Socio-Economic Conditions Of Handloom Weavers: A Study In Karimnagar District Of Telangana

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Abstract: The handloom weaving is one of the oldest arts, as history of human civilization and has a long tradition of excellence. In this paper mainly evaluate the structure of Karimnagar district handloom sector, socio-economic conditions of the handloom weavers in the district and finally to assess income and expenditure levels of the handloom weavers in Karimnagar district of Telangana. Telangana is one of the important states in the handloom industry. There are about 82,435 handloom weavers in cooperative fold and 1,58,902 in outside cooperative fold. In the Karimnagar district the total handloom weavers was registered 6,260 weavers. In the district the total handloom weaver’s cooperative societies working has registered 35. It is evident from the study that majority 54 per cent of the weavers are earning below Rs.50,000 per annum, only 41.50 per cent of the respondents are earning between Rs.50,000-1 lakh. Only 4.50 per cent of the respondents were earnings above 1 lakh rupees respectively. Majority of 80.50 per cent of the weavers are expenditure between Rs.25000-75000, and 15 per cent of the weavers households expenditure between Rs.75000 - 1 lakh rupees, and only 4.50 per cent of the weavers household are spend one lakh and above respectively. Out of 200 samples, majority of the weavers 55 per cent are borrowings the purpose of food, children’s education and health checkups. The main suggestion of this study is government has to develop programmes, which enable the inflow of fresh investments and emergence of new entrepreneurs into the handloom sector through appropriate strategies, and programmes. Institutional facilities to continuously enhance the capacity of the handloom weavers to contribute to the growth of the handloom sector have to be developed. Most of the handloom weavers are poor and have not yet developed the ability to deal with modern market economies. It is but essential that these poor families need support to educate their children, and also have decent quality of life.

Keywords: Socio-Economic Conditions, Handloom Weavers, Karimnagar District, Telangana State, India.

1. Introduction

India’s textiles and clothing industry is one of the mainstays of the national economy. It is also one of the largest contributing sectors of India’s exports worldwide. The report of the Working Group constituted by the Planning Commission on boosting India’s manufacturing exports during 12th Five Year Plan (2012-17), envisages India’s exports of Textiles and Clothing at US$ 64.41 billion by the end of March, 2017. India is major exporting country as far as textile sector is concerned and not dependent on import. Majority of import takes place for re-export or special requirement. In the global exports of clothing, India ranked as the ninth largest exporter as per WTO data during 2012, with China, EU and Hong Kong occupying first three slots. In the global exports of Textiles, India ranked as the third largest exporter, trailing China and EU.

The handloom weaving is one of the oldest arts, as history of human civilization and has a long tradition of excellence. Handloom weaving was functioning at a very high level of quality and was supplier of clothing needs of the Middle East and European countries before the Industrial Revolution. It was only when modern textile industry developed in England, India was subjugated as a colonial country and that the textile industry got asset back. Handloom weaving is the India’s biggest cottage and labour intensive sector, which has been playing a very important role in the country’s economy by forming part of India’s rich heritage and exemplifying the rich artistry of the weavers.
2. Objective of the study

The first objective of the study is to evaluate the structure of Karimnagar district handloom sector, second objective of the study to analyse the socio-economic conditions of the handloom weavers in Karimnagar district and third objective of the study is to assess income and expenditure levels of the handloom weavers in Karimnagar district of Telangana.

3. Data Collection

Fulfill the above objectives both secondary and primary data were collected. Secondary data are collected from the annual reports of Assistant Director of Textile and Handloom Office of Karimnagar district of Telangana, official websites of Ministry of Textiles, Government of India and Government of Telangana. Primary data are collected from the selected sample of weaver households in the Karimnagar District of Telangana with the help of a schedule. The data for contingent valuation has been collected through sample survey method in person with the help of a comprehensive questionnaire from a sample of 200 weavers’ respondents in Karimnagar district of Telangana.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Telangana Handloom Sector Structure

In Telangana state, The Department of Handlooms and Textiles is concerned with Handlooms, Powerlooms in the Co-operative and decentralized sector and setting up of Apparel and Textile Parks in the Garment sector. Telangana is one of the important States in the Handloom Industry. There are about 82,435 handloom weavers in cooperative fold and 1,58,902 in outside cooperative fold. There are about 48,967 Powerlooms working in the State. There are 475 Weavers Cooperative Societies in the State consisting of Cotton-253, Silk-50, and Wool-44. Besides this, there are 128-Tailor Powerlooms and other societies. There is one Apex society i.e. APCO for marketing the handloom products. Several Centrally Sponsored Schemes as well as State Schemes are being implemented for the socio-economic development of Handloom Weavers in Telangana including schemes with matching share of Central and State Governments.

4.2 Karimnagar District Handloom Sector Structure

In the Karimnagar district the total handloom weavers was registered 6,260 weavers. In the district the total handloom weaver’s cooperative societies working has registered 35. The varieties being produced are Double Cloth Bed Sheets, Lungies, Towels, Nawar tape, Mosquito Nets, Polyester Shirting and Suiting, Door Curtains and other Livery items. In the district the total power looms are registered 38160, out of this 36030 power loom are placed in Siricilla alone and only 2,130 power looms are placed in other than Siricilla. Varieties being produced on power looms are White Polyester Gray Cloth, Casement Cloth, Towels, Shirting and Suitings etc..., in the district the total suicide cases were registered 423 cases during the 01-04-1997 to 01-04-2015. Out of these 416 cases screening completed, 229 cases ex-gratia sanctioned and 187 cases are rejected. And 7 cases were pending verification.

In the district 33 societies were benefited from the cash credit loan waived scheme the sanctioned amount is Rs.431.08 lakh, 551 weavers benefited under individual loans waived scheme the sanctioned amount is Rs. 65.62 lakh and 108 PHWCS benefited under the government loans waived scheme the sanctioned amount is Rs. 352.17 lakh. In the district provide health security to the weaver’s families; in view of these 2,046 weavers have been enrolled under the scheme during the year 2012-13. The medical reimbursement claims to a tune of Rs.2.72 lakh have been settled by the ICICI Lombard during 2012-13 for the benefit of 303 handloom weavers. In the district 2,371 weavers have been enrolled under the Mahatma Gandhi Bunker Bima Yojana (MGBBY) scheme for the year 2014-15. The death climes to a tune of Rs.9.00 lakh have been settled by the LIC during 2014-15 for the benefit of 15 weavers respectively. In the district the scholarship amount of Rs.3.995 lakh sanctioned to the 333 children’s of enrolled members under Skisha Shayog Yojana of MGBBY for the year 2013-14.
Government of India has introduced Weavers Credit Card (WCC) Scheme to provide loan facility from the banks to the individual handloom weavers. In the district 6 awareness camps have been conducted and applications have been forwarded to the concerned banks, under this scheme 166 handloom weavers have been sanctioned loan amount Rs.49.80 lakh by the banks for the year 2014-15. With a view to supply quality yarn with fewer rate to PHWCSs to minimize cost of production to enable to face market problem the government of Andhra Pradesh were introduced Yarn Subsidy Scheme. Under this scheme 20 per cent yarn subsidy is being provided to the societies on purchase of Hank Yarn, Dyes and Chemicals from NHDC and APCO. So far the government has sanctioned an amount of Rs. 369.14 lakh for the benefit of 29 PHWCSs. The claims to a tune of Rs. 270.118 lakh in respect of 29 PHWCSs are pending sanction with the government. The government of Andhra Pradesh ‘Pavala Vaddi Scheme’ is implemented with a view to lessen the burden of interest on the cash credit loans availed by the PHWCSs. So far the government has sanctioned an amount Rs.52.63 lakh under the scheme for the benefit of 29 PHWCSs.

In the district with a view to provide training to youth on modernised power looms, the power looms service centre at Siricilla has been established. So far 675 weavers have been imparted training and 24 are under going training. In the district group Insurance scheme were implemented, under this scheme 5,174 power loom workers have been enrolled during the 2012-13. So far an amount of Rs. 135.75 lakh has been paid to 228 families of deceased weavers towards settlement of death claims. An amount of Rs. 88.47 lakh paid to the 7,373 childrens of enrollment members towards scholarships. Finally in the district Textile Park has been established with total outlay of Rs.7.73 crores at Siricilla with aim to provide employment to 7000 workers. So far employment has been provided to 1,232 workers in the textile park. An amount of Rs.1.25 crores has been sanctioned by the state government towards providing water supply in the park.

### 4.3 Socio-Economic Conditions of Handloom Weavers in Karimnagar District

The main objective of this section focuses on the social conditions of selected weavers in Karimnagar districts of Telangana. As indicated earlier in the study, the parameters employed for judging the social status of the sample weavers include the following: Age, Gender, Social grouping and Religion, Level of Education, Health conditions Services/amenities enjoyed by the weavers, Occupational preference of weavers’ and their children respectively, and secondly, income and expenditure levels of the handloom weavers in Karimnagar district of Telangana.

As seen from the survey results, out of 200 respondents, 73.50 (147) per cent of male and 26.50 (53) per cent of female respondents were elected from the Karimnagar district of Telangana. It is clear that, 27 per cent of the total sample population of the respondents is found to be in the age group of 46-60 years, 22.50 per cent fall under 60 & above years age group followed by 20.50 per cent, 17.50 per cent and 12.50 per cent in the age group of 36-45, 26-35 and 15-25 and above years respectively. In Karimnagar district particularly in Siricilla town some of the respondents are 70 years and above aged persons are found, these respondents are not benefited any scheme from the central and state governments, even they are not getting handloom weaver’s pension also. In India the majority of handloom worker households follow Hindu religion accounts 97 per cent, though about 1 per cent is Muslims, about 2 per cent of handloom households are from other faiths, mostly Christian’s religion.

According to the handloom census report 2009-10, across all social configurations, handloom work is primarily undertaken by Other Backward Castes (OBC) households, and OBCs are found to be the dominant caste group among handloom worker households. Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka have OBC households as the dominant social group, and the remaining households mainly belonging to others. From the survey results, in Karimnagar district 91 per cent of the respondents are from the BC community group, 7 per cent of the respondents are from OC community, and only 2 per cent respondents are from SC’s community group respectively.
Out of 200 respondents, 81 (40.50%) respondents are illiterate, 49 (24.50%) respondents are have primary level of education, 34 (17%) respondents are have secondary level of education, 21 (10.50%) respondents are have Tenth class education, 9 (4.50%) respondents are have intermediate level education, and only 6 (6%) respondents are have higher degree level of education in Karimnagar district. It is clear from the survey result, 59 per cent of the total respondents are of nuclear type families, 30 per cent of the total respondents are of joint type families and 11 per cent of the respondents are of single type families.

From the survey results, in the Karimnagar district 105 (52.50%) sample respondents have their own houses and remaining 95 (47.50%) of the respondents do not have own houses, hence they are living in rented houses. The present study presents a different picture altogether. As per the information collected through the survey, of the 200 respondents, 54.50 per cent are living in semi-pucca houses, 34.50 per cent are living in pucca houses, and 11.00 per cent are only living in katcha houses. Good health can be defined as the state of being where a person is free from all kinds of physical or mental illness. Large number of weavers reported muscular pains in the back, joints and lower abdomen. Other common complaints included hernia and high/low blood pressure, low appetite and sleep, weakness, stomach upset, gastric and vomiting and may be related to the strenuous work environment due to long working hours. The total sample respondents 200, out of these 87.50 per cent of the handloom weavers have aware in health problems only 12.50 per cent of the handloom weavers no aware of health problems in Karimnagar district.

From the field, in Karimnagar district 84.00 per cent of the sample respondents are suffering of diseases, only 16.00 per cent respondents are not suffering any diseases respectively. It is too common for handloom weavers to suffer from a variety of occupational health hazards and these problems become severe and acute, as they become aged. Occupational diseases induced by prolonged work, excessive physical exertion, association of psychological stress in work, harmful factors inherent in materials used by the weavers, and working in poor ventilated and illuminated conditions.

It is fact that a vast majority of the respondents are suffering from anemia accounting 29.00 per cent followed by Filarial accounting 20.50 per cent, Damage of Lungs accounts 18 per cent, Eye Problem recorded 14.50 per cent, Blood pressure accounts 11.00 per cent and a significant percentage of workers also have been suffering from occupational diseases respectively. In the study area out of the 200 sample weavers, 94 per cent of the weavers have knowledge in the field of health insurance schemes. From the survey results on the whole 45 per cent of the respondents are willing to this profession and remaining 55 per cent of the respondents are not willing this profession in Karimnagar district respectively. From the childrens side 37.50 per cent of the respondent’s children’s did not support of the weaving as a profession of their parents, only 62.50 per cent of the respondent’s children’s are support to weaving profession of their parents.

From the survey results, out of 200 samples highly 62.50 per cent of sample weavers are working under society, 24.50 per cent of weavers are working under master weavers and only 13 per cent of the respondents are working independently. From the field, reveals that, 67.50 per cent of the respondents express the hereditary occupation of weaving was adopted, 18.00 per cent of the respondents are express only less capital so that this profession was select, and 10.50 per cent sample respondents were selecting for this profession due to only work knows, and 4 per cent of the sample respondents were selecting due to other reasons respectively. The study revealed that about 82.50 per cent of the respondents have white ration cards as they belong to the poor category and only 4.50 per cent of the weavers have pink ration cards, 7 per cent of the weavers have AAY Card and about 6 per cent of the respondents do not have any card, since they are migrant weavers.
Individuals with higher income will naturally have the capacity to spend on various goods and services to have a better life. The income of the weaver’s families determines the standards of living and financial status. In the study area, all the weavers are dependent on weaving as their lone activity for their livelihood. It is evident from the study that majority 54 per cent of the weavers are earning below Rs.50,000 per annum, only 41.50 per cent of the respondents are earning between Rs.50,000-1 lakh. Only 4.50 per cent of the respondents were earnings above 1 lakh rupees respectively.

The expenditure pattern of the respondents on food, clothing, children’s education, health, rent, interest paid on borrowings, electricity and telephone facilities and other expenses per month are included. From the field survey it is evident from the study that majority 80.50 per cent of the weavers are spend between Rs.25000-75000, and 15 per cent of the weavers households expenditure between Rs.75000 - 1 lakh rupees, and only 4.50 per cent of the weavers household are spend one lakh and above respectively.

As seen from the survey, almost all the weavers having debt problems of different levels. Observe in Karimnagar district, 17 per cent of the respondents have debt below Rs. 50,000 rupees, 40.50 per cent of the respondents are having debt between Rs.50,000 to one lakh rupees, 27.50 per cent of the respondents have debt between one to two lakh rupees, and only 11 per cent of the weavers are having debt between 2-3 lakh rupees and finally 4 per cent of the weavers are suffering debt 3 lakh and above category respectively. In Karimnagar district, it is evident that among the weaver households source of the debt, 44 of the respondents (22%) have availed debt from Co-operative society, since they The borrowings from the money lenders accounted for 17.50 per cent and 15.50 per cent of the respondents are received debt from SHGs. The source of debt from banks only 6 per cent and from the money lenders accounts 10.50 per cent and finally from friends and relatives 18.50 per cent respondents got debt respectively.

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<tr>
<th>Annual Income Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Below 25,000</td>
<td>4.50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>25,000-50,000</td>
<td>37%</td>
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<td>50,000-75,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>75,000-100,000</td>
<td>4.50%</td>
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<td>1 Lakh &amp; above</td>
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**Figure-1: Annual Income of the Handloom Weavers in Karimnagar district of Telangana state**
From the field survey results out of 200 samples, majority of the weavers 55 per cent are borrowings the purpose of food, children’s education and health checkups. followed by 13.5 per cent of the weavers were borrowed for the purpose of debt clearance, 12 per cent of the weavers were borrowed for the purpose of working capital, 7.50 per cent of the weavers were borrowed for the purpose of social religious, 7.50 per cent of the weavers were borrowed for the purpose of household assets and 4.50 per cent of the weavers were borrowed for the purpose of purchasing new looms. In the Karimnagar district from the field survey results respondents’ opinion regarding to the different types of assistance required to the sample respondents. The highly 34.50 per cent of the weavers wants to financial assistance, 27.50 per cent of the weavers want to training of the designs, 21 per cent of the weavers want to marketing activities and only 17 per cent of the respondents wants to government provide new looms free of cost respectively.

5. Conclusions

In India, the production of handloom sector was recorded 7202 million square meters in the year 1995-96, it was declined 5339 million square meters in 2014-15. The share of handloom sector production registered 22.89 per cent during 1995-96; this share declining trend noted 11.08 per cent during 2014-15. Telangana is one of the important States in the Handloom Industry. There are about 82,435 handloom weavers in cooperative fold and 1,58,902 in outside cooperative fold. In the Karimnagar district the total handloom weavers was registered 6,260 weavers. In the district the total handloom weaver’s cooperative societies working has registered 35.

In Karimnagar district, 73.50 per cent of male and 26.50 per cent of females are noted. In Karimnagar district particularly in Siricilla town some of the respondents are 70 years and above aged persons are found, these respondents are not benefited any scheme from the central and state governments, even they are not getting handloom weaver’s pension also. In India the majority of handloom worker households follow Hindu religion. A social configuration, handloom work is primarily undertaken by Other Backward Castes (OBC) households, and OBCs are found to be the dominant caste group among handloom worker households in the district. In the district 40.50 per cent respondents are illiterates and 59.50 per cent are literates. In the Karimnagar district 52.50 per cent of sample respondents have their own houses and remaining 47.50 per cent of the respondents do not have own houses, hence they are living in rented houses. Good health can be defined as the state of being where a person is free from all kinds of physical or mental illness. Large number of weavers reported muscular pains in the back, joints and lower abdomen. Other common complaints included hernia and high/low blood pressure, low appetite and sleep, weakness, stomach upset, gastric and vomiting and may be related to the strenuous work environment due to long working hours.
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6. **Suggestions of the study**

Government should create positive conditions for the growth of the handloom sector.

Firstly, government has to develop programmes, which enable the inflow of fresh investments and emergence of new entrepreneurs into the handloom sector through appropriate strategies, and programmes. Secondly, Handloom parks have to be developed for handloom weavers, complete with infrastructural facilities (land, water, electricity) and input supply facilities (yarn shops, credit institutions, storage facilities, etc.). Thirdly, while co-operatives do help in maximizing the benefits for weavers in the entire chain of production, their present condition is a cause of concern. Cooperative system is riddled with corruption and political interference. This system needs to be insulated from political interference and corruption in order to help the weavers. Fourthly, Institutional facilities to continuously enhance the capacity of the handloom weavers to contribute to the growth of the handloom sector have to be developed. Sixth suggestion is common facilities have not been developed such as godowns, credit facilities (banks in the vicinity), roads, proper sanitation, etc have not been provided anywhere. Finally, most of the handloom weavers are poor and have not yet developed the ability to deal with modern market economies. It is but essential that these poor families need support to educate their children, and also have decent quality of life.

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3. Assistant Director, Textile & handloom sector office, Karimnagar.