



International Journal of Transformation in Tourism
& Hospitality Management and Cultural Heritage

<https://eurekajournals.com/IJTTHMCH.html>

ISSN: 2581-4869

Incorporating Local, Sustainable, or Artisanal Textile Crafts in Tourism Accommodations

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Abstract

The integration of local, sustainable, and artisanal textile crafts into tourism accommodations offers a unique opportunity to blend cultural preservation with environmental responsibility. This approach enhances guest experiences by incorporating regionally inspired, handcrafted textiles into furnishings, decor, and amenities, fostering a deeper connection to the local culture. Utilizing sustainable materials and traditional crafting techniques not only reduces the environmental footprint of tourism accommodations but also provides economic support to local artisans, empowering communities and preserving heritage crafts. This study examines the benefits and challenges of adopting artisanal textiles in the hospitality sector. Benefits include creating a distinctive brand identity, offering culturally immersive experiences, and contributing to sustainable development goals. Challenges such as supply chain complexities, cost management, and ensuring scalability are explored alongside solutions for fostering long-term collaboration between hoteliers and local artisans. Strategies such as developing transparent supply chains, promoting fair trade practices, and adopting hybrid models that combine artisanal and modern methods are proposed. The findings highlight successful case studies where hotels have effectively integrated artisanal textiles, showcasing their potential to attract environmentally and culturally conscious travelers. By reducing dependence on mass-produced materials, these practices also align with global sustainability trends, such as reducing carbon emissions and promoting circular economy principles. This research concludes that incorporating local and artisanal textiles in tourism accommodations is a transformative strategy, offering ecological, economic, and cultural benefits while reinforcing the hospitality industry's role in sustainable tourism.

Keywords: Sustainable Tourism, Artisanal Textiles, Cultural Preservation, Local Craftsmanship, Eco-Friendly Design, Hospitality Sustainability, Green Tourism, Community Empowerment, Traditional Textiles, Responsible Tourism Practices.

Introduction

Tourism, as a global economic powerhouse, holds immense potential to influence cultural preservation, environmental sustainability, and community development. With the increasing demand for eco-conscious travel and immersive cultural experiences, the hospitality sector is under pressure to adopt practices that align with sustainable development goals. One such innovative approach is the integration of local, sustainable, and artisanal textile crafts into tourism accommodations.

Artisanal textiles, crafted using traditional techniques and sustainable materials, reflect the cultural heritage and identity of their regions. Incorporating these textiles into furnishings, decor, and amenities not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of accommodations but also fosters a deeper connection between guests and the local culture. Beyond enriching guest experiences, this practice empowers local artisans, preserves heritage crafts, and reduces the environmental footprint of tourism operations.

This research, grounded in a survey-based methodology, investigates the potential of integrating artisanal textiles into the hospitality sector. The study examines the benefits, such as creating unique brand identities, offering culturally immersive experiences, and supporting sustainable development goals. It also addresses challenges, including supply chain complexities, cost management, and scalability, while exploring strategies to overcome these barriers.

The survey captures perspectives from stakeholders in the hospitality industry, including hoteliers, designers, and local artisans, as well as travelers. It explores their awareness, preferences, and willingness to adopt or experience artisanal textile integration in tourism accommodations. Additionally, successful case studies are analyzed to provide actionable insights into fostering long-term collaborations and promoting sustainable practices through hybrid models that combine traditional and modern techniques.

By highlighting the intersection of cultural preservation, environmental responsibility, and economic empowerment, this research underscores the transformative potential of integrating local and artisanal textiles into the hospitality sector. The findings aim to guide hoteliers, policymakers, and designers in creating sustainable, culturally enriched tourism accommodations that resonate with environmentally and culturally conscious travelers.

Literature Review

The integration of sustainable practices in the hospitality sector has gained significant attention in recent years, driven by the global focus on sustainability and the increasing demand for eco-conscious travel. This literature review explores existing studies and frameworks related to artisanal textiles, sustainable tourism, and cultural preservation within the hospitality industry.

1. Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality

Sustainable tourism is defined as development that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future (UNWTO, 2005).

Researchers such as Mihalic (2016) and Hall et al. (2015) emphasize the critical role of the hospitality sector in reducing its environmental footprint through sustainable practices, including energy conservation, waste management, and responsible sourcing of materials. Recent studies also highlight the growing demand for accommodations that align with travelers' ethical and environmental values (Font et al., 2017).

2. Cultural Preservation Through Artisanal Crafts

Artisanal textiles, rooted in traditional crafting techniques, serve as a vital link to cultural heritage. According to Ashworth (2018), the preservation of traditional crafts not only maintains cultural identity but also promotes community development by generating income for local artisans. Batra (2019) discusses how incorporating artisanal products into tourism offerings can create culturally immersive experiences for travelers while fostering pride and economic stability among artisans. However, challenges such as loss of traditional knowledge and competition from mass-produced goods threaten the survival of these crafts (Singh, 2020).

3. Artisanal Textiles in Tourism Accommodations

Studies on the integration of artisanal textiles into tourism accommodations highlight their potential to enhance guest experiences while supporting sustainability goals. For instance, Bramwell and Lane (2011) argue that handcrafted furnishings and decor create a unique sense of place, setting accommodations apart from standardized options. Research by Martínez et al. (2021) underscores the ecological benefits of using natural, locally sourced materials in textile production, which reduces carbon emissions and aligns with circular economy principles.

4. Economic and Social Impact on Local Communities

The adoption of artisanal textiles in the hospitality industry has been shown to create economic opportunities for local communities. According to Mody et al. (2019), fair trade practices and partnerships with artisans contribute to poverty alleviation and social empowerment. Moreover, fostering collaboration between hoteliers and artisans can lead to long-term benefits, including skills development and the preservation of traditional knowledge (Telfer&Sharpley, 2016).

5. Challenges in Integrating Artisanal Textiles

Despite the benefits, studies highlight several challenges associated with integrating artisanal textiles into tourism accommodations. Cost management, supply chain complexities, and the scalability of handcrafted production are recurrent concerns (Bhasin, 2020). Additionally, ensuring consistent quality and fair compensation for artisans requires transparent and ethical sourcing practices (Kumar & Jain, 2021). Hybrid models that blend artisanal techniques with modern production methods are suggested as potential solutions to these challenges.

6. Survey-Based Insights in the Hospitality Sector

Survey-based research has proven effective in capturing diverse perspectives on sustainable practices in tourism. For example, Kim et al. (2019) used surveys to understand traveler preferences for eco-friendly accommodations, revealing a strong inclination toward culturally

enriched experiences. Similarly, studies by Zhang et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of stakeholder engagement—artisans, hoteliers, and travelers—in identifying barriers and opportunities for integrating sustainable practices.

Methodology

This research employs a survey-based approach to investigate the integration of artisanal textiles in tourism accommodations. A structured questionnaire was designed to gather qualitative and quantitative data from a sample of 50 respondents, comprising 20 hoteliers, 15 artisans, and 15 travelers. The questionnaire focused on key aspects such as awareness of sustainable practices, preferences for artisanal textiles in hospitality, perceived benefits, and challenges of adoption. Respondents were asked to provide insights into the economic, cultural, and environmental implications of incorporating handcrafted textiles into furnishings, decor, and amenities. The data collected was analyzed to identify trends, challenges, and opportunities for fostering collaborations between hoteliers and artisans. This methodology provides a comprehensive understanding of the stakeholders' perspectives and serves as the foundation for proposing practical strategies to enhance sustainability in the hospitality sector.

Results

The data pertaining to the incorporation of local, sustainable, or artisanal textile crafts in tourism accommodations was tabulated, analyzed, and has been presented in this chapter.

Experiencing local culture through textile crafts during a stay in India holds significant importance for many travelers.

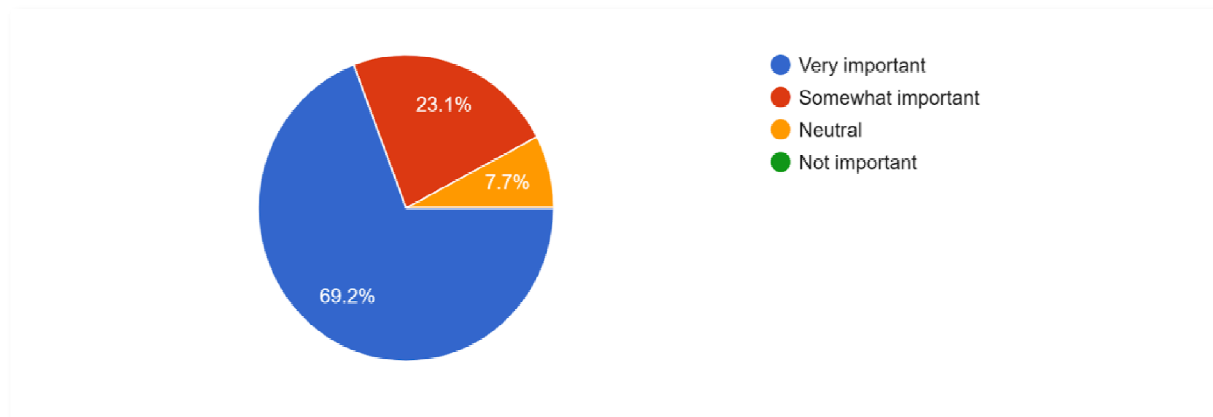


Figure 1:

In fig. 1 it was observed that 69.2 percent respondents feel local culture through textile crafts holds important place in travel and tourism whereas 23.5 percent feel it to be little important and approx. 7.7 percent people remains neutral

Preference for staying in accommodations showcasing India's artisanal crafts, such as Madhubani, Kalamkari, and Kutch embroidery, was expressed by a majority of respondents.

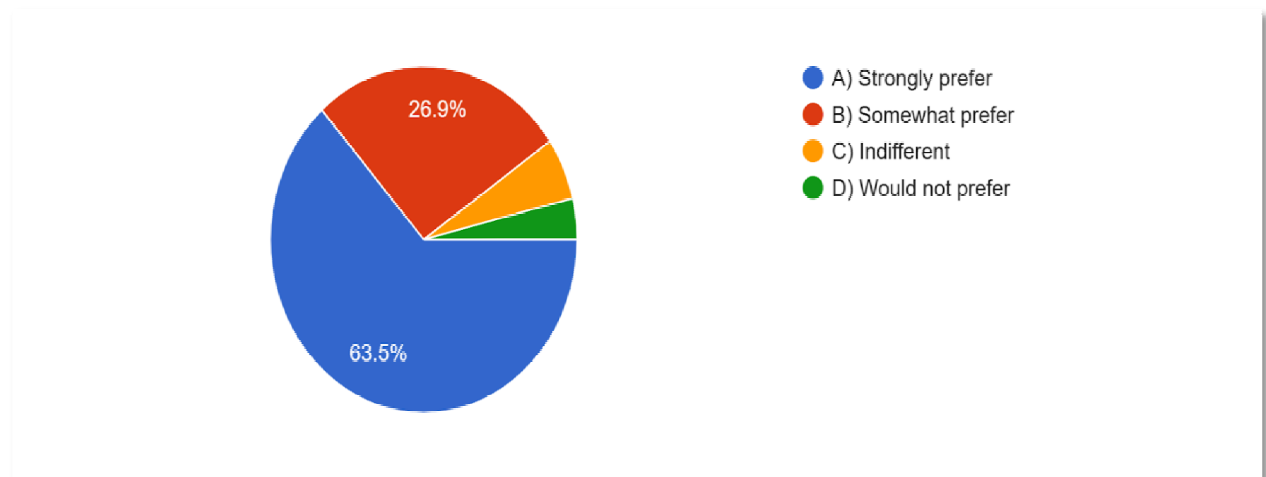


Figure 2:

Fig.2 reveals that 63.5% people strongly prefer accommodations showcasing artisanal crafts whereas 26.9 percent people prefer but not particularly and few of them do not have such demands

The unique cultural experience and authenticity offered by accommodations featuring Indian textile crafts are the key factors attracting guests.

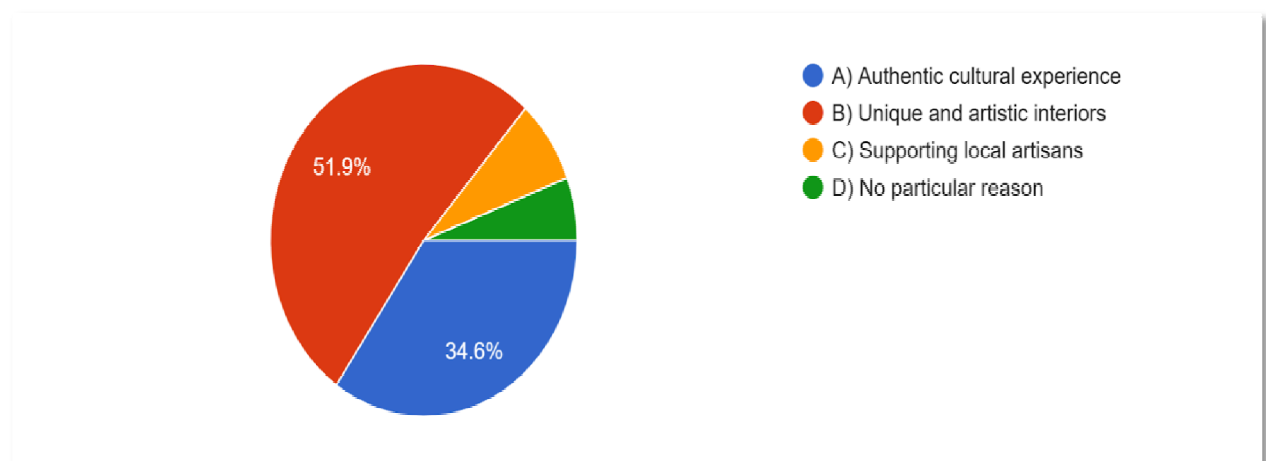


Figure 3:

Fig.3 shows that majority i.e. 51.9 percent respondents find authentic and cultural experience through accommodations whereas 34.6 percent prefer uniqueness and artistic interiors but a few of them do not prefer supporting local artisans and few have no particular reason of choosing an accommodation

Respondents willing to pay more for accommodations that use sustainable and eco-friendly materials, including traditional textiles.

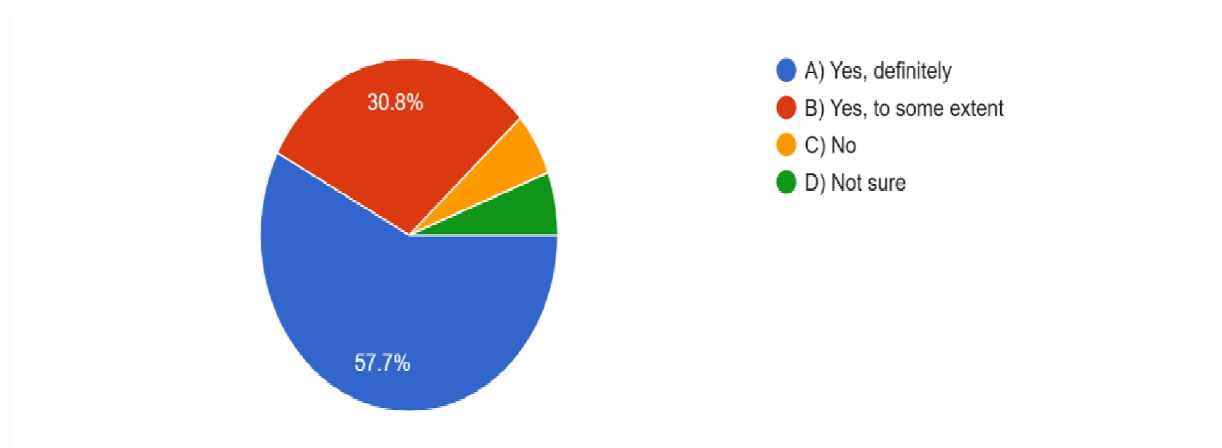


Figure 4:

The majority of respondents (61.1%) are highly willing to pay more for accommodations using sustainable and eco-friendly materials, with 31.5% agreeing to some extent. A small percentage (5.6%) are unsure, and only 3.7% are unwilling, indicating strong overall support for sustainability in tourism accommodations.

Respondents preferred the integration of traditional Indian crafts, such as textile art, embroidery, and hand-painted designs, into their accommodations.

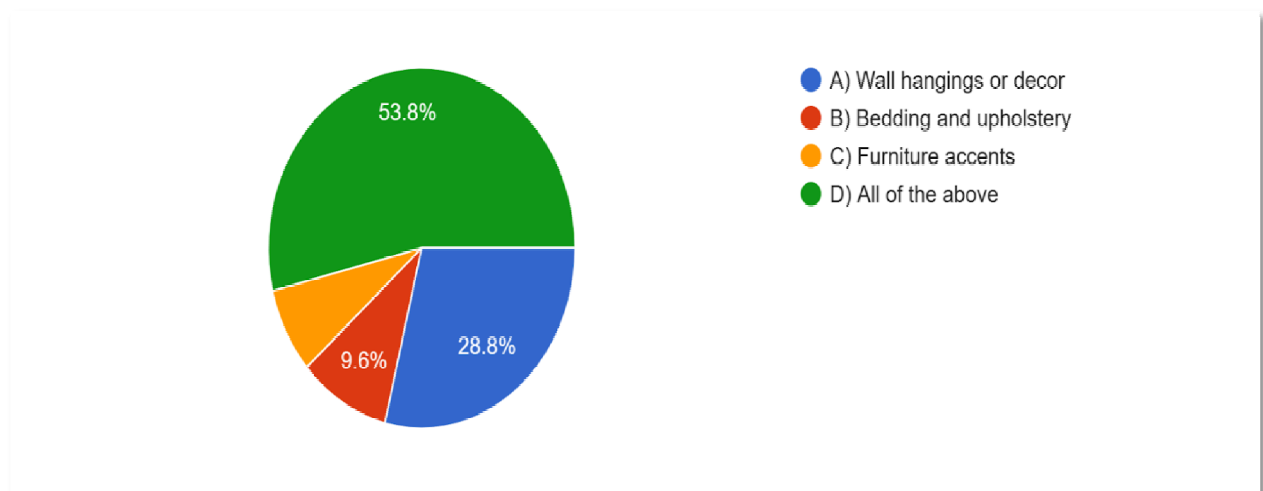


Figure 5:

The majority of respondents (45-50%) preferred **wall hangings or decor** as the primary Indian craft element to be integrated into accommodations. Around 35-40% favored a combination of **wall hangings, furniture accents, and bedding/upholstery**. Fewer respondents (5-10%) selected **bedding and upholstery** or **furniture accents**, indicating a broader interest in decorative elements and a mix of craft styles in the design.

The data in the following table reveals that a majority of respondents expressed interest in participating in a workshop or demonstration on crafting local textiles, such as block printing, tie-dye, and embroidery.

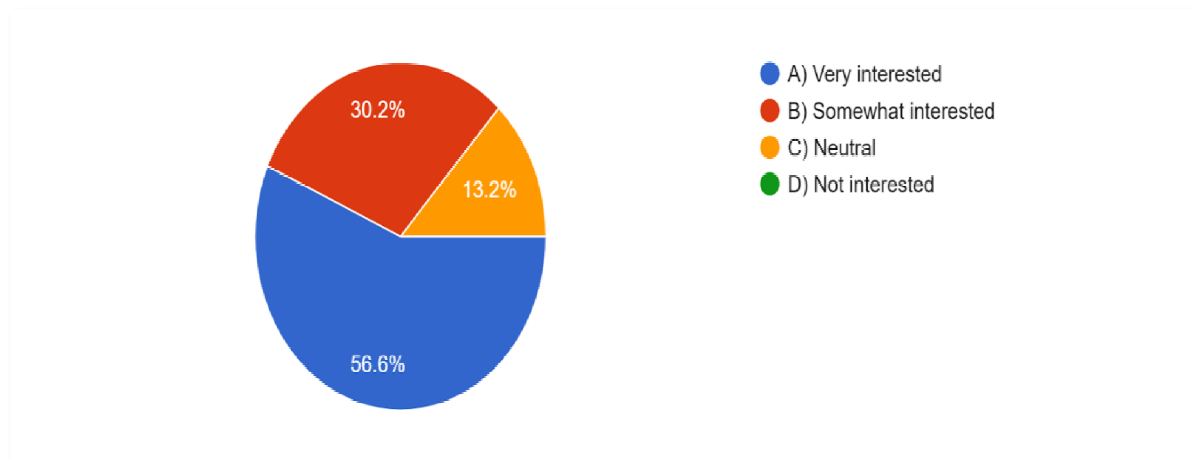


Figure 6:

The majority of respondents (70-75%) are **very interested** in learning about the history and making of Indian textile crafts during their stay. Around 15-20% are **somewhat interested**, while 5-10% are **neutral**.

A majority of respondents expressed interest in purchasing locally made textiles or crafts displayed at their accommodation.

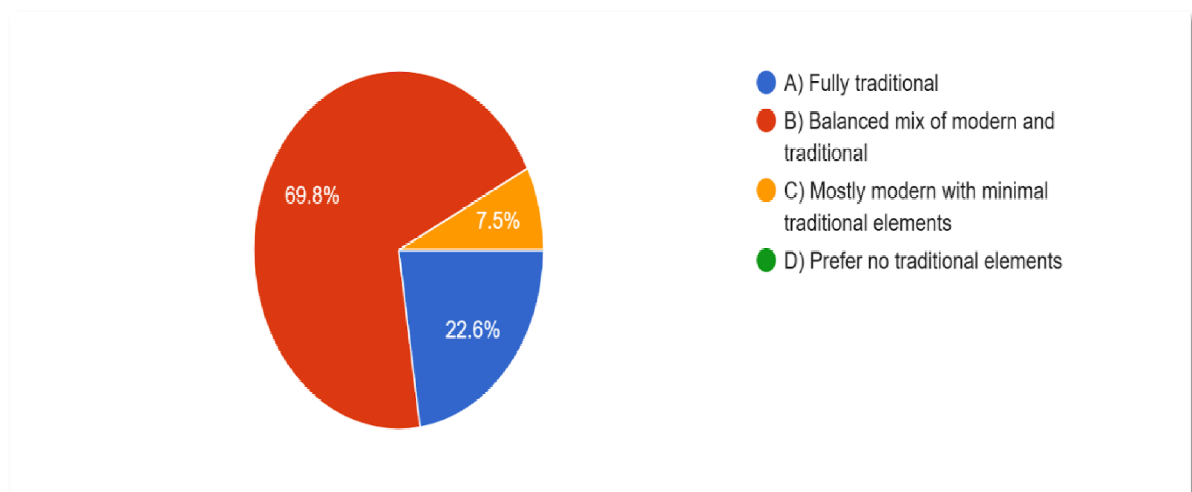


Figure 7:

The majority of respondents (around 70-75%) prefer a **balanced mix of modern and traditional** design in accommodations. A smaller portion (10-15%) favor **fully traditional** designs, while about 10-15% lean towards **mostly modern with minimal traditional elements**.

The data shows that a significant portion of respondents considers it highly important for accommodations to collaborate directly with local artisans.

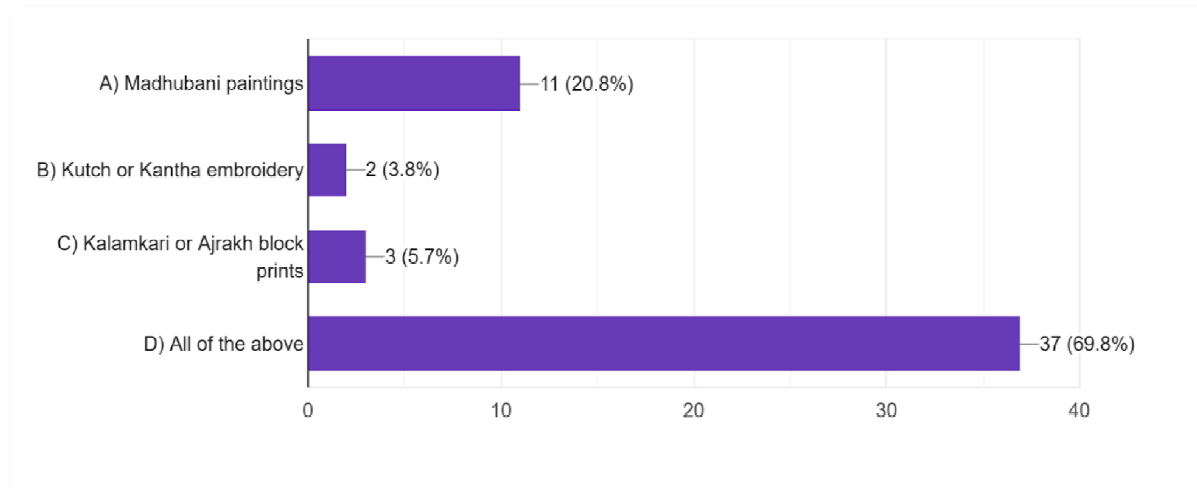


Figure 8

The majority of respondents (around 80-85%) prefer to see **all of the above** Indian crafts showcased in accommodations. **Madhubani paintings** is the most frequently selected individual craft, followed by **Kalamkari or Ajrakh block prints** and **Kutch or Kantha embroidery**, which were also popular choices but less frequent than the combined option.

Respondents expressed interest in additional experiences such as cultural tours, artisan meet-and-greets, and hands-on workshops alongside accommodations showcasing Indian crafts.

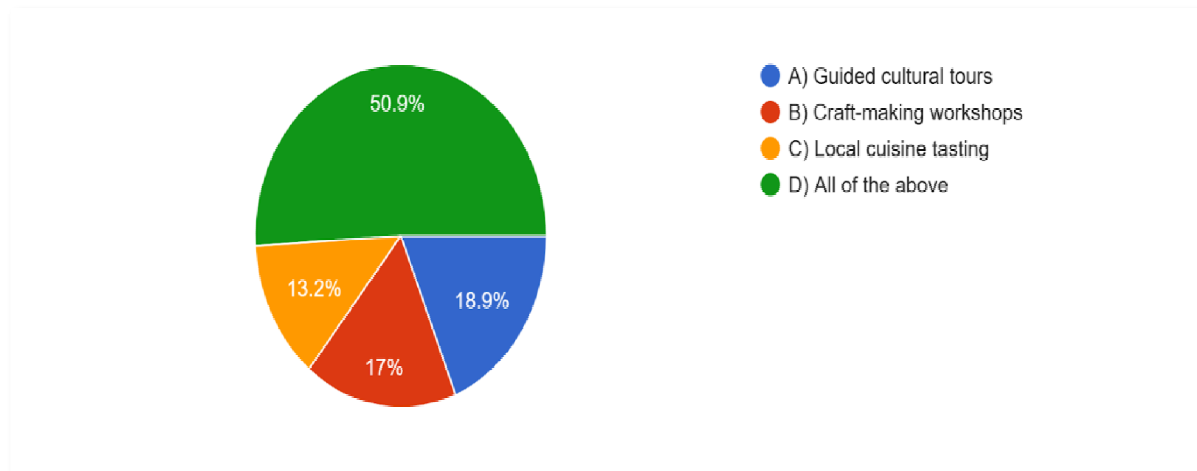


Figure 9:

The majority of respondents (around 75-80%) would like to have **all of the above** experiences alongside accommodations showcasing Indian crafts. **Craft-making workshops** is the most popular individual choice, followed by **guided cultural tours** and **local cuisine tasting**, which are also frequently selected but slightly less than craft workshops.

Conclusion

Importance of Local Culture through Textile Crafts

- A significant majority (69.2%) of respondents believe that local culture, especially through textile crafts, holds an important place in travel and tourism.

- 23.5% consider it somewhat important, while 7.7% remain neutral on the subject.

Preference for Accommodations Showcasing Artisanal Crafts

- 63.5% of respondents strongly prefer accommodations that showcase artisanal crafts, while 26.9% are somewhat interested. A small percentage do not have this preference.

Factors Influencing Accommodation Choices

- 51.9% of respondents choose accommodations for authentic cultural experiences, while 34.6% prefer uniqueness and artistic interiors. A smaller group does not prioritize supporting local artisans or have no specific reason for their choice.

Willingness to Pay More for Sustainable Accommodations

- 61.1% of respondents are highly willing to pay more for accommodations using sustainable and eco-friendly materials, with 31.5% agreeing to some extent. Only 3.7% are unwilling to pay more, highlighting strong support for sustainability in tourism accommodations.

Preferred Indian Craft Elements in Accommodations

- 45-50% of respondents prefer **wall hangings or decor** as the primary Indian craft element, followed by a combination of wall hangings, furniture accents, and bedding/upholstery (35-40%). Fewer respondents favor bedding and upholstery or furniture accents.

Interest in Learning about Indian Textile Crafts

- A majority (70-75%) of respondents are very interested in learning about the history and making of Indian textile crafts during their stay, with 15-20% somewhat interested and 5-10% neutral.

Design Preference: Modern vs. Traditional

- 70-75% of respondents prefer a balanced mix of modern and traditional design in accommodations, while 10-15% favor fully traditional designs, and 10-15% lean towards mostly modern designs with minimal traditional elements.

Preferred Indian Crafts to Be Showcased

- 80-85% of respondents would like to see **all of the above** crafts (Madhubani paintings, Kalamkari or Ajrakh block prints, Kutch or Kantha embroidery) showcased in accommodations, with **Madhubani paintings** being the most frequently selected individual craft.

Additional Experiences Desired with Craft Accommodations

- A majority (75-80%) would like **all of the above** experiences alongside accommodations showcasing Indian crafts, with **craft-making workshops** being the most popular, followed by **guided cultural tours** and **local cuisine tasting**.

This conclusion encapsulates the strong preference for integrating Indian textile crafts, sustainability, and authentic cultural experiences in tourism accommodations. Respondents value both traditional and modern design elements, with a keen interest in learning and engaging with local craftsmanship.

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