

# The Reason Why Textile Industries Develop in Local Areas: Through the Observation of a Dhaka Cloth Retail Shop in Terhathum, Eastern Nepal

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Place of fieldwork: Nepal

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- Research background

Nepalese Dhaka cloth is a traditional cloth and it has a variety of patterns and colors, and is used in many products. The cloth is now becoming popular among the Nepalese people. Since many traditional cloths around the world are demanded only in souvenir shops or traditional industries, Nepalese Dhaka cloth is not well known among tourists. However, Nepalese people use the cloth not only in traditional wear but also in variety of new ways.

In my research field, Terhathum, which is famous as the production hub of Dhaka cloth in Eastern Nepal, the weavers who weave Dhaka cloth are also the buyers of the cloth.



Photo 1: A man wearing Dhaka topi

- Research purpose and aim

The research purpose is to reveal the reasons why the Dhaka cloth is produced in the area, and how the weavers of Dhaka cloth also buy the cloth to keep its tradition alive in that area.

Many studies on textiles focus on the range, manufacturing process, and the use and exchange of textile materials. Few studies have covered all the processes involved from production to sale. In these studies, consumer layers are different from that of production layers. Investigative methods of my research are interviews with all the stakeholders in the Dhaka textile industry, observation of participants, and customer surveys conducted inside a shop that is the distribution base of t



Photo 2: A weaver in Terhathum

- Results and achievements of fieldwork

I visited two famous manufacturing areas of Dhaka cloth, Palpa and Terhathum, during my previous fieldwork. As a result of the interviews, I found that each area has a different history. In spite of the differences in the backgrounds, I found Palpali Dhaka in Terhathum and vice versa. There are many factories which have a strong commitment to traditional colors in Palpa as compared to Terhathum, though Palpa has a shorter history of Dhaka industry. In both places, new designs are introduced in the market. In Palpa, the target consumers are not only the local people but also domestic tourists. Contrarily, Terhathum is not a tourist place and most of the target consumers are the local people living in the area.

Photo 3: A Dhaka cloth shop in Terhathum



- Implications and impacts on future research

I have chosen Terhathum as my research center and will conduct interviews and collect data from one of the retail shops in the area. I would like to find the reason why Dhaka cloth is popular in this area considering four aspects: History, structure of industry and commerce, individual preference for the cloth, and status symbol.

During my last fieldwork, I stayed in Terhathum only for 5 days; it was the time of the Dasain festival, which is the biggest festival in Nepal, and there were few weavers at work. The owners of the industries were also very busy and I could not collect the required data for my interview.