ABSTRACT

Our country is rich in traditional textile collections. It has a variety of collections such as tapestries, carpets, rugs, costumes, upholsteries, shawls etc. All of them have different materials and methods of construction. The researcher in the present thesis has discussed our traditional Indian shawls with respect to its process of making, design techniques and preservation of tradition. The preservation and conservation practices of shawl collections have been documented through the different parameters of handling, display, storage, housekeeping and more importantly by emphasizing the preventive conservation aspect. The museum curators, conservators, private conservators, private collectors and the weavers were interviewed personally. The data collected on different parameters of preventive conservation and remedial conservation showed that 90% of museums focus on preventive conservation and around 85% museums do not have trained textile conservators in museums of India. Few conservators in private practice were found more technically advanced as compared to the museum professionals. The reason being maybe they are wholly solely responsible for the conservation of artifacts and there are no time constraints. They have enough time for research as compared to museums where there is a limited time, limited resources, limited staff and limited finance. During the visit to observe weavers from Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Kashmir, and Nagaland, it was found that our traditional handloom made shawls are declined and neglected at the hands of the synthetic machine made shawls. The case studies were planned on the woollen samples. The comparison was made between *Sapindus mukorossi* (5%) and Synperonic 91/6 (a non-ionic detergent) 5%. Both the solutions were considered safe to use for washing. The woollen samples were tested for protective coating by Lanoline (1% & 2%) and Glycerine (1% and 2%). It was found that the fabric was softer and it retained its transparency by lanolizing. The remedial conservation treatment on the selected shawl was done. Prior to the treatment condition assessment report and complete photo documentation was done along with the pH test and ink solubility test. Remedial conservation treatment included vacuum cleaning, removal of mud stains mechanically and grease stains by trichloroethylene, flattening, stabilization by darning technique followed by rolling the shawl for safely storing in the storage cabinet.