

# Quilt production and marketing strategies in urban sectors

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**Abstract:** *This paper aims to elucidate on importance, production and marketing of quilts in urban sectors. Quilt production in rural sector was seen at large few decades ago. But today in modern era quilt production rarely seen in rural area. Rural women folks gained skills of preparing quilts from their ancestors. It was one of the folk arts and cottage industry before Indian Independence. Folks used such quilts in memory of their ancestors and leaders. They used to keep beautiful memories in the form of quilt and they recalled their memories. Due to modern life and limited scope for quilts industry suffered both in rural and urban sectors suffered. Modern people showed their reluctance to use such old fashioned quilts. They started to use modern quilts prepared with new cloths. The author used descriptive and analytical method in this paper. He found that there is a lot of demand for modern quilts in urban sectors.*

**Key words:** *Quilt, women folk, rural industry, strategy, modern life, old fashion, new fashion.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

Quilt is one of the blanket type cloth used in villages in India. We could see such quilts in many other countries also. The scope of the study is limited to Karnataka state in India. Quilt is a warm bed covering made of padding enclosed between layers of fabric and kept in place by lines of stitching, typically applied in a decorative design. A hand knitted or fabric bedspread with decorative stitching. Quilting is the traditional art of transforming well-worn scraps of fabric into functional warm bedding, and is popular in Yallapur, Mundagod, Haliyal, Bagalkot, Vijayapura, Davangere, Shimoga, Gulbarga and other places in north Karnataka. There were women folks available in every village who involved themselves in preparing quilts. It was a leisure time activity. There was lot of demand for such quilts and children were fond of them. Due to modernization and urbanization there was a drastic change in attitude and life style of people especially in rural sectors. Every time modern life demands new things to lead their life. Therefore quilt prepared with old cloths lost its demand but retained its importance in modern life. Modern quilts entered into the wardrobes and occupied their place in modern life. The manufacturers are using modern strategies to sell their products.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS OF THE STUDY:

Author used survey, descriptive and analytical method for the study. Researcher used both primary and secondary data for the study. The study is restricted to Karnataka state in India.

## 3. FINDINGS AND ANALYSES:

Preparation of quilt is one of the folk arts in Karnataka state. It is linked with folk rituals and believes. Usually quilt preparation was restricted only for self use in villages. As modernization entered into the doors of villages women folks of rural sectors lost their interest in preparation of quilts.

Quilt production in rural sector was limited and women folks prepare such quilts for their own use. Every house in villages of Karnataka especially in north Karnataka region used to prepare quilts. Aged women of a family made use of her leisure time to prepare such quilts. They used old cloths used by the members of the family. Comparing to the scenario a few decades ago when at least one person in every household could sew a quilt. It takes a woman almost 20 days to finish a full-length quilt (kavudi) needs is three full-length saris of different colours and patterns, kavudi thread, a needle and some ingenuity. It is the elaborate and time-consuming process of stitching a quilt that the reason for dwindling numbers. There is high demand for it. But not many have sustained the patience of sewing a patchwork quilt.

Village women folks use to prepare quilts and following their own methods. This varies from region to region but stitching and joining pieces of cloths are almost same. Saris are first soaked in water, then semi-dried on the floor and 12 stones are placed around the sprawled fabric to secure it to the ground (this stage is called 'lyave'). Finally, a round of running stitch all through fastens all the layers of cloth," she explains, detailing the process. Quilts have evolved over the years. "Ivory carvings with Pharaohs wearing quilted garments indicate that quilt making was in practice even in 3500 BC. From Egypt, the craft found its way to Mongolia, Europe and America.

Historians may consider this a myth but many quilters believe that quilts were used to convey messages to help slaves flee to freedom during the civil war. Quilting patterns such as monkey wrench, wagon wheel, bear's paw trail, crossroads, log cabin, shoofly, bow ties, double wedding rings, flying geese, drunkard's path and the star were cleverly pieced together.

The Siddi tribe (of African origin) in Karnataka have been retaining the tradition of quilt making using fabric from saris and blouses. They have adopted, adapted and integrated their African cultural and artistic traditions along with the Indian cultural aspects." Gudharis, Kantha and Ralli craftsmanship from different regions of India were also highlighted. We can witness them in Yallapur in Karwar District.

Quilting is a well established leisure activity in America and in Europe. But for a handful of hobbyists and a few regional artisans, this craft is yet to gain popularity in India. Quilting machine manufacturers are making an effort to popularise the art of quilting in India by conducting workshops and by bringing in international experts to share their expertise and knowledge. Siddi and some migrated Maharshtrian in Karnataka still producing varieties of quilt and selling them in local market and urban markets.

Since it is a age old fashion of fabric, it is gaining both domestic and international market. Comparing to the other countries India is really competing in quilt production. Countries like USA, Africa and Sweden are producing in a large scale and conducting exhibitions to popularize the quilt products. They are making the people to use quilt products in their day to day life.

In India most of the quilts are producing for their own use not for sale. Only few families are engaging in this business that they are collecting the cloth from different sources and preparing quilts in different colour and sizes. Hindu mythology says that silk purifies our body and soul. Perhaps why silk has been an integral part of our rituals. According to feng shui, silk generates positive energy. Now, silk quilts are quite popular.

A silk quilt is nothing but a bed cover, a sandwich of silk and two layers of non-silk fabric. The eri silk and mulberry silk are best suited for the production of quilts because of their thermal qualities. Silk is known to have mesmerised the entire world since time immemorial, thanks to its softness, sheen and affinity to colours. Quilt as an end product means a soft experience for the users, but its making is laborious. Take for example the eri quilts (eri silk is known as endi or errandi in India, according to Wikipedia). They are made either by stuffing lots of eri silk or by using sheets of the silk

Quilts made of long sheets of eri silk are produced mainly in Nagaland. Around 2,5000 matured eri worms (almost ready to spin the cocoons) are released on a smoother surface inside a rectangular bamboo frame. Silkworms ooze out silk uniformly to form a sheet. A satin, silk or polyester fabric is used to cover these sheets of silk and stitched artistically. An average of two silk sheets are used to make one quilt. The current trends has seen that mulberry silk quilts are rising in popularity. One of the manufacturing units that produces such quilts is in Madhya Pradesh. He has already explored market in India by conducting exhibitions in major cities and getting orders regularly. Another quilt-making for Poonam Gupta, proprietor, Penguin Creations, is much more than a profession. She involved in this business and earning more than that what she had while in corporate work. Such efforts witnessed that quilts are being used in our society and there is a lot of demand for them. Producers have to understand the pulses of their customers and satisfy them with their products.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

After this study the author came to know that still there is a demand for quilts both in rural and urban sectors. To enhance and uplift rural and cottage industries in Karnataka state women folk have to prepare quilts as per demands of the customers who lived in modern era. Women folk have to develop their skills to prepare modern quilts using new cloths. They can use sewing and embroidery machines to attract city people who demand new fashioned quilts. Urban people do not ready to use quilts made with old cloths which was old fashioned. Using websites, mobile applications they can sell their products directly to the consumers' door step. Women folks can make use of many schemes implemented by Government to strengthen their cottage industry. Sitting in villages they can receive orders from distant places and sell their products across countries.

#### **5. CONCLUSION:**

As the amount of Quilt production has been decreasing day by day because of lack of skilled women folk in villages. But at the same time demand for it is increasing both in villages and towns. Due to this situation some women entrepreneurs are hiring women folks and provide them pieces of new cloth to prepare quilts. Modern quilts have been preparing without following any folk rituals which was following in India. Most of the urban educated women are not ready to purchase quilts prepared with old cloths. Therefore due to modernization quilts have been replaced as quilt like blankets. The manufacturers are using many strategies to sell their products viz. publicity through website, mobile application and selling directly to the customers in urban sectors. Such blankets are popular and using by all. Nowadays manufacturers of such blankets are supplying to the customers doorstep. Customers are fond of purchasing such blankets only because of modernization where there are quilts are not available and women folks are rarely preparing quilts.

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Dr. Basappa Y. Bangari has 15 years teaching experience both in UG and Post Graduate level. Presently serving as an Associate Professor and Head School of Indian and Foreign languages at Garden City University, Bengaluru. He also served as Private Secretary to the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor of Karnataka Janapada University, Gotagodi for seven years. Served as Teacher Educator. Serving as a casual News Reader at All India Radio, Dharwad. Served as a Special Correspondent for 'Samajveer' Kannada Daily for 25 years. Conducting research in Folklore of Karnataka and social sciences along with English language, literature and translation.