



THE PROBLEM OF WOMEN HANDLOOM WEAVERS IN WALAJA BLOCK OF TAMIL NADU

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Abstract

This paper aims to measure the problem of working in handloom in Walaja block. The data is collected with the help of interview scheduled and group discussion with women working in handloom. It has been found that women's are not educated and working in very friendly and cohesive environment. The job opportunities have improved their status in family environment as well and are their economic status in society` The paper shows the majority of problems in the society. Major physiological problem for handloom women workers are menstruation. During that period in the name of traditions and culture, they are not permitted to work. Weaving for more than 12 hours in a day, they underwent gynecological problems too. Handloom products are clothing produced by weaving cloth with a loom that works manually without electricity. Handloom is created by weavers across the country. The types of Handloom products include handloom decorative, handloom fabric, handloom saree, handloom textiles, cotton clothes and more. The "India Handloom" brand would be evolved based on high quality defect free, socially and environmentally compliant product for catering to the needs of the high-end consumers looking for niche handmade products. The scheme would initially be made voluntary.

Key words: Economic Empowerment, Family Empowerment, Social Psychological Empowerment and Education Status

Introduction

Women should take place in the fields of Economical, Educational, Socio- cultural, Psychological and Political participation. It represents Economic Independence, Self reliant, Self- Confidence, leadership and Respect, Recognition, Political, Social and legal awareness. Handloom Women's provides savings thrift entrepreneurship activities which changing the social attitude and status of women in society. Micro level of handloom women's activities are economic activities in developing empowerment of women. Empowering women is empowering the nation. Women constitute nearly 50% of the total human recourse in our country. But they are economically and socially backward.

The handloom women are from which they become active in society affairs. Women in Indian society, though their status varies significantly according to their social and ethnic background.

Objectives

- To study about the women's handloom weavers in Walaja Block of Vellore Districts.
- To analysis the working condition of handloom women workers.
- To identify the problem faced by women's in handloom society.

Statement of the problem

The India Handloom brand would be developed dependent on top notch imperfection free, socially and naturally agreeable item for taking into account the necessities of the very good quality buyers searching for specialty handcrafted items. The plan would at first be made willful.

Limitations of the Study

- The study was limited was taken to analysis in women handloom weavers in Walaja block.
- The study is limited 50 women workers in handloom in Walaja Block.

Methodology

Detailed area of study working condition of women's weavers handloom in Walaja block. This study has two parts the first part of the study has a review of theoretical literature and methodology. The second part of the study deals with analyzing of data after its collection and coming to a conclusion. The research will be conducted by using interview method with the help of semi structured questions. The samples will be collected from the subjects by using the interview schedule of face to face interaction. The sample size consists of 50 individual each from women's weavers in handloom silk. The raw data collected will be analyzed by using analytical method. Duration of the research will one and half month.

Review of the Literature

Angadi.V.B (1975) expressed that the handloom is facing the problem of proper marketing. The power loom cloth is cheaper than the handloom cloth. The ordinary man prefers power loom cloth to handloom cloth. It has become very difficult for marketing the handloom products. Therefore, it is necessary that the government should allot certain exclusive items for handloom sector and implement the reservations of handloom items.

Sharadha. M (1979) felt that handloom weavers are facing the problem of unemployment and underemployment. They have been living below the poverty line. The weavers are facing the problems of scarcity of yarn and necessary inputs. The marketing of handloom products is very difficult when compared to that of mill cloth.

Sinakamdhan. S.K (1972) identified various problems regarding handloom industry. The weavers have been suffering from lack of proper organizational support and production of the handloom cloth has continuously declined because of the high raw material cost. The industry has also been facing the problem of lack of marketing facilities. These are the major problems of the handloom industry. The government should give priority in to allocate resources in this sector.

Chakraborty, S.M (1982) observed that the quality of the handloom products has declined because of hike in the price of the raw materials. The weavers used cheaper quality of colours, as a result of this the consumers prefer mill made cloth and numerous weavers lost their employment and kept their looms idle. To avoid this type of situation, the government must supply the raw material at subsidized rates.

Rajula Devi A.K (1983) in her study observed that the handloom industry has fallen into a deeper crisis in recent years, because of lack of adequate financial support. While the socio-economic conditions of a majority of the weavers are not good and conducive, the weavers are trying to give up their profession and seek alternative employment. She felt that the government should take care of the handloom industry, by allocating huge resources for the development of that industry.

Tripathy.S.N (2000), the handloom industry is one of the largest cottage industries and it occupies a place of prominence in the economy in India. It is estimated that the handloom industry produces nearly one-third of the country's requirement of cloth. Among the various handloom cloth producing states in India. Tamil Nadu occupies an important place and the handloom silk saris of kanchipuram have a world market in Tamil Nadu during 1993. There were 1410 primarily weavers co-operative societies with 3.79 lakh weavers as members amounting to 80 percent coming under co-operatives.

Kuchal.S.C(2001), explained the handloom industry is the largest cottage industry in India. For instance in cottage industry “manufacture is carried on by the owner himself dependents, relations or a few wage earners but the total number of persons employed does not exceed”

Niranjana Vinayan(2001), in her study on the handloom weavers communities in Andhra Pradesh had a comparative analysis with states of Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. They pointed out the need to devise appropriate institutional and structural supports urgent for protecting weavers interests. The need has originated from the presence of resources in a dispersed manner allowing household –based labourers to use onl a small amount of capitel.

Srivastava(2016), in her study on Kota Doria investigated the challenges and opportunities in promoting the handloom product in the market. According to the report although the GI. Tag for Kota Doria has provided assurance to the customers and increased the confidence on quality on one hand; but takes and imitations at cheaper prices by power looms available in the market caused hindrance to the demand of authentic handloom textile on the other hand.

Chaturvedi Malik(2018) in their study aimed to analyses the financial and marketing condition of the weavers in Kaithun village of cota district. Though cartographic techniques the researcher has identified prevalence of unsold stock of Kote Doria and the minimal involvement of small weavers in the marketing activities. These factors along with dominating master weavers have contributed towards low income levels of the weavers.

Statistics on handloom in south India as on 2019-2020

As per the 4th All India Handloom census (2019-2020) there are 26, 73,891 handloom weavers and 8, 48, 621 allied workers in the country, state-wise number of handloom weavers and allied workers.

Statement showing state-wise numbers of weavers and allied weavers in the country as per the 4th All India Handloom censuses (2019-2020)

S. No.	State	No. of Allied Workers	No. of Weavers
1.	Andhra Pradesh	49785	127662
2.	Karnataka	27616	27175
3.	Kerala	6604	15480
4.	Pondicherry	782	908
5.	Tamil Nadu	45757	197818
6.	Telungana	21922	25930
	Total South Zone	152466	394973

Source : Number of Trained women in India

State wise and scheme- wise number of handloom weavers benefited under various Schemes in the last three years (2016-2017 to 2018-2019) and the current year 2019-20 till 30-9-2019

S. No.	State	No. of Beneficiaries of Block Level Clusters	No. of Beneficiaries of Marketing Events	No. of Beneficiaries of Concessional Loans	No. of Weavers Enrolled Under PMJJY PMSBY	No. of Weavers Enrolled Under MGBBY Conserved
1.	Andhra Pradesh	5366	45000	22322	9024	58175
2.	Karnataka	2777	29000	3528	-	52757
3.	Kerala	1030	13000	571	3359	11180
4.	Pondicherry	0	0	0	-	903
5.	Tamil Nadu	28626	54100	68727	143819	308964
6.	Telungana	1779	46000	3279	-	6998

Source: Secondary data

Number of Trained Women in India

States	Female%
Assam	99.56
Sikkim	100.00
Tamil Nadu	34.13
Andhra Pradesh	19.38
Karnataka	34.29
Meghalaya	98.67
Manipur	100.00

Source: Evaluation study Decentralized Training program for handloom weavers 2013. Program Evaluation organization planning commission, Government of India, New Delhi.

Measurement of Handloom Women's

Handloom women's leads them to be self- reliant and economic independence. There are no any concrete methods to measure the Handloom women's but we can measure them by the following indicators.

- **Economic Empowerment**

The income from handloom women's and possession of various luxurious as well as essential goods. eg -Refrigerator, Washing machine etc.

- **Family Empowerment**

The women should play a vital role in decision making process in the family, freedom to spend earning for the family and self respect within the family.

- **Social Psychological Empowerment**

Ability to face and solve any problem, power of decision making, leadership, enhanced knowledge and the courage to voice against injustice.

Condition and Problem of Handloom Women Workers

Women a major work force used to profession which they may think safe and secure though it is a back breaking and poverty alleviated profession. They work 12 hours a day 30 days in a month 12 month in a year respite victuals, festivals and meal time. They have no entertainment like others as cinema, picnic, chit, and chatting spending time with children etc where as the only entertaining music program in their lifetime is their handloom's glaringly monotonous sound. The most important thing in their life is to see their sons to come up in the life with decent salary or a profession other than weaving in the case of female child the marriage is the one and only solution to their up gradation but that too with other than wavers. Though he women handloom women workers from all the states of Indian seem to have a difference in dressing, mode of life, social men traditions food habit and child rearing practices they are similar in attitudes an orientation towards handloom weaving. They love it because it is their tradition. They work ship their looms as if they were their gods.

Major physiological problem for handloom women workers are menstruation. During that period in the name of traditions and culture, they are not permitted to work. Weaving for more than 12 hours in a day, they underwent gynecological problem too. The constant debt of the families' illness and other factors such as globalization power looms and industrialization retained them at the lowest level of subsistence. Their low wages went to pay debts and forever they remained them in poverty and deprivation. They toiled very few and far between in most of the weaving families in south India.

As a result the women sufferer with socio psychological problem such as mental disorder, anger and rage over frustrations etc. Route to economic empowerment in trade also been neglected to women handloom workers.

Collection of Data

The main source of the data is from the women's handloom weavers who are working independent weavers. For primary data collection 50 weavers were selected. A structured questionnaire is used for the survey method, observation method, personal interview method and group discussion method are used.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The data is collected from 50 sample respondents a structured questionnaire was given to the respondents to collect primary data.

Table-1
Age wise distribution of Female Weavers

S.No	Age wise	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Below 20 years	8	16
2	21-40 years	23	46
3	41-60years	13	26
4	Above 61years	6	12
Total		50	100

Source: Primary data

Table-2
Marital Status of Female Weavers

S.No	Marital status	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Married	36	72
2	Unmarried	12	24
3	Widow	2	4
Total		50	100

Source: Primary data

Table- 3
Educational Status of Female Weavers

S.No	Education status	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Literate	42	84
2	Illiterate	8	16
Total		50	100

Source: Primary data

Table -4
Economic Conditions

S.No	Causes	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Poverty	2	4
2	Low Income	15	30
3	Unemployment	6	12
4	Family burden	27	54
Total		50	100

Source: Primary data

Table- 5
Daily Income of Female Weavers

S.No	Income(Rs)	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Below 250	14	28
2	251-300	26	52
3	Above 301	10	20
Total		50	100

Source: Primary data

Table - 6
Daily Working of Female Weavers

S.No	Working hours	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Below 6	4	8
2	6-8	32	64
3	8-10	2	4
4	Above 10	2	4
Total		50	100

Source: Primary data

Table-7
Infrastructural Facilities of Weavers

S.No	Type of house	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Pucca	23	46
2	Tiles	19	38
3	Hut	8	16
Total		50	100

Source: Primary data

Table-8
Drinking Water Facilities

S.No	Types of drinking water	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Well	-	-
2	Hand pump	23	46
3	Municipal taps	27	54
Total		50	100

Source: Primary data

Table-9
Durable Goods Facilities by Female Weavers

S.No	Durable goods	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Television	23	46
2	Radio	3	6
3	Fridge	6	12
4	Cycle	12	24
5	Computer	6	12
6	CD Player	-	-
Total		50	100

Source: Primary data

Table-10
Problem Faced by Female Weavers

S.No	Problem faced	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Shortage of yarn	27	54
2	Electricity	12	24
3	Weakness	3	6
4	Eye related problem	8	16
Total		50	100

Source: Primary data

Table-11
Feel Tired in working place of Respondents.

S. No.	Feel Tired Working Place	No. of Respondent	Percentage
1	Always Feel Tired	18	36%
2	Sometimes Feel Tired	25	50%
3	Rarely Feel Tired	7	14%
4	Do not Feel Tired	-	-
Total		50	100%

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that the feel working place of the respondents. The 50 percent of the respondents are some time feel tired 36 percent of the respondents are always feel tired and 14 percent of the respondents are rarely feeling tired. It indicates that the majority of the women's handloom workers are some time feel tired.

Table- 12
Health problem of the Respondents.

S. No.	Health Problem	No. of Respondent	Percentage
1	Physiological problem	8	16%
2	Pain in Hand,Legs&Back	16	32%
3	Skin Problem	5	10%
4	Eye Problem	7	14%
5	Digest Problem	14	28%
Total		50	100%

Source: Primary Data

The above table show that the health problem of the respondents. The 32 percent of the respondents have pain in hand and legs 28 percent of the respondents have digested problems, 16 percent of the respondents have physical hurt during the work 14 percent of the respondents have eye problem 10 percent of the respondents have skin problem. It indicates that the majority of the problems handloom women's workers is pain in hand and legs.

Major findings

- ❖ Yarn price is increasing day by day. So the cost of production proposing to increase.
- ❖ This is major important input related problem followed by poor quality of raw material.
- ❖ Considering the weavers related problem the societies consider lack of active member as a major weaver's related problem followed by women's.
- ❖ Majority of the Women weavers related to 46% have 21 to 40 years.
- ❖ Majority of the weavers 72% are married.
- ❖ Majority of respondents Education status is 42% are literate.
- ❖ Nearly 54% of respondent have family burden.
- ❖ Majority of female weavers daily Income is Rs300.
- ❖ Majority of respondents 64% weavers are working 6 to 8 hours.
- ❖ Maximum respondents 54% using municipal taps only.
- ❖ Majority of female weavers 54% facing problem in shortage of raw material.
- ❖ Majority of the female handloom workers are having 32% back hand and leys pain.

Suggestions

- The women weavers are quite dissatisfied with being the members of co-operation societies in order to prefect these women weavers.
- Self help groups could be gives rights to establish weavers co-operative societies exclusively for women.
- As a restless weaving activities large numbers of women are suffering from gynecological problems and pain on hand legs& back pain.
- In order to lessen the women casualties, free medical camps and mobile health centers be established in the handloom weavers.
- The minimum wages act has to be amended to enable women to get proper and appropriate wage for their work while being dynamic to the inflationary trends.
- Government should take necessary steps o frequent supply of raw materials to empower them economically.
- Government should also provide household employment to the uneducated female weavers.
- Women handloom workers should be given priority to participate in entrepreneurship.
- Handloom women worker should be brought under the nation employment guarantee scheme.
- Literacy programme should be provided to improve the standard of living.

Conclusion

I feel handloom weavers can't survive if they don't change. In specific this change doesn't improve the structural position of women except a shift in their physique. It would lead to deskilling of women and their social position. Only long term vision strong policies and schemes can protect women weavers custodians in particular the frequent supply of raw materials will exempted this art and its barriers from the list of endangered traditional art. The number of employees in the handloom industry decreased on compared to the previous year now-a-day. Also the important economic problem of incentives to the weavers. Even Jawaharlal Nehru, the wanted the weavers to shift from handloom weaving to mechanization. He says 'I feel handloom weavers can't survive if they don't change according to the change in the industrialization'. In specific this

change does not improve the structural position of women except a shift in their skills and increasing burden on their physique.

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