



# Economic Profile Of Handloom Weavers Of Nadia District: A Case Study To Identify Reason Of Decline

**\*Dr. Soumen Debnath**

**\* Assistant Professor Dwijendralal College, Krishnagar, Nadia**

**Abstract :** This paper identifies various areas of problems, like, failure of cooperatives for different reasons, poor living conditions of weavers, problems of marketing, problems of production, lack of training for weavers, lack of loyalty among members to PWCs, problem of procurement of yarn, problem of water logging, problem of flood during pick time, illegal competition from powerloom, failure of Reservation Act for handloom and failure of welfare schemes. Areas of prospects of handloom of these districts are good demand of handloom products of these areas, environment friendly production system, low capital investment, employment generation, contribution in revenue generation of districts, concentration of industrial development and different types of linkage creation.

**Key words:** Handlom, Economic profile, areas of problems.

The knocking sound of handlooms can be heard in many areas of Nadia district. Weaving is the second field of employment, so the weaving process is no longer only in the hands of hereditary weavers. Other class of people is more or less directly or indirectly involved in the weaving process. The weaving is spreading to other areas where the expansion of other occupations has been stepped. Unlike other districts, not for part time, not even for partial livelihood, most of the weavers in these districts are full time weavers.

The handloom industry has made tremendous progress in recent times in terms of the economy of the whole country. If we go to any big clothing store, you will find a variety of products made of yarn, silk and wool. Bed sheets, towels, handkerchiefs, blankets or shawl, *shari*, costumes, curtains or carpets — everything has a wonderful combination of tradition and modernisation with the latest fashion designs and colors. The handloom weaving industry meets about 30 percent of the total textile demand of the country. But those who

are associated with this industry, their condition are not good at all. The financial condition of the weavers is deplorable. They are deprived of all the facilities that are required to run handloom.

Most of the people in this country still use local clothes and a large part of it comes from handloom weaving. But for those who are engaged in weaving, since it is not possible for them to deliver their products at all levels or to communicate directly with the buyers, they face market stagnation and fall into an artificial recession. Forever, country's market of handloom products are dominated by big merchants and *mahajan*. The ups and downs of the market, depend on their whims and fancies in control. In many cases these ups and downs are artificial. The goods that could have been sold immediately after production, as a result of the recession created by the traders, began to accumulate in the houses of the producers. The financial crisis escalates when capital sucks. It is sold once or twice a year. Some of it was sold on credit again, and it took a year for the money to come out. As a result, the capital of the producers is strained and the looms are about to close. At that situation they are forced to sell cloth without profit or loss. Traders wait for this opportunity (Interview of weavers and allied workers). Author has identified some areas of problems, which are impeding the development and sustainability of handloom of these districts. These are as follows:

**Failure of Cooperatives:** The cooperatives are absolutely essential tools for the sustenance and development of the handloom industrial sector. The cooperative experiment has left its own mark on the industry, succeeding in some places and failing in others. The PWCs of Nadia District, besides their limited areal extent and insufficient number of members, are suffered by many other problems such as problems of human resource, production, marketing etc.

**Problem of Human Resource:** The cooperatives are mainly situated in rural areas they are financially weak and thus it is not possible for them to appoint trained personnel to look after the management. They have to manage with unskilled and inefficient staff, which leads to deterioration in the quality of production and performance of the societies.

**Problem of Production:** Co-operatives face major production problem due to unstable and inadequate supply of raw materials. They get the least preference when it comes to raw materials supply, thus hindering the constant nature of production. These fluctuations lead to increase in the prices of the products.

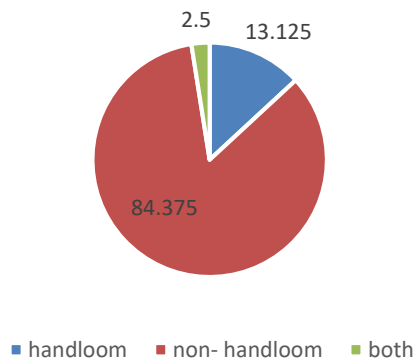
**Problem of Marketing:** Some cooperatives are extremely weak in marketing and sales promotion. They lack the finance and the capability to undertake aggressive marketing activities, due to which they are unable to increase sales (Biswas 2003:43-45).

**Table 1**  
**Purpose of loan or debt of weavers in Nadia**

Purpose	Number	Percentage
Handloom	21	13.12
Non- handloom	135	84.37
Both	4	2.5
Total	160	100

Source Survey by the author

**Figure 1**  
**Purpose of loan or debt of weavers in Nadia: percentage**



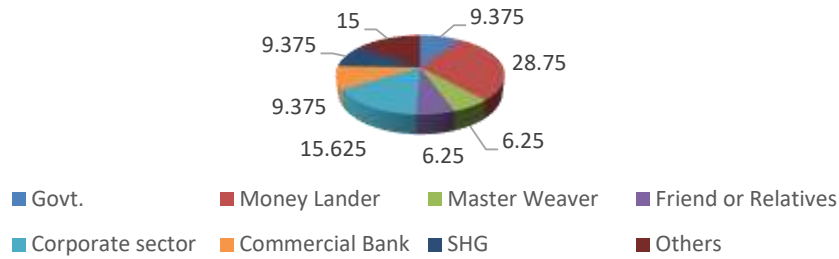
From this picture we can find that in most of the cases loan is used for non handloom purpose.

**Table 2**  
**Major sources of loan or debt in Nadia**

Purpose	Number	Percentage
Govt.	15	9.375
Money Lender	46	28.75
Master Weaver	10	6.25
Friend or Relatives	10	6.25
Corporate sector	25	15.625
Commercial Bank	15	9.375
SHG	15	9.375
Others	24	15
Total	160	100

Source Survey by the author

**Figure 2**  
Major sources of loan or debt in Nadia: percentage



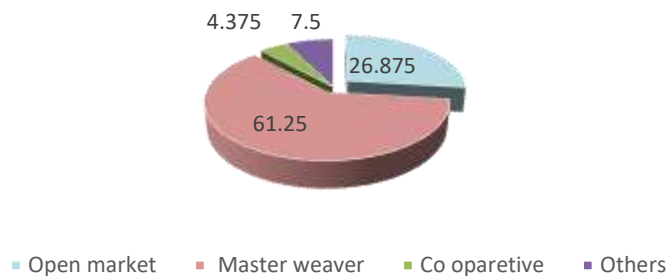
Money lenders, corporate banks, and self help groups plays important role to provide loans to the weavers.

**Table 3**  
Major source of input of weaving in Nadia

Source	Number	percentage
Open market	43	26.875
Master weaver	98	61.25
Co operative	7	4.375
Others	12	7.5
Total	160	100

Source Survey by the author

**Figure 3**  
Major source of input of weaving in Nadia: percentage



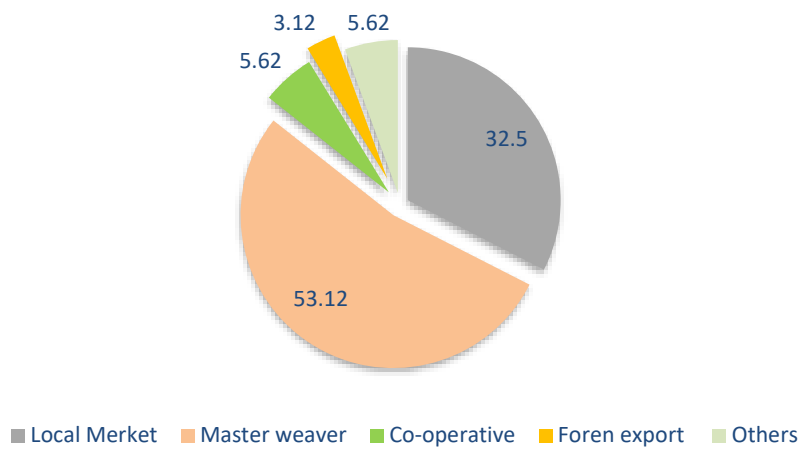
For imputes and raw materials weavers mainly depends upon master weavers and open market.

**Table 4**  
**Selling of product in Nadia**

Seal	Number	Percentage
Local Market	52	32.5
Master weaver	85	53.12
Co-operative	9	5.62
Foreign export	5	3.12
Others	9	5.62
Total	160	100

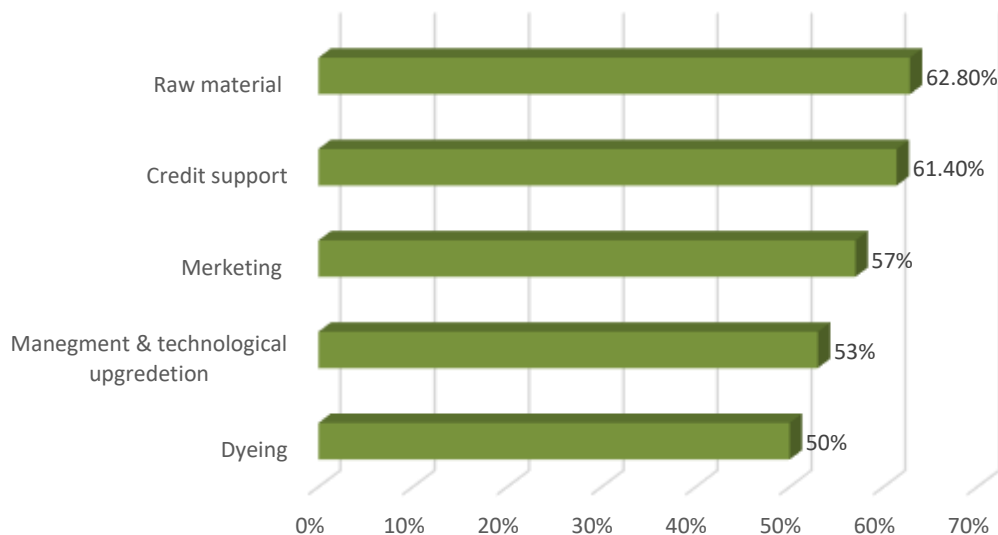
Source Survey by the author

**Figure 4**  
**Selling of product in Nadia: Percentage**



Most of the weavers sell their products in local market and to master weavers

**Figure 5**  
**Nature of support requirement by weavers in Nadia**



Source Survey by the author

Maximum support needed for survival of handloom in raw materials, credit, marketing, management and technological up gradation and dyeing.

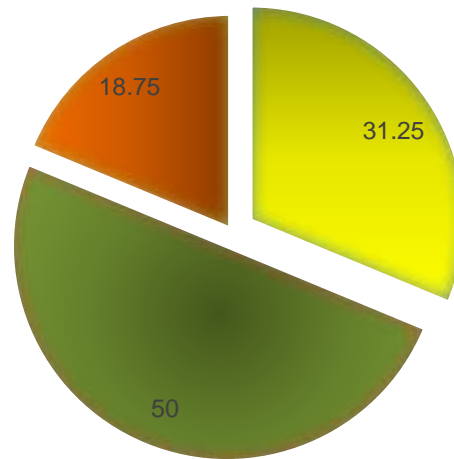
**Table 5**  
**Reason of idle loom in Nadia**

Reason	Number	Percentage
Lack of Development	50	31.25
Lack of credit	80	50
Lack of weavers	30	18.75
Total	160	100

Source Survey by the author

**Figure 5**  
**Reason of idle loom in Nadia: Percentage**

■ Lack of Development ■ Lack of credit ■ Lack of weavers



Maximum weavers are of the opinion that lack of development and lack of credit are main reasons of crisis of handloom in this district.

Handloom industry still occupies a predominant position in the industrial scenario of Nadia district. The major concentrations of handloom weavers are in Santipur, Nabadwip, Krishnanagar I and II and Ranaghat I, Srirampur . There are more than 1 lakh looms operating in these two areas providing employment to about two lakh people in the weaving and associated sectors of this industry. Only about 18 per cent of the weavers are under the cooperative fold, as per handloom census 2019-20. The region's handloom industry has an age old tradition and holds a special place in economy. For the benefit and development of the industry, the district handloom office is putting its best efforts to provide finance through NABARD and Nadia District Central Cooperative Bank Limited (NDCC), along with implementation of various welfare schemes, as already discussed. The products of the industry are not only sold in local and national markets but also through government showrooms viz. Tantuja and Manjusha. The handloom products of this district have good reputation and in recent years, product diversification in the handloom industry has opened new opportunities for their export abroad.

Handloom is a traditional activity of the district and the most renowned of all the industries in Nadia. This industry, with its environment friendly production trend, requirement of low capital input, demand

for human skill and manual labour is extremely suitable for densely populated developing countries like India. In this way, the economy of this district of West Bengal is immensely dependent on this industry.

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