

## Transforming Khovar Wall Paintings into Fabric: Revitalizing a Vanishing Tribal Art of India

Charu Bhatia<sup>1</sup>, Sonam Nagpal<sup>2</sup>, Ruchi<sup>3</sup>

<sup>123</sup>Assistant Professors of Fashion Design Department Chandigarh School of Business, CGC Jhanjeri, Mohali, Punjab, India

Email ID: [charubhatia729@gmail.com](mailto:charubhatia729@gmail.com)

Email ID: [comsonamnagpal91@gmail.com](mailto:comsonamnagpal91@gmail.com)

Email ID: [compandey.ruchi818@gmail.com](mailto:compandey.ruchi818@gmail.com)

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### ABSTRACT

The study titled "Transforming Khovar Wall Paintings into Fabric: Revitalizing a Vanishing Tribal Art of India" aimed to integrate traditional Khovar wall paintings into modern fabric designs. The research began with review of Khovar painting history, followed by the collection and categorization of various motifs. These motifs were then adapted using applique work and hand painting techniques to create a range of living area fabrics. A total of 30 designs were developed using Corel Draw software and displayed on walls for evaluation. Different fabrics were assessed to determine the most suitable material for the designs. Fabric samples were created based on the 2023-24 color forecast. A market survey conducted in Chandigarh revealed that shopkeepers found the living area range to be innovative and unique, and consumer feedback was highly positive, with many appreciating the exclusivity and distinctiveness of the Khovar motifs.

**Keywords:** Khovar Painting, Living arearange, applique work, Tribal art

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Art and fashion have been linked from years ago. But both disciplines interact and are recognized as interpreters of their time, normally it is the fashion designers who transfer the worlds of painting to their creations. From the influence of one art, other art come up and leads to the new art forms (Sujata,2019). Textile decorative is that branch of the creativity which includes those techniques of which are used to embellish or decorative textiles. The development of the decoration of textiles followed several unrelated routes. One developed from textures produced by the basic process of construction and the effect of colour variation such as strips, bars and checks. Another route is that of applied

decorations which are executed to the surface of finished cloth could be fabric painting or printing (Arora S.,2011) Indian has always been known for its traditional culture. The tribal art of India is very ethnic and simple reflects the creativity found in rural areas by several tribal or rural population. (Sharma M.,2019). Khovar (Kho is cave and Var a bridal couple) is marriage mural art of the tribal and Scheduled castes communities of Hazaribagh (Jharkhand) found throughout the plateau, living in forested hill villages, and agricultural valleys. Khovar painting is done by tribal community to decorate their Houses' walls. These motifs have special significance at festivals and marriage Occasion as it is believed that they have good luck. So here an attempt has been made to create unique patterns using khovar painting's motifs and applique technique for designing of living area range. (<http://tribalartofhazaribagh.blogspot.com/2014/08/tribal-women-artists-cooperative.html?m=1>) The present study was conducted to explore the possibility and to strengthen and the creativity of traditional tribal painting. Using tribal art motifs in textile designing give a wide scope of creating aesthetically beautiful designs and would serve as a dual purpose of introducing something new to the world of fashion and helping to brush off the dust from the traditional and beautiful tribal art.

The main significance of the study is to preserve the tribal culture and its authenticity towards the people as the traditional art is declining day by day in the modern world. The study will preserve the survival of tribal traditional and their customs.



## 2. KHOVAR PAINTING INTRODUCTION

Khovar (Kho is cave and Var a bridal couple) is a marriage mural art of the tribal and Scheduled castes communities of Hazaribagh (Jharkhand) found throughout the plateau, living in forested hill villages, and agricultural valleys. Khovar or the Comb-Cut art done during the marriage season, a type of graffito art using Reversed Slip pottery technique. This technique consists of applying a ground basecoat of manganese black earth Ochre and letting it dry, after which a wet slip of kaolin creamy white earth colour is applied and cut/scraped off

in various designs or motifs with a plastic or bamboo comb, or with the four fingers of the hand. The under layer is of a stark contrast with the upper layer, usually black and white.

The monsoon brings harvest after the monsoons have washed the mud house walls bare, which need repair, re-plastering, repainting of these traditional village houses with natural earth ochre colours, and worship of cattle as a ritual thanks giving for a good harvest celebrated with the Sohrai art. The traditional term Soh/Soro means to drive away and rai is a stick, denoting the early domestication of animals for agriculture and accumulation of wealth. Both Khovar and Sohrai are ancient words carrying traditional significance enacted in ritual paintings done only by tribal and traditional women artists.

## 3. HISTORY

In 1991 the Iscorockart (10,000, B.C) shelter was brought to light by Bulu Imam, Convenor INTACH Hazaribagh Chapter and subsequently during frequent visits to the Isco site in Barkagaon block 50 kms south west of Hazaribagh, the villages of Kharati, Badhuli Pipradhi and Jorakath inhabited by Prajapati (potters) and Kurmi (farmer) communities revealed a mural marriage art tradition known as Khovar, a name used to refer to the prehistoric rockart site of Isco.

In 2008, VIRASAT Trust was founded by Justin & Alka Imam to nurture and encourage the other remaining traditional Khovar women artists who were only known through paintings and exhibitions. VIRASAT Trust's objective was to protect, preserve and promote the Khovar women

artists. Henceforth, in 2008, the Bhagwan Birsa Biological Park in Ormanjhi Ranchi was painted with 17,500 Sqft of boundary wall with Khovar murals by 21 traditional women artists from Hazaribagh, funded by the Department of Tourism (Govt. of Jharkhand). This was the first occasion when the village women artists were provided the opportunity to go outside their homes to urban cities for painting murals. Subsequently, VIRASAT Trust undertook several initiatives to provide traditional women artists to demonstrate.

(Source: Delhi-sohrai-and-khovar-art-of-hazaribagh-jharkhand-2020.pdf)

## 4. MOTIFS & COLOURS

River-valley and plains-dwelling agricultural tribes have domestic animal forms like the cow, bull, goat, fowl, pigeon, peacock and lotus. The peacock motif is particularly potent as it symbolises fertility, and a pregnant peacock is seen as an auspicious motif for a nuptial chamber. Other Popular motifs are animals, birds, lizards, elephants and Pashupati (the creator of all animals), who is usually shown riding on the back of an animal.



Figure1

This relationship is of a purely matriarchal nature, such as the deer and goat milk-feeding their young, or birds feeding their chicks with fishes and

insects. There are interesting relationships between the animals themselves, such as a peacock or mongoose fighting with a snake, or snakes fighting among themselves, or the mother peacock with a young chick on the back, peacocks fighting, or a peahen breaking an egg. <https://www.scribd.com/document/490515361/2008-Heritage-India-Khovar>



### ***Appliquéwork***

Appliqué is a decorative technique in which shapes are cut from one fabric and applied to back ground fabric. It has been used in many items. Hand applique is traditional method but working by machine can be effective. (Bagri A., 2014)

### ***Living area range***

As clothing plays a major role in human lives by helping to convey their personalities, household linens play an equally important role in representing the house atmosphere. It makes the house beautiful, colourful, and appropriate. Textile decor is that branch of the creativity which includes various techniques which are used to embellish the overall appearance of the house, (Arora S., 2011). The development of the textiles decoration followed several unrelated routes. Different products are used to adorn living rooms because they balanced all the house's elements together and create an equilibrium to an otherwise disjointed place. For making living area more pleasant and attractive various types of product range are Table runner, Table mats, Cushion covers, Lamp shade, and Wall panels, (Kajal, 2021)

## **5. METHODOLOGY**

Methodology is the organized, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study. It is the research strategy that helps out the way in which a research project is to be undertaken and identifies the methods to be used.

- To conduct the study history of Khovar Painting was reviewed.
- Different motifs were collected and categorized into different categories.
- Applique work and hand painting techniques were used in creation of living area range.
- All motifs were developed and a total of 30 designs were created on Corel Draw software.
- The designs were displayed on the wall for evaluation of designs of living area range by experts and researchers.
- Different fabrics were collected, displayed and were evaluated to check which fabric was best suitable.
- For the product, fabric samples were developed under annual colour of colour forecast 2023-24.
- The survey was conducted to test the marketability of constructed living area range. It was done in Chandigarh. The shopkeeper finds the living area range innovative and unique and was highly encouraged.

## **6. RESULT & DISCUSSION**

This section presents the data concisely and clearly. The purpose of this section is to present the result in organized tables for analysis. Tables and figure with supportive description permit the readers to interpret them quickly and accurately.

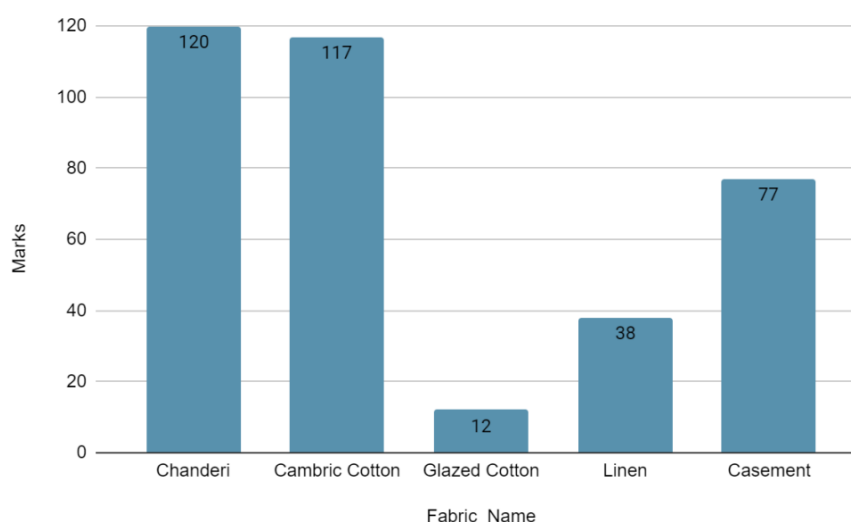
### ***6.1 Collection & Categorization of Khovar motifs.***

During study different types of motifs were found. Collected motifs were categorized into different categories based on their type. The different categories are Animal, Bird, Geometrical, Insects, Animal Border, Border motifs.

### ***6.2 Development of designs.***

#### ***6.2.1 Evaluation of fabric for living area range.***

**Figure 2- Selection of fabric for table runner, table mats, cushions cover and wall panel: -**



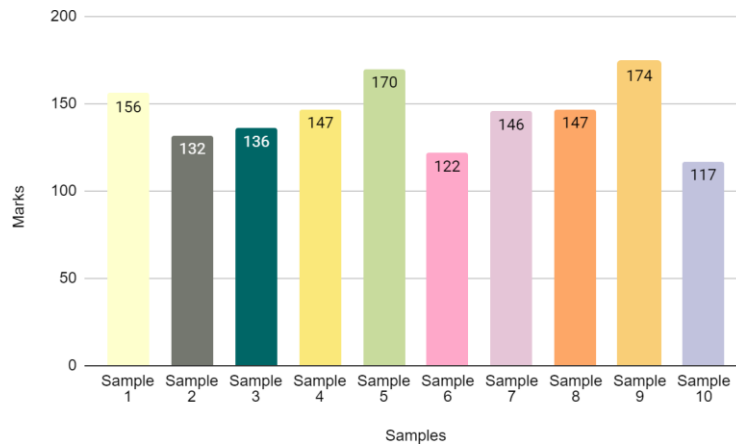


	SampleNo.1	SampleNo.2	SampleNo.3	SampleNo.4	SampleNo.5
RANK	1	5	2	3	4

It is reflected from figure 4.1 that sample no.1 i.e. **Chanderi fabric** was the most preferred fabric with highest score of 120 and ranked first. Sample no.3 i.e. **Glazed Cotton** scores 117 marks and ranked second. Third to sixth ranks in descending order were taken by sample no. 4, 5 and 2 respectively.

#### 6.2.2 Evaluation of colour for living area range.

Figure3 –Annual colour of colour forecast2022-23



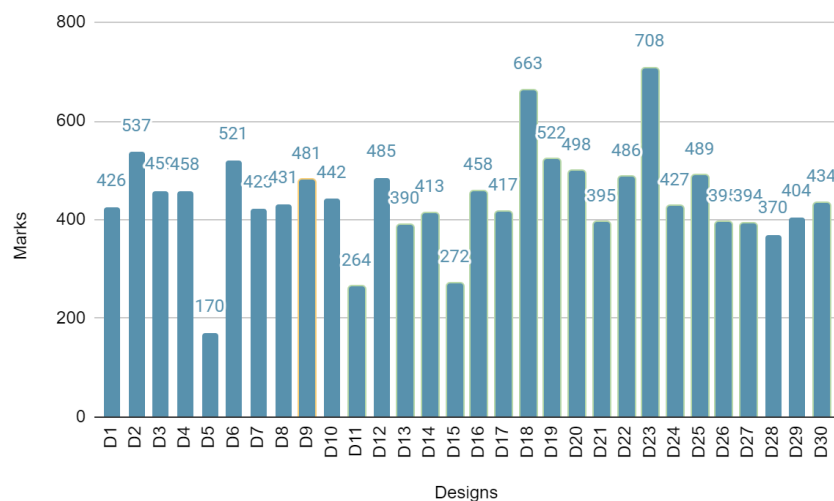
	Sample No.1	Sample No.2	Sample No.3	Sample No.4	Sample No.5	Sample No.6	Sample No.7	Sample No.8	Sample No.9	Sample No.10
RANK	3	8	7	5	2	8	4	6	1	10

It is revealed from figure 4.3 that the **Sample no.9** was the most preferred colour with 174 score and ranked first. Second rank was taken by **Sample no.5** with 170 score. Third to tenth ranks were taken by sample no.1, 7, 4, 8, 3 and sample no.10 respectively.

#### 6.3 Construction of living area range.

##### 6.3.1 Evaluation of designs for living area range

Figure4- Evaluation of most preferred design of living area range.





Design no.	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	D9	D10	D11	D12	D13	D14	D15	D16	D17	D18	D19	D20	D21	D22	D23	D24	D25	D26	D27	D28	D29	D30
Rank	17	31	12	15	58	16	10	14	30	90	25	20	28	13	19	27	24	6	22	81	71	29	23	22	24	26	11	5		

It is revealed from figure 4.3.1 that design **no. 23** was the most preferred design with 708 score and was ranked first second rank. Was tagged by design **no.17** with 663 score. Design no. 2 scores 537 marks and third rank. Fourth to tenth marks were tagged by design no. 5, 19, 20, 25 and 22 respectively.

### SELECTED DESIGN

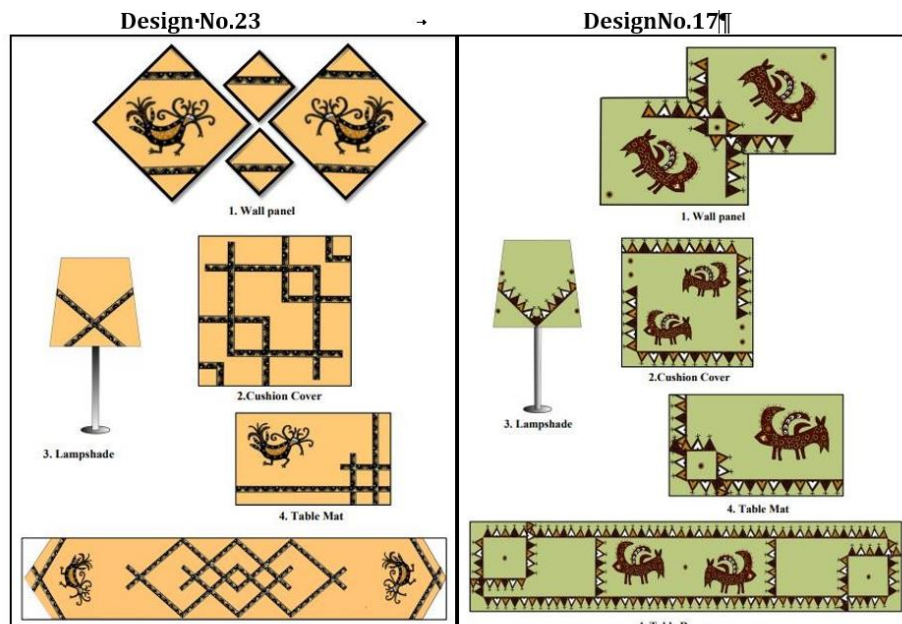


Figure5

Figure6

### PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT SET-1



Figure7





Figure8

Figure9

**PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT SET-1**

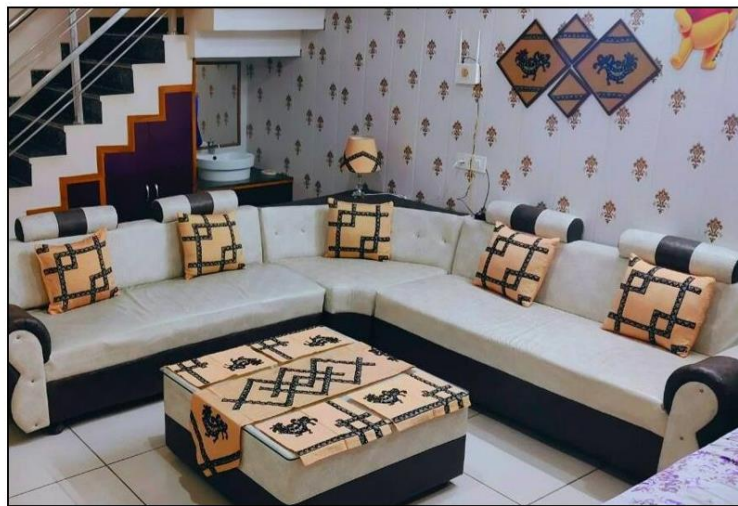


Figure10

Figure10



Figure11

Figure12

**7. FIND THE MARKET ABILITY AND CONSUMER ACCEPTABILITY.****7.1 Costing of living arrangement**

Before checking the market ability and consumer acceptability of final products, the cost of bed room range was calculated. The total calculated has been shown in table 1 & 2.

**Table1: -Cost of Set-1**

Sr.no.	Material	Cost/unit or meter (In Rupees)		Quantity	Cost of material consumed (in Rupees)
1.	Chanderi fabric	322 per meter		4 meters	1,288/-
2.	Dyeing	50 per meter		4 meters	200/-
3.	Lining	45 per meters		3 meter	135/-
4.	Framing lampshade				650/- 300/-
5.	Notion used: Threads and Paints	10 per rolls 20 per bottles		5 rolls 4 bottles	50/- 80/-
6	Labour	-		-	2,560/-
7	Total cost price	-		-	5,263/-
8	Profit (being 20% of the cost price)	-		-	1,052/-
9	Sales price	-		-	6,315/-

Table 4.7 depicts that price of set 1 is Rs. 6,315/- including the cost of fabric, dyeing, lining, notions, lampshade, labour & profit.

**Table2: -Cost of Set-2**

Sr.no.	Material	Cost/unit or meter (In Rupees)	Quantity	Cost of material consumed (in Rupees)
1.	Chanderi fabric	332 per meter	4 meters	1,288/-
2.	Dyeing	50 per meter	4 meters	200/-
3.	Lining	45 per meters	3 meter	135/-
4.	Framing lampshade			700/- 300/-
5.	Notion used: Threads and Paints	10 per rolls 20 per bottles	4 rolls 4 bottles	40/- 80/-
6	Labour	-	-	2,240/-
7	Total cost price	-	-	4,993/-
8	Profit (being 20% of the cost price)	-	-	998/-
9	Sales price	-	-	5,991/-

Table 4.8 depicts that price of set 2 is Rs 5,991/- including the cost of fabric, dyeing, lining, notions and lampshade.



## 8. MARKET ABILITY OF LIVING AREA RANGE.

A Performa (appendix4) was prepared to check the Market ability of bedroom range.

**Figure13:-Distribution of the respondents on the basis of their liking, over all appearance of the range.**

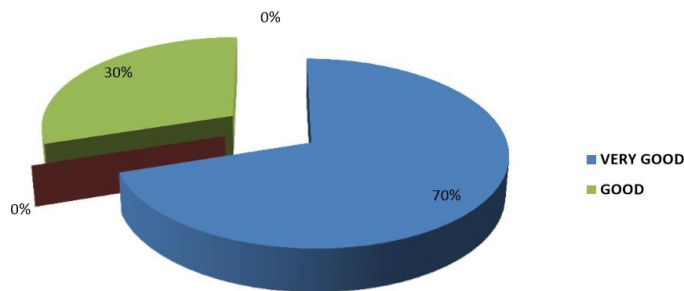


Figure13, reveals that majority of shopkeeper i.e. 70% of them appreciated the overall appearance of bedroom range. They found that the designs were very new and exclusive

**Figure14:-Distribution of the respondents on the basis of quoted price.**

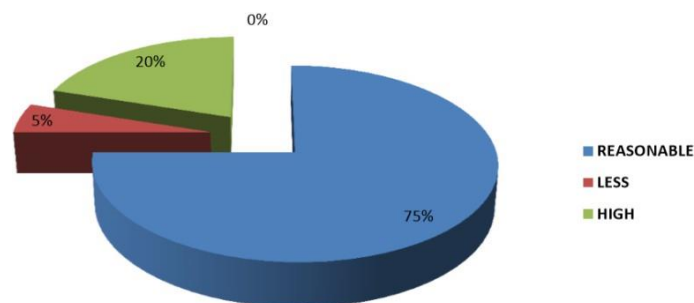
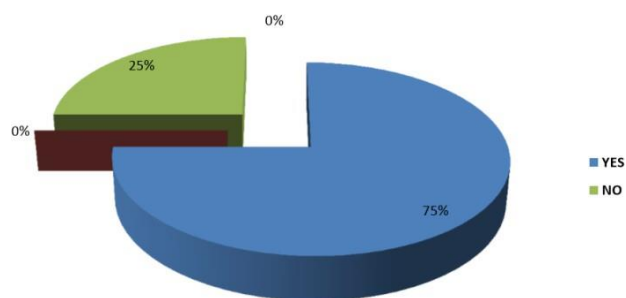


Figure14, shows 75% of the respondents found the quoted price of living area range areas on able, 5% found less and 20% found high.

**Figure15:-Distribution of the respondent on the basis of their will in guess to place an order.**



**Figure15**

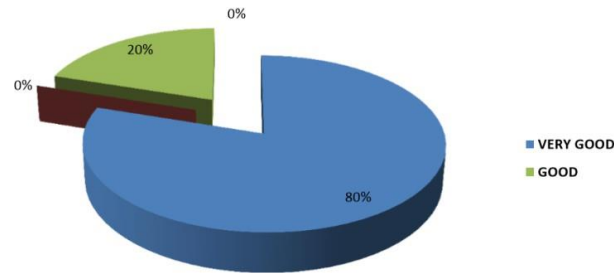
Figure15, depicts 75% of the respondents wanted to place the order and products were highly appreciated by them.

## 9. CONSUMER ACCEPTABILITY.

A Performa (appendix5) was prepared to check the consumer acceptability of bedroom range.

**Figure16: -distribution of respondent on the basis of their liking and overall appearance of products.**





**Figure16,** reveals that the overall appearances of the products were appreciated by the majority of consumer i.e. 80% consumer.

**Figure17:-Distribution of the respondent on the basis of quoted price**

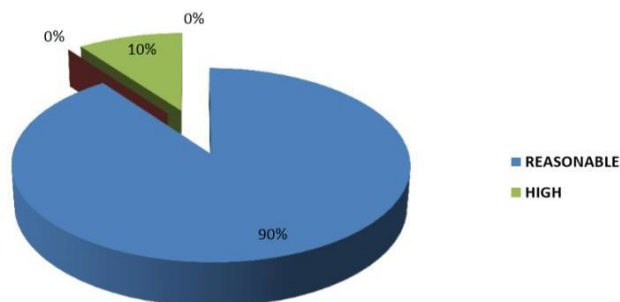


Figure17, shows that the90%of the consumer found the quoted price was reasonable and all products are sellable.

**Figure18:-Distribution of the respondents that were willing to place the order.**

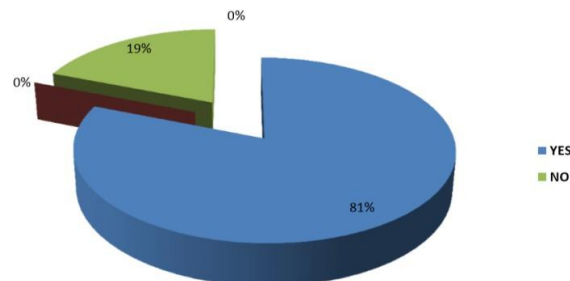


Figure18, depicts81%of the consumer are willing to place the order are produced were appreciated.

## 10. CONCLUSION

This study, titled "Designing Living Area Range Using Motifs from Khovar Painting," focused on creating new designs for living spaces by incorporating motifs from Khovar paintings. The research involved examining the history of Khovar art, gathering motifs, and creatively integrating them into new designs.

The study concluded that Khovar art is relatively unknown, with few people aware of this tribe and their paintings. By utilizing these motifs in innovative living area designs with applique work, the study not only helps revive tribal art but also offers a unique and fresh approach to home decor. A deeper exploration of Khovar art could lead to new creative applications in textiles and contribute to both the preservation and advancement of this traditional art form.

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