

## Ikat sarees of Odisha

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■ **ABSTRACT** : To document the different types of *Sarees*, motifs and their placement a self-structured interview schedule was used to elicit the information on the types of silk and cotton *Sarees* manufactured and motifs used in the popular *Ikat sarees* of Odisha. The most popular *Sarees* woven are *Sambalpuri*, *Sakatapar*, *Passapali*, *Bapta* and *Bomkai* both in cotton and silk with 5.5 meters length and 1.2 meters width using 2/100s-2/120s cotton yarn and 20-22 denier silk yarn. The variegated sarees are beautified with floral pattern, geometrical pattern, small flower *Buttis*, human figure, *Shankha*, *Chakra*, animal and bird depictions.

■ **KEY WORDS**: *Ikat sarees*, Motifs, Cotton, Silk, Denier silk yarn

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The *Saree* is a traditional female garment in the Indian subcontinent consisting of a strip of unstitched cloth ranging from four to nine meters in length that is draped over the body in various styles. It is the basic wear of rural people of India. The Indian '*saree*' has been in existence for more than 5000 years which is mentioned in the Vedas.

Few of the historically famous hand woven *sarees* of India are *Baluchar saree* of Varanasi, *Bandanis* of Kutch, *Brocades* of Banaras, *Chanderi sarees* of Madhya Pradesh, *Georgettes* of Mysore (Karnataka), *Ikat sarees* of Odisha, *Jamdhani sarees* of Bengal, *Karalkuddi* sarees of Kerala, *Kora* cotton sarees of Coimbatore, *Paithani shalu* of Maharashtra, *Patolas* and *Tanchois* of Gujarat, *Rathwa* loincloth of Chhota Udaipur and Temple silks of South from Kancheepuram, Arni, and Dharmavaram.

Odisha is a beautiful state enriched with huge landscape and enormous forest products. Across the unending green fields and forests, the harmonic and

rhythmic picking sound of fly shuttle in most of the rural huts indicates the importance of the handloom industry and its role in the economy of Odisha. The picking sound is waved from more than 1,20,000 handlooms and this sound provides livelihood to more than 5 lakhs of weavers directly and more than this indirectly in cultivation and ginning of cotton and marketing of handloom products (Mohapatra, 2008).

"*Khandua*" of Cuttack, "*Habaspur*" and "*Bomkai*" of Kalahandi, "*Kotpad*" of Koraput, "*Parda*" of Khurda, "*Kusumi*" of Nayagarh, "*Saktapar*" and "*Bichitrapar*" of Bargarh and Sambalpur are the unique traditional textile products reflecting the essence of traditional way of life with expression of their unparalleled depth, range, strength and craftsmanship. In contrast to the mosaic like appearance of "*Patola*" of Gujarat, "Checkboard" and "Chowk" design of Puchampali, Andhra Pradesh and "*Bandhni*" of Rajasthan, the appearance of design and forms of Odisha have a soft curvilinear effect. Odisha's handloom base is made of

two distinct types of products, the low quality plain fabrics that are used for towels, dhotis and plain *sarees* and the other of high quality with designs of intensive tie and dye '*Ikat*' and '*Bomkai*' fabrics (Mohapatra, 2014). Hence, an effect is made to study the *Ikat sarees* of Odisha.

## ■ RESEARCH METHODS

The information needed to document the different types of sarees, motifs and their placement on the saree was collected from Sambalpur Bastralaya, HLCS Ltd., Bargarh. A self-structured interview schedule was used to elicit the information on the types of silk and cotton sarees manufactured and motifs used in the popular *ikat sarees* of Odisha.

## ■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study as well as relevant discussion have been presented under following heads :

### Types of sarees and specifications :

Saree specification includes the constructional details of the different traditional cotton and silk sarees of Odisha and fabric information. Popular cotton and silk sarees available in Odisha and their fabric information is presented in Table 1. For weaving cotton sarees reed of 72 count is used with 70-72 pick count, denting order for the body is of 2 ends per dent and for border 4 ends passed through 1 dent with doobby attachment. The cloth count of cotton *Ikat saree* is 2/80s to 2/120s and 2/120s for cotton *bomkai saree*. The length of the pallav in cotton saree ranged from 0.5 to 1 meter whereas the weight ranged between 500-800 g.

For silk sarees, 80 reed count is generally used with pick count 80. The denting order for the body is of 2 ends per cent and for border 4 ends passed through 1 dent where the loom is attached with doobby attachment. In case of *sambalpuri* and *bomkai* silk sarees the cloth count is 20 to 22 denier. The length of the pallav in silk and *bomkai saree* is of 1 meter and the weight of silk saree ranged between 600-700g.

The length of both cotton and silk saree is 5.5 meters, but when woven along with blouse piece the length increased to 6.5 meters. The width of all the sarees are 45 inches. The width of the border ranged from 3 to 6 inches whereas in few sarees it ranged upto 8 to 10 inches and width of the body ranged from 35 to 42 inches. Few single *ikat* cotton sarees are woven without borders. Among all the sarees, cotton *bomkai saree* is the lightest.

### Types of Odisha sarees :

Odisha sarees are distinguished and characterized by its design, fibre content, colour, motifs and graceful look. Varieties of sarees available in Odisha are single *ikat sambalpuri saree*, double *ikat sakata* or *passapali saree*, *bafta saree*, plain silk *ikat saree*, silk and cotton *bomkai sarees* which are made up of either warp or weft *ikat* or both warp and weft *Ikat* in *sakatapar saree*. In *bomkai saree* extra weft yarn of cotton in different layouts including *buttis*, flower, dancers, animal or paper designs are used. In few sarees *jari* is also used as extra weft.

The details of various types of Odisha sarees are:

### Single *Ikat sambalpuri saree* :

Saree is woven using warp *ikat* yarn of 2/80's, 2/100's and 2/120's yarn count. *Sara bandha*,

**Table 1 : Fabric information of cotton and silk Odisha sarees**

Sr. No.	Saree type	Yarn type (Silk/Cotton)			Yarn count/ Denier (Ne)			Dimension of the saree								Wt of the saree (g)
		Warp	Weft	Extra weft	Wp	Wft	Extra weft	Length (mt)				Width (inch)				
								S	B1	B2	P	S	B1	B2	P	
1.	Single <i>Ikat saree</i>	Cotton	Cotton	—	2/120 to 2/80	2/120 to 2/80	—	5 to 5.5	4.5 to 5	5 to 5.5	0.5 to 1	45 to 48	45	3	45	450-600
	Double <i>Ikat saree</i>	Cotton	Cotton	—	2/120	2/120	—	5.5	4.5	5.5	1	48	43 to 45	3-5	43 to 45	450-500
2.	Cotton <i>Bomkai saree</i>	Cotton	Cotton	Cotton	2/120	2/120	2/120	5.5	4.5	5.5	1	48	40 to 45	3-8	40 to 45	500
3.	Silk <i>Ikat saree</i>	Silk	Silk	—	20-22	20-22	—	5.5	4.5	5.5	1	48	43 to 45	3-5	43 to 45	650
4.	Silk <i>Bomkai saree</i>	Silk	Silk	Cotton	20-22	20-22	2/120	5.5	4.5	5.5	1	48	40 to 45	3-8	40 to 45	650

S = Saree, B1 = Body, B2 = Border, P = Pallav

*Bichitrapuri, Utkalalaxmi, Tapoi, Aradhana* are famous *sambalpuri ikat* sarees and the name is given according to designs and motifs used. In the pallav of the saree, 7, 11 and 13 line *Sara ikat* is used (Plate 1).

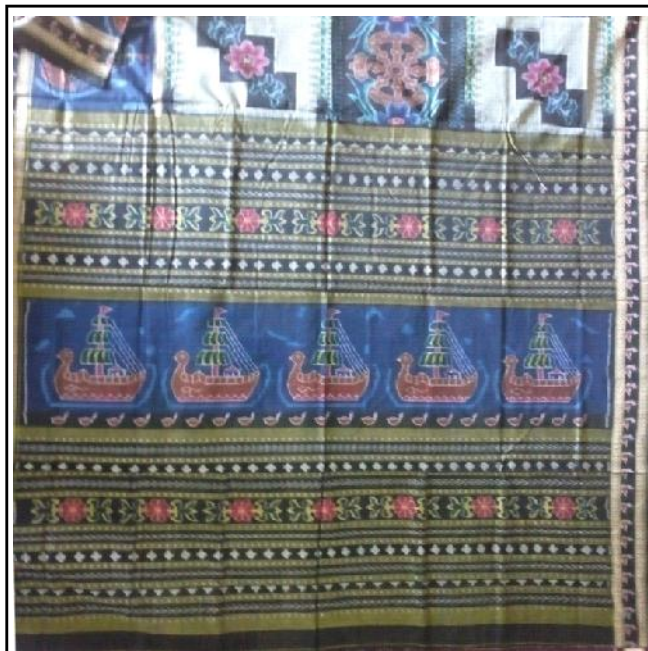


Plate 1 : Cotton single ikat Sambalpur saree

**Double Ikat sakata or Passapali saree :**

This *Saree* is manufactured from a very long period of time. In the beginning, the body of the *Saree* had 3 chamber which were bigger in size and now woven with 5 chambers. The *saree* is prepared by double ikat by calculating the space dyed yarns according to design so that the same colour is produced after interlacement of yarn during weaving. In the beginning the saree was woven without border, but now produced along with borders (Plate 2).

**Cotton Bomkai saree :**

The body of the *Saree* is generally plain. Ikat is seen in the border and pallav. *Buttas* or flower design is woven in the body by extra threads in weft direction. In the border, *dobby* design along with ikat is produced (Plate 3).

**Silk Ikat saree :**

Single *Ikat saree* is woven using 20-22 denier tassar silk. Sometimes in pallav cotton mix *bandha* is seen where 3 ply silk yarn as warp and cotton yarn as weft is used

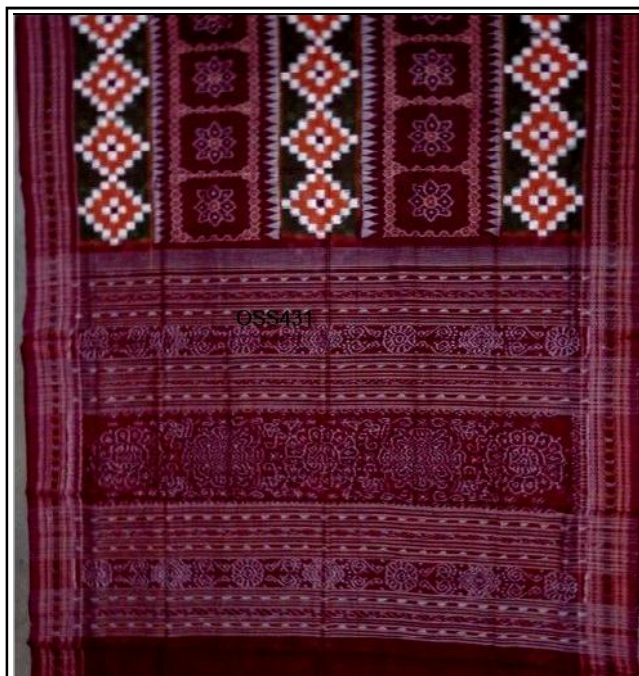


Plate 2 : Cotton double Ikat Ikat Sakata or Passapali saree



Plate 3 : Cotton Bomkai saree

(Plate 4).

**Silk Bomkai saree :**

*Saree* is woven with 2ply × 3ply silk yarns with

Plate 4 : Silk *Ikat saree*Plate 5 : Silk *Bomkai saree*

predetermined colour and design and the fine curvilinear Ikat designs reflecting the motifs on the body of the saree. The designs are incorporated on the body of the fabric








during weaving through adjustment of weft Ikat design in warp. The border and pallav design is woven with extra threads in a geometrical curvilinear pattern to have the extra prominence of the fabric (Plate 5).

#### Types of motifs used in Odisha *Sarees* :

The motifs used in Odisha *Sarees* are designs of various sizes and shapes, which are striking, exquisite, tremendous and sturdy. Floral pattern, Geometrical pattern, small flower *Buttis*, human figure, *Shankha*, *Chakra*, animal and bird depictions are used in *Sarees* (Plate 6).




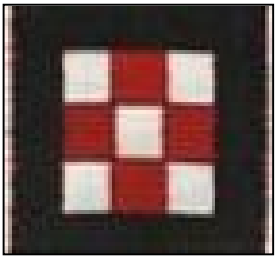


Plate 6 : Traditional pallav of *Ikat saree*

Many of these designs and methods used in creation are traditional; many contemporary designers constantly try to revive them according to the changing trend. The Odisha motifs are designed in a very sophisticated way and are very delicate and intricate styles as the motifs are arranged by tying the yarn according to the desired patterns. The master weavers prepare designs on graph paper (point paper) and tie the yarns as per the designs in *Ikat sarees* whereas, for *Bomkai sarees* the designs are transferred to the punch cards (pattern cards or jacquard pattern chain) for weaving with jacquard

Plate 7: Motifs and patterns used in Odisha sarees		
Sr. No.	Motif name and details	
1.		<b>Motif Name</b> - Chakra <b>Details of Motif</b> - This motif is derived from the chakra held by Lord Jagannath. Chakra or divine wheel has capacity to kill illiteracy or lack of knowledge.
2.		<b>Motif Name</b> - Shanka <b>Details of Motif</b> - A shell shaped motif is used in the saree which is found in the arms of God Jagannath. This motif of different shape and designs is commonly used in border and pallav of the saree
3.		<b>Motif Name</b> - Padma <b>Details of Motif</b> - Single lotus motif or in combination with creeper is used mostly in <i>ikat</i> sarees. Padma symbolises knowledge and beauty.
4.		<b>Motif Name</b> - Horse <b>Details of Motif</b> - Horse motif represents progress and speed. This motifs is also used in barati designs incorporated in the pallav of the <i>Ikat</i> and <i>Bomkai saree</i>
5.		<b>Motif Name</b> - Harina <b>Details of Motif</b> - A deer shaped motifs used in the pallav of the saree represents love.
6.		<b>Motif Name</b> - Lion <b>Details of Motif</b> - The singha bandha or motif of Lion is imitation of Lion of Jagannath temple and represents pride and power.
7.		<b>Motif Name</b> - Peacock <b>Details of Motif</b> - Peacock, Goose or Duck, Parrot including lotus motif represents love.





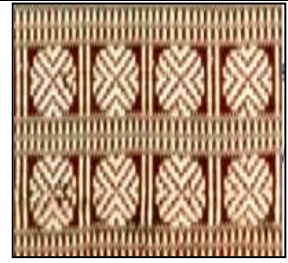

Contd... Plate 7

Plate 7 contd...

8.	<b>Motif Name</b> - Hatee <b>Details of Motif</b> - The elephant motif is mainly used in the pallav of the saree which signifies strength and pride.	
9.		<b>Motif Name</b> - Phula <b>Details of Motif</b> - A large single flower independently used in the body or smaller size flowers are more densely used towards the pallav of the <i>Saree</i> .
10.	<b>Motif Name</b> - Phula gacha <b>Details of Motif</b> - A flower pod shaped motif with leaves signifies beauty.	
11.		<b>Motif Name</b> - Passapali <b>Details of Motif</b> - Motif of distinctive marron or black and white squares is a replica of the chessboard. This motif is commonly used. Pasapali is derived from pasa or gambling games using Chess board.
12.	<b>Motif Name</b> - Chita jhoti <b>Details of Motif</b> - Motifs that resemble the jhoti done on the floor and wall of rural household	
13.		<b>Motif Name</b> - Butti <b>Details of Motif</b> - A buti created by arranging the points and/ or dots which is independently used in the body.



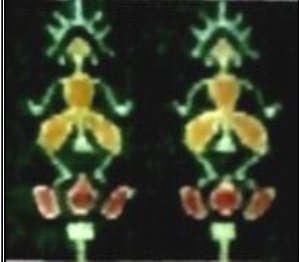



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Plate 7 contd...

14.	<p><b>Motif Name</b> – Phul jhuti  <b>Details of Motif</b> - A flower shaped butti generally seen in <i>Bomkai saree</i>. Motif is woven by jacquard mechanism</p>	
15.		<p><b>Motif Name</b> - Ethnic  <b>Details of Motif</b> - Ethnic motifs of human, animal and their activity.</p>
16.	<p><b>Motif Name</b> - Deula  <b>Details of Motif</b> - Temple shaped motifs are arranged in a line towards the pallav of the saree.</p>	
17.		<p><b>Motif Name</b> - Machha  <b>Details of Motif</b> - Fish shaped motif of 3-4 lines are woven in the border by dobby attachment.</p>
18.	<p><b>Motif Name</b> – Rudrakhya  <b>Details of Motif</b> - Rudrakhya shaped motif incorporated by dobby mechanism in the border of <i>Ikat</i> and <i>Bomkai</i> Odisha saree.</p>	
19.		<p><b>Motif Name</b> - Dobby phula with machha  <b>Details of Motif</b> - Combination of dobby flower and fish motif along with rudrakshya motif is seen in the border of both <i>Ikat</i> and <i>Bomkai</i> saree.</p>




Contd.... Plate 7

Plate 7 contd...

20.	<p><b>Motif Name</b> – Sara bandha  <b>Details of Motif</b> - <i>Ikat</i> designs of different animal motifs are used in different lines in the pallav of the saree. This is the common pallav designs of most of the traditional sarees. Sara <i>ikat</i> designs of 7 to 13 lines are incorporated in the pallav of the <i>Ikat saree</i>.</p>	
21.		<p><b>Motif Name</b> - Paper design  <b>Details of Motif</b> – The motifs does not have any specific meaning. These are designed by the weavers itself. These design are mostly used done in bomkai saree and incorporated by extra weft yarns using jacquard mechanism.</p>
22.	<p><b>Motif Name</b> - Putli  <b>Details of Motif</b> – A doll shaped motifs are seen in the body of the <i>Saree</i>.</p>	
23.		<p><b>Motif Name</b> - Aradhana  <b>Details of Motif</b> – Motifs resemble women worshipping god</p>
24.	<p><b>Motif Name</b> - Phul butti  <b>Details of Motif</b> – A flower shaped butti generally seen in <i>Bomkai saree</i>. Motif is woven by jacquard mechanism</p>	
25.		<p><b>Motif Name</b> - Dali  <b>Details of Motif</b> – A running floral pattern with creeper repeated over and again in a line.</p>

Contd... Plate 7

Plate 7 contd...

26.	<b>Motif Name</b> - Jangal <b>Details of Motif</b> – Scenery of forest with different types of animal and bird motifs	
27.		<b>Motif Name</b> - Barati <b>Details of Motif</b> – The bharat scene is designed in the pallav of the Saree
28.	<b>Motif Name</b> - Dwara <b>Details of Motif</b> – Door shaped motifs which represents the gate of temple or palace	

attachment.

Few sarees of Odisha are named after the motifs and patterns developed in the sarees. In this context details account of Odisha sarees, motifs and patterns employed on different sarees is presented.

**Types of sarees, motifs used and their placement :**

Different types of *Ikat sarees* available in Odisha, types of motifs used and the placement of motifs are given in Table 2. Odisha *Ikat* and *Bomkai sarees* are identified and sold in the market in different names based on the motifs woven on it. Each saree has its own beauty, richness and uniqueness. The details of different types of motifs and patterns used are presented in Plate 7. Few of the famous cotton ikat sarees are *Tapoi*, *Aradhana*, *Sakata*, *Bichitrapuree*, *Utkalalaxmi* and *Sarabandha* sarees (Plate 7).

In the border of *Tapoi* saree, swan and doobby flower motif is used. In the body *Chakra*, flower, creeper, and temple motifs are used whereas above the border *boeta* (boat), swan, flower, *shankha* and temples motifs along with *Saree Ikat* is used

In the border of *Aradhana* saree, rudrakshya, lotus flower, elephant and horse motifs are used. Motifs like women worshipping god is woven in the body hence, the name *Aradhana* saree. Other motifs such as temple, creeper, flower and *kumbha* are also used. In the pallav of the saree, lotus flower, konark chakra along with creeper design is seen.

In *Sakata* saree (also called *Sambalpuri* or *Passapalli saree*), *Passapalli* motifs are created by using double *ikat* yarn in the body. Two line of creeper motif is created in the border and in both side of it floral motifs are woven. In the pallav 7 or 11 lines of different

Sr. No.	Saree name	Motifs used		
		Body	Boarder	Pallav
1.	<i>Ikat saree</i>			
	<i>Baghambaree Saree</i>	Floral, temple, ghagra, sakata ikat	Fish, flower design by hand or doobby attachment, creeper, ghagara	11 or 13 line sara ikat having Floral, creeper , animals motifs
	<i>Bichitrapuree Saree</i>	Sakata ikat in between Check line	Fish and puchuki flower, rudrakhya, swan	13 line sara ikat
	<i>Utkala laxmi Saree</i>	4,6, 8 and 16 petal flower is seen in between chamber, puchuki flower	Flower bud, 8 petal puchuki flower, rudrakhya	Flower motifs
	<i>Aradhana Saree</i>	Worshiping lady, temple, creeper, flower	Rudrakshya motif, lotus flower, elephant, kumbha, creeper	Sakata, lotus flower, chakra, creeper
	<i>Tapoe Saree</i>	Flower, Creeper, Chakra, temple or serrated edge	Swan, rudrakhya or doobby	Sara bandha, flower, creeper, boat, temple, swan
2.	<i>Sarabandha Saree</i>	Flower, jhoti design	Flower, creeper	Lotus, elephant, lion, deer, swan, fish, butterfly, ghagra, creeper, temple
	<i>Double ikat Saree</i>			
	<i>Sakatapar or passapali Saree</i>	Passapali motif,	Creeper and florals motifs	7 or 11 line of saree bandha
3.	<i>Bomkai saree</i> (cotton/ silk)	Butta	Dobby phula, rudrakshya, fish, temple, passapali	Multi idols flowers, bird, dancer, barati scene

motifs are woven in separate lines. In *Sambalpuri sakata saree*, it was told that the border and pallav designs are decided according to the body.

In *Bichitrapuree* sarees, traditional fish and *Puchuki* flower ikat is created on both sides of saree above the border whereas, fish and *Rudrakshya* motifs are seen in the border. Sometimes swan and creeper motifs are also used. In the pallav 13 lines of *saree Ikat* is designed with different types of animal and birds in between the lines.

In *Utkalalaxmi* saree, bud motifs and 8 petals *Puchuki* flower is used in border. In the body 4, 6, 8 and 16 petals *puchuki* flower motifs is woven in between the chamber and empty space.

In *Sarabandha* saree 7, 9, 11, 13 and 15 lines of ikat are used in the pallav and in between the lines lotus, elephant, lion, deer motifs of *Ikat* design is arranged in separate lines followed by swan, fish, and butterfly motifs. Creeper and temple motifs are placed in the beginning and end of the line. *Ghagra Ikat* is also used in between the motifs line.

In cotton and silk *Bomkai sarees*, sometimes *Buta* motifs are used unless the body is plain. For anchal of the saree, multi idols flowers, bird, dancer, *barati* scene and for border dobby *Phula*, *Rudrakshya*, fish along with temple and *Passapali* motifs are used. In the body of the silk *Bandha saree*, *Buta*, star, stripes, animal motifs by tie and dye on weft is incorporated. In the border, flower, dobby phula, fish, *rudrakshya* motifs are used. Whereas in plain silk *Sarees*, *Butas* are seen all over the body and small flower, *Buta* and other common motifs are also used.

The weavers design some of the motifs in the graph paper according to their imagination or requirement and then incorporate these motifs in the saree by *Ikat* technique. These motifs have no specific name hence, called as paper design or motifs.

### Conclusion :

Types of sarees manufactured in Odisha are single

*Ikat* sambalpuri saree, double Ikat sakata or passapali saree, silk Ikat sarees, silk and cotton bomkai saree and bafta sarees. The single Ikat sarees are made up of either warp and weft ikat and double Ikat sarees are both warp and weft Ikat. In Bomkai saree extra weft yarn of cotton in different layouts of motifs are incorporated using jacquard mechanism. In case of ikat and bomkai silk sarees the cloth count is 20 to 22 deniers. The length of the pallav in silk and bomkai saree is of 1 meter. The weight of silk saree ranged between 600-700g. For silk sarees, 80 reed count is generally used with pick count 80. The denting order for the body is of 2 ends per dent and for border 4 ends passed through 1 dent with dobby attachment.

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