



# ADAPTATION OF TRADITIONAL TEXTILE INTO CONTEMPORARY INTERIORS

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**Abstract** - This study explores the integration of traditional textiles into contemporary interior design, examining how cultural heritage can coexist with modern aesthetics. Traditional textiles, rich in history, symbolism, and artisanal value, offer unique textures, colors, and patterns that enhance the visual and emotional appeal of modern spaces. The research investigates various methods of traditional textiles of Gujarat, including interior application examples. Through case studies and literature analysis, the paper highlights how traditional textiles can be preserved and revitalized within modern contexts, creating interiors that are both culturally rooted and stylistically current.

**Keywords**— Traditional Textile, Contemporary Interiors, Adaptation

## I. INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving interior design, traditional textiles play a pivotal role in bridging the gap between heritage and contemporary aesthetics. As designers increasingly seek to cultivate environments that resonate with authenticity, the incorporation of textiles rooted in cultural narratives fosters a deeper connection with the spaces we inhabit. The integration of traditional textiles into contemporary living spaces signifies a profound appreciation for heritage melded with the demands of modern life. In an era increasingly defined by a desire for sustainability, authenticity, and unique aesthetics, traditional textiles, with their rich tapestry of cultural narratives and time-honored artisanal craftsmanship, present compelling opportunities to enrich modern interiors. These textiles, often imbued with inherent sustainable qualities through the use of natural fibers and traditional, low-impact production methods, resonate with a growing consumer base seeking alternatives to mass-produced and environmentally questionable materials. This movement towards incorporating the past into the present reflects a desire to create living environments that are not only visually appealing and functionally sound but also deeply connected to cultural identity and history.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The exploration of traditional textiles reveals a rich tapestry of historical significance that resonates within contemporary design practices. Textiles have long served not only as functional items but also as powerful symbols of cultural identity and heritage. The intricate craftsmanship evident in traditional fabrics underscores the artistry and labor that have characterized diverse societies throughout history.

## III. OVERVIEW OF TRADITIONAL TEXTILES AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCES

Traditional textiles serve as a vital link between past and present, encapsulating the historical significance of various cultures through their intricate designs and crafting techniques. Traditional textiles serve as vital artifacts that embody and communicate cultural identity across various societies. They transcend mere functionality, encapsulating the historical narratives, social structures, and artistic expressions of the communities that produce them. The production of textiles is intricately linked to artisanship, reflecting deep-seated cultural practices and symbolizing collective identities.

### A. The Historical Significance of Traditional Textiles

Historically, textiles were not merely utilitarian, providing warmth and protection; they were also imbued with symbolic meanings that reflected the identity and values of a community. For example, the diversity found in designs can illustrate a society's cultural narratives and social hierarchies. As noted, textiles have played a key role in local and national cultures not only because of their utility and functionality but also in terms of the symbolic value that they have for a particular social group, populace, or nation. Furthermore, traditional practices have been adapted over time, allowing them to meet contemporary functional and aesthetic requirements while maintaining their cultural significance. This continuous evolution exemplifies the interplay between heritage and modern consumer needs.

## B. The Aesthetic Appeal of Traditional Textiles

The aesthetic appeal of traditional textiles lies not only in their visual richness but also in their capacity to convey cultural narratives and histories. In contemporary interior design, these textiles serve as conduits for expressing individuality and creating immersive environments. Designers increasingly recognize the importance of integrating traditional fabrics, as they can transform spaces from mere physical settings into reflections of personal and collective identities. The unique textures and patterns of these textiles evoke emotional responses, enabling a deeper connection between inhabitants and their surroundings.

## C. Cultural Significance and Storytelling of Traditional Textile

Traditional textiles not only serve as functional decor but also as vital vessels of cultural narratives and storytelling.

Each piece holds a unique history, reflecting the artisans' cultural origins, social contexts, and artistic techniques that have been passed down through generations. This storytelling aspect resonates powerfully in contemporary interior design, where the incorporation of traditional textiles can transform spaces into immersive cultural experiences. Design choices that feature these textiles encourage a deeper understanding of their significance, fostering appreciation for the craftsmanship involved in their creation. The use of textiles in this regard aligns with the notion that objects can embody extensive knowledge. Moreover, by prioritizing the process behind textile production, designers enhance viewers insights into the intricate relationships between culture, identity, and spatial aesthetics, affirming the notion that design is not merely about aesthetics but also about conveying rich narratives.

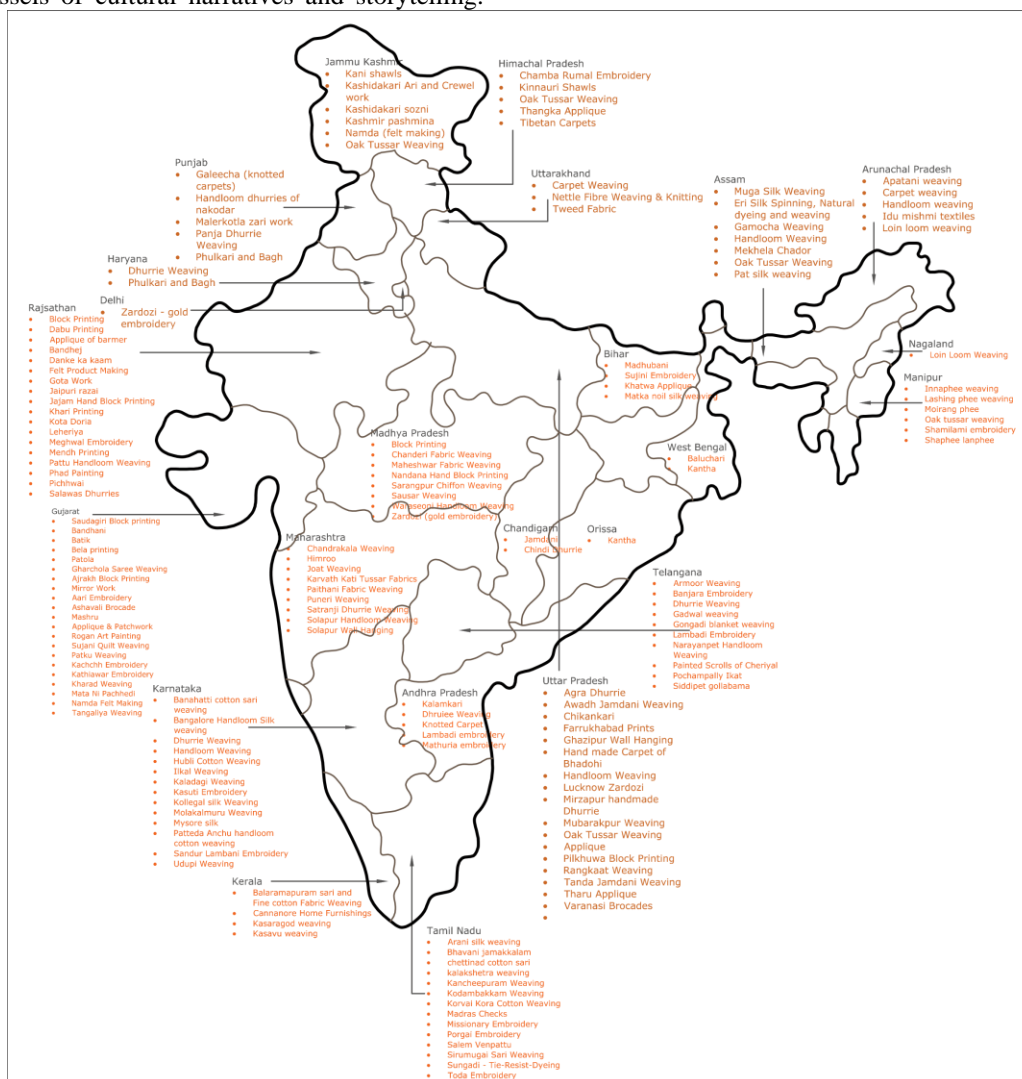


Fig. 1. Map of India Showing Traditional Textiles

#### IV. TRADITIONAL TEXTILES OF GUJARAT

Gujarat boasts a rich and diverse tradition of textiles, reflecting the state's vibrant culture, history, and the skills of its various communities. These textiles are not merely fabrics; they are intricate expressions of art, identity, and heritage, passed down through generations. Traditions of textiles in Gujarat have woven their way into the sheer dynamism of vibrantly colorful fabric of its people giving them a sense of identity and unique form. This craft form in Gujarat mirrors the topographical textures of the region and its design variations are a manifestation of clan and community characteristics. This Textile legacy in the state has a chequered history dating back three thousand years to the Indus Valley Civilization. Years of migrations, conquests, and trade coupled with the ingenuity of the Gujarati craftsmen resulted in a vast variety of weaving, printing, painting and dyeing techniques. The craftsmen of Gujarat have a close affinity with nature and eulogize nature's bounties in the design perception of their craft form. Textile traditions in Gujarat follow a variety of different styles, color, patterns and themes. The climatic and geographical conditions in Gujarat have been conducive for the growth of cotton thus facilitating the art of textiles as the premier craft form. A vast coastline and a thriving business community have ensured trade and migrations bringing about further evolutions and amalgamations within craft techniques. These added influences coupled with an intrinsic variant in styles have generated a tradition in textile which is vastly varied and all encompassing. The qualitative variants in traditions have energized and enervated a diversely successful contemporary textile market.

##### D. List of Traditional Textiles of Gujarat

- **Saudagari Block printing**  
 Region: Ajrakhpur  
 Motifs: Inspired by Mughal, Persian, Floral Theme  
 Technique: Block Printing  
 Colors: Natural Colors like Indigo, Madder, Turmeric & Black made from iron and jaggery
- **Bandhani**  
 Region: Bhuj, Jamnagar, Rajkot  
 Motifs: The fabric is tied in intricate patterns with threads and then dyed, creating beautiful dotted patterns  
 Technique: Tie & Dye  
 Colors: Red, Yellow, Green, Blue, Black
- **Batik**  
 Region: Mudra, Kutchh  
 Motifs: Batik printing is a traditional textile art form that involves applying wax to fabric in specific patterns and then dyeing the fabric.  
 The wax resists the dye, allowing artisans to create intricate and multicolored designs.

Technique: Tie & Dye  
 Colors: Red, Black, Indigo

- **Bela printing**  
 Region: Kutchh  
 Motifs: Common motifs include floral patterns, peacocks, geometric designs, and traditional Gujarati symbols.  
 Technique: Block Printing  
 Colors: Natural Colors like Indigo, Madder, Turmeric & Black made from iron and jaggery
- **Patola**  
 Region: Patan, Surendranagar  
 Motifs: elephants, parrots, flowers, dancing figures, and geometric patterns.  
 Technique: Double Ikat Weaving  
 Colors: Multicolor
- **Gharchola Saree Weaving**  
 Region: Jamnagar  
 Motifs: checkered grid with Elephants, Flowers Peacocks, Kalash (holy pots), Dots (symbolizing fertility and prosperity)  
 Technique: Tie & Dye  
 Colors: Red, Green, Yellow
- **Ajrakh Block Printing**  
 Region: Kutch (especially Dhamadka and Ajrakhpur)  
 Motifs: Typically includes stars, flowers, and complex tessellations, often rendered in repeating symmetrical blocks.  
 Technique: Block Printing  
 Colors: Natural Colors like Indigo, Madder, Turmeric, Black & White
- **Aari Embroidery**  
 Region: Banaskantha, Kutchh, Jamnagar  
 Motifs: peacocks, flowers, and traditional folk Motifs  
 Technique: Embroidery  
 Colors: Multicolor
- **Ashavali Brocade**  
 Region: Ahmedabad  
 Motifs: Intricate patterns, Floral motifs, and Mughal-inspired designs, geometric patterns, stylized animals  
 Technique: Weaving  
 Colors: Multicolor
- **Mashru**  
 Region: Patan  
 Motifs: Intricate patterns, Floral motifs, and Nature Inspired motifs  
 Technique: Weaving



Colors: Natural Colors like Indigo, Madder, Yellow  
 Turmeric, Black & White

- Applique & Patchwork  
 Region: Mainly Saurashtra  
 Motifs: Floral motifs, Animal Figures Geometric shapes,  
 Cultural symbols, Human Figures  
 and Nature Inspired motifs  
 Technique: Sewing & Stitching Work  
 Colors: Multicolor

- Rogan Art Painting  
 Region: Kutchh  
 Motifs: Floral motifs, Fauna Motifs, Creepers and Vines,  
 Paanferi, Animal Figures, Symbolic  
 Motifs and Nature Inspired motifs  
 Technique: Painting Work  
 Colors: Black, Red, Yellow, White, Blue and Green

- Sujani Quilt Weaving  
 Region: Bharuch  
 Motifs: Geometric Designs, Flowers  
 Technique: Weaving Work  
 Colors: Black, Green, Red, white

- Patku Weaving  
 Region: Surat  
 Motifs: Geometric Designs  
 Technique: Weaving  
 Colors: Red, Brown, Blue, and White

- Kachchh Embroidery  
 Region: Kutchh  
 Motifs: Geometric Designs  
 Technique: Embroidery

Colors: Red, Green, Yellow, Blue, Black

- Kathiawar Embroidery  
 Region: Mainly Saurashtra  
 Motifs: Floral motifs, Fauna Motifs, Creepers and Vines,  
 Animal Figures  
 Technique: Embroidery  
 Colors: Black, Red, Yellow, Blue, Green, White

- Kharad Weaving  
 Region: Kutchh  
 Motifs: Horizontal stripes with geometrical patterns &  
 Geometrical forms of camels, flora, local huts  
 Technique: Weaving  
 Colors: Multicolor

- Mata Ni Pachhedi  
 Region: Ahmedabad  
 Motifs: Mythological Characters, Animals, Flowers Trees  
 Technique: Painting  
 Colors: Black, Red, Brown

- Namda Felt Making  
 Region: Kutchh  
 Motifs: creepers and geometrical patterns  
 Technique: Felting  
 Colors: beige, black, brown, grey

- Tangaliya Weaving  
 Region: Surendra Nagar  
 Motifs: Houses, Trees, Birds, Animals, Especially Elephants,  
 Camels, Peacocks, Tiny Colourful dots  
 Technique: Weaving  
 Colors: Red, Black, Blue, White, Beige

#### **E. Traditional Textiles of Gujarat with Interior Application**

Table -1 Craft Details

Craft	Textile Typology/Yarn Typology	Production & Process	Interior Application
Kharad Weaving	Wool	The wool required for weaving these floor coverings is obtained from the hair of locally reared camels, sheep, and goats. The Maldharis and Rabaris (pastoral communities) shear the hair from animals and give it to the hand-spinners for making the yarn. This yarn is used by the kharad weavers to weave these floor coverings.	Considering the choices of modern-day customers, the colour palette of kharad is contemporary, ranging from browns to pastel shades. Mainly uses as floor coverings.





Fig. 2. Kharad woven rug

Table -2 Craft Details

Craft	Textile Typology/Yarn Typology	Production & Process	Interior Application
Sujani Quilt Weaving	Cotton	Indigenous tools and implements are used for sujuni weaving and are made by local carpenters. It is woven on a pit loom with a throw shuttle.	The sujuni quilt is prepared in the following sizes: 52"x 90", 60"x 90"; 66"x 90"; 72"x 90". Of these sizes, 66"x 90" is the most favoured popular. A simple sujuni weighs around 1.5 to 2 kilograms. Apart from quilts, sujuni is also used as bed spread, table cover, carpet or a throw, and prayer mat.

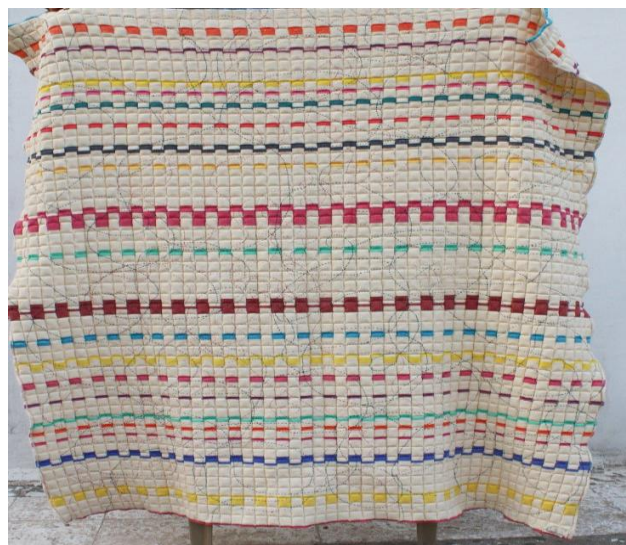


Fig. 3. Sujani Weaved Quilt

Table -3 Craft Details

Craft	Textile Typology/Yarn Typology	Production & Process	Interior Application
Bandhani Tying & Dyeing	Cotton,Silk	Jamnagar bandhej involves a meticulous process of tying and dyeing fabric to create unique patterns. Skilled artisans use fine threads to create tiny knots on the fabric, securing it tightly.	Bandhej textiles have deep cultural significance in Gujarat and are an integral part of traditional. It can be used as thematic curtains, bedspreads, runners, wardrobe shutters.



Fig. 4. Bandhani Table Runner

Table -4 Craft Details

Craft	Textile Typology/Yarn Typology	Production & Process	Interior Application
Batik Tying & Dyeing	Cotton,Silk	Fabric resisted through wax in batik is dyed in Naphthol or Azoic dyes (cold dyes) that neither involve heating the dye bath while dyeing nor require any heat or steam fixing.	Batik prints were an essential part of the daily ensemble of the native communities of Kutchh. The contemporary product range of batik includes home furnishing products like cushion covers, Curtains, Bed Spread, Bed Sets.



**Fig. 5. Batik Cushion Covers**

**Table -5 Craft Details**

Craft	Textile Typology/Yarn Typology	Production & Process	Interior Application
Ajrakh Block Printing	Cotton,Silk	The process of ajrakh printing is painstaking and has fourteen stages. Each stage requires different tools and ingredients.	Ajrakh finds its way into home decor items like cushion covers, table runners, and bedspreads, adding a touch of traditional elegance to living spaces.

**Table -6 Craft Details**

Craft	Textile Typology/Yarn Typology	Production & Process	Interior Application
Sudagiri Block Printing	Cotton,Silk	The Saudagiri printing process is similar to block printing. The Saudagiri blocks included geometric designs and buti, or flowers or sprigs. The blocks were always carved in an eight-colour pattern.	Saudagiri prints used in home furnishing products like cushion covers, Curtains, Bed Spread, Bed Sets,Rugs.





Fig. 6. Saudagiri Printed Rug

Table -7 Craft Details

Craft	Textile Typology/Yarn Typology	Production & Process	Interior Application
Mata Pachhedi Painting	Ni Cotton	Creating Mata-ni-Pachedi is a labor-intensive and intricate process that involves immense skill and patience. The artisans start by hand-drawing the designs, narrating compelling stories revolving around the central figure of the Goddess.	Traditionally, Mata-ni-Pachedi served as an essential backdrop for group worship and religious celebrations, accentuating the spiritual ambiance. However, with contemporary adaptations, these mesmerizing textiles have found new utility and popularity. Many Paintings have innovatively transformed Mata-ni-Pachedi into stunning wall hangings with fewer figures on horizontal side panels in traditional colours, enhancing the aesthetic appeal of homes and spaces.



Fig. 7. Matani Pachhedi Painting



Table -8 Craft Details

Craft	Textile Typology/Yarn Typology	Production & Process	Interior Application
Aari Embroidery Work	Cotton,Silk	The fabric to be embroidered is stretched across the frame and affixed to the horizontal and vertical bars with the help of additional cotton fabric and thread.	Aari embroidery work products used in home furnishing items and home accessories products.



Fig. 8. Aari Embroidery Cushion Cover

Table -9 Craft Details

Craft	Textile Typology/Yarn Typology	Production & Process	Interior Application
Namda Felt Making Rugs	Wool	The whole process of making namda is done by hand, and no tools or equipment are used. The manufacturing of namda starts with the procurement of locally available raw sheep wool. The wool is then separated into different categories according to the quality and the natural colour of the wool fibres	The soft, mushy felt made from sheep and camel hair is used to make the floor coverings & Rugs.



Fig. 9. Namda Felt Making Rug

Table -9 Craft Details

Craft	Textile Typology/Typology	Production & Process	Interior Application
Rogan art Painting	Cotton, Silk	The process of rogan painting comprises three steps: gel preparation, colour making, and painting. Traditionally, rogan painting is done on the cloth spread on the artist's lap, and painting starts from the centre of the cloth. Only one side of the design is painted on the cloth, which is then folded and pressed to print the mirror image on the other side. It is then dried in sunlight for 5–6 hours.	An inexpensive substitute for embroidered textiles, rogan-painted fabric was traditionally used to decorate skirts, odhanis, wraps, and toran. Nowadays it is used as wall art piece.

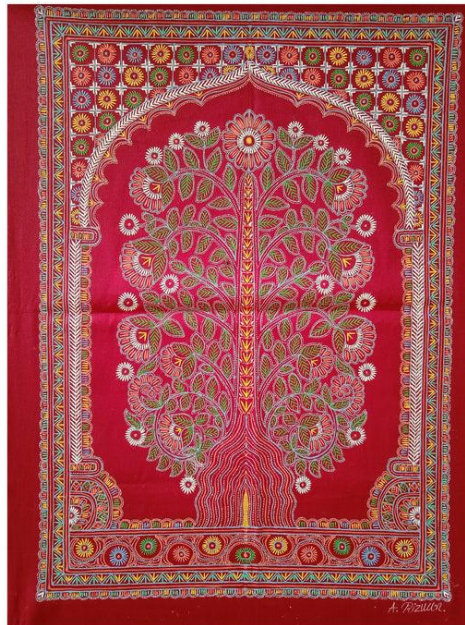


Fig. 10. Rogan Art Painting (Tree of Life)

#### V. SHORTFALLS & LIMITATION OF TRADITIONAL TEXTILES OF GUJARAT

While the traditional textiles of Gujarat are aesthetically rich and culturally significant, their direct and widespread application in modern interiors faces certain shortfalls and limitations:

##### Shortfalls:

**Cost:** Many of these textiles, especially handwoven And intricately embroidered pieces like Patola and fine zari work, are expensive due to the intensive labor and specialized skills involved.

This can limit their use to high-end or accent applications.

**Risk of Extinction of Craft:** The younger generation's lack of interest in continuing traditional crafts, as noted with Rogan Painting Work, poses a risk to the availability and diversity of these textiles in the future.

**Maintenance:** Delicate materials like pure silk and intricate embroidery may require specialized cleaning and care, making them less practical for everyday use in high-traffic areas or homes with children and pets.



**Durability:** Some traditional techniques and materials might not be as durable as modern industrial textiles, making them susceptible to wear and tear in frequently used interior elements like upholstery.

**Color Fastness:** Natural dyes, while environmentally friendly and producing unique hues, can sometimes be less colorfast than synthetic dyes, potentially fading with prolonged exposure to sunlight or washing.

**Availability and Scalability:** The handcrafted nature of many of these textiles means production can be slow and may not meet the demands of large-scale interior projects. Consistent quality and design across large quantities can also be a challenge.

**Design Adaptability:** The traditional motifs and color palettes might not always align seamlessly with contemporary interior design trends, which often favor minimalism, neutral tones, and simpler patterns.

**Application Limitations in Interiors:**

**Upholstery:** Delicate silk or heavily embroidered fabrics might not be suitable for upholstery in high-use furniture due to their fragility and cleaning requirements.

**Curtains and Drapery:** While some lighter cotton-based textiles like Bandhani can be used, heavier weaves or those with intricate embellishments might not drape well or be practical for everyday opening and closing. Color fading due to sunlight can also be a concern.

**Flooring:** Traditional Gujarati textiles are generally not designed for flooring due to their delicate nature and lack of durability underfoot traffic. While some thicker woven textiles exist, they might not meet modern standards for wear and cleanability.

**Wall Coverings:** While some embroidered or block-printed fabrics can be framed as art or used as decorative wall hangings, their application as full-fledged wall coverings might be limited by cost, maintenance, and installation challenges.

**Mass-Market Appeal:** The distinct cultural identity and traditional aesthetics of these textiles might not appeal to a broad, global consumer base in the interior design market.

**Width and Size Limitations:** Handloom textiles often have narrower widths compared to mill-produced fabrics, which can pose limitations for larger upholstery projects or drapery.'

## VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, while the inherent qualities and traditional nature of Gujarati textiles present certain limitations for widespread use in modern interiors, their unique beauty and cultural significance ensure their continued relevance, particularly in niche applications and through innovative design adaptations. They offer a way to bring a touch of India's rich textile heritage into contemporary living spaces.

However, it's important to note that:

**Adaptation and Innovation:** Contemporary designers are increasingly finding ways to incorporate elements of traditional Gujarati textiles into modern interiors through adaptations in materials, techniques, and design. For example, using simpler Bandhani patterns on more durable cotton blends for cushions or creating modern motifs inspired by traditional embroidery.

**Accent Pieces:** Traditional textiles often find their niche as accent pieces like cushions, throws, table runners, and wall art, adding a touch of cultural richness and artisanal beauty to a space without the limitations of large-scale applications.

**Preservation of Craft:** The use of these textiles, even in limited applications, helps support the livelihoods of artisans and preserve these valuable cultural traditions.

**Sustainable and Ethical Choices:** The handcrafted nature and use of natural dyes in some of these textiles can appeal to consumers seeking sustainable and ethically produced interior decor.

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