂਪੀ ਤੂੰਹੈ

Sarbi rangi roopi tuhhe

You are in all colours and forms

(Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Page 355)

Orange, yellow, and blue are the most commonly purchased colours of Rumala Sahib due to their significance in Sikhism.

Guru Gobind Singh raised a blue flag on the day of Vaisakhi, 1699, when he established the Khalsa. Thus, the colour blue came to stand for the Khalsa and the Sikh warrior community. According to shopkeepers selling Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, devotees now request specific colours in these textiles for various occasions and festivals. Additionally, visitors to Gurdwaras stated that they purchase even these textiles depending on the occasion. The significant days associated with the lives of the Ten Gurus are celebrated as Gurpurb. Mostly bright and dark colours are selected for Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib to be offered in Sikh Shrines on these auspicious occasions as bright colours are symbolic of happiness and prosperity.

One respondent who had come to offer Rumala Sahib in a Gurdwara stated, "*If we all choose different colours and fabrics for different occasions and seasons, then why not for our own Guru Sahib?*" Occasionally, they inquire with shopkeepers about the colours in vogue, or they choose the colour based on personal preference. According to the manufacturers, all colours except black and green have been used for Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, as the green colour is associated with Islam.

According to a manufacturer from Patiala, "*you will find a greater variety of colours and embellishments in these holy textiles than in women's suits. Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are manufactured in nearly all varieties of fabric today*".

Manufacturers create heavy embroidered Rumala sets in various combinations- single or double colours. The components can be either matching or in contrast.



(Source- Sadana Brothers, Patiala)

Plate 4.12: Single coloured Rumala Sahib



(Source- Sadana Brothers, Patiala)

Plate 4.13: Double coloured Rumala Sahib

4.3.2 Seasonal shifts and colour palettes

The tradition of covering the Holy Book started with a white sheet, but people began using coloured cloth coverings to cover the Holy Granth as time progressed. Now the fabric and the hues used for Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are chosen with consideration given to the changing seasons. Light and pastel colours, such as pink, sky blue, purple, yellow, and peach, are especially popular among enthusiasts throughout the warmer summer months. In the winter, bright colours such as red, maroon, brown, blue, orange, and dark pink are preferred. But despite the fact that

multicoloured embellished textiles are now used to adorn the Holy Granth, only white cotton sheets are used underneath the coloured sheets.



Plate 4.14: Light pastel shades of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in summer

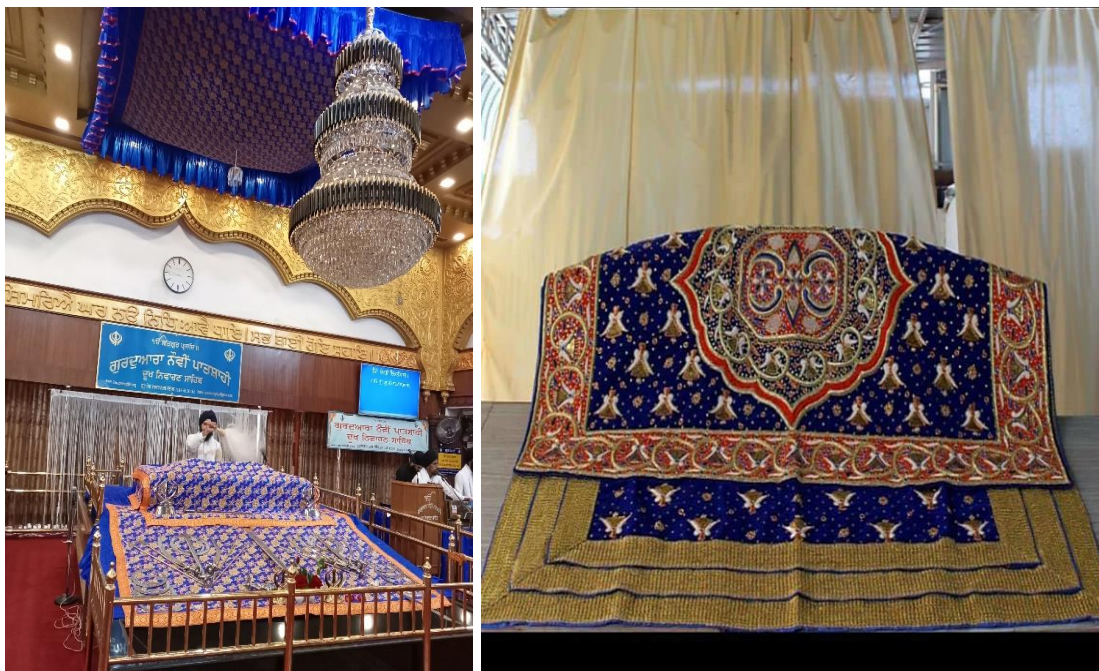


Plate 4.15: Dark coloured textiles for winters

4.3.3. Changes in Fabric- Past to present

Historically, only cotton was used to create these Rumala Sahib. Numerous respondents disclosed that in the past, only white cotton or muslin fabric was used by the Gurus to protect the holy books, or Granth, from dust and other impurities. Over time, devotees started using fabrics other than cotton to prepare these Sacred textiles. Increasing spending capacity and advancements in technology led to the use of many kinds of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib. During the course of the field work, numerous manufacturers disclosed that these textiles are now manufactured in a vast array of fabrics with an infinite number of patterns and designs. In these textiles, there is a wide selection of summer-appropriate materials, some of which include net, lightweight brocade, silk, cotton, chiffon, crepe, and other similar options. For the winter months, fabrics like velvet, thick silk, and brocade are used for these textiles. Additionally, heavy, warm blanket material in different colours is used for manufacturing Rumala Sahib. It is also mentioned in the ‘Guru Granth Sahib protocol’ published by SGPC, that in the summer, thin, light-weight Rumala and, in the cold season, warm Rumala Sahib should be used².



Plate 4.16: Guru Granth Sahib wrapped with a white cotton Rumala Sahib

² https://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Guru_Granth_Sahib_protocol



Plate 4.17: Silk Rumala Sahib



Plate 4.18: Blanket Rumala Sahib

4.3.4. Transformation in embellishments

As described in the last chapter, i.e., the study of literature, the tradition of embellishing the Holy fabrics has been in practice almost in every faith. In Sikhism, also people have been using cloth coverlets called Rumala Sahib for their Holy Scripture – Guru Granth Sahib. Earlier women used to stitch and finish Simple Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib with a flat golden ribbon called *gotta* or braid. A few embroidery stitches were used to further accentuate the Holy textiles. In order to create the Chandoa Sahib, solid fabric was used. Frills created with pleats were attached to a rectangular piece of fabric. *Piping and gotta* was used to ornate the piece. Researcher found the two extremely antique Chandoa Sahib, one in white with

applique work and machine embroidery and finished with frills and another of cotton in solid colour finished with frill and *gotta* (Plate 4.20 & 4.21).

As machine embroidery became a popular form of ornamenting various textiles, apparel, and lifestyle products, people started to get these devotional textiles ornamented with machine work. This was further enhanced by the application or stitching of beads and stones on the embroidery. With changing trends, tastes, and spending power among devotees, intricate handcrafted Rumala Sets became more famous and in demand. And today, these textiles are created with numerous kinds of embellishments and accessories, including hand block printing, hand painting, *phulkari* work, *dabka* work, sequins work, bead work, mirror work, lace work, etc.



Plate 4.19: Chandoa Sahib stitched with only plain fabric



Plate 4.20: Plain cotton Chandoa Sahib with frill and plain *gotta*



Plate 4.21: Simple white cotton Chandoa Sahib with frills and applique work in centre



Plate 4.22: Chandoa Sahib made with embroidered fabric



Plate 4.23: Silk Chandoa Sahib designed with only *gotta*



Plate 4.24: Single coloured Chandoa Sahib with *zardozi*

4.3.5. Change in stitching and finishing

Earlier, women used to sew their garments and other household items at home. Even the holy textiles, Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib were worked on by them using

plain fabric and simple accessories like braids. It was disclosed by some old respondents that they would stitch the Rumala Sahib personally at their homes; they have even stitched Rumala Sahib to be offered on their wedding days. At that time there were few enterprises that were selling readymade Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib. People started to purchase these Sacred textiles after machine stitched Rumala Sahib arrived in the market, which were available in plain as well as patterned fabrics. Stitching was fairly simple at that time, often with a single border of *gotta* or any other braid. The Chandoa Sahib had a single frill constructed with knife pleats. The field work also reflects that in the past, the Chandoa Sahib was hung by attaching long ropes or strings to rings or some other object in the corners of the room where the devotees wished to install the Holy Scripture. The space for hanging the Chandoa Sahib was always included in Sikh households at the time of building.

In the present times, the stitching procedure has become extremely detailed. Electric and multi stitch specialized machines are being used to stitch these textiles.



Plate 4.25: Chandoa Sahib finished with tissue, contrast fabric band and ribbon

A lot of variations in the design and sewing of these textiles were noticed by the researcher. Double frills, sometimes even in multiple hues, are put on all sides of Chandoa Sahib. Various kinds of tassels and edgings are also used for embellishing these textiles.



Plate 4.26: Single frill attached on Chandoa Sahib



Plate 4.27: Double frills attached on Chandoa Sahib

Earlier, only three pieces were included in the Rumala Sahib called single Rumala, but after some time, a four-piece set came into trend, i.e., double Rumala, which had two big sheets and two small rectangular sheets called *Palkan*. After a while, people started demanding and offering more sheets or components as per the furniture set around the Guru Granth Sahib in Gurdwaras. Manufacturers started designing as per the requirements and demands of the devotees. Now, beginning from three to four, a set of Rumala and Chandoa Sahib may have even twenty pieces (components). Most of the Gurdwaras have their own size charts for these textiles. Different size charts were gathered by the researcher during her visits to the specified Gurdwaras.

Rumala of a standard size can be presented in any Gurdwara, but if a whole set is to be presented, then it must be made with the proportions of the Darbar Hall of the specific Gurdwara in consideration, as can be observed from Plate 4.28.

Standard size Rumala Sahib can be presented in any Gurdwara. Additional items can be included in the set-in addition to the Rumala Sahib and the Chandoa Sahib. These components can be used to cover the side tables or stools, the diwan, or the platform or side platform on which the *raagis* (musicians) perform *Kirtan*.

The following images show the different settings of various Gurdwaras and the number of components of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib. Moreover, the decorations around the Holy Scripture are different in all Gurdwaras.



Plate 4.28: A Specially designed elaborate Rumala Sahib set

The above-mentioned customised Rumala Sahib set includes two sheets of Rumala, two *Palkan*, one huge decorated sheet to cover the front of the platform, eight side table coverings designed with frills, one small Chandoa Sahib for *Palki Sahib*, and a large

Chandoa Sahib for the top. The set has been prepared with single colour fabric and zardozi work.



Plate 4.29: Rumala Sahib set designed for Darbar Hall of Gurdwara Manaktabra, Haryana

Two components of Rumala Sahib, two *Palkan*, one huge sheet for the front, two small horizontal panels that are to cover side staircases, one ornate Chandoa Sahib for *Palki* Sahib, one large Chandoa Sahib at the top, and one *Sehra Patti* at the front are included in the aforementioned Rumala Sahib set. The fabric and embellishments are identical throughout all of the components.



Plate 4.30: A Set of Rumala Sahib offered in Gurdwara Shree Guru Arjan Dev Ji Singh Sabha, Sunny Enclave, Mohali

The specially designed set of above Rumala Sahib (Plate 4.30) comprises of two sheets of Rumala Sahib , two rectangular sheets known as *Palkans*, two large sheets decorated

with heavy frills to cover the whole platform, and Takht on which the musicians sit and sing the *Kirtan*, two rectangular table covers that are placed in front of the *Golak*, one small *Chandoa Sahib* inside the *Palki*, and a large *Chandoa Sahib* above the *Palki Sahib*.



Plate 4.31: Customized set of Rumala Sahib adorned on the occasion of Gurburb in Gurdwara Shree Guru Arjan Dev Ji Singh Sabha, Sunny Enclave, Mohali

Stitching on each component was carried out in accordance with the specifications and plans for the furniture and the architectural structure near Guru Granth Sahib adorned inside the Sikh shrine. Pillars next to the platform, as depicted in the extreme right of Plate 4.31, required specific cutting and sewing so that the sheets made for the platform fit well into the structure. A cut is made at each of the four corners, and after that edging is finished, the loops are affixed so that they can be tied around the pillars. The sides of whole platform are covered with heavy pleats. Golden coloured zaradozi embroidery and golden brocade braid are used to design the elaborate set.



Plate 4.32: Rumala Sahib set splendid in the Darbar Hall of Gurdwara Toka Sahib, Himachal Pradesh

The above Rumala Sahib set has been designed to meet the specific requirements of the Gurdwara. Two Rumala Sahib, two *Palkan*, a huge sheet for the front, a large quilted sheet with frills for the platform on which the Holy Book is kept, two horizontal table

covers with frills on all sides, a large Chandoa Sahib, and a *Sehra Patti* have been included. The fabric for the set has been machine embroidered, and the edges are finished with golden braid. Applique work is used for embroidering the Sacred verse from Gurbani on the front panel of the *Sehra Patti*.





Plate 4.33: Exclusive set of Rumala Sahib designed for Gurdwara Dasvi Patshahi Shri Nada Sahib, Panchkula, Haryana

The beautiful extensively embellished double coloured set included Double Rumala Sahib, two side sheets *Palkan*, one very big sheet having heavy frills on all sides to cover the palanquin, eight side tables of different sizes (6 on the sides of platform and two on the platform aside the Guru Granth Sahib) as depicted in Plate 4.33, one smaller Chandoa Sahib inside the *Palki* and a big one with double-coloured frills at the top of the *Palki*. The contrast colours of the fabric and heavy sequin work, along with the broad orange coloured embellished braid, add beauty of the divine textiles. Two contrast-coloured fabrics are used for making frills on the Chandoa Sahib.



Plate 4.34: Rumala and Chandoa Sahib adorned in Gurdwara Singh Shaheedan,
Mohali, Punjab

The beautiful contrast of sky blue and bright red highlighting golden embroidered *Slok* at the front panel of Chandoa Sahib is giving a unique look to the whole Darbar of Gurdwara. The big Chandoa Sahib has intricate embroidery and contrast double coloured frills on all sides.

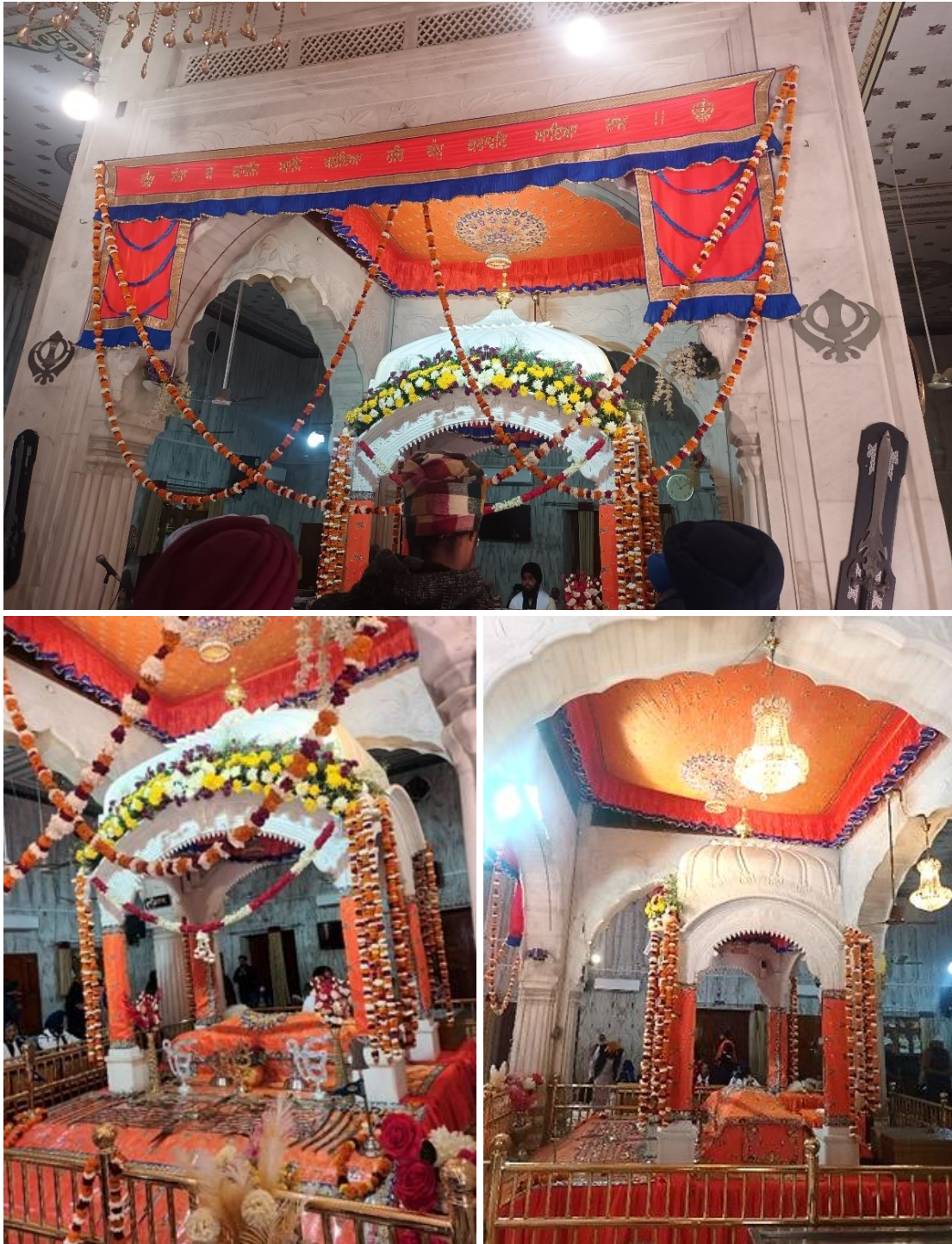


Plate 4.35: A set of Rumala Sahib adorned at Gurdwara Amb Sahib, Mohali, Punjab

The above set of devotional textiles has been designed in an incredibly unique manner. The embellished fabric panels that cover the palki sahib's four pillars are the set's distinguishing feature. Beautifully designed *Sehra Patti* has been hung separately in front of the main wall of the covered platform instead of being attached to the Chandoa Sahib. A large Chandoa Sahib with two coloured frills has been installed to further increase its attractiveness.



Plate 4.36: An extensively embroidered set of Rumala Sahib for
Sri Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar

Above is a photograph of the Sri Harmandir Sahib in Amritsar, where an intricately embroidered, heavy silk or velvet Rumala Sahib set is offered daily. The set consists of a total of twelve components, including one elaborately embroidered large Chandoa Sahib, one Sehra Patti with Gurbani *pankti* (verse), four distinct Rumalas

that are usually kept plain, two embroidered Rumala Sahib or top sheets, two Palakan, and two additional sheets with embroidery. Twelve tiny and two large gold *Chhabba Sahib* (hangings) complete the divine textiles. Along with the new set of Rumala Sahib, additional gold ornaments are taken out every day, cleansed carefully, polished, and rehung alongside the new set. The set of Rumala Sahib on Plate 4.36 has been designed using two colours and heavy zardozi embroidery along with applique work.





Plate 4.37: Specially designed set of Rumala Sahib for
Sacha Dhan Gurdwara, Mohali, Punjab

The above light pastel coloured Rumala Sahib set, embroidered with silver embroidery and finished with a silver border, includes double Rumala Sahib, one very big sheet finished with double frills and *gotta* and one large Chandoa Sahib with *Sehra patti*. Double coloured frill attached to the sheet for platform and Chandoa Sahib adds beauty to the whole design of the textiles.



Plate 4.38: Rumala Sahib set designed for Gurdwara Dukh Niwaran Sahib, Patiala

The above designed double coloured set of Rumala Sahib has a very unique feature, the *Sehra Patti* has been designed in a very different way. A broad golden frill is attached at the centre of the *Sehra Patti* along with semicircular embellished panels attached on both sides. The placement of *Sehra Patti* is also very different, as can be seen in plate 4.38. Most of the *Sehra Pattis* are attached to the front side of the Chandoa Sahib, but here they have been attached quite downwards from the Chandoa Sahib. The entire set has been embellished with *zardozi* embroidery.



Plate 4.39: A Set of Rumala Sahib designed for Gurdwara
Sahibzada Ajeet Singh, Mohali

The above set of the Rumala Sahib includes a beautiful embroidered double Rumala Sahib, one sheet to cover the *Takht*, one small Chandoa Sahib inside the Palki, one big Chandoa Sahib above the *Palki* and two small side table covers finished with frills. The same-coloured (as of Rumala Sahib) garland of artificial flowers can also be seen on the Plate 4.39 adding more charm to the decorations.

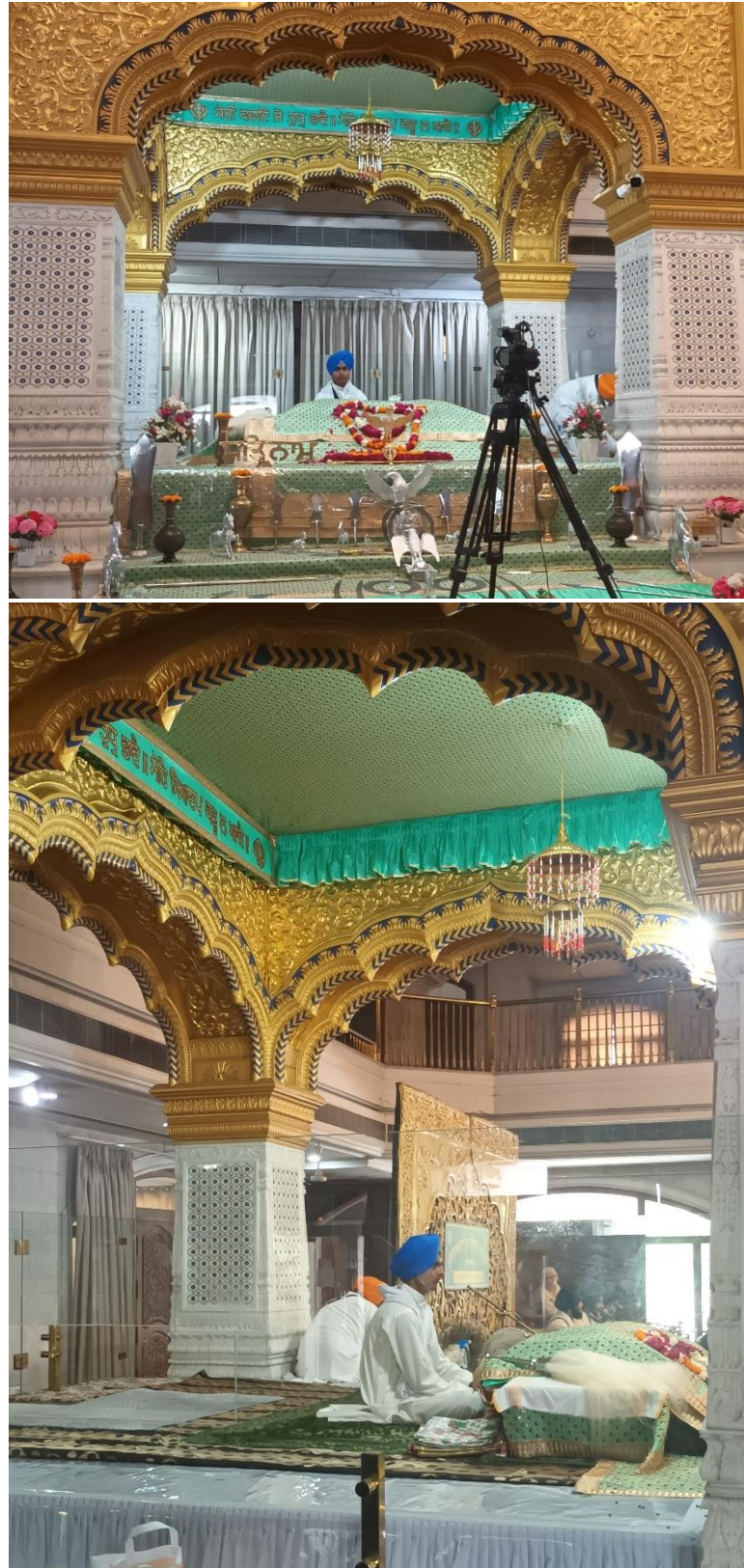


Plate 4.40: A Set of Rumala Sahib designed for Gurdwara Dukh Niwaran Sahib, Ludhiana

The complete set of Rumala Sahib has been designed with single colour and zardozi embroidery. The *Sehra Patti* panel that features a verse of Gurbani can be seen on the backside of Chandoa Sahib instead of being attached to the front side (usually in all

Gurdwaras), which makes it unique from the others discussed earlier. It was revealed by the Granthis present there that it has been specially designed to keep the front dome like construction of the platform where the Guru Granth Sahib is adorned.

Accessories - *Palki Sahib*

Palki Sahib is a Punjabi term that describes the structure housing the Manji Sahib (a small bed on which the Holy Sikh Scripture is placed during the day in the main hall), and it forms the part of Guru's platform or seating. *Palki Sahib* is usually two metres wide, two metres deep and two metres high. *Palki Sahib* of wood was more common in the past, but it is now available in metallic, gold, silver and different finishes with light fixtures and decorative work. These days, the portable *Palki Sahib* is also available, even if someone welcomes the Guru Granth Sahib to their home or another place. These are made of steel and can be readily disassembled and reassembled. The *Palki* also allows for the execution of Chandoa Sahib.



Plate 4.41: Different types of metallic Palki



Plate 4.42: Marble Palki



Plate 4.43: Wooden Palki

Chattar Sahib

Chattar Sahib is an embellished umbrella shaped covering that is used to cover the Guru Granth Sahib while taking it outside the Gurdwara. It has a metal base covered with heavy silk fabric and the edges usually finished with a frill or lace or a braid.



Plate 4.44: *Chhattar Sahib*

Chhabba Sahib

These are the hanging accessories that add beauty to the Darbar of a Gurdwara.

These are dome shaped accessories, with the smaller dome hanging below the bigger dome (Plate 4.45). There can be two, three, or more domes/*jhumkas* in one *Chhabba Sahib*. These are made of metal and embellished with stones, beads, and sometimes precious gems and stones. These are hung either at the centre or at the front side of Chandoa Sahib. In Harimandir Sahib twelve *Chhabba Sahib* in pure gold studded with precious stones are hung in front of Chandoa Sahib (Plate 4.36).



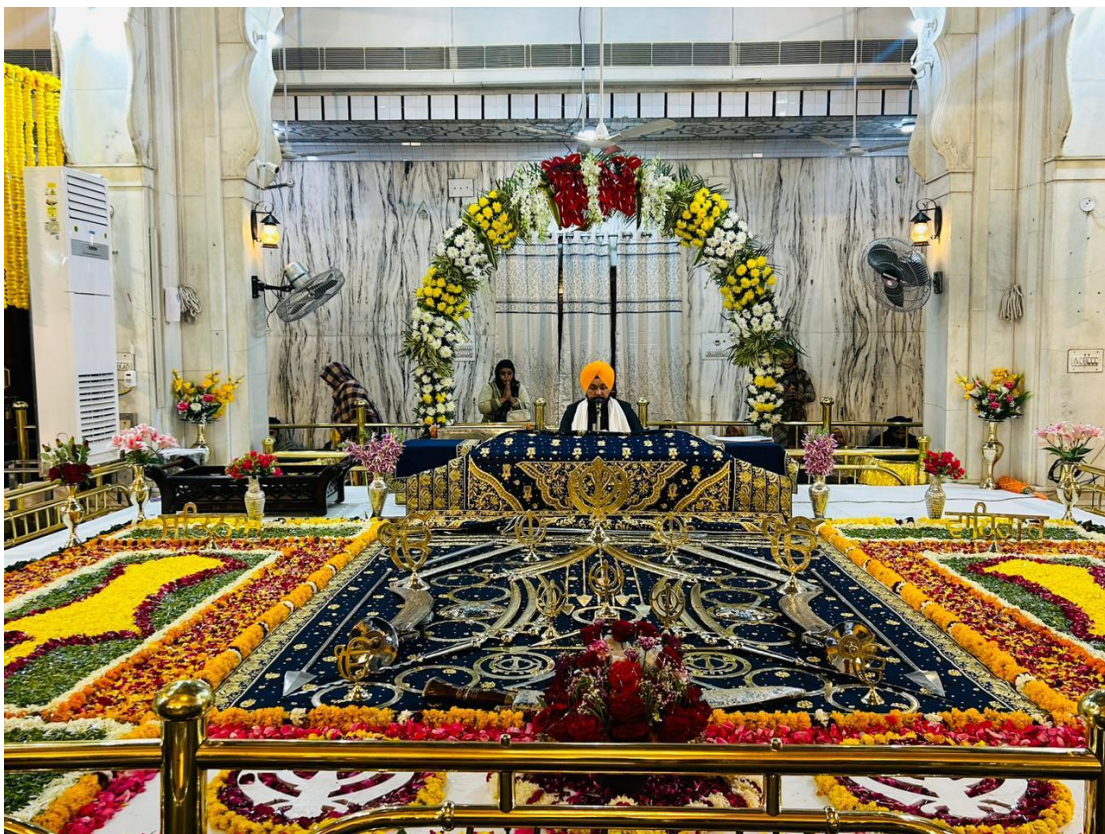
Plate 4.45: *Chhabba Sahib*

Flower garlands

In Gurdwaras, flowers are frequently used as decorations. At certain Gurdwaras, fresh flowers and flower garlands are used on special days, such as marigold on Baisakhi with marigold. It is common to see artificial flower arrangements and decorations with garlands that coordinate with Gurdwara decor. Artificial flower garlands of various colours are used in some Gurdwaras to adorn the Darbar and *Palki Sahib*, sometimes even matching with the Rumala Sahib.



Plate 4.46: Flower garlands matching with Rumala Sahib



(Source- Sadana Brother, Patiala)

Plate 4.47: Floral decoration in Darbar Hall of a Gurdwara

4.4 Offering Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib on different ceremonies and occasions

Every religion has rituals and rites that are inextricably linked to them. The customs and rituals of a particular religion are frequently called the unwritten laws of that faith. Like other faiths, Sikhism includes customs and rituals that are followed at particular times in a person's life. Since Guru Granth Sahib is the most important part of Sikhism, every ceremony is held in His presence. If this is not possible, then certain hymns from the Holy Book are chanted during the event. Offering Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib is associated with many ceremonies and occasions. Following are the main ceremonies that are related to Sikhism:

4.4.1. Child's naming ceremony - *Nam Karan*

The family visits a Gurdwara to commemorate the birth of a newborn child after the mother has recovered from childbirth and is physically able to travel. There, cheerful hymns from the Holy Granth are recited. *Amrit* (immortal nectar, a bowl of sugar water) is given to both the mother and infant and is prepared by the Gurdwara's Granthis. The name of the infant is determined by performing the *Hukam*, in which the Granthi opens any page of the Guru Granth Sahib at random and recites the hymn on the page. The initial letter of that hymn is then selected as the initial letter of the child's name. The appellation is shared by both sexes in Sikhism. The word Kaur (princess) is associated with female names, while Singh (lion) is associated with male names. The family presents Rumala Sahib, and sometimes even Chandoa Sahib, to share their joy. During this ceremony in front of the Guru Granth Sahib, some families dress newly-born children in new clothing. Then, the sacrosanct pudding, *Karah Parshad*, is distributed to everyone present.



Plate 4.48: A new born child being dressed in new clothes by his mother and grandmother in a Gurdwara



Plate 4.49: Granthi gives *Amrit* to the new born child

4.4.2. Baptism: *Amrit Sanskar*

Baptism is a highly revered ceremony that takes place in a quiet spot where Guru Granth Sahib has been installed. When a child is old enough to obey the Rehat Maryada, he or she must receive Amrit from the Panj Pyare (five baptized Sikhs). Amrit is the Guru's blessing, and a person who receives it becomes immortal and breaks the cycle of birth and mortality.

ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਪੀਵਹੁ ਸਦਾ ਚਿਰ ਜੀਵਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਮਰਤ ਅਨਦ ਅਨੰਤਾ ॥

Amrit pivo sda chir jivaho Har simrat anad Ananta

Drink Amrit, live forever. Attain extreme bliss by meditating on God.

(Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Page 4)

Before seeking baptism, a man or woman is encouraged to appear, act, and behave like a Sikh, according to the Khalsa. It is not required to present a Rumala Sahib at this ceremony, but some families do so when a member of the family seeks baptism. Before presenting themselves as *amritdhari* (baptized) Sikhs, they are required to wash their hair, cover their head with a turban, wear spotless clothing, and wear 5Ks. Those who have already undergone baptism are *amritdhari* Sikhs. Five Sikhs with *amritdhari* status conduct the ceremony. During the recitation of the Holy Granth, all the fundamentals of Sikhism are explained to the candidates for baptism, after which the *Ardas* and *Hukam* ceremonies are performed. Five *amritdhari* Sikhs prepare *Amrit* in a steel basin and stir it with a Kirpan while reciting sacred hymns. This is followed by *Ardas* and the initiate consuming the Amrit five times while reciting ‘**Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh**’, which means the pure belong to God and God is victorious. The Amrit is then sprinkled on the individual's eyes and hair. The code of conduct and required discipline are then explained to the initiate, which are:

- The person is required to wear all 5 K's, i.e., *Kesh, Kangha, Kara, Kachera, and Kirpan*.
- He or she is required to abstain from cutting the hair, eating meat, having physical relations with any other person except the spouse, and using any intoxicant.
- After explaining all the rules, the *Karah Prashad* is distributed.

4.4.3. Path on various occasions

Path is the reading or recitation of Guru Granth Sahib's sacred texts. The *path* can be performed by an individual or a group; it can be the recitation of a single section or the entire Holy Granth. The Holy Granth is positioned beneath a canopy (Chandoa Sahib) on a decorated seat or on a *Palki* perched on an elevated platform. A Granthi (reader) opens and reads from the Holy Granth while another person waves a fly-whisk (*Chaur Sahib*) above it. There are primarily three types of *Path*: *Akhand Path* (continuous reading of Holy Scripture), *Saptahik Path* (in which entire Holy Granth is read in a week), and *Sahaj Path* (in which there is no time limit for finishing or completely reading the Holy Granth) is performed on various occasions to commemorate, including birth, marriage, relocating into a new home, starting a new business, Gurburb, and even death. After the reading, which takes approximately 48 hours, the *bhog* ceremony is performed, followed by *Hukam*, which consists of arbitrarily turning to any page of the Guru Granth Sahib and reading the hymn from that page. The *Karah Parshad* is then distributed to everyone present.

The *Saptahik Path* is the reading of the entire Guru Granth Sahib in a single week. It begins seven days before a particular occasion or event and can be performed by any individual or group, regardless of age or gender, using the relay method. Professional *Pathis* are also available for hire to complete the *Path*. On the final day, *Ardas* is performed, followed by *Kirtan*, and *Karah Parshad* is distributed to those in attendance.

The *Sahaj Path*, or *Sadharan Path*, is the reading of the Guru Granth Sahib without any time limit. It can be performed for an extended period of time with multiple breaks between readings.

Some individuals hold the *Path* at Gurdwaras or in their residences on various occasions. If a family organises *Path* at their residence or another location, one of the family members will carry the Guru Sahib covered with Rumala Sahib from the Gurdwara to their place. When carrying Guru Granth Sahib, it is obligatory to cover the head and remove footwear. One person perpetually waves the *Chaur Sahib* (fly whisk) over the Holy Granth. The family creates a neat and spotless platform for the Guru Granth Sahib. Occasionally, *Palki* or frame are also used to install the Guru Granth Sahib. At the end of the *Path*, *Ardas* is performed, and *Karah Parshad* is distributed to everyone. The family presents their Guru with an embellished Rumala Sahib, which is then presented by the Granthi to Guru Granth

Sahib. As the Holy Granth is revered as their living Guru, the Rumala Set is selected and offered by families according to the season; for instance, if the *Path* is conducted in the winter, a heavy blanket of Rumala Sahib is offered.



Plate 4.50: Devotees carrying Guru Granth Sahib to home



Plate 4.51: Granthi offers the Rumala Sahib on the occasion of Path at home

4.4.4. Wedding ceremony: *Anand Karaj*

In Sikhism, the marriage ceremony is known as the *Anand Karaj*, which signifies a happy union. The groom enters the chamber of the Gurdwara carrying a Rumala Sahib as an offering to the Holy Scripture and takes his seat. The bride would also enter while holding the Rumala Sahib, offer it, and take a seat next to the groom. Four times, the bride and groom circumambulate the Holy Scripture known as *Lavan*.

ਚਰਨ ਅਮੋਲ ਪਰਦਛਨਾ ਕਰਨ ਕੈ ॥

Charan amol pardachhna karan kai

Those feet that do *Parkarma* of Guru Sahib Ji are priceless

(Kabit Svaye Bhai Gurdas, Page 17³)

Walking around the Holy Scripture i.e., *Parkarma*, signifies sacrificing one's mind, body, and wealth. The couple beg for protection and assistance and signifies that they are the servants of Guru Sahib. After the *lavans*, *Kadah Parshad* is distributed among all those present.

During the *lavan* ceremony, the groom guides the bride. Before each *lavan*, Granthi recites a verse of a Guru Ram Das hymn, which is then sung by the musicians present. The *lavan* is the most significant aspect of the wedding ceremony, uniting the couple through four biblical verses. The four *lavans* convey four distinct messages and responsibilities to the couple:

- The first *Laav* conveys the message of duty towards the family and community.
- The second *laav* indicates the stage of yearning and love for each other.
- The third *Laav* stresses the stage of detachment from the world.
- The last and fourth *Laav* stress the stage of synchronisation and union in marriage when love between the couple blends into love for God.

After the *lavan* verses from Anand Sahib are read, followed by the Ardas and distribution of *Karah Parshad*.

³ <https://www.searchgurbani.com/amrit-keertan/shabad/15333/Chirunkaal-Maanus-Junum-Nirumol-Paaee>



Plate 4.52: A bride entering the Darbar holding Rumala Sahib in her hands



Plate 4.53: Bride offers Rumala Sahib before her *Anand Karaj* ceremony

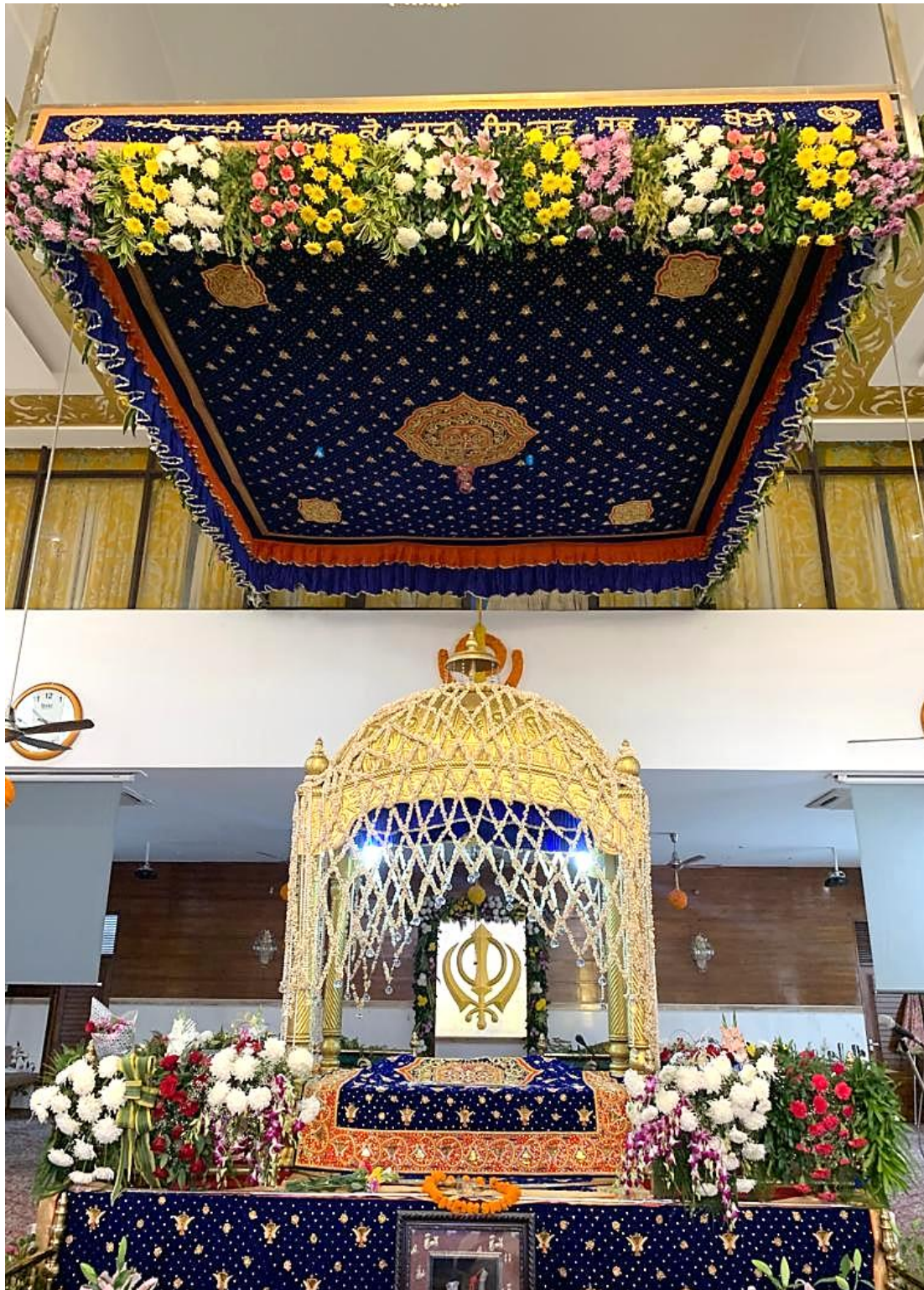
4.4.5 Gurburb

Gurburb refers to the special days and anniversaries associated with the lives of Sikh Gurus. On the occasion of Gurburb, a continuous reading of Guru Granth Sahib - *Akhand Path* is performed that usually starts two days before Gurburb continues for forty-eight hours, and concludes on the morning of Gurburb. The Granth Sahib is read in relays lasting no longer than two hours. At the conclusion of the *Path*, lectures, discourses, and sometimes poems are delivered about the honoured Guru (Cole, 1994).

As a sign of reverence for their Guru, numerous devotees offer Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib to various Gurdwaras on these special days. During interviews with Head Granthis, it became apparent that these days, so many Rumala Sahib sets are presented in Gurdwaras. According to the traders, Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are more frequently purchased during the day of Gurburb than on other days. After the *path*, the ceremony closes with an hour of singing *Kirtan* (devotional songs), another *Ardas*, and a serving of the sweet Parshad to everyone present. This is usually followed by *Langar*, where food is served from a community kitchen open to everyone.

The devotees are also provided with *langar* (free food and desserts) on these special days. A procession called *Nagar Kirtan*, bearing Guru Granth Sahib, is also organised at some places. The Gurburb are observed on -

- The first installation ceremony of Guru Granth Sahib in the Golden Temple
- Birth ceremony of Guru Nanak Dev
- Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev
- Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur
- Martyrdom of Five Sahibzada's (sons of Guru Gobind Singh)



(Source- Sadana Brother, Patiala)

Plate 4.54: Darbar of Gurdwara decorated on the occasion of
Guru Nanak Dev's birthday

4.4.6. Ceremony of turban tying: *Dastaar bandhi*

In Sikhism, it is a very significant ceremony in which a turban is tied for the first time on a boy's head, usually between the ages of eleven and sixteen. Generally, the ceremony is conducted in a Gurdwara, but some families celebrate this ceremony at home in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib. The first turban is tied by Granthi or another senior relative of the boy. At that time, the significance of wearing a turban was also conveyed to him. The teenage boy and his family present Rumala Sahib to their Guru as a sign of devotion and reverence. The performance of *Ardas* is followed by the distribution of *Karah Prasad*. The turban, or *dastar*, is perceived by Sikh families as an integral part of their identity.



Plate 4.55: First turban tied by a relative of the boy

4.4.7. Baisakhi

Guru Gobind Singh founded the Khalsa order in 1699 by gathering thousands of Sikhs at Anandpur Sahib and baptising five courageous Sikhs who were willing to sacrifice their lives for their Guru. This day is celebrated every year on 13th of April. Majority of Sikhs visit Gurdwaras on this auspicious day. Numerous Sikhs prefer to be initiated into the Khalsa brotherhood on this day. Sacred wrappings on the Nishan Sahib flag are also changed in the majority of Gurdwaras. On this day, numerous exquisitely embroidered Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are also offered in Gurdwaras. As orange is associated with the Khalsa Panth, orange Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are predominantly offered on this day. The association with of Baisakhi is also reflected, as many offers yellow sets of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.



Plate 4.56: Orange coloured Rumala
and Chandoa Sahib



Plate 4.57: Yellow coloured Rumala
and Chandoa Sahib



Plate 4.58: Darbar hall of Gurdwara decorated in yellow

4.4.8. Diwali : festival of lights

Diwali is a festival of lights that symbolises the spiritual ‘victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance’. For Hindus it marks the celebration of

return of Lord Rama after 14 years of exile from his kingdom at Ayodhya. Diwali commemorates Rama's ultimate defeat of the evil Ravana and victorious return to his home. For Sikhs, it is a day when Guru Har Gobind Singh was released from the prison in Gwalior, where he had been held as a political prisoner for two years at the direction of Emperor Jehangir. Along with him, the Guru's proposal resulted in the liberation of fifty-two additional Rajas. Because of this, the Guru is often referred to as "Bandi Chhor", which literally means "liberator of captivity" and this day is marked as 'Bandi Chor Divas'.



Plate 4.59: Darbar Hall of Gurdwara on occasion of Diwali

On this particular day, the houses are decked out in fairy lights and earthen *diyas* as a kind of decoration. Thousands of lights may be seen illuminating the interior of the Golden Temple in Amritsar. Sikhs visit the Gurudwaras along with their family members in order to seek blessings from their Guru. Inside Gurdwaras, everyone lights the candles, or *diyas*, as part of the ceremony. Some of them offer heavily decorated Rumala and sweets in Sikh Shrines (Kapoor, 1992).



Plate 4.60: Gurdwara decorated with lights on Diwali

4.4.9 Martyrdom Day of Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur

Guru Arjan Dev was the fifth Guru of Sikhism, and he handed the Sikhs their sacred book, which was first known as *Pothi Sahib*, then *Adi Granth*, and eventually *Guru Granth Sahib*. The design and construction of the Holy Shrine, *Hari Mandir Sahib*, by Guru Arjan Dev is also an important contribution. He passed away when he was 43 years old. On June 16, 1606, he was tortured to death at Lahore under the orders of Emperor Jehangir. Every year, the Sikhs commemorate the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Guru and the first Sikh martyr (Kapoor, 1992).

On this day, processions are also held, during which candies and various other edible items are distributed to the people in the audience. This day is not only about regret or melancholy for Sikhs; rather, but it is also a celebration of his life as well as the lives that have been made possible as a direct result of him. The site on the river Ravi where Guru Arjan Dev was executed is now the location of the *Gurudwara Deha Sahib*. On this particular day, Sikhs from all across the region join together to commemorate his

life, the sacrifices he made, and the significant contributions he made to Sikhism. These celebrations take the form of processions, worship ceremonies, and peaceful gatherings. This represents a way that Sikhism can be preserved for future generations and continue to be practiced⁴.

On November 24, the yearly martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru is commemorated. He is also known as Hind ki Chadar, or India's Shield. He sacrificed himself for the liberties of a group of individuals who were not even of his religion. On the orders of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, he was publicly beheaded at Chandni Chowk in Delhi in 1675. This location is home to the renowned Gurdwara Sis Ganj. Some people offer Rumala and Chandoa Sahib that are custom-made according to the season or Gurburb; for instance, on the occasion of the martyrdom of the Gurus, the devotees prefer off-white, white, or light colours.



Plate 4.61: White-coloured Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

⁴ <https://nationaltoday.com/martyrdom-of-guru-arjan-dev-sahib/>

4.5 Designing and manufacturing of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

Creating and manufacturing Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib is an extensive procedure, beginning with the selection of fabric and ending with the delivery of the finished items.

For designing Rumala Sahib or Chandoa Sahib, the first point to be considered is the size and number of pieces required in a set of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib. This again depends upon the size and requirements of the Darbar Hall where the devotee wishes to offer the same, because each Gurdwara has its own standard size charts for the dimension of Rumala Sahib, which depend upon the number and size of side stools, the size of *Takht Posh*, or the main platform in the Darbar of Gurdwara. Hence, a Rumala Sahib set may contain three to twenty components. The mandatory and common components of a Rumala Sahib are one or two square or rectangular sheets and two side rectangular sheets, i.e., *Palkan*. In order to have a coordinated look of the Darbar Hall, some other components may be added, that may include a cover sheet for takht posh or the platform where the Guru Granth Sahib is installed, side tables/stools to keep flower vases and bouquets, *Chaur Sahib* (fly whisk), the platform on which the musicians sit and sing the *Kirtan*.

4.5.1 Availability of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in different types and sizes

From the data collected from the individuals who had offered the Rumala Sahib, it was found that they preferred the double set of Rumala Sahib because of its availability in a variety of fabrics and designs. Since they were unaware of the precise dimensions of these textiles as well as the Gurdwara where they have to offer the Rumala Sahib, they purchased these from stores that specializes in sacred textiles.

Table 4.7. Distribution of respondents according to the preferred type of Rumala Sahib

S. No.	The most preferred type (variety) of Rumala Sahib	Frequency	Percentage
1	Single	6	17.14
2	Double	22	62.86
3	Complete set including Chandoa Sahib	7	20
	Total (15 manufacturers and 20 shopkeepers)	35	100

According to manufacturers and shopkeepers, single and double types of Rumala Sahib were commonly and easily available in a variety of sizes. The sizes of Rumala and Chandoa Sahib are as follows:

Standard size of Single Rumala Sahib-

- 42x50 inches (single sheet) and 18x18 inches (2 side *Palkan*)
- 45x45 inches (single sheet) and 20x20 inches (2 side *Palkan*)

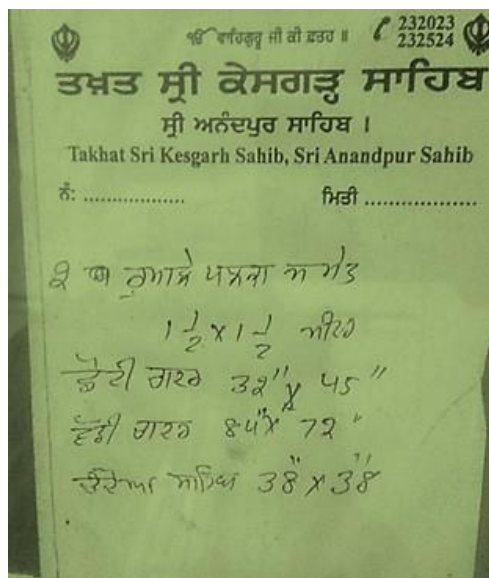
Standard size of Double Rumala Sahib-

- 44x55 inches (2 pieces of Rumala) and 20x20 inches (2 pieces *Palkan*)
- 42x50 inches and 18x18 inches (2 pieces *Palkan*)
- 41x49 inches and 20x20 inches (2 pieces *Palkan*)

Common sizes of Chandoa Sahib

- 4x4 feet
- 4 x 6 feet
- 5x5 feet
- 4.5x5 feet
- 7x7 feet
- 10x10 feet

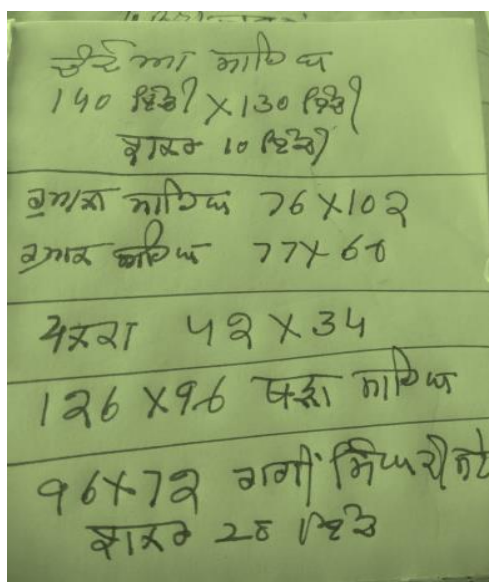
Though the standard size of Rumala Sahib may be offered in any Sikh Shrine by the devotees, many of the Gurdwaras have their own size chart for sets of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in accordance with the infrastructure and dimensions of the Darbar Hall. They get the customized sets prepared by the manufacturers or provide the dimension chart to the devotees who want to present the prepared sets in that particular Gurdwara. As it can be observed in Plate 4.62 (size chart of Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib, Anandpur Sahib), the different required components along with their dimensions are mentioned as:



Two Rumala Sahib with *Palkans*
 –1.5x1.5 meter
 One small sheet – 32x45 inch
 One large sheet – 82x72 inch
 Chandoa Sahib – 38x38 inch
 Total number of components – 7

Plate 4.62: Size chart of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib: in Punjabi on the letter head (left) and in English (right)

In another size chart (Plate 4.63) along with the size of Rumala Sahib, Chandoa Sahib, and side *Palkans*, the size of the sheet for covering the platform on which the musicians sit and perform *kirtan* and the length of the frills to be are also mentioned.



Chandoa Sahib – 140x130 inch
 Frills – 10 inch
 Rumala Sahib – 76x102 inch
 Rumala Sahib – 77x66 inch
 Palkan – 42x34 inch
 Takht/ platform sheet – 126x96
 Sheet for platform of musicians
 – 96x72 inch
 Frill – 28 inches
 Total number of components – 7

Plate 4.63: Size chart of Gurdwara Nauvi Patshahi- Dukh Niwaran Sahib, Jalandhar: in Punjabi (left) and in English (right).

4.5.2. Procurement of fabric and raw materials and their variations

Both Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are created using an extensive variety of fabrics in addition to other types of raw materials. According to the manufacturers who

specialized in creating these ornate textiles, it was practically impossible keep track of all different colours and material combinations that had been used by them in creating these Holy textiles. They have been using almost all types of fabrics, like silk, velvet, brocade, chiffon, crepe, blanket, net, and other materials, in the creation of Rumala and Chandoa Sahib. Silks and velvets were commonly used for the creation of customised merchandise. When constructing the expensive sets of Rumala Sahib that are required to be served in the Harmandir Sahib in Amritsar, silk or thick velvet fabric is usually utilised.

The fabric for Rumala and Chandoa Sahib was selected in accordance with the season. Cotton, net, and chiffon textiles were popular in the summer, while velvet, brocade, silks, and thick piled blanket materials were popular in the winter. The manufacturers and shopkeepers were asked about the preferred fabrics/more demanded fabrics for the Rumala Sahib by the customers. As shown in Table 4.4, silk was deemed to be the most chosen fabric (100%) by manufacturers and shopkeepers. Following silk, velvet was claimed to be the most desired by manufacturers (93.3%) and shopkeepers (80%), with woollen being selected by 93.3% of manufacturers and 75% of shopkeepers. Brocade was most often sold by 86.7 % of manufacturers and 80% of shopkeepers. The Rumala set of chiffon was in demand by 73.3% of manufacturers and 20% of shopkeepers. According to the manufacturers and retailers, the cotton and towel textiles of Rumala Sahib were selected by the fewest clients.

Table 4.8. Distribution of respondents according to their preference for type of fabric

S.No.	Type of preferred fabric	Manufacturers		Shopkeepers	
		F	P	F	P
1	Silk	15	100	20	100
2	Velvet	14	93.3	16	80
3	Brocade	13	86.7	16	80
4	Chiffon	11	73.3	4	20
5	Crepe	7	46.7	8	40
6	Cotton	4	26.7	7	35
7	Woollen/blanket	14	93.3	15	75
8	Net	6	40	12	60
9	Organza	8	53.3	5	25
	Towel	3	20	6	30

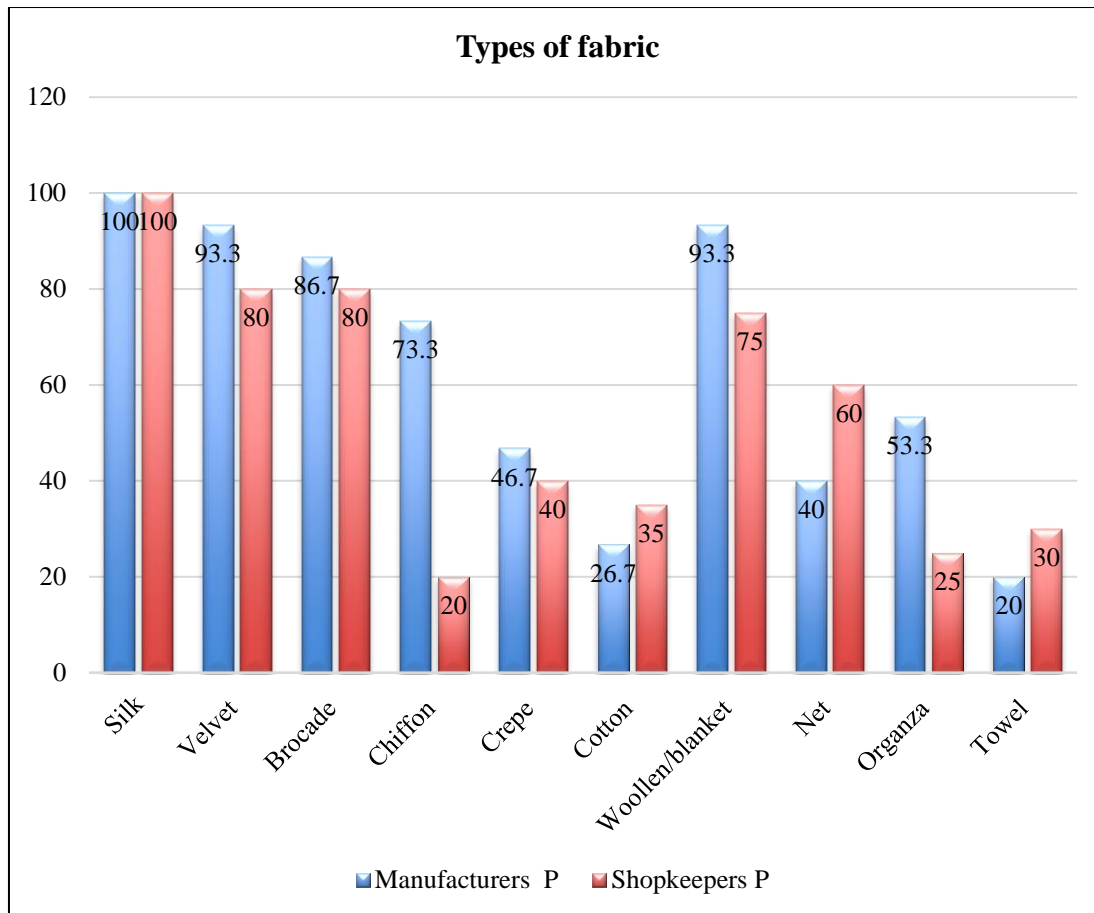


Figure 4.2. Distribution of respondents according to their preference for type of fabric

Silk has been the most common fabric for Chandoa Sahib too. For designing heavy embellished textiles, the majority of manufacturers sourced their raw materials from cities like Ludhiana, Patiala, Ambala, and Amritsar. For simple single and double types of Rumala Sahib that are less expensive or low on cost, locally available different types of fabrics, embroidered, printed, woven, etc; are used. Some manufacturers procured silk of high quality from Surat and Bangalore, while velvet was purchased from Ahmadabad, Delhi, and Bombay. Some of the manufacturers in Patiala and Ludhiana responded that they procure raw materials from Amritsar.



Plate 4.64: Different types of fabrics for Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

4.5.3. Selection of Colour

After deciding on the final outlook of Rumala and Chandoa Sahib, the colour choice was made. When the customised pieces were being created, the colour chart for the fabric that would be used was provided to the customers so that they could pick the hue that best matched their preferences. Customers who ordered a customised item online were provided with colour swatch cards so they could select the proper hue for their order. The producers had a large collection of shade cards for a range of textiles, including brocade, velvet, and silk. Shade cards were prepared by collecting the rectangular sample pieces of each fabric. In addition to the main fabric, a good-quality lining was also selected for further durability.



Plate 4.65: Shade card of fabric

Various colour combinations of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib were used in the manufacturing process. These were manufactured in a single colour, two colours, or sometimes a combination of multiple colours. According to the manufacturers, the colour combination was usually decided by the customer while ordering a set of these textiles; otherwise, the manufacturer's team selected the colours. From the data collected from visitors to Gurdwaras, it became apparent that they offered these Holy textiles in a variety of hues, with some preferring vibrant colours, others choosing sober

hues, and the majority choosing according to the occasion and the season, as they consider the Guru Granth Sahib as their Living Guru.

4.5.4 Fabric cutting

Before cutting the fabric for creating Rumala or Chandoa Sahib, it was essential to consider the number of pieces required and their size. The workers drafted an approximate estimate of the amount of fabric on paper prior to fabric cutting. When discussing fabric requirements, one of the manufacturers explained that in order to prepare a complete pair of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib for the Darbar Sahib, roughly forty-five to fifty metres of main fabric, in addition to the lining material, are required. Fabric is cut to the appropriate shapes and dimensions. Because embroidery is frequently used on more complicated designs, sufficient fabric is retained on all sides, usually fifteen inches, to stretch and attach the pieces to the embroidered frame. Following the marking of the necessary proportions, cutting is done on big tables with either electric or manual shears. The fuse paper was cut solely with electric rotary cutter equipment.



Plate 4.66: Workers cutting the fabric



Plate 4.67: Layers of fabric after cutting



Plate 4.68: Cutting of fuse paper with electric rotary fabric cutter machine

4.5.5 Tracing of design

The manufacturers had a multitude of designs for these sacred textiles. They revealed that images of previously created textiles were shown to customers before they could choose their preferred design. Even while taking online orders, the photos of the designs were provided to the buyers via email or WhatsApp. Tracing was the next step after the design was selected. To accomplish this, the essential designs or patterns were

created on large sheets of tracing paper with a pen or pencil. Tracing papers are semi-transparent materials that are used for tracing drawings. Needle holes are made manually or mechanically to transfer the design from the sketch to the fabric.



Plate 4.69: The design to be traced penetrated with needles on tracing paper

To trace the design onto the fabric, the first step is to lay the fabric, then over it, tracing paper is laid. A piece of cloth made into a small roll or cotton swab dipped in a solution is rubbed on the tracing paper. The solution moves out of the tracing paper holes and imprints the design on the cloth. The solution is made by adding powdered blue in kerosene oil for tracing on light coloured fabrics or zinc powder in kerosene oil for dark coloured fabrics. This process is followed by embroidery.



Plate 4.70: Traced design

4.5.6 Ornamentation/embellishment

Surface embellishment adds visual appeal and improves the overall appearance of a product. The primary purpose of surface decoration is to add visual interest for both the wearer and observers. Varieties of mirrors, beads, sequins, laces, threads, wires, buttons, etc. are used for surface ornamentation. “Surface ornamentation or embellishment” purely depends on the creativity and exclusive ideas of fashion designers (Verma, 2022).

For the creation of these religious textiles, different kinds of embellished materials have been used. Fabrics already embroidered, woven, brocaded, sequined, printed, or patterned have been used to create inexpensive Rumala Sahib in standard sizes as well as customized ones. Various embroidery techniques, including machine embroidery, hand embroidery, applique work, and zardozi work, may be employed to create extensively embellished sets of these textiles. In addition to being embroidered, these textiles can also be created through hand painting and block printing. Although such kinds of embellished items are relatively rare, a few people are engaged in this work and prepare them on order.



Plain silk with golden braid



Plain Silk with Sitare and Kundan work



Plain cotton with printing



Block printed with braid



Sequined fabric with braid



Silk with machine embroidery



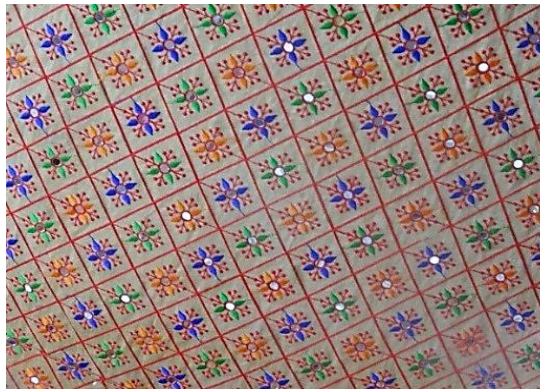
Silk with zari embroidery



Net with embroidery



Hand embroidered – aari work



Machine embroidery with mirror work



3 D flowers on silk



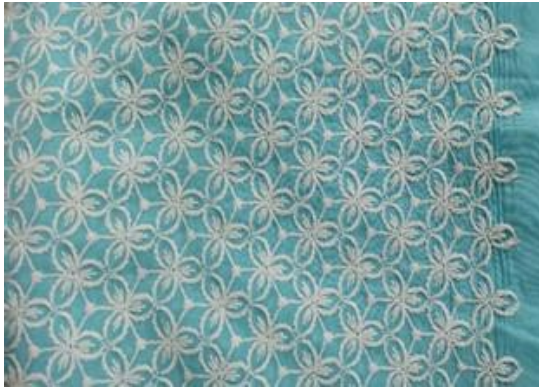
Phulkari Rumala



Silk with golden thread work



Silk Rumala with embroidered braid

Cotton *chikan* work RumalaGolden brocade with *gotta*

Sequin work with machine embroidery



Blanket Rumala Sahib

Handwork of *Gota Patti*

Velvett Rumala Sahib

Plate 4.71: Different ornamentations of Rumala Sahib

During the current research, it was observed that the most preferred ornamentation technique for these religious textiles was embroidery. The embroidery worked on the Rumala Sahib and the Chandoa Sahib is usually intricate and lends a rich and ornate look to the textiles offered in Sikh shrines.

As revealed by the manufacturers of these textiles, handwork, including *dabka* work, *aari* work, and *zardozi* work, was the most preferred embellishment selected for heavy sets of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.



Plate 4.72: Zardozi work

Aari Work: A unique crochet needle called an *aari* needle is used for creating the elaborate and delicate patterns that are the hallmark of this art form. Because the artisan could pass the thread both above and below the fabric when using the *aari*, the task could be completed in a shorter amount of time when compared to a standard needle. Back stitch, running stitch, chain stitch, and satin stitch are common stitches used for

creating patterns. Variations in satin stitch for filling the patterns and changing directions of the stitch-vertically, horizontally, or diagonally created stunning effects. Sequins, beads, and other ornamentation is also stitched along with these stitches.



Plate 4.73: Aari used for embroidery



Plate 4.74: An artisan using aari



Chain stitch



Satin stitch



Running stitch



Back stitch

Plate 4.75: Various stitches used in embroidery

Zardozi work - Zardozi is a form of embroidery prevalent in India that originated in Persia. Zardozi is made of two Persian words: 'zar' means gold and 'dozi', which means embroidery, thereby translating into gold embroidery. It is a heavy and elaborate metal embroidery usually done on velvet, silk, or satin fabric. Couching, stem stitch, running stitch and satin stitch are commonly used in this embroidery to create motifs which are further enhanced by incorporating beads, stones, etc. If a raised effect is required, then a soft thick cotton thread is used as padding.

Dabka work - Dabka which originated in Rajasthan, is an intricate and precise hand embroidery done with needle and thread. A spring type of thread or a coiled thin wire

is used, through which a needle and thread are passed and sewn further onto the fabric to create a 3D effect.



Plate 4.76: *Dabka* work

Some other embellishments that are worked on the Sacred textiles are as follows:

Cut dana work- Cut dana work is done by using different stones and beads cut at specific angles that enable them to reflect the light. These cut beads and stones are sewn to the cloth with threads to make numerous types of designs.



Plate 4.77: *Cut dana* work

Sequin/ Sippy/ Sitara work: Sequins/ *sitaras* are small plastic or metallic discs with holes in the centre or at the edges to be stitched into cloth. The sacred textiles are embellished with sequins of various colours, shapes, and sizes.



Plate 4.78: Sequin Work

Gotta patti work: This is a well-known Rajasthani handicraft. Gota work includes a ribbon, usually silver, gold, or copper that is folded into various forms and motifs and sewn onto fabric to produce elaborate patterns. It is a time-consuming and intricate art form.



Plate 4.79: Gotta patti work

Silk embroidery/ Resham ka kaam: This embroidery is done by using different types of silk threads. These silk yarns give a lustrous and appealing look to the embroidered part.



Plate 4.80: Resham ka kaam

Bead work /*Moti ka kaam*: A *moti* or bead is an item with a small hole for threading or stringing that's available in a range of forms, colours, and sizes and is made of a variety of material such as stone, bone, shell, glass, plastic, wood, or pearl. To create the patterns, beads are sewn to the surface of textiles with embroidery or a hooked needle.



Plate 4.81: Bead work

Applique work: Pieces or patches of fabric in various sizes and patterns are applied or sewn onto a bigger textile to form a pattern or design in this style of decoration. The applique pieces are either hand-sewn or machine-sewn.



Plate 4.82: Applique work

Customers may request specially embellished textiles based on their preferences. One of the manufacturers revealed that one of his clients had specially ordered a whole set of these textiles with *Phulkari* embroidery for her wedding day. The ornamentation and intricacy of the work are determined by the customer's budget or paying capability. Hand painting and block printing, in addition to needlework, are used for embellishment. He further revealed that there are few craftspeople who are specialists in hand painting and block printing and are approached for the creation of the sacred

textiles after receiving orders from devotees. The researcher was able to interview one such specialist in Mohali. Her case study is as follows:

Case study 2



Plate 4.83: Researcher with an entrepreneur at Mohali

The researcher visited and interacted with an entrepreneur who has been operating her shop in Mohali, Punjab, for the last three to four years. She has designed Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib using fabric painting. She sells hand-painted women's dresses and dupattas and also has a presence on Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook, where she promotes her work. She received her first order to design Rumala Sahib with hand painting from Spain after one of the clients saw her work on YouTube. The six-piece set was made of Habutai silk, which included two Rumala Sahib, two *Palkan*, one large sheet, and one Chandoa Sahib, with cotton used for the lining to reinforce the cloth. The floral design hand painting was accomplished with fevicryl acrylic paints. The whole set required around twenty-five to thirty metres of cloth. The customer had given a size chart for Spanish Gurdwaras as well as a video of the Gurdwara interior for her reference. The fabric and colour combination were finalized by the customer. Tailors stitched and finished the pieces by inserting braids at the borders after she finished with hand painting. All the created pieces were cleaned and ironed before being transported to Spain. The estimated cost of the set was between fifteen thousand to twenty thousand rupees. As an *Amritdhari* Sikh, she and her staff followed the correct standards when developing and producing the components. The photographs below show the set created for a Gurdwara in Spain.



Plate 4.84: Rumala Sahib set designed for Gurdwara in Spain

ਰੁਮਾਲਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਸਾਇਜ਼	
ਚੰਦੇਆ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਲੰਬਾਈ -----	194 ਸੈਂਟੀ ਮੀਟਰ
ਚੋੜਾਈ ਸਾਮਣੇ ਵਾਲੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਤੋਂ -----	220 ਸੈਂਟੀ ਮੀਟਰ

ਇੱਕ ਵੱਡੀ ਚਾਦਰ -220 x 300 ਸੈਂਟੀ ਮੀਟਰ	

ਰੁਮਾਲਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਲੰਬਾਈ -----	150 ਸੈਂਟੀ ਮੀਟਰ
ਰੁਮਾਲਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਚੋੜਾਈ -----	180 ਸੈਂਟੀ ਮੀਟਰ
ਨੋਟ - 2 ਰੁਮਾਲਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਲੈਣੇ ਆ ਜੀ	

Size of Rumala Sahib
Length of Chandoa Sahib- 194cm
Width of Chandoa Sahib from front side- 220 cm
One large sheet- 220x300 cm
Length of Rumala Sahib – 150 cm
Width of Rumala Sahib – 180 cm
Note – please take two Rumala Sahib (double)

Plate 4.85: Size chart of Gurdwara located in Spain

The size chart has all the dimensions of not only Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, but the exact size required for one large sheet to be spread on the platform. The entrepreneur further mentioned that she has also created a few more additional sets for these sacred textiles using fabric painting on silk with fevicryl colours as well as pigment dyes for clients in India and Canada. She claimed that she has recently received an additional order to create a whole set of textiles for a Gurdwara in Canada from a girl who is getting married in August. The customer requested a beautifully designed set with floral hand paintings to be presented to the Gurdwara because she desired the interior of the Darbar Hall to be very beautifully adorned and stand out on her wedding day.



Plate 4.86: Rumala Sahib set designed with hand painting

4.5.7. Securing fabric to a wooden frame/adda for embroidery

In order to stretch and secure the fabric to be embroidered, an embroidery frame, also known as an *adda*, made of wood and either square or rectangular in shape, was used. A cotton cloth of sufficient strength was used to encase the frame on all four sides. On each of the four sides, the cloth that included a layer of lining was unevenly and tightly stitched onto the wooden frame with thick cotton thread using various kinds of stitches. This was done in order to smooth out any wrinkles or folds in the fabric that were uneven. These timber frames have been adapted to any size specifications that may be desired. The craftsmen embroider the fabric while seated around the frames. While

visiting the workshops or manufacturing units it was a common sight to observe a number of artisans sitting in close proximity to one another and involved in embroidering fabric stretched on a wooden frame while listening to the *Shabad* (Gurbani verses).



(Source – Shiromani Rumala Center, Amritsar)

Plate 4.87: Fabric secured on wooden *adda*



(Source – Shiromani Rumala Center, Amritsar)

Plate 4.88: Women artisans embroidering a large Chandoa Sahib



(Source – Shiromani Rumala Center, Amritsar)

Plate 4.89: *Sehra Patti* being embroidered



(Source – Shiromani Rumala Center, Amritsar)

Plate 4.90: Male artisans embroidering a component of Rumala Sahib



(Source – Shiromani Rumala Center, Amritsar)

Plate 4.91: Embroidered Rumala Sahib before finishing the edges



Plate 4.92: Reverse side of the embroidered Rumala Sahib

After embroidery, the finishing of each piece is done by trimming extra threads from the right as well as from the reverse side of the embroidered textile. The embroidered pieces are then removed from the frames and sent to the stitching unit.

Machine embroidery is also used for ornamenting Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, though hand embroidery, especially *zardozi* work, is more prevalent for heavy customized sets of these sacred textiles. Machine embroidery is also used for creating cost effective, simple Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib that can be purchased by devotees and offered in any Sikh Shrine.

If embroidery work is to be done on thin or delicate fabric, a layer of fuse paper is attached to the fabric to be embroidered. Paper fuse is a thin sheet of non-woven fusible interlining that is applied to the reverse side of the fabric to be embroidered. It is used as an embroidery backing as it protects the fabric from stretching and provides strength to the fabric. The paper fuse is placed flat on the reverse side of the fabric, and heat and pressure are applied with a hot iron, which melts the resin on the paper fuse and sticks the interlining to the fabric.

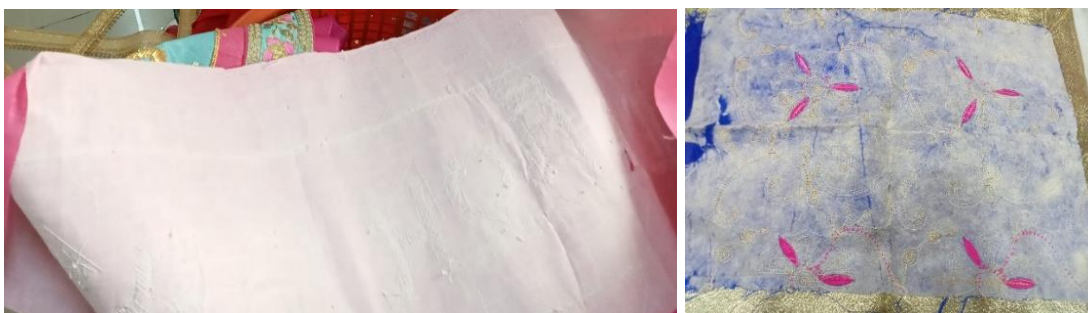


Plate 4.93: Fuse paper used at the back of machine embroidery

Raw material for embroidery

Threads of cotton, silk, and zari were used for the embroidery work. To finish off the ornamentation, additional components like sequins/ *sitare/sippi*, beads, and *kundan* were incorporated into the design at various points along the pattern. The embroidery was additionally embellished with *salma*, *dabka*, *badla*, *nakshi*, and *gota*, which are all types of decorative materials. For *zardozi* work, *dabka*, which is a very thin, tightly coiled wire; *badla*, which is a flat wire that has a thread base; *salma*, which is a coiled wire; and *tilla*, a flat metallic wire, were used. These wires and threads were used to construct the primary design, and various other embellishments were sown onto the fabric.

As per the manufacturers, the materials used for embellishments like *dori*, *dabka*, *naksha*, *kora*, and *sitare* were procured not only from local vendors but also from Surat too. Some of the raw material was also procured from Delhi and Lucknow at wholesale prices.

Following the initial step of securing the fabric on the *adda*, a white cotton thick *dori* was positioned over the portions of the designs that were going to have the embossed effect following the completion of the embroidery. The *dori* was sewn onto the fabric with extremely fine thread to keep it in place. After that, it was covered or embroidered with *dabka*, *kora*, or *nakshi*, which resulted in a stunning embossed effect in certain specific places. Further accessories like *beads*, *sitare*, *kundan*, etc. were stitched in case these were a part of the design.



Plate 4.94: Cotton *dori* sewn at certain places to give an embossed effect

After that, it was coated or covered with *dabka*, *kora*, or *nakshi*, which resulted in a stunning embossed effect in certain specific places.



Plate 4.95: Cotton *dori* covered with *kora* and *nakshi* giving an embossed effect

After that intricate work with metallic wires and golden thin *dori*, the embellishment work was completed by the artisans. Final touches were done after that by adding other accessories like beads, *sitare*, *kundans*, etc.



Sequins - Golden *tikki* (*sitare*), *lambi tikki*, *gol tikki*



Cut daana (cut beads)



Moti (beads)



Kora



Nakshi



Dabka

Golden *dori*

Golden thread

*Sooti dori*/ thread**Plate 4.96:** Material used in embroidery and embellishment

4.5.8 Motifs/patterns

Jain (1982) describing motif mentions a quote “The significance of a motif in traditional art, like that of India, is typically more profound than its visual form would indicate. A motif may be merely decorative, or it may represent something else. It may have greater significance in its complete context than as an independent component. It may acquire greater significance as it passes through various cultural eras over the centuries.”

Flowers of different shapes and numbers of petals were embroidered. The motifs are inspired by the nature. Along with flowers, different creepers and leaves are also embroidered. These are named according to their appearance. Paisley motif, Star motif, beetle leaf, and plant in a pot were also found on many pieces. Embroiderers mentioned some common names for the motifs: *Panpatta booti*, *aath kone wali booti*, *paanch kali booti*, *aath kali booti*, *ambi booti*, *gamla booti*, *kingrewali booti*, *star booti*, *seeti booti*, *chauras booti*, *chaar patti booti*, *badaam booti*, *chhey kali booti* and *sooraj booti*.

*Panpatta booti* / *Betal leaf motif**Aath kone wali booti*/ *eight side motif*



Paanch kali booti/ five petal motif



Aath kali booti/ eight petal motif



Ambi /amb booti / paisley motif



Gamla booti/ flower vase motif



Kingre wali booti/ tassel motif



Star booti/ star motif



Seeti booti



Chauras booti



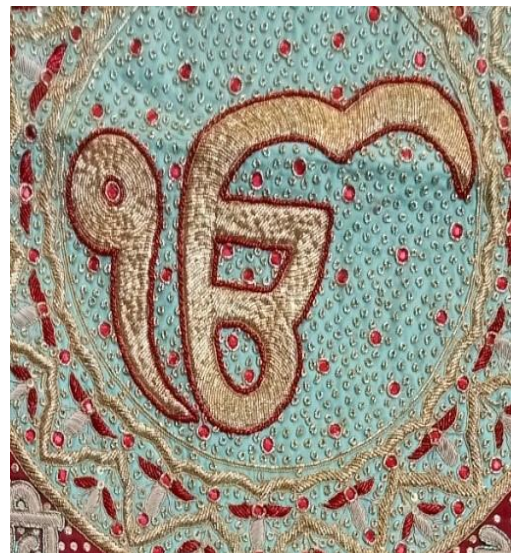
Chaar patti booti



Sooraj booti

Plate 4.97: Different types of motifs embroidered on Rumala Sahib

Religious symbols like Ek Onkar and Khanda are also found on these textiles. These symbols or motifs were commonly embroidered till the last few decades, but when a few incidents of sacrilege came to light, the SGPC- Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee⁵ prohibited these designs from being used on these textiles. The exception is Chandoa Sahib's front panel (*Sehra Patti*), where these symbols are still embroidered. The field survey indicated that these Sacred textiles are also enriched with embroidered text from Gurbani (verses from Guru Granth Sahib). The people coming for *Darshan* of their Guru, when they look at these textiles and read the embroidered text, evoke the faith of devotees and connect with the supreme.

**Plate 4.98:** Khanda motif**Plate 4.99:** Ek Onkar motif

⁵ An organisation in India that is responsible for management of Gurdwaras. It oversees the security, facility upkeep, and religious elements of Gurdwaras, as well as the preservation of archaeologically rare and precious artefacts and writings of Sikh Gurus



Plate 4.100: Khanda motif being embroidered on *Sehra -patti*

The following images show embroidered text from Gurbani on Sacred textiles:



(Source – Darshan Singh Surinder Singh (Rumalyan Wale), Amritsar)

Plate 4.101: A Religious textile embroidered with Sikh Symbols

The textile has been skilfully produced on silk fabric with elaborate handwork using golden *zari* threads, *nakshi*, *kora*, and *sitare*, as can be seen in the Plate at the top. The scalloped *zari* lace that is embellished with golden beads has been used to finish the edges of the cloth. The cloth is distinguished by the embroidered words in an embossed effect as well as the Sikh motifs known as Ek Onkar and Khanda. These elements combine to create the component's distinctive appearance.



(Source – Darshan Singh Surinder Singh (Rumalyan Wale), Amritsar)

Plate 4.102: A Verse from Gurbani embroidered on a religious curtain for Hazoor Sahib

On some special textiles, verse from Gurbani may be embroidered along with some other motifs, as observed on Plate 4.99. Along with heavy hand work in golden and turquoise blue, a verse from Gurbani, "*Kurban Jai Us Vela Suhavi Jit Tumre Duware Aya,*" is also embroidered beautifully, which means 'I am sacrificing to that most wonderful time when I came to your door'. The Sikh motifs Ek Onkar and Khanda, along with floral motifs (*paanch kali booti*), can also be seen there.

4.5.9. Stitching of Rumala Sahib

The final pieces are further sent for sewing after the embroidery and finishing by clipping the superfluous threads are completed. Stitching is worked on single needle lock stitch machines. The stitching of Rumala Sahib may need a lining where lining material is attached to the main fabric with uneven tacking (if not attached prior to the embroidery). Border formation with ornate braids, broad ribbons, and fabrics is very common in the preparation of these religious textiles. These borders are further ornated or edged with piping, braids, laces, and tassels.



Plate 4.103: Women assembling different components of Rumala Sahib on sewing machine



Plate 4.104: Worker stitching the Rumala Sahib

The following images show the making of Rumala Sahib with brocade fabric.

Brocade silk fabric, along with cotton matching lining material, is selected for stitching a set of Rumala Sahib. A golden, broad woven ribbon is to be used at the edges. For the formation of the border, a contrast-coloured satin piping is sandwiched between the border and the fabric. Sometimes binding is also attached to the edges (plate 4.111).



Plate 4.105: Brocade fabric for stitching



Plate 4.106: Matching lining material



Plate 4.107: Stitched contrast binding on both sides of braid



Plate 4.108: Finished edges of the Rumala Sahib



Plate 4.109: Ready Rumala Sahib



Plate 4.110: Back side of ready piece



Plate 4.111: Binding attached to only one side of braid

Materials used for finishing edges of Rumala Sahib



Plate 4.112: Various types of braids and ribbons available at the manufacturing units

It was revealed by the manufacturers that mostly golden braids and ribbons were used to finish the Rumala Sahib. Only flat braids are used to ensure that reverence and respect for the Guru Granth Sahib remain central. It was revealed by the manufacturers that braids with fringes called *kiran and gotta tikki*, an accessory that is used to adorn Punjabi costumes, are not used to finish Rumala Sahib or Chandoa Sahib.

Different methods were used for the attachment of braids, ribbons and *gotta*.

Method 1.

The first method involves cutting the base material (fabric for Rumala Sahib) 1-2 inches smaller than the actual required ready size. The fabric is overlapped on all sides. Broad ribbon is applied at the edges by making appropriate corners (mitring), as shown in plate 4.111.



Plate 4.113: Back side of Rumala Sahib (raw edges interlocked)



Plate 4.114: Front side of Rumala Sahib finished with single broad ribbon



Plate 4.115: A Worker overlocking the fabric



Plate 4.116: Fabric after overlocking

Method 2

In the second method, the base material of Rumala Sahib is cut one inch (on all sides) more than the ready required dimensions of Rumala Sahib. The extra allowances are folded towards the right side of the fabric, and a broad ribbon is placed on the edges on all four sides, enclosing the raw folded edges of the fabric under it. The edges of folded fabric coincide with the edges of flat ribbon. This method of stitching braid is quite time consuming but it gives better finish to the stitched piece as compared to method 1.



Plate 4.117: Front side of Rumala Sahib



Plate 4.118: Back side of Rumala Sahib

Method 3

In the third method, the raw edges of the fabric are folded by approximately half an inch on the front side, and on that, the braid or flat ribbon is stitched, concealing the

raw edges. In this case, the edging-flat ribbon or braid is extended from the fabric edge, as shown in plate 4.120.



Plate 4.119: Front side of finished edge



Plate 4.120: Back side of finished edge

To further emphasize the finish of the Rumala Sahib, piping in a contrasting hue is sometimes sewn in between the fabric of the Rumala Sahib and the braid or ribbon. After stitching all the pieces, extra threads were cut to give the final finishing touch to the prepared pieces.



Plate 4.121: Finishing with braid/ribbon and contrast piping

4.5.10 Developing Chandoa Sahib

The intricately crafted frills on all four sides of a Chandoa Sahib, which lend beauty to the beautiful material, are the primary feature that draws attention to the divine textile.

The first step is to cut the desired dimensions of Chandoa Sahib into the desired shapes. The shape can be rectangular, circular, or square, depending upon the size and dimensions of the Darbar Hall of the Sikh Shrine.

The next step is to embroider the base fabric, which is followed by holding the embroidered piece with the lining material so that the wrong sides of both pieces face each other. Uneven tacking (uneven long stitches with a single thread) is used to hold both fabrics.

The next step is to apply frill/ or ruffles on all sides of Chandoa Sahib. The frills are constructed by making knife pleats, which consume a significant number of meters of cloth.



Plate 4.122: Ready frill with pleats

The width of the frills may vary depending on the size and design of the Chandoa Sahib. Generally, twelve to fifteen inches wide frills are attached to the sides. Ready frill is attached to both the layers of fabric—the base material as well as the lining material. Edges of frill can be finished with machine hemming, binding of a contrast colour, or application of a braid. Usually, a single frill is stitched on Chandoa Sahib, but frills in two colours are also applied, which adds a more pleasing effect to the look of the design of Chandoa Sahib.



Plate 4.123: A Tailor stitching the Chandoa Sahib

The edges of the frill were finished with either contrast piping, tissue, or some braid that took several hours for the workers to finish.



Plate 4.124: Square Chandoa Sahib



(Source- <https://www.tradeindia.com/products/complete-set-of-rumal-sahib-and-chandoa-sahib-5252441.html>)

Plate 4.125: Round Chandoa Sahib



Plate 4.126: Rectangular Chandoa Sahib



Plate 4.127: Edges of frill finished with contrast band/ribbon



Plate 4.128: Edges of frill finished with golden tissue

The passage of time has brought forth a variety of design modifications that have been incorporated into these textiles. Now, in addition to frills of a single shade, the divine textile now features frills of two different colours, which adds even more appeal to the item.

On all the corners, long straps or ropes were also attached to hang the canopy in the Darbar Hall, either on the roof or in the *Palki*.

Sehra Patti- the front component of Chandoa Sahib

It is the component of a Chandoa Sahib that is both the most beautiful and the most noticeable. It is a horizontal band/*patti* that is either tied to the Chandoa Sahib or a separate band that is knotted with the ropes on both sides of the Chandoa Sahib. On this band/ *Patti*, a *Slok* or verse from the Gurbani is usually embroidered in a beautiful pattern employing *zardozi* technique, handwork, or even applique work. This embroidery can take on a variety of forms.



Plate 4.129: *Slok* written on *Sehra patti* with applique work



Plate 4.130: *Slok* written on *Sehra patti* with embroidery

Along with embroidery and braids, embroidered or golden ribbons are also stitched on the *Sehra patti*.



Plate 4.131: Embroidered braid



Plate 4.132: Worker stitching embroidered braid on *Sehra patti*



Plate 4.133: Worker stitching golden braid on *Sehra patti*

It was disclosed by the manufacturer and the shopkeepers that it is common practice for devotees or customers to choose the *Slok* to be embroidered on *Sehra patti*. This is usually done according to the occasion. As shown in Plate 4.131, the *Sehra patti* of the Chandoa Sahib is specially designed for the occasion of Vaisakhi. The verse is embroidered with golden thread work, and a broad golden ribbon is attached at the edges of the *patti*.



Plate 4.134: *Sehra Patti* of Chandoa Sahib designed for the occasion of Baisakhi

4.5.11. Provision of hanging Chandoa Sahib

Various methods are employed for setting the Chandoa Sahib in the Gurdwara's Darbar Hall. While sewing, cloth straps or metal rings are affixed. It also depends on the kind of provision made to hang it inside the hall. In general, three sorts of methods are used

by manufacturers in the stitching of Chandoa Sahib to allow it to hang properly, as detailed below.

The first method is used in cases where a metal frame already exists and is fixed in the Darbar Hall to hold Chandoa Sahib. A wide cotton tape is attached on all four sides at a place where the frill is attached to the base fabric. On this cotton tape, metal rings are attached with hand stitches. These metal rings are then slipped on the metal rod of the frame to hang Chandoa Sahib. Along with this, cotton tape is attached to the corners with hand stitched metal rings. A rope or tape is tied to the metal rod and passed between the rings.



Plate 4.135: Cotton band (*Sooti Patti*) stitched on four sides of Chandoa Sahib

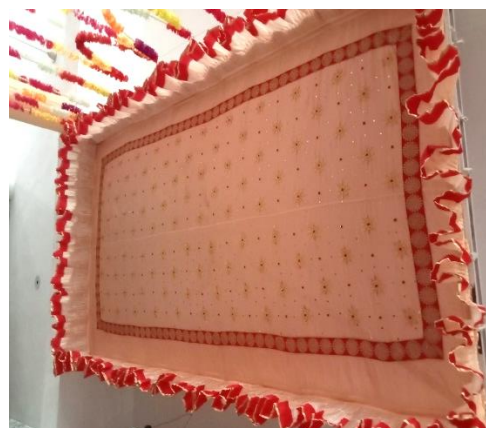


Plate 4.136: Small metallic rings on top of Chandoa Sahib to hang on rod



Plate 4.137. A Big metallic ring attached at the corners of Chandoa Sahib

On the four corners, the same band is attached in the form of long loops, and a big metallic ring is also attached to tie the ropes on the four corners.

Second method is to attach fabric straps at a regular distance on the upper side of Chandoa Sahib that faces the roof of Darbar Hall. These straps are tied over the metallic frame.



Plate 4.138: Fabric straps stitched at the top of Chandoa Sahib

These days, some Gurdwaras have a steel metallic Palki Sahib that is sported by four steel poles. The Chandoa Sahib is installed inside those Palki Sahibs by passing through the round holes created at the four corners of the Chandoa Sahib. Four circular holes of about inch in diameter are cut and finished with a circular facing, and these holes are then finished with metallic eyelet rings. This is the third method.

These four corners are slipped on to the four pillars from the top to install the Chandoa Sahib inside the Palki.



(Source – Karan Rumala House, Patiala)

Plate 4.139: A Worker stitching
Chandoa Sahib



Plate 4.140: A Hole made at the
corner of Chandoa Sahib

A small metallic ring is often attached at the center of the Chandoa Sahib to hang the Jhoomer (a decorative hanging, generally golden metallic) that is mostly seen in all the Gurdwaras.



Plate 4.141: A Metallic ring attached at
the centre of Chandoa Sahib



Plate 4.142: *Jhoomar* hanging at the
centre of Chandoa Sahib

After Chandoa Sahib has been stitched, the other components that are required to be included in the set, such as the cover for the side table, the platform sheet, and the cover of the platform for the musicians, are also stitched and finished in the same manner. This is done in accordance with the requirements of the Darbar Hall and the size of the other furniture items that are placed near the Guru Granth Sahib. The cover of the platform/*takht* is cut as per the shape and dimensions of the platform. In case, there is a pillar on the platform, the shape is cut in order to accommodate the pillar and cover every part of the platform.



Plate 4.143: Stitching of side table covers matching with Rumala Sahib



Plate 4.144: A Specially designed sheet to cover the platform of a Darbar of Gurdwara

The pink sheet (Plate 4.144) that shall be used to cover the platform has been embroidered according to the platform's design and size. Particular care was used in sewing the section that corresponded with the steel pillar. The same thing can be observed on the second quilted sheet, which is beige in hue. A keyhole has been sewn at the exact location of the pillar, and strings have been added to secure it in place.

4.5.12 Finishing and packaging

After the completion of embroidery and stitching, finishing is done by cutting extra threads or other unnecessary material. Before folding the pieces, all of the prepared pieces are steam pressed to eliminate any uneven folds or creases. All embroidered pieces are ironed from the wrong side.



Plate 4.145: A Worker trimming the extra threads after stitching



Plate 4.146: Ironing area in a manufacturing unit



Plate 4.147: A Worker finishing with steam iron

After being folded, Rumala Sahib with simple embroidery designs is then individually packaged in transparent plastic packets.

When heavy embroidered works are folded, a layer of butter paper is sometimes kept in between each fold to prevent the fabric from tearing.



Plate 4.148: Rumala Sahib packed in transparent bags

The sets of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib to be offered in Harmandir Sahib, (Golden Temple) Amritsar, are given to devotees after folding and then wrapping in a fresh piece of muslin cloth (new) in bundle/ *potli*. No plastic or other material is used for the packing of these textiles. If these are to be carried out of the station by road or air, then the folded pieces are adequately packaged in large, properly labelled fabric zip bags. This enables the packaged items to be conveniently handled while being transported.



Plate 4.149: Heavily embroidered Rumala sets wrapped in fabric for packaging



Plate 4.150: Woollen Rumala Sahib set packed in plastic printed bag with zippers



Plate 4.151. Embroidered sets of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib packed in a labelled bonded fabric bag



Plate 4.152: A Devotee carrying the set of Rumala Sahib on his head to be offered in Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar

4.6. Marketing of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

Marketing and distribution of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib were major aspects that were also explored through the field work. Marketing encompasses all actions concerned with impacting the flow of products and services from producers to consumers (Hibbard et. al, 2023). This includes advertising, selling, delivering the products to consumers etc.

For the present study, the major manufacturing hubs of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib namely Amritsar, Ludhiana, and Patiala, were chosen to collect information regarding the price, profit earned by them, place of marketing of these textiles, mode of taking order from the customers, etc. As Panjab is the most well-known state for producing these sacred textiles, the researcher visited and interviewed five manufacturers in each of the selected cities.

Twenty shopkeepers from the designated cities/regions who manufactured Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib were chosen at random and interviewed in order to determine the relevant facts, marketing process, price, and demand for these textiles. The majority of shops visited for data collection chosen for the study were located close to the Sikh Shrines.

During this study, it was found that a significant number of people were involved in the production of these divine textiles offered in Sikh Shrines. Numerous illiterates, educated, and professionals (discussed under the demographic profile of respondents) have found employment opportunities in the designing and manufacturing of these textiles. It was not merely their occupation or a way to make a livelihood; all those involved in this work were deeply devoted, and they were engaged in their assigned or chosen work with absolute passion and dedication. When a customer asks to see or choose a Rumala Sahib in a store or production site, an appropriate protocol for these textiles is followed. Before displaying any textile, the individual must wash his hands, cover his head, and lay out a clean white sheet. This demonstrates their devotion and loyalty to these sacrosanct textiles.



Plate 4.153: White sheet spread on the surface under the Rumala Sahib while displaying it before the customer

During the conversation, one of the manufacturers stated, "*I feel extremely fortunate to be involved in such a divine endeavour. I have always been fortunate in my efforts because of Waheguru's blessings.*"

While conversing with them, some manufacturers revealed that some of them continue their ancestors' textile manufacturing business. One from Amritsar stated, "*We have been carrying this work for four generations. Despite having earned an MBA, I chose to continue with my grandfather's business and would always encourage my son to do the same*".

This section is further detailed under the following subsections:

- Procuring orders
- Product promotional strategies
- Transportation for marketing and supply of products
- Pricing and Profit in the business of Rumala and Chandoa Sahib

4.6.1. Procuring orders from the customers

Rumala and Chandoa sahib were available in the stores, and these were also customised or made to order. Orders were received from devotees from India as well as from foreign countries.

Table 4.9: Distribution of units and shops on the basis of taking orders from foreign countries

S. No.	Orders from foreign countries	Frequency (Manufacturers)	Percentage	Frequency (Shopkeepers)	Percentage
1	Yes	11	73.3	2	10
2	No	4	26.7	18	90
	Total	15	100	20	100

Table 4.9 shows that a greater number of manufacturers (73.3%) as compared to the shopkeepers (10%) were taking orders from foreign countries such as the United States of America, Canada, South Africa, Kenya, and Australia. Orders were received via email and WhatsApp. Colour, style, and material were selected by the customer through images sent by the manufacturer, or the customers themselves sent their specifications to the manufacturer for preparing the desired Rumala or Chandoa Sahib.

Some of the manufacturers had distinct marketing departments staffed by professionals who handled receiving and tracking orders from foreign nations.

10% of the shopkeepers received orders from foreign nations, while 90% supplied to local markets and a few other cities.

There were many ways of taking orders. The first way is to receive an order at the shop/manufacturing unit when the customer visits the unit or shop physically. Majority of the shopkeepers (90%) and 33.3% of the manufacturers were receiving orders when people visited them, and the owners themselves or a trained person would show them the pieces or note them down in case any customisation was required.

Another way of getting orders was via online mode. It was found that the maximum number of manufacturers (46.7%) were receiving online orders. The online orders were taken through E-mail or WhatsApp. These were further contacted telephonically. Some manufacturers revealed that they had a catalogue of different designs of Rumala Sahib.

Each design has been given a number or code. The specific code number of the design was selected by the customer and confirmed to the manufacturers for further processing. Some modifications, like colour combinations, type of accessories like ribbons, braids, etc; were also entertained by them as per the requirements of the customers.



(Source- Sadana Brothers, Patiala)

Plate 4.154: Specific numbers or codes allotted to the designs

Table 4.10: Distribution of units and shops on the basis of mode of taking orders

S. No.	Mode of taking orders	Frequency (manufacturers)	Percentage	Frequency (shopkeepers)	Percentage
1	At shop/ reception	5	33.3	18	90
2	Online	7	46.7	-	-
3	Agents	3	20	2	10
	Total	15	100	20	100

4.6.2. Product Promotional Strategies

There were many promotional strategies used by manufacturers and store owners in order to get in touch with their clientele. The majority of them had their own web pages/websites, social media sites including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn, and each of those pages had a significant number of followers. To further advertise their textiles, several of them had formed partnerships with a number of news channels like Chardi kalan and PTC Punjabi, etc. and marketing platforms like Amazon, India mart, Justdial, etc.

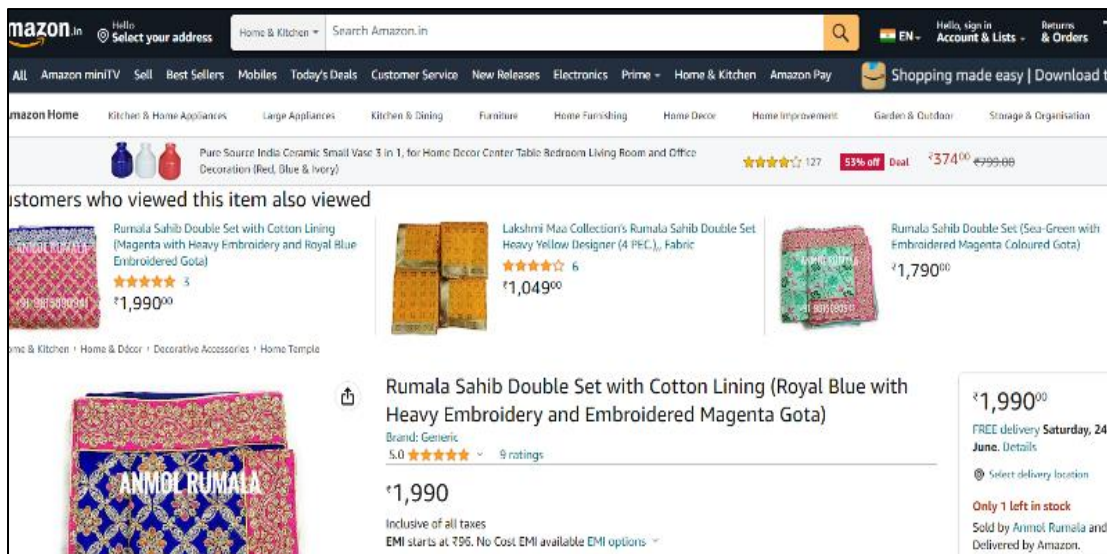


Plate 4.155: Rumala Sahib for purchase on Amazon

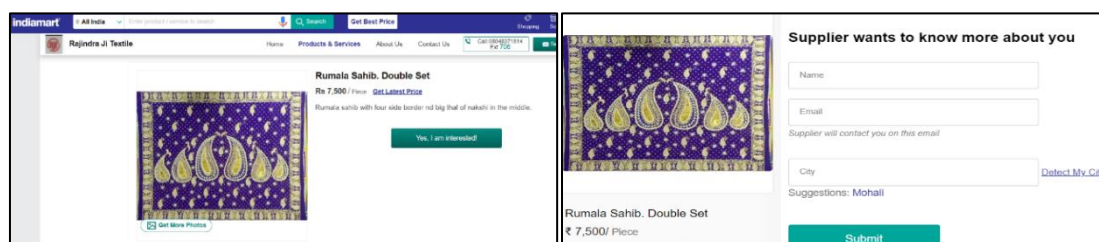


Plate 4.156: Rumala Sahib set on India Mart

There are numerous platforms where customers are able to see, select, and purchase these textiles. On many platforms, customers were able to get information of the selected product by just sending an inquiry to the manufacturer or shopkeeper (Plate 4.158). When a consumer submits his information, which may include his name, email address, and other details, the relevant staff members get in touch with the willing customer and assist him in fulfilling his requirements.

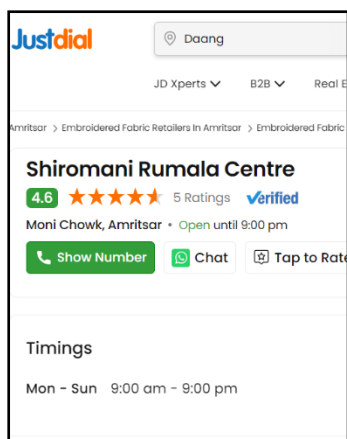


Plate 4.157: The Manufacturer's details on Justdial

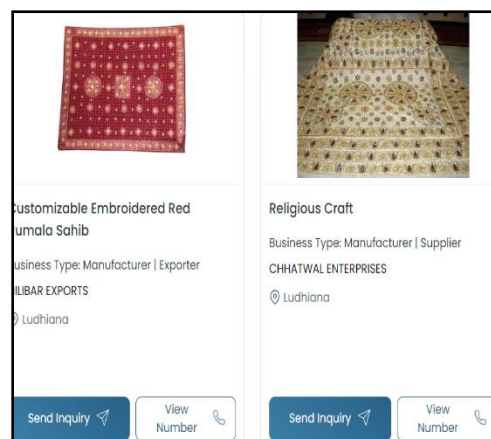


Plate 4.158: Online enquiry portal

Many shopkeepers and manufacturers disclosed that they often distribute printed pamphlets in their cities through vendors of newspapers, especially near occasions like Gurburb, Baisakhi, Diwali, etc; as this is the time when people tend to buy or order more Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.

It was found that social media marketing was most commonly employed approach by businesses. They also revealed that several marketing strategies, notably those used on social media platforms, contributed to a rise in their sales during the previous several years. In a similar way, Dash et al. (2018) found in their study also found that a significant difference in the marketing strategies of various textile industries (large, medium and small) in India in terms of promotional strategy. Further, it was revealed that there is a substantial correlation between the sales of textile industries in India and the marketing strategies employed.

Further research revealed that most retailers (55%) obtained ready-made Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib from other producers; only a small number (10%) had their own workshop to create these textiles on a small scale with limited variety. Although 35% of business owners had their own workshops and procured these holy textiles from other sources. Most of them paid the producers in either cash or through the use of cheques as the mode of payment.

Table 4.11: Distribution of the shopkeepers on the basis of procurement of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

S.No.	Source of procurement of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib	Frequency	Percentage
1	Procure from outside	11	55
2	Develop in their own workshops	2	10
3	Procure from outside as well as develop themselves	7	35
	Total	20	100

4.6.3. Transportation for marketing and supply of products

The vast majority of manufacturing facilities owned their own transportation services, enabling them to carry their products to the local markets as well as to other cities. 73.3% of the firms sent their products using all three modes of transportation: by land, by sea, and by air. 13.3% of the firms sent their products by road. 6.7% of these companies transported their goods only through air, and an equal number transported these textiles by sea. Everyone who owned a store admitted that the only mode of transportation they ever used to market their goods in other cities was the road.

Table 4.12: Distribution of units/shops on the basis of mode of transport used in marketing

S. No.	Mode of transportation	Frequency (manufacturers)	Percentage	Frequency (shopkeepers)	Percentage
1	By Sea	1	6.7	-	-
2	By Road	2	13.3	20	100
3	By Air	1	6.7	-	-
4	All of the above	11	73.3	-	-
	Total	15	100	20	100

4.6.4. Pricing and profit in the business of Rumala and Chandoa sahib

The researcher inquired with the makers about the price range of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib. The price of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib depends on the number of pieces, type of fabric, kind, and intricacy of ornamentation and accessories.

The most typical item that devotees purchased and offered in practically all Gurdwaras was a double Rumala Sahib, which consisted of four individual pieces. The approximate

starting price for Rumala Sahib, including three to four components, ranges between two to four hundred rupees, whereas the initial price for a set of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib was approximately two thousand five hundred to four thousand rupees and could go as high as two lakh rupees, depending on the amount of craftsmanship, type of cloth, and other raw materials involved in the designing and manufacturing processes. Few of the manufacturers discussed the Rumala Sahib Set that was being sold for Darbar Sahib, which consisted of a total of twelve pieces, each of which featured elaborate embroidery and cost approximately sixty thousand to two lakh rupees.

The profit margins varied for manufacturers and shopkeepers. According to the data presented in Table 4.9, 46.7% of the manufacturing units made a profit of between 25 and 30%, followed by 20% of the units that made a profit of more than 30%. 13.3% of the units had a gain of 20-25%, 13.3% of the units earned 15-20%, and the remaining 6.7% of the units achieved a profit of 10-15%.

After selling these textiles, the maximum number of shopkeepers (70%) made a profit of between 15-20%, only 15% of them were earning between 20-25%, followed by 10% of them earning between 10-15%. Only 5% of the store owners made between 25-30% profit.

Table 4.13: Distribution of manufacturing units and shopkeepers on the basis of profit gained by selling Rumala and Chandoa Sahib

S. No.	Profit gained	Frequency (manufacturers)	Percentage (manufacturers)	Frequency (shopkeepers)	Percentage (shopkeepers)
1	10-15%	1	6.7	2	10
2	15-20%	2	13.3	14	70
3	20-25%	2	13.3	3	15
4	25-30%	7	46.7	1	5
5	More	3	20	-	-
	Total	15	100	20	100

As revealed by the manufacturers, the success of their business depends upon the dedication and skill of their workers in manufacturing the Holy textiles, so they always want to treat them as family members and pay them well as per their assigned work. They were also provided with some incentives from time to time in the form of some bonus money or other gifts. Workers were paid in three different ways- per piece, per

day, and consolidated at the end of the month. Usually, workers involved in the hand embroidery and stitching of these religious textiles were paid per piece. But in certain units, these workers were also paid per day or consolidated for a month. In 46.7% of the manufacturing units, all three modes of payment were practiced for different workers. When manufacturers were asked for three different types of modes of payment, they replied that it depends on the task that is expected from the workers. Sometimes, workers are very skilled, and they want their payment per piece, and in this way, they work more and do good work. At the same time, some workers are happy doing work on a consolidated salary. 40% of the manufacturers were paying per piece to their workers. There were only a few units (13.3%) where workers were paid a consolidated salary per month.

Table 4.14: Distribution of the manufacturing units on the basis of mode of payment given to the workers

S. No.	Mode of wages	Frequency	Percentage
1	Per piece	6	40
2	Per day	-	-
3	Monthly	2	13.3
4	All above	7	46.7
	Total	15	100

4.7 Preservation of presented Rumala Sahib

Conservation or preservation seeks to reduce the loss of our cultural heritage and safeguard valuable objects from environmental, physical, or chemical deterioration. It typically refers to a two-way process involving both preventative and curative measures. The art of preservation is dependent on the categories of collected objects, such as tapestries, carpets, quilts, clothing, flags, furnishings, and accessories. Numerous of these artefacts require special maintenance. In addition to cleaning, one of the most essential components of caring for textiles is determining the best way to store them. This involves taking into account all of the textile's variables that can have an effect on it while it is being stored, as well as the construction details, the state it is in, and the size of the textile (Jose et al., 2023).

Preservation of textiles is one of the emerging fields in a nation with a rich textile history. From the royal and elite's wardrobe to the common man's and from religious to folk styles, textiles everywhere have many stories to tell and memories to preserve so that the same memory, story, and history can be handed down to future generations. Gurudwaras, also known as Sikh Shrines, hold a significant place of importance in the Sikh religion. The religion is distinctive because of various unique elements. By studying the Sikh temple, one can gain an understanding of these components or characteristics. In the religion of Sikhism, elaborately embroidered textiles known as Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib have been presented in Gurudwaras on a number of occasions. These textiles are produced in a wide variety of designs, colours, and fabrics, and they also feature a variety of decorations. The procedure that the Sikh Shrine officials follow in order to preserve these miraculous textiles has been explained in the current section of the study.

Personal interviews with the officials and Head Granthis of the various Gurudwaras were conducted in order to collect information about the preservation procedures that are used in each of the Gurudwaras, and the observation method was also used. The information was gathered from a total of twenty Gurudwaras located in the states of Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Uttar Pradesh, Chandigarh, as well as in the capital city of Delhi.

Table 4.15: Distribution of respondents according to preservation practices followed by them

S. No.	Practice of preservation followed	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	12	60
2	No	8	40
	Total	20	100

Table 4.15 shows that the majority of Gurudwaras (60%) were following the practice of preserving the offered Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib so they could use them again. 40% of them were not preserving any of the offered textiles for future use.

Nearly all of the Gurudwaras have designated storage areas or shelves to keep the offered textiles. Before being packed away, the items with intricate embroidery were carefully folded, then placed in either plastic bags or wrapped in cotton cloth sheets and shelved. In some Gurudwaras, the sets of Chandoa Sahib and Rumala Sahib were kept in an

entirely separate space from the Rumala Sahib. In order to protect the textiles from dirt and wear and tear, the storage area was regularly cleaned.



Plate 4.159: A Storage cabinet in a Gurdwara

After some time, generally months, these textiles are unfolded so that the folds do not cause any harm to the objects of value. According to the respondents and the researcher's observations, the people in charge of these treasures were following some practices like dusting, folding again, and sometimes changing the cover bag to preserve these textiles.

Some Gurdwaras with a significant number of preserved textiles employed workers to care for them on a regular basis; however, the majority of Granthis took responsibility for managing the storage of textiles.

In some Gurdwaras, offered textiles were not kept or stored for further use since the number of offerings of these textiles was very large. The majority of respondents (Head Granthis) did not reveal much regarding the re-use of the Rumala Sahib, but some of them mentioned that the offered textiles are sometimes donated to other Gurdwaras in response to their requests. As an example, in the Harmandir Sahib, devotees make an offering of the set of the Rumala Sahib collection, which consists of twelve distinct components and features elaborate embellishments, each and every day. It was found from feedback that it was never used again.

Very few Gurdwaras were reusing the Rumala Sahib that had been presented. According to the Granthis, the laundry area and washing machine were thoroughly cleaned prior to washing these textiles. These sacred textiles were laundered separately from any other clothing item. During washing, drying, and storage, appropriate

protocols were followed, including hand cleansing, shoe removal, and head covering. A few sets with heavy zardozi work were got drycleaned from the market.

4.8. Rumala Sahib abundance in Gurdwaras

India has historically been a spiritual nation with diverse cultures, geography, and religions. In every religion, people observe certain rituals and customs in order to show their devotion to their deities. Using or presenting various textiles has also been a custom in numerous religions. Today, the sustainability of textiles has become an essential concern. For garments and textiles, the most sustainable materials are those that are long-lasting and strong. Reusing or repurposing clothing or textiles has also emerged as a crucial step in achieving sustainability. In order to contribute to this cause, religious textiles can also be used for something useful in the future. So, in the current chapter, the issue of Rumala Sahib's abundance, the devotees' perspectives on the matter, and some ideas and suggestions for reducing the abundance have been discussed.

The reuse of textiles is not a novel activity among Indians. As one of the Jain philosophies emphasises *aparigraha*, which translates to "do not store, and buy only as needed," the people of our country have long engaged in various recycling-related activities. In India, recycling textiles was practiced at both the industrial and household levels. Many ancient arts and crafts involve recycling. Bengal's Kantha work, in which old muslin sarees are repurposed by hand embroidery using a running thread, is one of the world's oldest textile recycling techniques⁶.

To preserve old textiles, the Bakkarwal and Gujjar tribes of Jammu and Kashmir employ various textile crafts founded on recycling. Some Rajasthani communities use patchwork and mirror work to adorn textile products made from recycled materials. Reusing obsolete shawls, dupattas, sarees, etc., Chindi Durries weaving is also a well-known art form in Haryana.

According to industry veterans Adrian Jones and Graham Ross, the ability to recycle fabric is a "holy grail... for the industry and the planet" that will help close the loop between resource-intensive fabric production and rapidly expanding textile waste heaps (Smee, 2019).

⁶ <https://www.fibre2fashion.com/industry-article/9454/textile-recycling-in-india-to-achieve-zero-waste>

Walsham (2017) examines the mediaeval liturgical artefacts that were able to survive the English Reformation because they were repurposed for other religious and secular purposes. It investigated how sacred artefacts were modified and repurposed for a variety of tasks within the home and the church, as well as the underlying theological beliefs about adiaphora, sometimes known as "things indifferent," that legitimised such acts of "recycling." It also examined how the repurposed goods functioned to perpetuate social and cultural memory while adding a layer of complexity to it. The authors probed the importance of growing concerns about the sin of 'sacrilege' committed by people who have profaned sacred objects in order to study the uncertain longer-term ramifications of this reform method.

Reusing sacred linens is a creative and calming activity that can be challenging and rewarding for any needleworker. The difficulty lies in determining how to recycle something and deconstruct it so that it can be used. The time spent working on the undertaking is a sacred respite from the hectic pace of life. Recycling is merely good stewardship of the resources we have been given for use in worship services. If textiles, garments, or wall hangings were donated in honour of or in memory of a person or event, every effort should be made to continue using them⁷.

The present research focuses on the Sikh's offerings of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in Sikh shrines. Sikhs regard their scripture as they would a human Guru, and it even has a separate overnight room. The Holy Book stands on a raised platform beneath a canopy and is covered with Rumala Sahib, which is usually an expensive and exquisitely embroidered textile.

During the course of field work, it was revealed by the Head Granthis that the devotees present a significant quantity of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib as offerings. These textiles are presented by the people as a token of their devotion and reverence for their Guru, which is referred to as the Guru Granth Sahib. In the past, fairly simple pieces of fabric were used for these holy textiles, but with the passage of time and the availability of diversity in the market, the devotees now present different varieties of elaborately ornamented Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib. It was disclosed by Granthis that, in modern times, practically all of the Gurdwaras are struggling with the issue of Rumala overload. This is caused by the extremely high volume of offerings of these textiles on a number of occasions.

⁷ <https://www.nationalaltarguildassociation.org/?p=3057>

According to a Chief Granthi, *'It is an issue of astha or faith. It is not true that expensive Rumalas presented by wealthy individuals will delight Guru more. Anything that is offered with full devotion (til-phul) will be equally pleasing to Him'*. It was inquired from each and every respondent of the research as to whether or not they were aware of the fact that contemporary Gurdwaras are crowded with excessive quantities of the Rumala Sahib. The majority of those who responded indicated that they were aware of the situation and that they concurred with it.

Table 4.16: Distribution of respondents on the basis of their awareness about Rumala Overload

Sr. No.	Awareness about Rumala Overload in Gurudwaras	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	212	84.8
2	No	38	15.2
	Total	250	100

As a result of the large number of Rumalas that are offered by the congregation, there are some Gurdwaras in which the Rumala Sahib that is being presented is only used once. They don't wash them very often, and they reuse them. Each and every day in the Harmandir Sahib in Amritsar, the entire set of the Rumala Sahib and the Chandoa Sahib are replaced with the new ones. There is extensive decoration and multiple layers of cloth, and it has twelve separate pieces and weighs around 20 to 30 kilograms. The one complete set of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib presented there requires a large number of workers and artisans to collaborate for several days in order to prepare it. Because of the profound faith and practice of presenting these textiles in Harmandir Sahib, the waiting period for offering this set there is almost exactly one year, and this is the case even if a devotee desires to present the Divine textiles there. At Harmandir Sahib, devotees not only from India but also from other nations present these elaborate and expensive sets of textiles as offerings.

In addition to the specially designed and manufactured set of Rumala and Chandoa Sahib, people offer a significant number of single and double Rumala Sahib every day. These are lightly touched with the Holy Book by the present Granthis and then set aside. During special occasions such as Baisakhi, Diwali, and Gurdurbas, Gurdwaras receive a larger number of these textiles. During the present study, the researcher observed that many devotees bring Rumala Sahib to Gurdwaras on certain special occasions in order to present it to their Guru.



Plate 4.160: A Number of (piles) offered Rumala Sahib in a single day



Plate 4.161: A Granthi arranging the offered Rumala Sahib

4.8.1. Use of offered Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

Granthis of Gurdwaras disclosed that despite periodic announcements and requests to spend less money on the Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, people offer these textiles daily and on certain special days in all Gurdwaras. Some devotees even have them customised according to their preferred colours, designs, and prices. After a single use, these textiles are stored in cabinets by the committees of Gurdwaras. The chief Granthis of twenty Gurdwaras were questioned about their usage of Rumala Sahib in Gurdwaras as part of the study.

Table 4.17: Distribution of the Head Granthis as per re- using practice of offered Rumala Sahib

Sr. No.	Practice of reusing the offered Rumala Sahib	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	12	60
2	No	8	40
	Total	20	100

The majority of respondents (60%) disclosed that they were attempting to reuse these holy textiles, but despite the fact that the Gurdwaras are still overflowing with an abundance of these textiles.

During the research, the opinions of all respondents regarding the reuse of these sacred textiles were gathered. These individuals were asked whether these textiles should be reused or not.

Table 4.18: Distribution of respondents according to their point of view regarding re-use of Rumala Sahib

Sr. No.	Re-use of Rumala Sahib	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	207	82.8
2	No	43	17.2
	Total	250	100

It can be observed from the above table that the majority of respondents (82.8%) supported the reuse of the Rumala Sahib. Only 17.2% of them were hesitant to talk about this or were not supporting the idea of reusing the sacred textiles. Even the Granthis were very concerned and wanted to reduce the number of Rumala Sahib

offerings in Gurdwaras. Some of them appreciated the initiative of raising this issue through the current study. Some of the respondents recalled hearing about instances of disrespectful behaviour towards these holy textiles in the past.

In 2017, after a shocking incident of Rumala Sahib being discarded as refuse in the United Kingdom, Sikhs erupted over the issue of Rumala overload in Gurdwaras. President of the UK-based NGO Jeena, Rani Bilku, was of the opinion that devotees should help the impoverished or donate money instead of spending a great deal of money on Rumala Sahib. She also suggested that the committees of Gurdwaras to re-use these textiles as the best option.

Balwinder Kaur Saundh, a member of the Sikh Council of the United Kingdom, opined that people should purchase Rumalas from Gurdwaras and reuse them, or this practice of offering costly textiles should be discontinued (Rana, 2017).

Even a verse from Gurbani throws light on the same point to donate something with wisdom-

ਅਕਲੀ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਸੇਵੀਐ ਅਕਲੀ ਪਾਈਐ ਮਾਨੁ ॥

ਅਕਲੀ ਪੜਿ ਕੇ ਬੁਝੀਐ ਅਕਲੀ ਕੀਚੇ ਦਾਨੁ ॥

Akalee Saahib saeveeai akalee paaeeai maan

Akalee parrih kai bujheeai akalee keechai daan

(Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Page 1245)

Use wisdom in serving the Ek Onkar, use of wisdom will get you respect; use wisdom to read and understand (Gurbani); use wisdom in making donations i.e., make donations of what is needed.

During the present research, some ideas revealed to re-use the new and used Rumala Sahib were as follows:

Some of the small and used pieces were used to be spread in the baskets that were used to serve the langar to the devotees.



Plate 4.162: Old Rumala Sahib used for covering the basket to serve Langar



Plate 4.163: Big container of food covered with Rumala Sahib in langar hall



Plate 4.164: Sevadaars carrying langar covered with used Rumala Sahib



Plate 4.165: A Basket at the entrance to Gurdwara containing old Rumalas to cover the head

Used Rumalas were kept in the baskets at the entrance of the main Darbar of the Gurdwaras that were used to cover the head while entering there.

Some new and used sets of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib were given to Gurdwaras in small or remote locations where few people visited and offered these textiles. During this investigation, the researcher visited a Gurdwara in Haridwar that was built on a small piece of land. It was discovered that relatively few people usually visited that location, so they had very few Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib that were presented by some families on some special occasion. They also disclosed that they receive some used and new sets of these sacred textiles from other larger Gurdwaras in the vicinity.



Plate 4.166: Gurdwara Gyan Godri, Haridwar

Some Rumalas are used to make covers of *Pothis* or *Gutkas*.



Plate 4.167: *Pothi* wrapped in Rumala Sahib

Sometimes old Rumala Sahib are used to cover the side tables to keep the other sacred things, like containers of *Parshad*, in the Darbar Hall of the Gurdwaras.



Plate 4.168: Table covered with old Rumala Sahib

In order to prevent the desecration of these holy textiles, the authorities of Gurdwaras gather up all of the old Rumalas and burn them in a ceremony known as *Sanskar*. In the province of Punjab, there is a region known as Taran Taran, which has a place called Goindwal where the *Sanskar* ceremony is carried out.

Even in the Christian religion, the standard "rule of thumb" is to either burn the item that has been blessed (and then bury the ashes) or just bury the item⁸.

It was also questioned from each respondent whether they are aware that Gurdwaras are doing anything to minimise the overload of these fabrics. Most respondents disclosed that they were unaware of any such endeavour to lessen the load of Rumala Sahib.

⁸ <https://catholicdos.org/disposal-of-religious-items>

Table 4.19: Distribution of respondents according to their awareness regarding any initiative taken to reduce the Rumala overload

Sr. No.	Awareness about initiatives to reduce the overload of Rumala Sahib	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	32	12.8
2	No	218	87.2
	Total	250	100

Table 4.19 shows that the majority of respondents (87.2%) did not have awareness regarding any initiative taken to reduce the Rumala overload in Gurdwaras. Only 12.8 % of respondents were aware of some initiatives or the ideas followed by the Gurdwaras to re-use the Rumala Sahib. Some of the people who answered knew that Rumala Sahib was used to serve Langar and cover the heads of followers when they went into Shrines. Some of them even said that some shop owners buy the Rumala Sahib presented by devotees from some of the Gurdwaras and sell them again. During the course of the conversation with the respondents, it became clear that each and every one of them was concerned, and some even alarmed, about the steadily rising volume of these textiles. They shared their thoughts and opinions about this matter.

One of the manufacturers from Patiala expressed his opinion that “*consumers should not spend more money on these textiles. When making an offering of these holy textiles, feelings are more important than the amount of money contributed*”.

An older respondent revealed that “*we used to design and stitch the Rumala Sahib at homes to offer to our Guru, but with the increased variety available in the market, no one makes this kind of effort now and prefers to choose from the market.*” This respondent was referring to the fact that in the past, people would create the Rumala Sahib at home and sew it themselves, which had deep devotion and sanctity.

During group discussion with the respondents, which included visitors to the Gurdwaras, it was discovered that, despite being aware of the overabundance of these textiles, they nevertheless preferred to spend their money on Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib rather than on some other products that can be used in Gurdwaras. This was evident even if the devotees were aware of the circumstances. They believed that if they offered these textiles to their Guru Sahib, He would bless them with greater

wealth. "If Guru Ji is giving us so many expensive *Poshaks* (dresses), why can't we provide some for Him?" shared a devotee from Patiala.

"In our childhood, our parents would always offer a *Rumala Sahib* in the same *Gurdwara* after any of our family member's achievements, so we are following a similar tradition and will even teach this to our children in the future," explained the young devotee who had come to *Gurdwara Shri Nada Sahib* in Panchkula to share the reason for offering the set of *Rumala Sahib* and *Chandoa Sahib*.

During the present examination, the researcher came across a few devotees who held radically different opinions. According to them, "devotion is unrelated to monetary expenditures. True dedication should be found in our hearts and minds; money is immaterial." They agreed completely with the present issue of *Rumala Overload*, and they preferred contributing useful products to Sikh Shrines on occasion rather than offering heavy, expensive textiles. One respondent, a middle-aged lady, stated that she attempts to donate something from her wages to a Sikh shrine at the start of the New Year. She either asks the *Gurdwara* members what they require or thinks about it before donating. She'd rather spend her money on ceiling fans, water coolers, carpets, or repairing and maintaining the Shrines.

It was disclosed by the Granthis and authorities of the *Gurdwaras* that they communicate and make announcements on many different occasions to the devotees that they should spend less money on these textiles and try to donate some other useful things that are needed more in *Gurdwaras*. For example, they can donate carpets, rugs, or durries; medicines; fans; or they can arrange some water coolers; or they can donate some money that will be used for the repair and maintenance of the Shrines. Following the discussion of the matter, it was determined that a concerted effort on the part of all Sikhs is required in order to lessen the overabundance of *Rumala Sahib* in *Gurdwaras*. It is of the utmost significance that we concentrate on this matter and take the necessary steps on our own. The responses offered several suggestions for reusing these holy textiles in a manner that would not offend the devotees' feelings in any way.

The following are some of the recommendations that were made by them:

- These might be put to use in making some of the drapes, like curtains that are found in *Gurdwaras*.

- Utility bags can be prepared that can be used to put some religious things without hurting the sentiments of devotees.
- Because these fabrics often have elaborate ornamentation, they may be repurposed as wall hangings or other types of ornamental things.
- The Gurudwaras can purchase few sets of Rumala Sahib and people can choose and purchase from them to reuse the same again and again.
- Instead of new ones, the old Rumalas may be used to cover the side tables or other furniture items present in the Darbar Hall of the Gurdwaras.

The endeavour and initiative of recycling sacred textiles have already been taken up in numerous other countries, and the governments and people there are collaborating to make it a reality. People in our country are still extremely reluctant to take the initiative to do anything about this situation, despite their willingness to do so. People will eventually come forward to work on the reuse of Sacred Textiles if this initiative gets regularly promoted by Sikh Shrines in the future.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION



5. Summary and Conclusion

“In summary, all great work is the fruit of patience and perseverance, combined with tenacious concentration on a subject over a period of months or year” (Santiago, 2004).

Throughout its history, India has been known as a spiritual nation that is home to a wide variety of religions, cultures, and geographical settings. People of all religions express their devotion to the gods and goddesses they believe in by participating in certain rituals and adhering to specific customs. In numerous worldwide religions, it is also considered respectful to present specific kinds of textiles to gods and goddesses. The present study focuses on the offering of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib by people in the Sikh Shrines, or Gurdwaras. The Sikhs pay exactly the same kind of reverence to their Holy Scripture as they would to a living Guru; in fact, it even has a separate room in which it rests at night. The Holy Book is adorned on a raised platform beneath a canopy known as Chandoa Sahib and is wrapped in embellished sheets of fabric known as Rumala Sahib. Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, that are embellished with beautiful embroidery, have been offered by devotees in almost every Gurdwara. The present research is an attempt to put together details regarding the practice of offering, designing, producing, packaging, marketing, and preservation of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib. The concern about the overabundance of Rumala Sahib in Sikh Shrines has also been discussed.

5.1 Objectives of the study

1. To study the tradition of presenting Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in Sikh Shrines and its history.
2. To study types of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib presented at Sikh Shrines on various ceremonies and occasions.
3. To explore the process of designing, manufacturing, and marketing of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.
4. To investigate the variations in colour, fabric, stitching, decorations, and accessories of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib throughout time.
5. To study the preservation methods used in Gurdwaras for Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.
6. To gather people’s perspectives on the abundance of Rumala Sahib at Gurdwaras and to re-use the Rumala Sahib.

5.2 Limitations

1. Respondents were chosen from Northern states of India.
2. The manufacturers were selected from Amritsar, Ludhiana, and Patiala, which are the main manufacturing hubs of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.

A review of the relevant literature revealed that a substantial amount of research has been done on a variety of embroidered, woven, and embellished textiles, as well as various kinds of religious textiles. However, despite being extensively embellished textiles and being connected with the intense devotion of devotees, there has been no research on Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib offered by people in Sikh Shrines. As a result, the researcher came to the conclusion that there was a requirement for exploring these exquisite, expensive, and heavenly textiles, studying the ornamentation and making of these textiles, various changes in these sacred textiles over the years, associated people in the marketing of these textiles, finding out some solutions to minimise the increasing abundance of Rumala Sahib these days.

For the present study, a descriptive research design was used. The survey method and interview schedule were used to collect quantitative as well as qualitative data. All respondents were interviewed, and their work was photographed and documented. Primary data was also collected through observation, videography, and group discussion. Secondary data was collected from books, research papers, Gurdwara literature, publications, and Sikh websites.

Interview schedules served as the primary method for obtaining data for the current study. Five distinct interview schedules, including both open-ended and closed-ended questions, were prepared for varying categories of respondents.

The study was focused on the Holy textiles offered in Sikh Shrines, Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, which are most prevalent in Punjab, and as the majority of Sikhs reside in Punjab, it was chosen as the primary locale. Various districts from all of Punjab's regions, including Malwa, Majha, and Doaba, were included. Four out of eleven Malwa districts, one out of three Majha districts, and two out of four Doaba districts were selected purposively for data collection.

The other adjacent states of Punjab, namely Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Chandigarh and Delhi were selected as well to provide the study with diverse and extensive data.

5.3 Selection of sample

A total sample of two hundred and fifty respondents was randomly selected and divided into five different categories: Head Granthis of Gurdwaras, people visiting the Gurdwaras, manufacturers of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, workers working in those manufacturing units, and shopkeepers selling Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.

Two *Takhts* of Sikhism, namely the Akal *Takht* in Amritsar and the *Takht* Sri Keshgarh Sahib in Anandpur Sahib, as well as historical Gurudwaras from each selected region, were visited to collect the data. Head Granthi or another official were personally interviewed. The auspicious prayers and the process of offering Rumala Sahib in various Gurdwaras were also witnessed with their cooperation and guidance.

Interviews were also conducted with six men and women, irrespective of their age group, visiting each of the selected Gurdwaras, comprising a total of one hundred and twenty persons. Group discussions with them were also held regarding issues such as the overabundance of Rumala Sahib in Gurdwaras. Fifteen manufacturers producing these Holy textiles, along with the workers, were also interviewed to study the designing, manufacturing, and marketing processes of these Holy textiles. They were also questioned about the many modifications in design that have occurred throughout the years. Twenty shopkeepers from the selected locations were chosen at random and personally questioned to learn the facts linked to the products, marketing process, various designs, and customers' demands.

5.4 Analysis of data

The most important task following the collection of relevant data was the analysis of non-numerical data and information, such as interview transcripts, notes, video and audio recordings, images, and text documents. Particular themes or codes were assigned to organise the collected data and identified several prevalent themes, responses, and associations within the sample responses. The frequency and percentage of some questions were also calculated and tabulated.

5.5 Major Findings of the study

The findings of the research were discussed under different sections -

5.5.1 Demographic profile of respondents

Age group-

Head Granthis of all selected Sikh Shrines were asked about their age group. 45% of them were between 40 and 50 years old, 35% of Head Granthis were older than 50 years, and 20% were between 30 and 40 years old.

25.8 % of visitors to the Gurdwaras were over 50 years old, 21.7% were between 30 and 40 years old, and 19.2% were in the age group of 20 to 30 years old. Most of the manufacturers were between 40 - 50 years old, with 26.7% being between 30 and 40 years old and 13.3% being over 50 years old.

34.7% of the workers from the selected manufacturing units that were engaged in various skills were in the age group of 40 -50 years old, 29.3% were 30 to 40 years old, 21.3% were 20 to 30, and 20 % were under 20 years. Only 8% of them were over 50 years old.

40% of store owners selling Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib were over 50 years old, 35% were between 40 to 50 years old, 15% were between 30 and 40 years old, and 10% were between 20 and 30 years.

Educational qualification

The majority (60%) of Head Granthis were graduates, 20% were professionals with degrees in B. Ed, Gyani, etc., 10% were postgraduates, and 10% completed 10th grade.

Visitors to Gurdwaras with bachelor's degree (34.1%) and postgraduate degree (33.3%) dominated the survey. 10.9% had professional degrees like MBA, B.Tech, etc; 10% had high school diplomas; 10% of them were illiterate; and 1.7% had middle school certificates.

Manufacturers had bachelor's degree (60%), professional degree (20%), master's degree (13.3%) and 6.7% of them completed high school.

34.7% of workers were graduates, while 24% studied until 10th grade only. 21.3% of the workforce was professionally trained in embroidery, needlework, marketing, and others 9.3% of illiterate workers performed family-taught manual labour.

Most shopkeepers (45%) had a graduation degree, followed by 30% with a postgraduate degree; 10% of them had professional degrees; 10% completed middle school; and 5% were illiterate.

Religion of respondents

It was found after studying the demographic characteristics of respondents that all the Head Granthis of Sikh Shrines were Sikh. Most of the people (64.1%) who went to Gurdwaras and were taken for the study were also Sikh. Only 35.9% of respondents visiting the Gurdwaras were Hindu.

All of the manufacturers involved in the creation and production of Rumala Sahib were also Sikhs. The Sikh faith was represented by the majority of workers (82.7%) in the manufacturing units. Some (13.3%) were Hindus, whereas just 4% were Muslims. 90% of shopkeepers were Sikhs, while 10% were Hindus.

5.5.2 History and practice of offering Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

Respondents were asked about the history and practice of presenting the Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in Sikh Shrines. Guru Granth Sahib, considered the "living Guru," is often adorned with intricately designed textiles to express respect and devotion. It was revealed by respondents that initially Guru Nanak Dev started using fabric to wrap the books containing Holy texts, *pothis*, which was also followed by other Gurus. Guru Arjan Dev also began wrapping the Holy Scripture in white muslin cloth after its compilation. Since then, it has become a tradition to wrap the Holy Scripture into the fabric. In addition to white cloth, people started using colourfully embellished textiles to wrap the Sacred Book. It was also revealed that Sikh Gurus were covered with a fabric canopy that is now called Chandoa Sahib by his followers to avoid dust, birds' refuge, and other elements while walking from place to place. As time passed, people began using beautiful, colourful canopies instead of plain white ones. This practice continued even when the Guru Granth Sahib was given the status of a Live Guru.

Rumala Sahib was used to wrap the Holy Book for mainly two reasons: respecting the Guru's *Shabad* and preserving the sanctity of the Holy Scripture. It was also scientifically necessary to preserve the written *Shabad* on paper. In earlier times, the entire text was written by hand, making it essential to keep the text safe and preserve its sacredness, the custom of wrapping the holy text in fabric started.

Some of the respondents discussed that people used to make these devotional textiles themselves using silk or cotton materials and embellished them with braids or laces. However, as time passed, people began using more vibrant and ornamented fabrics. Chandoa Sahib was stitched by family members, adding frills and embroidery by hand. Only standard size Rumala Sahib, including a maximum of four pieces, were made, and these were washed well before being presented to the Guru Granth Sahib. Now Rumala Sahib is prepared as per the specific dimensions and requirements of the Darbar hall of a Sikh Shrine. Single Rumala Sahib contains three components (one sheet and two small side sheets called *palakan*), double Rumala Sahib has four components (two sheets and two *palakan*), and set of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in various hues, embellishments, and designs are offered these days in Sikh Shrines.

To know the frequency of visit to various Sikh Gurdwaras, data was collected from 120 people visiting the Shrines and found that 43.3% of respondents occasionally visited Gurdwaras, while 29.2% visited daily and 15% visited weekly. Some visited on Sundays due to their busy working days, while others visited once a month only. The majority of respondents (81.7%) had the experience of offering Rumala Sahib in Gurdwaras or organizing *Path* at their premises, while 18.3% had never presented it. Some of the devotees revealed the reason for presenting these textiles as the fulfillment of their vows made to their Guru, carrying forward the tradition of offering these textiles on special occasions like Diwali, Gurburb, Parkash Utsav, Baisakhi or birthdays and anniversaries of the family members, to take the blessings of their Divine Guru, etc. Gurdwara officials said that anyone of any gender or religion may present Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, which can be in any colour, fabric, style, or price. Devotees can also create these textiles and present them.

5.5.3 Changes in fabric, colours, embellishments, stitching and accessories of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib throughout the time

With the passage of time, advancements, and increased spending capacity, there have been many changes in the fabric, colours, embellishments, and stitching of these textiles. Most respondents (90.4%) thought that the colours for these textiles were changed to fit the seasons and events. Very few of them (9.6%) said Rumala and Chandoa Sahib's colours do not alter with seasons or events. Shop owners revealed that devotees now ask for certain colours of these textiles for different occasions and festivals. Some particular colours, like red, maroon, pink, and orange, were bought by them for important events, like weddings and the anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev. People who have been to Gurdwaras also said that they preferred these fabrics based on the occasion. Along with the designs and patterns, the embellishments and fabrics used to make these textiles have also changed over time.

Head Granthis revealed that the trend of using coloured textiles emerged in recent times over the last two decades; otherwise, Guru Granth Sahib did not specify any colours for different occasions. Now, people choose the colours and fabric of Rumala Sahib as per various seasons and occasions. Orange, yellow, and blue were found to be the most commonly purchased colours due to their significance in Sikhism. Orange symbolizes wisdom, sacrifice, character, and is associated with the *Nishan Sahib* (triangular flag), while yellow represents happiness, mental clarity, and concentration, and blue depicts protection and warrior. Cotton, net, chiffon and crepes were popular during the summer, while in the winter, materials like velvet, silk, brocade, piled- blanket material were used. Even though the Holy Granth is wrapped in colourful, embroidered Rumala, only white cotton sheets are used inside as an inner layer under the coloured Rumala Sahib.

Some of the Granthis revealed that in the past, women used plain braids (*gotta*) to finish and stitch Simple Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib themselves. They also sometimes did a few stitches of hand embroidery. To make the Chandoa Sahib, they used to make frills with knife pleats and finish the same with piping or braid. After machine embroidery became popular, people started to get it decorated with machine work, beads, and stones. This was done to make it look more beautiful and decorative. Rumala sets became more popular and in demand as devotee's tastes changed and their ability to spend money grew. Today, these fabrics are made with many different kinds of

decorations and embellishments, even with hand painting. The number of components in a set of Rumala and Chandoa Sahib has also added to its grandeur. Sikh followers occasionally offer Rumala Sahib as a way of expressing their love and devotion to the Guru Granth Sahib, as they consider the Holy Granth as their living Guru. The use of Rumala Sahib indicates the Sikhs' respect for their scripture. It represents the sacredness of the Guru Granth Sahib's words and the reverence with which Sikhs treat their religious teachings. Artisans, in particular, play an important role in the production of these embroidered textiles establishing a sense of community and shared devotion.

Earlier, a Rumala Sahib set, consisting four components with two large sheets and two little rectangular sheets named *Palkan*, was popular. In the present times, these three to four components in a set of Rumala and Chandoa Sahib can now go up to twenty pieces. Every Gurdwara usually has specific size charts of these components depending upon the size and interior of the Darbar hall of the Gurdwara. Manufacturers create these sacred textiles as per the size chart of a particular Gurdwara. In case the size chart is not there, the standard size Rumala and Chandoa Sahib may be offered. The standard sizes of Single Rumala Sahib were mentioned as 42x50 inches (single sheet) and 18x18 inches (2 side *Palkan*) or 45x45 inches (single sheet) and 20x20 inches (2 side *Palkan*). Standard size of the Double Rumala Sahib was 44 x 55 inches (2 pieces of Rumala) and 20 x 20 inches (2 pieces *Palkan*) or 42 x 50 inches and 18 x 18 inches (2 pieces *Palkan*) or 41 x 49 inches and 20 x 20 inches (2 pieces *Palkan*). The common sizes of Chandoa Sahib were found to be 4 x 4 feet, 4 x 6 feet, 5 x 5 feet, 4.5 x 5 feet, 7 x 7 feet, or 10 x10 feet.

Palki Sahib (wooden or metallic) constitutes an important part of the Platform, or *Takht*, inside the Darbar Hall, which has been modified with the passage of time. Instead of only being wooden, *Palki* can now be found in metallic, marble and aluminium. Portable *Palkis* that can be disassembled and reassembled easily were also found. *Chattar Sahib*, -an embellished fabric umbrella, is also used these days to cover Guru Granth Sahib while carrying from one place to another. Another accessory was, *Chhabba Sahib* which is hung on the front side or centre of the Chandoa Sahib, and flower garlands that add beauty to the Darbar Hall of a Gurdwara.

5.5.4 Offering of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib on different ceremonies and occasions

Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are offered during the rituals and ceremonies related to Sikhism that are practiced at specific moments in a person's life. The main ceremonies are the child's naming ceremony: Nam Karan, which involved singing hymns from the Holy Granth and giving Amrit to both mother and infant, and embroidered Rumala Sahib are presented by the family to the Holy Scripture.

On Baptism, a highly revered ceremony and the celebration of *Path* by the families at their home, Gurdwaras, or any workplace that may be *Akhand Path*, *Saptahik Path*, or *Sahaj Path*, Rumala Sahib by the devotees are offered. The decorated Rumala Sahib is carried by the bride as well as the groom to the Darbar Hall of the Sikh Shrine and presented to Guru Granth Sahib at the important moment of a Sikh wedding, or Anand Karaj. Offering of the Sacred textiles is also practiced by the people on occasions like Gurburb, special days, and anniversaries associated with the lives of Sikh Gurus like the birth ceremony of Guru Nanak Dev, Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev, Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, Martyrdom of five Sahibzada's (sons of Guru Gobind Singh). Rumala Sahib is also presented on the occasion of *Dastaar Bandhi*, a significant ceremony in which a turban is put on a boy's head between the ages of 11 and 16. Yellow and orange coloured Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are offered in Sikh Shrines on Baisakhi as these colours are associated with Khalsa orders. Diwali, a festival of light also called *Bandi Chhor diwas* was the celebration of the release of Guru Har Gobind Singh from Gwalior prison. A large number of textiles are offered on this auspicious day. Some respondents also mentioned particular colours of Rumala Sahib offered on various events, like red and maroon on Gurburb, white or off white on the martyrdom of Sikh Gurus and yellow and orange on Baisakhi.

5.5.5 Designing and manufacturing of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

To explore the process of designing and manufacturing devotional textiles, manufacturers as well as workers involved in the manufacturing units were interviewed. The manufacturers discussed their experiences in this field, their progression from a modest business to expanded industries, and the cyclical shifts they had observed in the fashion of these Sacred textiles. The workers from chosen manufacturing units in Amritsar, Ludhiana, and Patiala were also asked questions through interviews.

To design a Rumala Sahib or Chandoa Sahib, the size and number of pieces needed for the Darbar Hall is considered first. Rumala Sahib is prepared as per the standard sizes, with two varieties: single and double. Most devotees purchase standard sizes for Gurdwaras. Special sets of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are also offered, such as in Darbar Sahib, Amritsar. These sets are prepared according to the main hall specifications of the Gurdwara. Personalized sets are designed by manufacturers and shopkeepers based on size charts of significant or nearby Gurdwaras. Each Gurdwara has its own dimensions as per the various furniture articles present in the main Darbar hall of the Gurdwara. A set may contain as many as components. The double Rumala set was found to be the most purchased type of Rumala Sahib.

Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib were made from a variety of fabrics and raw materials, making it challenging for the manufacturers to keep track of colours and material combinations. Various types of pre-embellished fabrics were also used by the manufacturers as well as the shopkeepers to stitch Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib. Fabric selection was based on seasonal preferences, with silk being the most marketed fabric by both manufacturers (100%) and shopkeepers (100%). Velvet was preferred by 93.3% of manufacturers and 80% of shopkeepers. Woollen fabric was preferred by 93.3% manufacturers and 75% shopkeepers. 86.6% of the manufacturers and 80% of shopkeepers liked brocade. Chiffon fabric was preferred by 73.3% of manufacturers and 20% of shopkeepers. Cotton and towel terry fabric were preferred by only a few clients. High-quality silk and velvet were sourced from Surat, Bangalore, Ahmadabad, Delhi, and Bombay.

After choosing the piece's design and fabric, the customers were provided with the colour chart so they could choose their favourite for the custom pieces. Visitors to Gurdwaras responded that they offered these Holy textiles in a variety of colours, with some preferring vibrant colours, others choosing sober colours, and the majority choosing according to the occasion and season. The fabric was then cut by considering the required size of the textiles. Fifteen-inch extra fabric was cut if the textiles were to be designed with embroidery. Large sheets of tracing paper scribbled with a pen or pencil were used to trace the desired design on the fabric before embroidery or embellishments. The design was traced out with a solution made by mixing powdered blue or zinc powder with kerosene oil.

Rumala Sahib are made from various embellished materials, including embroidered, woven, brocaded, sequined, printed, or patterned fabrics. Embroidery techniques like machine work, handwork, applique, and zardozi work are employed to create extensive embellished sets. Hand painting and block printing are also used. Although rare, few people work on these embellished items on an order.

Research showed that embroidery was the most preferred ornamentation technique for religious textiles, with handwork like *dabka*, *aari* work, and *zardozi* being the most popular embellishments. Some other embellishments used on these Holy textiles were *cutdana work*, *sippy sitara work*, *gotta patti work*, *Resham ka kaam*, *moti ka kaam* and *applique* work. Customers sometimes ordered specially embellished textiles, such as a complete set with Phulkari embroidery and fabric painting, for their wedding day.

The Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib showcased intricate embroidery work, with workers seated close together in manufacturing units. The two most commonly found tools were needles and *aari*, a crochet needle or pen-like instrument used to embroider designs into fabric. Back stitch, running stitch, chain stitch, and satin stitch were the common stitches used for creating designs. A layer of fuse paper was attached to the reverse side of the fabric to be embroidered.

The embroidery work used cotton, silk, and *zari* threads, with additional embellishments like *sippi*, *sitare*, beads, and *kundan*. The design was embellished with decorative materials like *salma*, *dabka*, *badla*, *nakshi*, and *gotta*. Zardozi work used thin, coiled wires like *dabka*, *badla*, *salma*, and *tilla*. Threads were used for the primary design, and embellishments were further sewn onto the fabric. The raw material was procured from Surat, Delhi, and Lucknow by some of the manufacturers.

Flowers and creepers were the most commonly found motifs on these sacred textiles. Along with the flower motifs, *Kingrewali bootti*, *Gol bootti*, *Seeti bootti*, *Chauras bootti*, *Gamla bootti*, *Aath kone wala design*, *Badaam bootti*, *Star bootti*, *Aath kali bootti*, *Chhe kali bootti*, Sooraj booti and some religious motifs like Ek Onkar and Khanda were also embroidered. After embroidery or embellishments, finishing was done, and the components were sent to stitching units. Finishing was done by adding braids, *gotta*, lace, a fabric band and tassels on the edges. It was revealed by the manufacturers that most of the time, flat golden braids were used to finish the edges.

Braids with fringes or *gotta tikki* were not used as an embellishment on Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.

For stitching Chandoa Sahib, lining material was attached to the main fabric after embroidery or prior to it, depending on the type of fabric. The main feature of Chandoa Sahib was the elaborately created knife pleats on all four sides or along the circumference, which consumed many metres of fabric. The frills were finished with piping, braid, *gotta*, band, etc. Chandoa Sahib was crafted in circular, square, and rectangular forms, but square and rectangular were the most preferred. The double-coloured frills were the latest trend in the Chandoa Sahib. The *Sehra patti* (a band in front) was the highlighted element of Chandoa Sahib that has a verse from Gurbani and generally the Sikh Motifs written with either embroidery or applique work. The *Slok* or the verse may be selected by the devotees while ordering the textile or by the manufacturers themselves. Metallic rings or fabric straps were attached to all the sides of Chandoa Sahib to enable it to hang easily. A big metallic ring is also attached at the centre of Chandoa Sahib to hang *Jhoomer*.

After finishing Chandoa Sahib and Rumala Sahib, the other required components of the set were stitched in accordance with the size, design, and requirements of the Darbar Hall. After steam pressing, the prepared set was packaged either in transparent bags or bonded fabric bags. The sets with heavy embroidery offered in Harmandir Sahib were packed in muslin fabric (*kora kapda*).

5.5.6 Marketing of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

It was found that a significant number of people, skilled, educated and illiterate, were involved in the production of these Divine textiles for use in Sikh Shrines. Proper protocol, i.e., cleaning hand, covering heads, and removing shoes, was followed at the shops as well as in the manufacturing units. Before displaying the Sacred textiles, a clean white sheet was spread on the surface to maintain the sanctity of the textiles. The manufacturers and shopkeepers thought themselves blessed to be involved in that profession. Some of them were carrying forward their ancestor's businesses. The majority of manufacturers (73.3%) accepted orders from other countries, such as the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Kenya, and Australia, via email and WhatsApp. Few of the shopkeepers (10%) received orders from foreign nations, while most of them (90%) supplied local markets and a few other cities. The majority of shop owners (90%) and

33.3% of manufacturers sold their products within their own establishments only, and the orders were taken either by the store owners themselves or by other trained experts. Orders were taken through email or WhatsApp. Some makers revealed that they have a catalogue of different Rumala Sahib designs. Each design has a unique number or code. The buyer chose the design's individual code number and confirmed it with the producers for future processing. They also accommodated some alterations, such as colour combinations, braid types, and so on, based on the needs of the consumers.

It was discovered that numerous marketing methods, particularly those implemented through social platforms, contributed to an increase in their sales over the course of the preceding several years. The majority of the manufacturers had their own webpages on social media sites, including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn and had collaborations with marketing platforms like Amazon, India mart, Justdial, etc. They also had collaborations with some news channels, like PTC Punjabi, Chardi kalan, etc; to advertise their products. They distributed printed pamphlets in their cities through newspapers, especially near particular festivals like Gurburb, Baisakhi, and Diwali, etc. It was further revealed by the manufacturers that various marketing strategies, including social media marketing, influenced the sales of their products. Most of the shopkeepers (55%) procured stitched and readymade Rumala Sahib from the manufacturers, and some of them (10%) had their own tailors or workshops. 35% of the shopkeepers were procuring readymade Rumalas from outside as well as preparing themselves.

Most manufacturing enterprises had their own transportation services to deliver their goods to local and distant markets. 73.3% of manufacturing units shipped their products by land, sea, and air too. 13.3% of them sent their goods by road only. 6.7% of them solely shipped their goods by air or sea. All the store owners selling Rumala Sahib transported their goods only by road.

The most typical item that devotees purchased and offered in practically all Gurdwaras was a double Rumala Sahib, which was priced between two hundred and four hundred rupees. The initial price for a set of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib was approximately two thousand five hundred to four thousand rupees. The price of these textiles can increase significantly, even reaching several lacs, depending on the type of cloth, the level of craftsmanship, and the other raw materials utilised. The cost of the

set that is offered in Harmandir Sahib every day, including twelve components, was told as sixty thousand to two lakh rupees.

46.7% of manufacturing units generated a profit of 25-30% after selling the ready Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, followed by 20% that made more than 30%. 13.3% of units made 20-25%, 13.3% gained 15-20%, and 6.7% made 10-15% profit. After selling these textiles, 70% of shopkeepers made an average profit of 15-20%, with 15% of them earning 20-25% and 10% earning 10-15%. Only 5% of store owners made 25-30% profit.

All the workers were provided with some incentives in the form of bonus money or other gifts, along with their salaries. The majority of manufacturers (40%) were paying per piece to their workers. Only 13.3 % of them were giving monthly salaries to their workers. 46.7% of manufacturers paid their employees using all three methods: per piece, per day, and at the end of the month. Mostly, they were paid per day for embroidery and on a piece basis for stitching work.

5.5.7 Preservation of presented Rumala Sahib

Interview and observation methods were used to learn about each Gurudwara's preservation methods for Rumala Sahib. During the research, it was revealed by the Shrines' authorities that 60% of them were preserving the offered Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib for further use, where as 40% of respondents did not preserve any of the offered textiles for future use. Most Gurdwaras had proper storage space and cupboards. The storage space was dusted and cleaned regularly to protect the fabrics. The intricately embroidered objects were folded and packed in plastic bags or cotton cloth sheets. Some Gurdwaras did not preserve any offered textiles since the number of offerings was very large.

The stored textiles were unfolded after a period of time, usually months, to prevent damage from the folds. The majority of Granthis were involved in the preservation of these textiles, while certain Gurdwaras with a huge collection of preserved textiles engaged personnel to look after them on a regular basis.

Only a small percentage of Gurdwaras were reusing the Rumala Sahib that had been offered by the devotees. The Granthis claimed that the laundry room and washing machine were meticulously cleaned before these fabrics were washed. Separate

washing machines were used for these sacred textiles. All necessary precautions were taken during washing, drying, and storage, including washing hands, taking off shoes, and covering the head.

5.5.8 Abundance of Rumala Sahib in Sikh Shrines

It was revealed by the Head Granthis that in modern times practically all of the Gurdwaras are struggling with the issue of Rumala Overload due to the extremely high number of offerings of these textiles on a number of occasions. All 250 respondents taken for the study were asked about their point of view or their awareness about the issue of the overload of these textiles in Gurdwaras. The majority of respondents (84.8%) responded that they were aware of the increasing overload of offered Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in Sikh Shrines.

It was found that in some Gurdwaras, Rumala Sahib was used only once. The twelve-piece set, weighing twenty to thirty kilograms due to its rich ornamentation and several layers of cloth that take many days for several workers and artisans to prepare, was changed daily with the new one in Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar. It was found that after adorning it for only one day, it was never used again. If a devotee wants to offer the Divine textiles in Harmandir Sahib, the waiting period is about a year.

During the present study, the researcher observed that many devotees present Rumala Sahib to Gurdwaras on certain occasions in order to present it to their Guru for fulfilling their vows. Gurdwaras received a larger number of these textiles on special occasions such as Baisakhi, Diwali, and Gurpurb.

It was revealed by the Gurdwara authorities that despite time-to-time announcements and requests to spend less money on the Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, people present these textiles daily and on certain days in all Gurdwaras. The majority of Head Granthis (60%) disclosed that they were attempting to reuse these Holy Textiles, but despite this fact, the Gurdwaras were still overflowing with an abundance of these textiles. The old Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib were found used to serve langar to devotees, cover the basket to serve Langar, and cover the heads of devotees at the entrance of the main Darbar of the Gurdwaras. In addition, some Rumala Sahib were used to make covers of *Pothis* or *Gutkas*, and the authorities of Gurdwaras gathered up all of the old Rumala and burned them in a ceremony known as Sanskar at Goindwal,

a place in Panjab. Some were used to cover the tables or stools in the Darbar Hall. Respondents were asked about their point of view regarding re using these textiles. 82.8% were in favour of the idea, while 17.2% were quite reluctant to talk about it.

The vast majority of respondents (87.2%) were unaware of any initiative taken to reduce the overload of Rumala Sahib. It was revealed that the Granthis and authorities of the Gurdwaras communicate and make announcements to the devotees to donate other useful things such as carpets, rugs, durries, medicines, fans, water coolers, or money for the repair and maintenance of the Shrines. It was determined that a concerted effort on the part of all Sikhs was needed to lessen the overabundance of Rumala Sahib in Gurdwaras. The responses offered suggestions for reusing holy textiles in a way that would not hurt the feelings of devotees. These included making drapes, utility bags to be used in Shrines, wall hangings of used Rumala Sahib. It was suggested to use them to cover side tables or other furniture items in the Darbar hall. There were a few respondents who suggested that ornamented Rumala Sahib can be procured by Gurdwaras from the manufacturers, and these can be further purchased by devotees. They further added that the same Rumalas can be reused by other devotees by purchasing them from Gurdwaras and making this a cycle, thus minimizing the overload.

The initiative of reusing Rumala Sahib has already been taken up in other nations, but respondents in my study from India indicated that they are still hesitant to take the initiative.

5.6 Conclusion

Since the Vedic period, the 'word' and '*Shabad*' have been of great significance in the Indian tradition of knowledge. Dialogue created the tradition of knowing the "word," ascending, and comprehending more. The greatest example of this is the Indian Scriptures.

To imbibe the supreme greatness of *Shabad/Gyan* and language, the wrapping of the scriptures in a clean and pure cloth was initiated. The books that were the source of knowledge and considered to be Supreme were enveloped in a clean cloth and stored in an elevated position where they could be handled with care and their quality could be preserved. In addition to Hindu and Islamic texts, Guru Nanak Dev introduced a new

era of knowledge in the form of *Pothis*, the compilation of which is known as the Guru Granth Sahib. The Holy Granth had always been wrapped in a white cotton cloth, but as time and technology progressed, the tradition of using a basic fabric evolved into a more elaborate one. The Chandoa Sahib was originally used as a simple fabric canopy to shield the Guru from impurities and bird droppings when he moved outside. Over time, it evolved into an elaborately embroidered and crafted piece of cloth that is tied and draped above the Guru Granth Sahib in each Gurdwara, and it is believed to be a mandatory element in Gurdwaras. Numerous alterations to the Holy wrappings offered in Sikh Shrines have resulted from the evolution of art, design, and devotion. Several artisans, tailors, designers, shopkeepers, manufacturers, and vendors are now involved in the Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib manufacturing and distribution sectors. The majority of the manufacturers of Rumala Sahib export their exquisitely crafted textiles to other countries in addition to serving their domestic market. So many different kinds of fabrics are used to create these textiles with varied embellishments. These textiles range in price from hundreds of rupees to several lakhs of rupees. Rumala Sahib's grandeur originates from its symbolic significance, artistic beauty, ceremonial use, personal contributions, global appreciation, and Sikhs' deep regard for their sacred scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib. This study looked at how Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib have changed over time, as well as how they have been marketed and distributed. As Guru Granth Sahib is considered the Living Guru by the Sikhs, the fabric, colour, and embellishments of these textiles are chosen according to the season and occasion. On almost every occasion associated with the Sikh religion, Rumala Sahib is presented to the Holy Book in various Sikh Shrines, resulting in an abundance of these offered textiles in Gurdwaras. During the course of the research, it was discovered that there are still few Gurdwaras in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand where the Holy Granth is still wrapped in simple textiles, and the quantity of textiles is also very low. Possible causes include a lower Sikh population in the area and fewer visitors to Gurdwaras. This issue has been of concern to the Sikh community for the past few years, but due to the prevalent tradition, sentiments, and devotion, devotees continue to engage in the practice of offering these textiles despite repeated requests from the Gurdwaras committees. The study concludes that the trend of presenting elaborate sets of Rumala Sahib has dominated the tradition and people's devotion. The feeling and act of devotion to the One can also be expressed through simplicity, so devotees can offer these textiles in a limited number. Through the current study, an effort was made to raise public

awareness of the issue and identify some solutions for dealing with the abundance of these textiles in Gurdwaras while maintaining their sanctity.

5.7 Implications of the study

1. The present research will be beneficial for researchers who want to undertake studies on religious textiles.
2. Documentation of textiles will help in preserving cultural heritage.
3. Documentation of the textile would serve as a resource material to academicians, art lovers, historians, designers, and manufacturers interested in Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.
4. Documentation of Divine textiles, their designs and transformation with time would serve as a valuable asset for future generations.
5. The study will be helpful in making people aware about the Rumala abundance in the Sikh Shrines.
6. The study will be useful to bring some ideas to re-use the offered Rumala Sahib in various Sikh shrines.

5.8 Future recommendations

1. Similar research can be undertaken at different locales in the world, and comparisons can be drawn.
2. An experimental study on designing of Rumala Sahib can be done with surface ornamentation techniques like fabric painting, block printing, resist dyeing using natural dyes, etc.
3. A study on reusing or repurposing of Divine textiles can be undertaken.
4. A comparative study of the practice of offering Rumala Sahib between different regions of India can be conducted.
5. A study of Sacred textiles presented in other religions can also be undertaken.

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GLOSSARY

1. Akhand path- continuous reading of Guru Granth Sahib
2. Amritdhari Sikhs-a sikh who has been initiated into the Khalsa
3. Anand Karaj- sikh wedding ceremony
4. Ardas -prayer
5. Chandoa Sahib- is a canopy made of embellished cloth, which covers Guru Granth Sahib from top.
6. Chaur Sahib-fly whisk
7. Chhattar- a royal canopy
8. Daan -charity
9. Deodi- an entrance or a gateway, through which one has to pass before reaching the shrine.
10. Dwara - gateway or seat
11. Golak-is usually kept in front of the Darbar of Shrine into which the devotees drop their cash offerings.
12. Granthi- a ceremonial reader of Guru Granth Sahib
13. Gurbani -the utterance of the Guru
14. Gurdwara- a place of worship in Sikhism
15. Guru - spiritual master
16. Hukamnama - the divine command
17. Kangha - comb
18. Kara- bracelet
19. Karah Prasad- a sweet flour-based recipe
20. Kesh -hair
21. Khalsa -a community that considers Sikhism as its faith.
22. Khanda- a symbol of Sikh faith
23. Kirtan -singing of hymns

24. Lavan - the hymn read at the time of marriage
25. Panj Payaras-five Baptized Sikhs
26. Path - recitation of the Scripture
27. Pothi - a sacred book that consists Gurbani or sacred text.
28. Raagi- musicians
29. Rehat Maryada -the code of discipline of the Sikhs
30. Rehras- the evening prayer.
31. Rumala Sahib- a square or rectangular piece of fabric that is used to cover the Guru Granth Sahib.
32. Serai -a boarding and lodging place for the people visiting the Gurdwara from distant places
33. Sewa- service
34. Shabad - hymns from Sikh Scripture
35. Slok- a verse from Gurbani
36. Sukhasan Room -rest room for Guru Granth Sahib
37. Takht- royal throne

ANNEXURE I

Dear participants,

I am pursuing my research on topic ‘‘A Study and Documentation of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib offered in Sikh Shrines’’ from University Institute of Fashion Technology and V.D, Panjab University, Chandigarh. This interview schedule is intended to gather information for this research work. The information provided by you will be kept confidential and used only for academic purpose

HEAD GRANTHIS OF GURDWARAS

1. Name –
2. Age-
3. Gender-
4. Educational qualification-
5. Time of joining as Head Granthi-
6. Religion-

History /origin of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

7. What do you know about the history of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
8. What was the reason behind using Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib ?
9. What is their significance in Sikh religion?

Fabric, designs and Embellishments

10. Do you think, with time, there have come some changes in fabric used, designs and embellishment used for Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
11. If yes, what types of changes has come?
12. When the Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are offered in Gurdwaras?
13. Is there any particular time or occasion to offer these?
14. Is anybody from every religion can offer Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
15. Is there any particular Slok to be read while offering Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?

16. What are the different sizes of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
17. Which size of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are offered most
Single
Double
Complete set
18. Do the designs or type of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib change with occasion to occasion and season to season?
If yes, how?
19. Are there particular motifs or designs to be embroidered on Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
If yes, what?
20. What is their significance?
21. Are there particular colours of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib to be offered on different occasions?
22. How many Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are offered in your Gurdwaras in a month?
23. Can a person offer Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib designed and prepared by himself/ herself?
24. When do you change Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?

Use and re use

25. For how many times a Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib is used?
26. Do you wash and reuse the offered Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib or use it once only?
27. What do you do of used Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
28. Do you agree that Gurdwaras are overloaded with offered Rumala Sahib?
29. Are you doing something to reduce the overload of Rumala Sahib in Gurdwaras?
30. Do you think that something should be done to reduce this overload?

31. What can be done to reduce this overload?
32. Can we re use the Rumala Sahib or develop any other products from it?
If yes, what can we do?

Preservation / Conservation

33. Do you preserve the used Rumalas?
34. Where do you preserve the used or new Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
35. How do you preserve the new and used Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
36. Do you have proper and sufficient storage place for this purpose?
37. Do you have some special people to conserve or preserve the Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
38. How do you wash Rumala Sahib?

ANNEXURE II

Dear participants,

I am pursuing my research on topic ‘‘A Study and Documentation of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib offered in Sikh Shrines’’ from University Institute of Fashion Technology and V.D, Panjab University, Chandigarh. This interview schedule is intended to gather information for this research work. The information provided by you will be kept confidential and used only for academic purpose

PEOPLE VISITING GURDWARAS

Demographic profile

1. Name-
2. Age-
3. Gender-
4. Religion-
5. Educational qualification-
6. When do you come to Gurdwara

Daily

Weekly

Occasionally

Monthly

Other

Practice of offering Rumala Sahib

7. Can you tell something about history of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
8. Have you ever offered Rumala Sahib or Chandoa Sahib?
9. If yes, when and at which occasion?
10. Why do you offer Rumala Sahib or Chandoa Sahib?
11. From where you purchase these textiles?

Fabric, designs and embellishments

12. What types of Rumala sahib and Chandoa Sahib are offered in Gurdwaras?
13. Which fabrics are more used for the Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
14. Which colours are more used for Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
15. Do you think, with time, there have come some changes in fabric used, designs and embellishment used for Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
16. If yes, what types of changes have come?
17. Do the designs or type of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib change with occasion to occasion and season to season?
18. If yes, how?
19. Are there particular motifs or designs to be embroidered on Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
20. If yes, which are those motifs?

Reuse of Rumala Sahib

21. Do you agree that Gurdwaras are overloaded with offered Rumala Sahib?
22. Do you think they are doing something to reduce this overload ?
Yes
No
23. How are they reducing this overload?
24. What can be done in your opinion to reduce this overload?
25. Can we re use the Rumala Sahib or develop any other products from it.
If yes, what can we do

ANNEXURE III

Dear participants,

I am pursuing my research on topic ‘‘A Study and Documentation of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib offered in Sikh Shrines’’ from University Institute of Fashion Technology and V.D, Panjab University, Chandigarh. This interview schedule is intended to gather information for this research work. The information provided by you will be kept confidential and used only for academic purpose

SHOPKEEPER

Demographic profile

1. Name –
2. Age-
3. Gender-
4. Educational qualification-
5. Religion-
6. Date of establishment-

Types and sizes of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

1. What products do you have in your shop?
Rumala Sahib only
Chandoa Sahib only
Sets of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib
Any other
2. How many varieties are available in your store?
3. How many sizes are available of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
4. Which types of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are mostly ordered to be prepared customized?
Single
Double
Sets

5. Do you take order from customers to prepare as per their choice?
6. Which type of fabric is more used for Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
7. What are the different prices of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?

Fabric, designs and embellishments

8. Do you think, with time, there have come some changes in fabric used, designs and embellishment used for Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
9. If yes, what types of changes has come?
10. Do the designs or type of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib change with occasion to occasion and season to season?
If yes, how
11. Are there particular motifs or designs to be embroidered on Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
If yes, which are those?

Marketing/ distribution

12. Do you procure the prepared pieces or get them prepared on order?
13. From where you procure the prepared ones?
14. How do you place the order for products?
Online
By distributors
By direct visiting the manufacturing unit
15. Do you sell your products online?
16. How do you promote your products in market?
17. Do you supply to other cities too?
18. If yes, how do you supply there?
19. Do you have your own transport to supply your products?
20. Where are the products marketed?
 1. Local Market
 2. Throughout country
 3. Export internationally
 4. All above

Price/ profit

21. What is the approximate price of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in your shop?
22. How much money is spent by people on purchasing Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
23. Approximately how much profit you get on one article?
 1. 10-15%
 2. 15-20%
 3. 20-25%
 4. 25-30%
 5. More

Re use of Rumala Sahib

24. Do you agree that Gurdwaras are overloaded with offered Rumala Sahib?
25. Do you think they are doing something to reduce this overload?
 - Yes
 - No
26. How are they reducing this overload?
27. What can be done in your opinion to reduce this overload?
28. Can we re use the Rumala Sahib or develop any other products from it?
 - If yes, what can we do
29. Do you know about any person/ organization working on re use of Rumala Sahib?

ANNEXURE IV

Dear participants,

I am pursuing my research on topic ‘‘A Study and Documentation of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib offered in Sikh Shrines’’ from University Institute of Fashion Technology and V.D, Panjab University, Chandigarh. This interview schedule is intended to gather information for this research work. The information provided by you will be kept confidential and used only for academic purpose.

MANUFACTURERS

Demographic Profile

1. Name -
2. Age-
3. Gender-
4. Educational qualification-
5. Religion-
6. Income-
7. Address of Unit-
8. Year of Establishment-

History /origin of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

9. What do you know about origin or history of Rumala Sahib?
10. What do you know about origin or history of Chandoa Sahib?
11. What is the significance of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in Sikhism?
12. What motivated you to start this profession?
13. Is this your family business?

Yes

No

Fabric, Designs and Embellishment

14. What are the different articles manufactured in your unit?

Rumala Sahib

Chandoa Sahib

Sets of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

Any other

15. What types of fabric are used for manufacturing Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?

Name of the fabric	Rumala Sahib	Chandoa Sahib
Cotton		
Silk		
Velvet		
Brocade		
Net		
Towel		
Woolen		
Organza		
Crepe		
Any other		

16. Which fabric is more used as compared to others?

17. From where you procure the fabric?

18. What types of ornamentation techniques are used?

19. From where do you procure the raw material for embellishment?

20. Which ornamentation technique is more in demand?

21. How many steps are involved in designing and manufacturing of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?

22. How many sizes are manufactured of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?

23. Which size is more common?

24. How many pieces are included in a Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?

25. Are there any particular motifs to be embroidered on Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
26. If yes, which are those motifs?
27. Is there any special importance of these motifs?
28. How many meters of fabric is required for stitching a Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
29. Is it compulsory to embroider a Slok from Gurbani on Chandoa Sahib?
30. Is there any particular Slok to be embroidered?
If yes, which are those?
31. Is the Slok to be embroidered is chosen by people or by your choice?
32. Which types of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are mostly ordered to be prepared customized?
Single
Double
Sets
33. Which things are considered by you while designing and manufacturing Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
34. How much time is required to manufacture a Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib respectively?
35. Do you think that with time, designs, fabric used and embellishment techniques have changed?
If yes, what type of changes has come?

Workers

36. Do the workers work inside the unit only?
37. Do you get it done from outside?
38. Do the workers belong to any particular religion, if yes which?
39. Who does the designing of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?

40. Are there different workers for different tasks involved in manufacturing of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
41. Have they got some professional training for this work?
42. Do you provide any extra incentive to your workers?
43. How do you pay your workers?
Per piece
Per day
Monthly basis

Price/profit

44. What is the approximate price of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib manufactured in your unit?
45. Do you pack the prepared pieces in your unit or get it done from outside?
46. Approximately how much profit you get on one article?
 1. 10-15%
 2. 15-20%
 3. 20-25%
 4. 25-30%
 5. More

Marketing and Distribution

47. Where do you sell prepared pieces?
48. Do you take order from people in foreign countries?
49. To how many countries you supply your products?
50. How do you promote for your sale?
51. How do you take order?
Online
By agents
On reception

52. What are the sources of receiving the order?
1. Agents
 2. Distributors
 3. Retailers
 4. Any other

53. How do you send the manufactured products?
- By Ship
By Road
By Air

54. Do you have your own transport facilities?
- Yes
No

Reuse of Rumala Sahib

55. Do you think, Gurdwaras are overloaded with offered Rumala Sahib?
56. Do you think they are doing something to reduce this overload?
- Yes
No
57. How are they reducing this overload?
58. What can be done in your opinion to reduce this overload?
59. Do you know about any person/ organization working on re use of Rumala Sahib?

ANNEXURE V

Dear participants,

I am pursuing my research on topic ‘‘A Study and Documentation of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib offered in Sikh Shrines’’ from University Institute of Fashion Technology and V.D, Panjab University, Chandigarh. This interview schedule is intended to gather information for this research work. The information provided by you will be kept confidential and used only for academic purpose

WORKERS IN MANUFACTURING UNITS

Demographic profile

1. Name-
2. Age-
3. Sex-
4. Religion-
5. Educational qualification-
6. Nature of employment-
7. What work do you perform here?
8. Have you learnt this work from some place?

Employment / wages

9. How do you get your wages from your employer -
Per piece
Daily basis
Monthly basis
10. Do you work in this unit only?
11. Do you work from home too?
12. How many hours do you spend daily on this work?
13. Are you satisfied with your work?
14. Do you get any extra incentive?

Fabric, designs and embellishments

15. What are the different types of fabric used for manufacturing Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
16. Which type of fabric is used more for manufacturing Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib?
17. Which embellishment technique is used more?
18. Are there particular colours to be used for manufacturing?
19. Which colours are more used?
20. Do you cover your head while doing work here?
21. Are there any special instructions given to you for working here?

Reuse of Rumala Sahib

22. Do you agree that Gurdwaras are overloaded with offered Rumala Sahib?
23. Do you think they are doing something to reduce this overload ?
Yes

No
24. How are they reducing this overload?
25. What can be done in your opinion to reduce this overload?
26. Can we re use the offered Rumala Sahib or develop any other products from them?
27. If yes, what can we do?



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Exploring the patterns and colours of religious textiles

Rati Arora and Dr. Anu H Gupta

Abstract

India has historically been a place of diverse cultures characterised by diverse religious practises, beliefs, rites, rituals, and ideologies. Despite being ethnic, multilingual, and multifaceted, its essence has been "unity in diversity." People of many different faiths and beliefs, including Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, and Jains, coexist in peace and harmony. Nearly every religious tradition includes the practise of presenting an ornamented textile to a deity or wrapping a sacred text as an expression of love, devotion, and respect. Some examples include the offering of a green or blue textile called a Chaddar to a Dargah or Peer, a red or orange Chunri to the Goddess, an Altar cloth in a Church, or a colourful Rumala Sahib to encase the Guru Granth Sahib. Textiles are commonly used for developing wall hangings that can be hung either at religious places or at home with depictions from folklore, mythology, and religious scriptures. These scriptures convey or release positivity. Many religious practises or rituals involve the use of embellished textiles. Each of these textiles' ornamental techniques, themes, and even colours all communicate a unique meaning and expression. Worshiping their deities or supremacy through offering ornamental textiles is an excellent way to communicate with God. The purpose of this study is to examine the diverse patterns and colours of the textiles that are offered at various holy places. The study will also explore the symbolic significance of these motifs and colours.

Keywords: Textiles, ornamentation, religion, symbolic

1. Introduction

For centuries, religious diversity has been a defining characteristic of India's population with different ceremonies, festivals, faiths and rituals, pilgrimages and religious traditions. Every major faith, Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam, Buddhism, Christianity etc., uses textiles and materials in their worship. Some of them utilise the textiles as wall hangings to adorn their sacred sanctuaries, some as wrappings for their holy books, and yet others as offerings to their deity's statues.



Fig 1: Goddess's idol draped with Red chunri



Fig 2: Holy book wrapped in Textile

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"Every religious ceremony and rituals involve textiles." Esoteric philosophic concepts like Buddhist sutra, grantha and tantra owe their origin to textile where sutra means "to weave" and tantra means "to spread the thread" (Dhamija, 2014)^[7].

In the current research, an attempt has been made to investigate the numerous motifs or symbols, patterns, and colours used in religious textiles, as well as the beliefs or symbolism associated with them.

Motifs are the smallest component of a pattern or design. Same or different motifs are repeated multiple times to create a pattern on textile. In Indian textiles, motifs act as conduits for transmitting the related belief system and values between generations. The traditional concepts and deep layers of meaning give the unique identity to a textile and symbolise the extent to which we are deep rooted in our tradition. Each design used on textiles has a distinct story to tell and is associated with diverse religions. Each motif and colour of a textile's design has its own symbolic interpretation (Bisht, 2020) ^[1].

2. Patterns in Religious Textiles

Religious or sacred textiles are often adorned with specific symbols and designs that have specific significance. Frequent usage of the Krishna figure motif may be seen in Hindu religious textiles. In Gujarati folk embroidery, figures of Lord Ganesh are used. It is thought that Ganesh removes impediments to happiness, hence his image is stitched in the centre of Ganeshtapana (a pentagonal wall hanging), often with a dish of sweets and his companion rat. Peacock as the chariot of Goddess Sarasvati, the goddess of arts and learning is also common in religious textiles. Such motif finds its place in on a bridal dress in many cultures as it signifies completeness of being women. It is also believed that a sense of energy is carried which comes from its renewal of feathers every year. A motif of a parrot represents passion and courting and is also known as the vahana of Kamadeva, the God of love and desire, in India. It is also adopted as a sign of good fortune in Chinese art. Banyan and peepal trees are represented on several sacred textiles because they are revered in Hindu ceremonies. Mahatma Buddha also attained enlightenment under a peepal tree (Prajapati & Tiwari, 2021) ^[15].

Embroidered banners, canopies and umbrellas are very popular for the festival processions in Orissa. Bihar's appliqué work is well-known for its usage in canopies (shamianas), wall enclosures (kanats), and tents for ceremonial reasons, including Sujanis - quilts produced by Bihar's womenfolk that are used as a wrap or cover, but were also sometimes used to cover books or musical instruments. Chamba- a state of Himachal Pradesh, holds a special place for Rumals (known as Chamba *Rumals*) which were used in temples and homes as a backdrop to, or canopy for a deity. Gifts were wrapped with the coverings of square *rumals* specially when an offering was made to temple Gods, or gifts were exchanged between the families of a bride and groom (Gillow and Barnard, 2008) ^[9]. The most common motifs on these *rumals* were wedding scenes. The *rumal* was an essential part of the bride's dowry and she was expected to have learnt this craft at a very tender age. On the *rumals*, needlework also depicted Lord Shiva's great deeds: the destruction of the elephant demon often known as *Gajantaka*, which means "end of *Gaja*" or elephant. Various events from Hindu epics, particularly the stories of Krishna, were also portrayed. These *rumals* were used to cover offerings to the deities (Paine and Paine, 2010) ^[13].

A life-size statue of Lord Krishna sculptured from a single piece of black marble in the Temple located at Nathdwara, popularly known as Temple of Srinath ji is exclusively decorated with expensive jewels, rubies, pearls and stones on various occasions. There, Thakur Ji wears a variety of

headgears like *Paga*, *Pheta*, *Dumala*, *Mukut*, *Morshikha*, *Tipara*, *Gokurna* etc. Even the fabric and ornamentation are changed as per the season. For example, during the month of Vaisakh i.e., April to May, bright and colourful mulmul fabric is used and for shringar seep, *moti* (pearl) and *chandan* (sandal) is used. Jewellery slightly studded with diamonds is used in the months of Ashad i.e., June-July. During Phalguna (February—March) white cotton clothes with golden silver laces are used. The *shringar* in only gold and *meena* are used throughout this month. As the month of Kartika (October-November) is marked by the presence of Navratri, use of heavy brocade in silk and precious stones is done for jewellery (Sachdeva, 2020) ^[17].

Hand painted and block printed shrine cloths done by a wandering caste Vaghri from Gujarat are known as '*mata-ni-pachedi*' or '*mata- no- chandarvo*' that always have an image of the '*Mata*' – the mother goddess in her fearsome aspect- sitting on her throne, or on an animal, brandishing in her hands the weapons needed to kill demons (Gillow and Barnard, 2008) ^[9].

The connection between the *Rudraksham* motif and the holy land of Kanchipuram is undeniable. *Rudraksham* is a bead resembling a dried blueberry, it is obtained from a tree grown in the foothills of Himalayas. The bead is used as prayer bead because of its medicinal and spiritual properties. The bead is called the tears of Lord Shiva because the word '*Rudra*' means "to cry" and '*Aksha*' means "eye" in Sanskrit. The sacred beads of Lord Shiva have an aesthetic appeal and are adopted by weavers to create subtle and intricate motifs on Kanchipuram textiles. Several patterns: geometrical, curved or free flowing are created by weavers using this motif with Zari. In most of the pieces this motif is placed on border of the textile but in some special ones, rudraksha is used in centre too. It is believed to be the oldest motif of our civilisation and believed to protect the wearer from all evils imparting a sense of spirituality (Sundari Silks, 2020) ^[18].

Doorway hangings popularly known as torans frequently seen in northwest India are not used just for decoration purpose but there are some ritual and symbolic meanings attached to it. *Torans* signify devotion, fertility, regeneration and prosperity. The torans are made in colourful fabrics with their leaf-like pointed embroidered and mirror embellished pendants attached to a horizontal band. It is believed that torans when placed at the door, neutralize the harmful effects penetrating the inside of the home or compound from outside. *Torans* divert the evil eye and also convey auspicious blessings. A special types of wall hangings called Pichhavai hangings (devotional pictures on cloth) are famous that are embroidered by mochi for temples illustrating the Lord Krishna (Gillow and Barnard, 2008) ^[9].

In Ladakhi textiles, several motifs are used with different symbolic significance like *Swastika* represents good fortune, dorge or thunderbolts depicts stability and Enis knot shows compassion. The *khataq* - a ceremonial scarf usually white in colour and woven from cotton or silk is used as a sacred symbol shared by both Buddhist and Muslim communities. They are offered to deities and the clergy, to the bride and her groom, too newly- born babies, to visiting officials and respected elders (Rao, 2010) ^[16].

The technique of ikat, known as patola or bandha, involving the tying of threads with dye-resistant material and then dyeing them is known as a powerful textile. Because ikat was considered imbued with the ability to cure, to heal, to purify and to protect. It was believed that it protected the child in its mother's womb, guided its steps from birth to puberty rites

and marriage, and finally helped the spirit on its last journey to rest with the ancestors (Dhamija, 2014) [7].

In the 'textile-conscious' heritage of Tibetan culture, the history of adorning and dignifying Buddha's temple with exquisitely draped fabric is well-known. The holy area of Buddhist structures is defined by religious hangings such as baldachins, round silk banners, triple banderols, and thangkas. The pillars, doors, and ceilings are adorned with silk brocade woven with golden and silver threads in hues associated with rituals. On the occasion of some significant events, even the clay statues of deities adorning the walls are 'dressed' in rich silk materials. Consecration rituals and Buddhist devotional practices were depicted in Tabo wall paintings of deities and heavenly thrones embellished with textiles (Kalantari, 2018) [10].

In ancient times, flags, royal tents, and other symbols of authority were imprinted by hand with silver stamping, also known as *Chandi ki Chhapai*, to symbolise the position and grandeur of the holder. This art is also known as "Varak Gold or Silver Leaf Printing" because it employs *varaks* manufactured by flattening gold or silver into a paper-like consistency. It is a common ornamentation in sacred shrines and temples (Chakrabarti, 2018) [3].

Religious textiles have the highest value, serve and continue to serve to honour the holy places in Mecca and Madina and the burial chamber of the Prophet Mohammed in Madina. Even the calligraphic motifs are specially selected to reflect a religious textile's function and location. Motifs are taken from Holy Quran that have special place in Muslim rituals and culture. One of the most interesting examples is green silk bag with its words in golden that is used to hold the key of the Kabba. Every year a special bag is prepared to put the key and the bag is gifted to the most senior representative of the Banu Shayba, the man chosen by the Prophet Mohammed to guard the Kabba keys "until the days of judgement" (Ghazal, 2021) [8].

Among the Muslims, it is a common practice to spread a small carpet (*sajjada*) at the time of Prayer, because they believe that the place of prayer should be ritually pure or free from any polluting substances (Katz, N.D.). The prayer niche, a recess in the wall indicating the direction of Mecca, a lamp depicting a reference to God as well as the flowers and trees that symbolize the abundance of nature in God's paradise were the common motifs and symbols used in weaving of these carpets. They were used to wrap their praying stone-*Mohr* with the small cloth made by the Shiite Hazara of Afghanistan. This cloth was considered as a Holy object and was not used for any other purpose.

Even Guru Granth Sahib- the holy book of Sikhism is also always wrapped in white cotton sheet and then by colourful embroidered sheets known as 'Rumala Sahib'. A variety of fabrics (cotton, silk, velvet, net, chiffon, crepe, brocade and many more) decorated with different techniques (embroidery, *Gotta*, beads, sequins, *zardosi*, Ari work, hand painting, *dori* work etc.) are used for Rumala Sahib. Fabric of Rumala Sahib is even selected as per the season like in winter, usually heavy velvet or Blanket Rumala sahib are used and cotton, net or light material is selected for summers because Guru Granth Sahib is respected as Living Guru by the Sikh people. A Sloka from Gurbani is mostly embroidered on front panel of Chandoa Sahib- a canopy under which Guru Granth Sahib lies (figure 3). *Ek Oankar* and *Khanda* are the common motifs to be embroidered. The *khanda* (☯) is the symbol of the Sikh faith which attained its current form around the 1930s during the Ghadar movement. The *khanda* is like a "coat of

arms' for Sikhs. It was introduced by the sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind Singh. Another symbol of Sikhism *Ek Oankar* (ੴ) represents the one supreme reality and is a central belief of Sikh religious philosophy. Meaning of *Ek Oankar* is that there is only one God or one creator or one Om-maker.



Fig 3: Guru Granth Sahib covered with Rumala Sahib under the canopy- Chandoa



<https://unsplash.com/s/photos/church-altar>, N.D.

Fig 4: Altar cloth with sign of cross

Altars cloths are used in Churches by Christians during celebrations and are generally used to cover the surface when not in use. Formally precious stones studded altar cloths were used but at present linen or hemp material is used because of its whiteness, cleanliness and firmness. Altar covers are usually finished with laces and embroidered with applique or some other techniques. A sign of cross is embroidered as the main motif along with others like scenes depicting priests officiating at an altar. Birds and dancing figures are also used (Paine and Paine, 2010) [13].

3. Colours associated with the Religious Textiles

Colors have a significant role in our lives. They have a significant impact on how we view and interact with the environment. Each colour impacts our physical, emotional, and psychological states via the emission of distinct signals.

Additionally, colours impact moods, sentiments, and emotions. Colours have a great association with religious textiles.

Colours have profound meaning in Hinduism and so in their religious textiles. Hindu artisans use hues to the deities and their garments to symbolise their characteristics. Some of the main colours used in religious ceremonies are red, yellow (turmeric), green from leaves, white from wheat flour etc.

The colour red represents positive concepts and strong emotions like passion, power, and strength. Gods and Goddesses who are revered for their virtuous attributes and their ability to vanquish evil, are traditionally depicted in red like Goddess Durga. The colour red is associated with purity and is also symbolic of being married, hence it is traditional for brides to wear red bridal dress; a red coloured powder *sindhoor*, and a red dot or *bindi* is worn on foreheads by married women. Given that soil or mother earth which is represented by red is considered to be very fertile, it's no surprise that the colour red has come to symbolise plenty in culture. Associated with the colour of fire, saffron is a blend of shades of golden-yellow and orange. Saffron is symbolic of the cleansing and purity that comes from burning objects as well as it represents lightness and wisdom. Saffron-coloured robes are worn by Hindu monks to represent their mission to cleanse and eliminate impurities and evil from the world.

The colour blue is also associated with the qualities or characteristics that so many deities possess, such as courage, kindness, determination, and protection like Lord Krishna, Vishnu, and Shiva, and hence are invariably represented with blue. In the Middle East blue coloured mosques can be found as it is believed as a protective colour. There are several renowned Blue Mosques in Afghanistan, Malaysia, Egypt, etc. In Catholicism, blue colour is mostly taken as closely related with Mother Mary and the heavenly realm.

Yellow is symbolic of learning and knowledge and often found in sacred textiles and clothing of Hindu deities, such as Lord Vishnu, Krishna and Ganesh. Like the colour of the sun, yellow represents the characteristics of the sun, light, warmth and happiness. Due to the abundant presence of the sun during spring, it represents new beginnings and developments (Crandall, 2017) [6].

Orange and Navy-Blue colours are traditional colours of Sikh Khalsa that are worn on days of religious observance or special commemorative events. Royal blue or navy-blue turbans being the colour of warrior and of protection are often used among Sikh ministers and Gyanis, especially in India (Neeru, 2015) [12]. Orange appears in the form of Nishan Sahibs in Gurudwaras, the cholas worn by Panj Payaras and Sikh turbans being the representative of deep joy and bliss. It absorbs shocks, nasty experiences and trauma. Orange is the colour of connection, a sense of community, belonging and social aspects of being.

White is a mixture of seven different colours, so it represents a little bit of the quality of each colour. It is believed to represent purity, cleanliness, peace and knowledge. Goddess Sarasvati- the Goddess of knowledge is always represented wearing a white clothes, seated on a lotus. As white is associated with purity, the priests of temples and the Brahmins often clad in white. In Christianity also white is used for the garments of angels, and the throne of judgment, purity and joy. In Western Culture also white is used to symbolize purity and peace.

In Islam, green is the most prominent colour and is symbolic of springtime renewal, joy, success, and happiness. Green colour represents the triumph of life over death. Green in the

Bible is usually a reference to growth, vegetation or fertility. Green being a sacred colour of Islam is used for the bindings of the Qur'an-the Holy book of Islam and in the silken covers of the Sufi saints. It has been suggested that green is revered because it was worn by Muhammad and it depicts life and nature.

4. Conclusion

The motifs used in religious textiles whether embroidered, painted, printed or woven, are symbolic of diverse faiths and beliefs that may vary from one region or religion to another but are interconnected with same essence. As devotees or people's feelings, beliefs, and rituals are intertwined with this, people of almost every faith and area have utilised adorned textiles of various hues as a sacred object to be dedicated to God. Every motif and colour has a distinct traditional significance, and particular patterns are associated with traditional practises.

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**A STUDY AND DOCUMENTATION OF RUMALA SAHIB AND
CHANDOA SAHIB OFFERED IN SIKH SHRINES**

A THESIS

Submitted to the

PANJAB UNIVERSITY, CHANDIGARH

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in

FACULTY OF SCIENCE

BY

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5. Summary and Conclusion

“In summary, all great work is the fruit of patience and perseverance, combined with tenacious concentration on a subject over a period of months or year” (Santiago, 2004).

Throughout its history, India has been known as a spiritual nation that is home to a wide variety of religions, cultures, and geographical settings. People of all religions express their devotion to the gods and goddesses they believe in by participating in certain rituals and adhering to specific customs. In numerous worldwide religions, it is also considered respectful to present specific kinds of textiles to gods and goddesses. The present study focuses on the offering of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib by people in the Sikh Shrines, or Gurdwaras. The Sikhs pay exactly the same kind of reverence to their Holy Scripture as they would to a living Guru; in fact, it even has a separate room in which it rests at night. The Holy Book is adorned on a raised platform beneath a canopy known as Chandoa Sahib and is wrapped in embellished sheets of fabric known as Rumala Sahib. Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, that are embellished with beautiful embroidery, have been offered by devotees in almost every Gurdwara. The present research is an attempt to put together details regarding the practice of offering, designing, producing, packaging, marketing, and preservation of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib. The concern about the overabundance of Rumala Sahib in Sikh Shrines has also been discussed.

5.1 Objectives of the study

1. To study the tradition of presenting Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in Sikh Shrines and its history.
2. To study types of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib presented at Sikh Shrines on various ceremonies and occasions.
3. To explore the process of designing, manufacturing, and marketing of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.
4. To investigate the variations in colour, fabric, stitching, decorations, and accessories of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib throughout time.
5. To study the preservation methods used in Gurdwaras for Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.
6. To gather people’s perspectives on the abundance of Rumala Sahib at Gurdwaras and to re-use the Rumala Sahib.

5.2 Limitations

1. Respondents were chosen from Northern states of India.
2. The manufacturers were selected from Amritsar, Ludhiana, and Patiala, which are the main manufacturing hubs of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.

A review of the relevant literature revealed that a substantial amount of research has been done on a variety of embroidered, woven, and embellished textiles, as well as various kinds of religious textiles. However, despite being extensively embellished textiles and being connected with the intense devotion of devotees, there has been no research on Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib offered by people in Sikh Shrines. As a result, the researcher came to the conclusion that there was a requirement for exploring these exquisite, expensive, and heavenly textiles, studying the ornamentation and making of these textiles, various changes in these sacred textiles over the years, associated people in the marketing of these textiles, finding out some solutions to minimise the increasing abundance of Rumala Sahib these days.

For the present study, a descriptive research design was used. The survey method and interview schedule were used to collect quantitative as well as qualitative data. All respondents were interviewed, and their work was photographed and documented. Primary data was also collected through observation, videography, and group discussion. Secondary data was collected from books, research papers, Gurdwara literature, publications, and Sikh websites.

Interview schedules served as the primary method for obtaining data for the current study. Five distinct interview schedules, including both open-ended and closed-ended questions, were prepared for varying categories of respondents.

The study was focused on the Holy textiles offered in Sikh Shrines, Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, which are most prevalent in Punjab, and as the majority of Sikhs reside in Punjab, it was chosen as the primary locale. Various districts from all of Punjab's regions, including Malwa, Majha, and Doaba, were included. Four out of eleven Malwa districts, one out of three Majha districts, and two out of four Doaba districts were selected purposively for data collection.

The other adjacent states of Punjab, namely Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Chandigarh and Delhi were selected as well to provide the study with diverse and extensive data.

5.3 Selection of sample

A total sample of two hundred and fifty respondents was randomly selected and divided into five different categories: Head Granthis of Gurdwaras, people visiting the Gurdwaras, manufacturers of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, workers working in those manufacturing units, and shopkeepers selling Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.

Two *Takhts* of Sikhism, namely the Akal *Takht* in Amritsar and the *Takht* Sri Keshgarh Sahib in Anandpur Sahib, as well as historical Gurudwaras from each selected region, were visited to collect the data. Head Granthi or another official were personally interviewed. The auspicious prayers and the process of offering Rumala Sahib in various Gurdwaras were also witnessed with their cooperation and guidance.

Interviews were also conducted with six men and women, irrespective of their age group, visiting each of the selected Gurdwaras, comprising a total of one hundred and twenty persons. Group discussions with them were also held regarding issues such as the overabundance of Rumala Sahib in Gurdwaras. Fifteen manufacturers producing these Holy textiles, along with the workers, were also interviewed to study the designing, manufacturing, and marketing processes of these Holy textiles. They were also questioned about the many modifications in design that have occurred throughout the years. Twenty shopkeepers from the selected locations were chosen at random and personally questioned to learn the facts linked to the products, marketing process, various designs, and customers' demands.

5.4 Analysis of data

The most important task following the collection of relevant data was the analysis of non-numerical data and information, such as interview transcripts, notes, video and audio recordings, images, and text documents. Particular themes or codes were assigned to organise the collected data and identified several prevalent themes, responses, and associations within the sample responses. The frequency and percentage of some questions were also calculated and tabulated.

5.5 Major Findings of the study

The findings of the research were discussed under different sections -

5.5.1 Demographic profile of respondents

Age group-

Head Granthis of all selected Sikh Shrines were asked about their age group. 45% of them were between 40 and 50 years old, 35% of Head Granthis were older than 50 years, and 20% were between 30 and 40 years old.

25.8 % of visitors to the Gurdwaras were over 50 years old, 21.7% were between 30 and 40 years old, and 19.2% were in the age group of 20 to 30 years old. Most of the manufacturers were between 40 - 50 years old, with 26.7% being between 30 and 40 years old and 13.3% being over 50 years old.

34.7% of the workers from the selected manufacturing units that were engaged in various skills were in the age group of 40 -50 years old, 29.3% were 30 to 40 years old, 21.3% were 20 to 30, and 20 % were under 20 years. Only 8% of them were over 50 years old.

40% of store owners selling Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib were over 50 years old, 35% were between 40 to 50 years old, 15% were between 30 and 40 years old, and 10% were between 20 and 30 years.

Educational qualification

The majority (60%) of Head Granthis were graduates, 20% were professionals with degrees in B. Ed, Gyani, etc., 10% were postgraduates, and 10% completed 10th grade.

Visitors to Gurdwaras with bachelor's degree (34.1%) and postgraduate degree (33.3%) dominated the survey. 10.9% had professional degrees like MBA, B.Tech, etc; 10% had high school diplomas; 10% of them were illiterate; and 1.7% had middle school certificates.

Manufacturers had bachelor's degree (60%), professional degree (20%), master's degree (13.3%) and 6.7% of them completed high school.

34.7% of workers were graduates, while 24% studied until 10th grade only. 21.3% of the workforce was professionally trained in embroidery, needlework, marketing, and others 9.3% of illiterate workers performed family-taught manual labour.

Most shopkeepers (45%) had a graduation degree, followed by 30% with a postgraduate degree; 10% of them had professional degrees; 10% completed middle school; and 5% were illiterate.

Religion of respondents

It was found after studying the demographic characteristics of respondents that all the Head Granthis of Sikh Shrines were Sikh. Most of the people (64.1%) who went to Gurdwaras and were taken for the study were also Sikh. Only 35.9% of respondents visiting the Gurdwaras were Hindu.

All of the manufacturers involved in the creation and production of Rumala Sahib were also Sikhs. The Sikh faith was represented by the majority of workers (82.7%) in the manufacturing units. Some (13.3%) were Hindus, whereas just 4% were Muslims. 90% of shopkeepers were Sikhs, while 10% were Hindus.

5.5.2 History and practice of offering Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

Respondents were asked about the history and practice of presenting the Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in Sikh Shrines. Guru Granth Sahib, considered the "living Guru," is often adorned with intricately designed textiles to express respect and devotion. It was revealed by respondents that initially Guru Nanak Dev started using fabric to wrap the books containing Holy texts, *pothis*, which was also followed by other Gurus. Guru Arjan Dev also began wrapping the Holy Scripture in white muslin cloth after its compilation. Since then, it has become a tradition to wrap the Holy Scripture into the fabric. In addition to white cloth, people started using colourfully embellished textiles to wrap the Sacred Book. It was also revealed that Sikh Gurus were covered with a fabric canopy that is now called Chandoa Sahib by his followers to avoid dust, birds' refuge, and other elements while walking from place to place. As time passed, people began using beautiful, colourful canopies instead of plain white ones. This practice continued even when the Guru Granth Sahib was given the status of a Live Guru.

Rumala Sahib was used to wrap the Holy Book for mainly two reasons: respecting the Guru's *Shabad* and preserving the sanctity of the Holy Scripture. It was also scientifically necessary to preserve the written *Shabad* on paper. In earlier times, the entire text was written by hand, making it essential to keep the text safe and preserve its sacredness, the custom of wrapping the holy text in fabric started.

Some of the respondents discussed that people used to make these devotional textiles themselves using silk or cotton materials and embellished them with braids or laces. However, as time passed, people began using more vibrant and ornamented fabrics. Chandoa Sahib was stitched by family members, adding frills and embroidery by hand. Only standard size Rumala Sahib, including a maximum of four pieces, were made, and these were washed well before being presented to the Guru Granth Sahib. Now Rumala Sahib is prepared as per the specific dimensions and requirements of the Darbar hall of a Sikh Shrine. Single Rumala Sahib contains three components (one sheet and two small side sheets called *palakan*), double Rumala Sahib has four components (two sheets and two *palakan*), and set of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in various hues, embellishments, and designs are offered these days in Sikh Shrines.

To know the frequency of visit to various Sikh Gurdwaras, data was collected from 120 people visiting the Shrines and found that 43.3% of respondents occasionally visited Gurdwaras, while 29.2% visited daily and 15% visited weekly. Some visited on Sundays due to their busy working days, while others visited once a month only. The majority of respondents (81.7%) had the experience of offering Rumala Sahib in Gurdwaras or organizing *Path* at their premises, while 18.3% had never presented it. Some of the devotees revealed the reason for presenting these textiles as the fulfillment of their vows made to their Guru, carrying forward the tradition of offering these textiles on special occasions like Diwali, Gurburb, Parkash Utsav, Baisakhi or birthdays and anniversaries of the family members, to take the blessings of their Divine Guru, etc. Gurdwara officials said that anyone of any gender or religion may present Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, which can be in any colour, fabric, style, or price. Devotees can also create these textiles and present them.

5.5.3 Changes in fabric, colours, embellishments, stitching and accessories of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib throughout the time

With the passage of time, advancements, and increased spending capacity, there have been many changes in the fabric, colours, embellishments, and stitching of these textiles. Most respondents (90.4%) thought that the colours for these textiles were changed to fit the seasons and events. Very few of them (9.6%) said Rumala and Chandoa Sahib's colours do not alter with seasons or events. Shop owners revealed that devotees now ask for certain colours of these textiles for different occasions and festivals. Some particular colours, like red, maroon, pink, and orange, were bought by them for important events, like weddings and the anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev. People who have been to Gurdwaras also said that they preferred these fabrics based on the occasion. Along with the designs and patterns, the embellishments and fabrics used to make these textiles have also changed over time.

Head Granthis revealed that the trend of using coloured textiles emerged in recent times over the last two decades; otherwise, Guru Granth Sahib did not specify any colours for different occasions. Now, people choose the colours and fabric of Rumala Sahib as per various seasons and occasions. Orange, yellow, and blue were found to be the most commonly purchased colours due to their significance in Sikhism. Orange symbolizes wisdom, sacrifice, character, and is associated with the *Nishan Sahib* (triangular flag), while yellow represents happiness, mental clarity, and concentration, and blue depicts protection and warrior. Cotton, net, chiffon and crepes were popular during the summer, while in the winter, materials like velvet, silk, brocade, piled- blanket material were used. Even though the Holy Granth is wrapped in colourful, embroidered Rumala, only white cotton sheets are used inside as an inner layer under the coloured Rumala Sahib.

Some of the Granthis revealed that in the past, women used plain braids (*gotta*) to finish and stitch Simple Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib themselves. They also sometimes did a few stitches of hand embroidery. To make the Chandoa Sahib, they used to make frills with knife pleats and finish the same with piping or braid. After machine embroidery became popular, people started to get it decorated with machine work, beads, and stones. This was done to make it look more beautiful and decorative. Rumala sets became more popular and in demand as devotee's tastes changed and their ability to spend money grew. Today, these fabrics are made with many different kinds of

decorations and embellishments, even with hand painting. The number of components in a set of Rumala and Chandoa Sahib has also added to its grandeur. Sikh followers occasionally offer Rumala Sahib as a way of expressing their love and devotion to the Guru Granth Sahib, as they consider the Holy Granth as their living Guru. The use of Rumala Sahib indicates the Sikhs' respect for their scripture. It represents the sacredness of the Guru Granth Sahib's words and the reverence with which Sikhs treat their religious teachings. Artisans, in particular, play an important role in the production of these embroidered textiles establishing a sense of community and shared devotion.

Earlier, a Rumala Sahib set, consisting four components with two large sheets and two little rectangular sheets named *Palkan*, was popular. In the present times, these three to four components in a set of Rumala and Chandoa Sahib can now go up to twenty pieces. Every Gurdwara usually has specific size charts of these components depending upon the size and interior of the Darbar hall of the Gurdwara. Manufacturers create these sacred textiles as per the size chart of a particular Gurdwara. In case the size chart is not there, the standard size Rumala and Chandoa Sahib may be offered. The standard sizes of Single Rumala Sahib were mentioned as 42x50 inches (single sheet) and 18x18 inches (2 side *Palkan*) or 45x45 inches (single sheet) and 20x20 inches (2 side *Palkan*). Standard size of the Double Rumala Sahib was 44 x 55 inches (2 pieces of Rumala) and 20 x 20 inches (2 pieces *Palkan*) or 42 x 50 inches and 18 x 18 inches (2 pieces *Palkan*) or 41 x 49 inches and 20 x 20 inches (2 pieces *Palkan*). The common sizes of Chandoa Sahib were found to be 4 x 4 feet, 4 x 6 feet, 5 x 5 feet, 4.5 x 5 feet, 7 x 7 feet, or 10 x10 feet.

Palki Sahib (wooden or metallic) constitutes an important part of the Platform, or *Takht*, inside the Darbar Hall, which has been modified with the passage of time. Instead of only being wooden, *Palki* can now be found in metallic, marble and aluminium. Portable *Palkis* that can be disassembled and reassembled easily were also found. *Chattar Sahib*, -an embellished fabric umbrella, is also used these days to cover Guru Granth Sahib while carrying from one place to another. Another accessory was, *Chhabba Sahib* which is hung on the front side or centre of the Chandoa Sahib, and flower garlands that add beauty to the Darbar Hall of a Gurdwara.

5.5.4 Offering of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib on different ceremonies and occasions

Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are offered during the rituals and ceremonies related to Sikhism that are practiced at specific moments in a person's life. The main ceremonies are the child's naming ceremony: Nam Karan, which involved singing hymns from the Holy Granth and giving Amrit to both mother and infant, and embroidered Rumala Sahib are presented by the family to the Holy Scripture.

On Baptism, a highly revered ceremony and the celebration of *Path* by the families at their home, Gurdwaras, or any workplace that may be *Akhand Path*, *Saptahik Path*, or *Sahaj Path*, Rumala Sahib by the devotees are offered. The decorated Rumala Sahib is carried by the bride as well as the groom to the Darbar Hall of the Sikh Shrine and presented to Guru Granth Sahib at the important moment of a Sikh wedding, or Anand Karaj. Offering of the Sacred textiles is also practiced by the people on occasions like Gurburb, special days, and anniversaries associated with the lives of Sikh Gurus like the birth ceremony of Guru Nanak Dev, Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev, Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, Martyrdom of five Sahibzada's (sons of Guru Gobind Singh). Rumala Sahib is also presented on the occasion of *Dastaar Bandhi*, a significant ceremony in which a turban is put on a boy's head between the ages of 11 and 16. Yellow and orange coloured Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are offered in Sikh Shrines on Baisakhi as these colours are associated with Khalsa orders. Diwali, a festival of light also called *Bandi Chhor diwas* was the celebration of the release of Guru Har Gobind Singh from Gwalior prison. A large number of textiles are offered on this auspicious day. Some respondents also mentioned particular colours of Rumala Sahib offered on various events, like red and maroon on Gurburb, white or off white on the martyrdom of Sikh Gurus and yellow and orange on Baisakhi.

5.5.5 Designing and manufacturing of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

To explore the process of designing and manufacturing devotional textiles, manufacturers as well as workers involved in the manufacturing units were interviewed. The manufacturers discussed their experiences in this field, their progression from a modest business to expanded industries, and the cyclical shifts they had observed in the fashion of these Sacred textiles. The workers from chosen manufacturing units in Amritsar, Ludhiana, and Patiala were also asked questions through interviews.

To design a Rumala Sahib or Chandoa Sahib, the size and number of pieces needed for the Darbar Hall is considered first. Rumala Sahib is prepared as per the standard sizes, with two varieties: single and double. Most devotees purchase standard sizes for Gurdwaras. Special sets of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib are also offered, such as in Darbar Sahib, Amritsar. These sets are prepared according to the main hall specifications of the Gurdwara. Personalized sets are designed by manufacturers and shopkeepers based on size charts of significant or nearby Gurdwaras. Each Gurdwara has its own dimensions as per the various furniture articles present in the main Darbar hall of the Gurdwara. A set may contain as many as components. The double Rumala set was found to be the most purchased type of Rumala Sahib.

Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib were made from a variety of fabrics and raw materials, making it challenging for the manufacturers to keep track of colours and material combinations. Various types of pre-embellished fabrics were also used by the manufacturers as well as the shopkeepers to stitch Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib. Fabric selection was based on seasonal preferences, with silk being the most marketed fabric by both manufacturers (100%) and shopkeepers (100%). Velvet was preferred by 93.3% of manufacturers and 80% of shopkeepers. Woollen fabric was preferred by 93.3% manufacturers and 75% shopkeepers. 86.6% of the manufacturers and 80% of shopkeepers liked brocade. Chiffon fabric was preferred by 73.3% of manufacturers and 20% of shopkeepers. Cotton and towel terry fabric were preferred by only a few clients. High-quality silk and velvet were sourced from Surat, Bangalore, Ahmadabad, Delhi, and Bombay.

After choosing the piece's design and fabric, the customers were provided with the colour chart so they could choose their favourite for the custom pieces. Visitors to Gurdwaras responded that they offered these Holy textiles in a variety of colours, with some preferring vibrant colours, others choosing sober colours, and the majority choosing according to the occasion and season. The fabric was then cut by considering the required size of the textiles. Fifteen-inch extra fabric was cut if the textiles were to be designed with embroidery. Large sheets of tracing paper scribbled with a pen or pencil were used to trace the desired design on the fabric before embroidery or embellishments. The design was traced out with a solution made by mixing powdered blue or zinc powder with kerosene oil.

Rumala Sahib are made from various embellished materials, including embroidered, woven, brocaded, sequined, printed, or patterned fabrics. Embroidery techniques like machine work, handwork, applique, and zardozi work are employed to create extensive embellished sets. Hand painting and block printing are also used. Although rare, few people work on these embellished items on an order.

Research showed that embroidery was the most preferred ornamentation technique for religious textiles, with handwork like *dabka*, *aari* work, and *zardozi* being the most popular embellishments. Some other embellishments used on these Holy textiles were *cutdana work*, *sippy sitara work*, *gotta patti work*, *Resham ka kaam*, *moti ka kaam* and *applique* work. Customers sometimes ordered specially embellished textiles, such as a complete set with Phulkari embroidery and fabric painting, for their wedding day.

The Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib showcased intricate embroidery work, with workers seated close together in manufacturing units. The two most commonly found tools were needles and *aari*, a crochet needle or pen-like instrument used to embroider designs into fabric. Back stitch, running stitch, chain stitch, and satin stitch were the common stitches used for creating designs. A layer of fuse paper was attached to the reverse side of the fabric to be embroidered.

The embroidery work used cotton, silk, and *zari* threads, with additional embellishments like *sippi*, *sitare*, beads, and *kundan*. The design was embellished with decorative materials like *salma*, *dabka*, *badla*, *nakshi*, and *gotta*. Zardozi work used thin, coiled wires like *dabka*, *badla*, *salma*, and *tilla*. Threads were used for the primary design, and embellishments were further sewn onto the fabric. The raw material was procured from Surat, Delhi, and Lucknow by some of the manufacturers.

Flowers and creepers were the most commonly found motifs on these sacred textiles. Along with the flower motifs, *Kingrewali bootti*, *Gol bootti*, *Seeti bootti*, *Chauras bootti*, *Gamla bootti*, *Aath kone wala design*, *Badaam bootti*, *Star bootti*, *Aath kali bootti*, *Chhe kali bootti*, Sooraj booti and some religious motifs like Ek Onkar and Khanda were also embroidered. After embroidery or embellishments, finishing was done, and the components were sent to stitching units. Finishing was done by adding braids, *gotta*, lace, a fabric band and tassels on the edges. It was revealed by the manufacturers that most of the time, flat golden braids were used to finish the edges.

Braids with fringes or *gotta tikki* were not used as an embellishment on Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.

For stitching Chandoa Sahib, lining material was attached to the main fabric after embroidery or prior to it, depending on the type of fabric. The main feature of Chandoa Sahib was the elaborately created knife pleats on all four sides or along the circumference, which consumed many metres of fabric. The frills were finished with piping, braid, *gotta*, band, etc. Chandoa Sahib was crafted in circular, square, and rectangular forms, but square and rectangular were the most preferred. The double-coloured frills were the latest trend in the Chandoa Sahib. The *Sehra patti* (a band in front) was the highlighted element of Chandoa Sahib that has a verse from Gurbani and generally the Sikh Motifs written with either embroidery or applique work. The *Slok* or the verse may be selected by the devotees while ordering the textile or by the manufacturers themselves. Metallic rings or fabric straps were attached to all the sides of Chandoa Sahib to enable it to hang easily. A big metallic ring is also attached at the centre of Chandoa Sahib to hang *Jhoomer*.

After finishing Chandoa Sahib and Rumala Sahib, the other required components of the set were stitched in accordance with the size, design, and requirements of the Darbar Hall. After steam pressing, the prepared set was packaged either in transparent bags or bonded fabric bags. The sets with heavy embroidery offered in Harmandir Sahib were packed in muslin fabric (*kora kapda*).

5.5.6 Marketing of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib

It was found that a significant number of people, skilled, educated and illiterate, were involved in the production of these Divine textiles for use in Sikh Shrines. Proper protocol, i.e., cleaning hand, covering heads, and removing shoes, was followed at the shops as well as in the manufacturing units. Before displaying the Sacred textiles, a clean white sheet was spread on the surface to maintain the sanctity of the textiles. The manufacturers and shopkeepers thought themselves blessed to be involved in that profession. Some of them were carrying forward their ancestor's businesses. The majority of manufacturers (73.3%) accepted orders from other countries, such as the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Kenya, and Australia, via email and WhatsApp. Few of the shopkeepers (10%) received orders from foreign nations, while most of them (90%) supplied local markets and a few other cities. The majority of shop owners (90%) and

33.3% of manufacturers sold their products within their own establishments only, and the orders were taken either by the store owners themselves or by other trained experts. Orders were taken through email or WhatsApp. Some makers revealed that they have a catalogue of different Rumala Sahib designs. Each design has a unique number or code. The buyer chose the design's individual code number and confirmed it with the producers for future processing. They also accommodated some alterations, such as colour combinations, braid types, and so on, based on the needs of the consumers.

It was discovered that numerous marketing methods, particularly those implemented through social platforms, contributed to an increase in their sales over the course of the preceding several years. The majority of the manufacturers had their own webpages on social media sites, including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn and had collaborations with marketing platforms like Amazon, India mart, Justdial, etc. They also had collaborations with some news channels, like PTC Punjabi, Chardi kalan, etc; to advertise their products. They distributed printed pamphlets in their cities through newspapers, especially near particular festivals like Gurburb, Baisakhi, and Diwali, etc. It was further revealed by the manufacturers that various marketing strategies, including social media marketing, influenced the sales of their products. Most of the shopkeepers (55%) procured stitched and readymade Rumala Sahib from the manufacturers, and some of them (10%) had their own tailors or workshops. 35% of the shopkeepers were procuring readymade Rumalas from outside as well as preparing themselves.

Most manufacturing enterprises had their own transportation services to deliver their goods to local and distant markets. 73.3% of manufacturing units shipped their products by land, sea, and air too. 13.3% of them sent their goods by road only. 6.7% of them solely shipped their goods by air or sea. All the store owners selling Rumala Sahib transported their goods only by road.

The most typical item that devotees purchased and offered in practically all Gurdwaras was a double Rumala Sahib, which was priced between two hundred and four hundred rupees. The initial price for a set of Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib was approximately two thousand five hundred to four thousand rupees. The price of these textiles can increase significantly, even reaching several lacs, depending on the type of cloth, the level of craftsmanship, and the other raw materials utilised. The cost of the

set that is offered in Harmandir Sahib every day, including twelve components, was told as sixty thousand to two lakh rupees.

46.7% of manufacturing units generated a profit of 25-30% after selling the ready Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, followed by 20% that made more than 30%. 13.3% of units made 20-25%, 13.3% gained 15-20%, and 6.7% made 10-15% profit. After selling these textiles, 70% of shopkeepers made an average profit of 15-20%, with 15% of them earning 20-25% and 10% earning 10-15%. Only 5% of store owners made 25-30% profit.

All the workers were provided with some incentives in the form of bonus money or other gifts, along with their salaries. The majority of manufacturers (40%) were paying per piece to their workers. Only 13.3 % of them were giving monthly salaries to their workers. 46.7% of manufacturers paid their employees using all three methods: per piece, per day, and at the end of the month. Mostly, they were paid per day for embroidery and on a piece basis for stitching work.

5.5.7 Preservation of presented Rumala Sahib

Interview and observation methods were used to learn about each Gurudwara's preservation methods for Rumala Sahib. During the research, it was revealed by the Shrines' authorities that 60% of them were preserving the offered Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib for further use, where as 40% of respondents did not preserve any of the offered textiles for future use. Most Gurdwaras had proper storage space and cupboards. The storage space was dusted and cleaned regularly to protect the fabrics. The intricately embroidered objects were folded and packed in plastic bags or cotton cloth sheets. Some Gurdwaras did not preserve any offered textiles since the number of offerings was very large.

The stored textiles were unfolded after a period of time, usually months, to prevent damage from the folds. The majority of Granthis were involved in the preservation of these textiles, while certain Gurdwaras with a huge collection of preserved textiles engaged personnel to look after them on a regular basis.

Only a small percentage of Gurdwaras were reusing the Rumala Sahib that had been offered by the devotees. The Granthis claimed that the laundry room and washing machine were meticulously cleaned before these fabrics were washed. Separate

washing machines were used for these sacred textiles. All necessary precautions were taken during washing, drying, and storage, including washing hands, taking off shoes, and covering the head.

5.5.8 Abundance of Rumala Sahib in Sikh Shrines

It was revealed by the Head Granthis that in modern times practically all of the Gurdwaras are struggling with the issue of Rumala Overload due to the extremely high number of offerings of these textiles on a number of occasions. All 250 respondents taken for the study were asked about their point of view or their awareness about the issue of the overload of these textiles in Gurdwaras. The majority of respondents (84.8%) responded that they were aware of the increasing overload of offered Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib in Sikh Shrines.

It was found that in some Gurdwaras, Rumala Sahib was used only once. The twelve-piece set, weighing twenty to thirty kilograms due to its rich ornamentation and several layers of cloth that take many days for several workers and artisans to prepare, was changed daily with the new one in Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar. It was found that after adorning it for only one day, it was never used again. If a devotee wants to offer the Divine textiles in Harmandir Sahib, the waiting period is about a year.

During the present study, the researcher observed that many devotees present Rumala Sahib to Gurdwaras on certain occasions in order to present it to their Guru for fulfilling their vows. Gurdwaras received a larger number of these textiles on special occasions such as Baisakhi, Diwali, and Gurpurb.

It was revealed by the Gurdwara authorities that despite time-to-time announcements and requests to spend less money on the Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib, people present these textiles daily and on certain days in all Gurdwaras. The majority of Head Granthis (60%) disclosed that they were attempting to reuse these Holy Textiles, but despite this fact, the Gurdwaras were still overflowing with an abundance of these textiles. The old Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib were found used to serve langar to devotees, cover the basket to serve Langar, and cover the heads of devotees at the entrance of the main Darbar of the Gurdwaras. In addition, some Rumala Sahib were used to make covers of *Pothis* or *Gutkas*, and the authorities of Gurdwaras gathered up all of the old Rumala and burned them in a ceremony known as Sanskar at Goindwal,

a place in Panjab. Some were used to cover the tables or stools in the Darbar Hall. Respondents were asked about their point of view regarding re using these textiles. 82.8% were in favour of the idea, while 17.2% were quite reluctant to talk about it.

The vast majority of respondents (87.2%) were unaware of any initiative taken to reduce the overload of Rumala Sahib. It was revealed that the Granthis and authorities of the Gurdwaras communicate and make announcements to the devotees to donate other useful things such as carpets, rugs, durries, medicines, fans, water coolers, or money for the repair and maintenance of the Shrines. It was determined that a concerted effort on the part of all Sikhs was needed to lessen the overabundance of Rumala Sahib in Gurdwaras. The responses offered suggestions for reusing holy textiles in a way that would not hurt the feelings of devotees. These included making drapes, utility bags to be used in Shrines, wall hangings of used Rumala Sahib. It was suggested to use them to cover side tables or other furniture items in the Darbar hall. There were a few respondents who suggested that ornamented Rumala Sahib can be procured by Gurdwaras from the manufacturers, and these can be further purchased by devotees. They further added that the same Rumalas can be reused by other devotees by purchasing them from Gurdwaras and making this a cycle, thus minimizing the overload.

The initiative of reusing Rumala Sahib has already been taken up in other nations, but respondents in my study from India indicated that they are still hesitant to take the initiative.

5.6 Conclusion

Since the Vedic period, the 'word' and '*Shabad*' have been of great significance in the Indian tradition of knowledge. Dialogue created the tradition of knowing the "word," ascending, and comprehending more. The greatest example of this is the Indian Scriptures.

To imbibe the supreme greatness of *Shabad/Gyan* and language, the wrapping of the scriptures in a clean and pure cloth was initiated. The books that were the source of knowledge and considered to be Supreme were enveloped in a clean cloth and stored in an elevated position where they could be handled with care and their quality could be preserved. In addition to Hindu and Islamic texts, Guru Nanak Dev introduced a new

era of knowledge in the form of *Pothis*, the compilation of which is known as the Guru Granth Sahib. The Holy Granth had always been wrapped in a white cotton cloth, but as time and technology progressed, the tradition of using a basic fabric evolved into a more elaborate one. The Chandoa Sahib was originally used as a simple fabric canopy to shield the Guru from impurities and bird droppings when he moved outside. Over time, it evolved into an elaborately embroidered and crafted piece of cloth that is tied and draped above the Guru Granth Sahib in each Gurdwara, and it is believed to be a mandatory element in Gurdwaras. Numerous alterations to the Holy wrappings offered in Sikh Shrines have resulted from the evolution of art, design, and devotion. Several artisans, tailors, designers, shopkeepers, manufacturers, and vendors are now involved in the Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib manufacturing and distribution sectors. The majority of the manufacturers of Rumala Sahib export their exquisitely crafted textiles to other countries in addition to serving their domestic market. So many different kinds of fabrics are used to create these textiles with varied embellishments. These textiles range in price from hundreds of rupees to several lakhs of rupees. Rumala Sahib's grandeur originates from its symbolic significance, artistic beauty, ceremonial use, personal contributions, global appreciation, and Sikhs' deep regard for their sacred scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib. This study looked at how Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib have changed over time, as well as how they have been marketed and distributed. As Guru Granth Sahib is considered the Living Guru by the Sikhs, the fabric, colour, and embellishments of these textiles are chosen according to the season and occasion. On almost every occasion associated with the Sikh religion, Rumala Sahib is presented to the Holy Book in various Sikh Shrines, resulting in an abundance of these offered textiles in Gurdwaras. During the course of the research, it was discovered that there are still few Gurdwaras in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand where the Holy Granth is still wrapped in simple textiles, and the quantity of textiles is also very low. Possible causes include a lower Sikh population in the area and fewer visitors to Gurdwaras. This issue has been of concern to the Sikh community for the past few years, but due to the prevalent tradition, sentiments, and devotion, devotees continue to engage in the practice of offering these textiles despite repeated requests from the Gurdwaras committees. The study concludes that the trend of presenting elaborate sets of Rumala Sahib has dominated the tradition and people's devotion. The feeling and act of devotion to the One can also be expressed through simplicity, so devotees can offer these textiles in a limited number. Through the current study, an effort was made to raise public

awareness of the issue and identify some solutions for dealing with the abundance of these textiles in Gurdwaras while maintaining their sanctity.

5.7 Implications of the study

1. The present research will be beneficial for researchers who want to undertake studies on religious textiles.
2. Documentation of textiles will help in preserving cultural heritage.
3. Documentation of the textile would serve as a resource material to academicians, art lovers, historians, designers, and manufacturers interested in Rumala Sahib and Chandoa Sahib.
4. Documentation of Divine textiles, their designs and transformation with time would serve as a valuable asset for future generations.
5. The study will be helpful in making people aware about the Rumala abundance in the Sikh Shrines.
6. The study will be useful to bring some ideas to re-use the offered Rumala Sahib in various Sikh shrines.

5.8 Future recommendations

1. Similar research can be undertaken at different locales in the world, and comparisons can be drawn.
2. An experimental study on designing of Rumala Sahib can be done with surface ornamentation techniques like fabric painting, block printing, resist dyeing using natural dyes, etc.
3. A study on reusing or repurposing of Divine textiles can be undertaken.
4. A comparative study of the practice of offering Rumala Sahib between different regions of India can be conducted.
5. A study of Sacred textiles presented in other religions can also be undertaken.