

Problems of the Handloom Weavers of Mubarakpur Town (Azamgarh District)

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ABSTRACT

India has a rich cultural heritage of handloom industry having the largest handloom industry in the world. Thus it also makes major contribution to the country's economy. The strength of handloom lies in the introducing innovative designs which cannot be replicated by the power loom sector. Among various states of India, Uttar Pradesh is known for many forms of arts. This state is famous for distinctive handloom products Handloom weaving is done mainly in four districts of Uttar Pradesh namely Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Mau, and Azamgarh. The Azamgarh district occupies second place in number of handlooms after Varanasi. Mubarakpur town is a municipal board in Azamgarh district. In present time, handloom industry in Mubarakpur town is facing multifarious problems in comparison to the other industries. Therefore the present study was planned with the objective to analyze the problems faced by handloom weavers. The selection of samples for this study was done by purposive random sampling method. Fifty handloom weavers between age group 20-65 years were selected for the study from different areas of Mubarkpur town, Azamgarh districts. The questionnaire was prepared with some close ended and some open ended questions to collect information's about the problems faced by handloom weavers during weaving. The result showed that, handloom industry is gradually declining in Mubarakpur town over the years. There was lack of technological advancement in their handloom, they have to work in their traditional handloom because of which, the weavers were facing serious problems in weaving such as problem of yarn breakage. They were also facing the problem in procurement of raw material and problem in marketing their products. There were less numbers of godowns in Mubarakpur town because of which the weavers were also facing the problem of storage. The weavers who inherited in this occupation were in a pitiable condition owing to the poor socio-economic conditions. These problems of the weavers can be eliminated by introducing some better policies by state and central government. The government should encourage the weavers by providing finance facilities with lesser interest rates. These steps can provide better improvements in the social and economical conditions of handloom weavers of Mubarakpur town.

Key Words : Handloom, Weavers, Mubarakpur, Problems, Weaving, Azamgarh

INTRODUCTION

Traditional hand weaving has been a part of India's cultural heritage. The handloom industry is expanding both nationally and internationally because of the demand for hand crafted art. India has a rich cultural heritage of handloom industry having the largest handloom industry in the world. Thus it also makes major contribution to the country's economy. The strength of handloom lies in the introducing innovative designs which cannot be replicated by the power loom sector. Among various states of India,

Uttar Pradesh is known for many forms of arts. This state is famous for distinctive handloom products Handloom weaving is done mainly in four districts of Uttar Pradesh namely Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Mau, and Azamgarh. The Azamgarh district occupies second place in number of handlooms after Varanasi. Mubarakpur town is a municipal board in Azamgarh district. In present time, handloom industry in Mubarakpur town is facing multifarious problems in comparison to the other industries. Despite of several measures taken by the government in Mubarkpur town the weavers are facing

various problems during weaving. Therefore the present study was planned with an objective to analyze the problems faced by handloom weavers during weaving.

METHODOLOGY

The selection of samples for this study was done by purposive random sampling method. Total fifty respondents were selected for the study. The respondents were between age group 20-65 years. The respondents of both the genders were selected from different areas of Mubarkpur town. The questionnaire was prepared with some close ended and some open ended questions to collect information's about the problems faced by handloom weavers during weaving.

The present study is based on the primary sources of data by direct interview of the respondents. Questionnaire was used to collect the information pertaining to the problems of the handloom weavers in Mubarakpur town of Azamgarh district. After collection of data, the data were converted into the tabular form. Care was also taken in the selection of handloom weavers that they should be true representative of their wards. The data collected by the means of questionnaire was coded, tabulated and analyzed using appropriate statistical methods. Responses from the questionnaires were arranged and grouped according to different research questions. Frequency and percentage methods were used to analyze the tabulated data and presented in form of frequency and percentage in the tables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic profile of the handloom weavers:

The general information of the respondents was studied; it included their gender, age, marital status, educational qualification, number of family members, education of children and types of family.

Result in Table 1 shows the general profile of the handloom weavers. It was found that the 50 per cent weavers were male whereas 50 per cent of the weavers were female. The marital status of the weavers was also studied and it was found that, 60 per cent of the weavers were married whereas 36 per cent were still un-married, 4 per cent female weavers were widow and no weavers were divorcee. The Table 1 also shows the educational qualification of the weavers. It was found that, 56 per cent weavers were illiterate, 24 per cent of the weavers studied up to 10th standard, 12 per cent of the weavers

studied up to 12th standard, only 8 per cent weavers had degree and no weavers had diploma. It was also found that, 56 per cent weavers had joint family and 44 per cent of the weavers were living in nuclear family.

Table 1 Demographic profile of the respondents (N=50)

Sr. No.	Particulars	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1.	Gender		
	Male	25	50
	Female	25	50
2.	Marital status		
	Married	30	60
	Unmarried	18	36
	Divorce	00	00
	Widow/er	02	04
3.	Education qualification		
	Up to 10 th std.	12	24
	Up to 12 th std.	06	12
	ITI/ Diploma	00	00
	Degree	04	08
	Illiterate	28	56
5.	Types of family		
	Joint family	28	56
	Nuclear family	22	44

Problems of handloom weavers:

It included problems faced by the handloom weavers of Mubarakpur town during weaving. It also includes problems related to market, financial, production, procurements of raw material and problems regarding storage of raw materials.

Problems faced in handloom weaving:

Table 2 depicts the problems faced by handloom weavers. After analysis, it was found that most of the weavers were having multiple problems. Maximum weavers (70 %) were having eye related problems, market problems and electricity problems. 60 per cent

Table 2 : Problems faced in handloom weaving (N=50)

Sr. No.	Problem faced in handloom weaving	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1.	Breaking yarn	25	50
2.	Electricity	35	70
3.	Weakness	30	60
4.	Eye related problems	35	70
5.	Hard work	22	44
6.	Market problem	35	70
7.	Heart problem	6	12

weavers were facing the problem of body weakness. Another problem was breaking of yarn during weaving, which was faced by 50 per cent of the weavers. 44 per cent of the weavers reported that, they have to work very hard for weaving and 12 per cent weavers were having heart problems due to prolonged weaving.

Financial problems of handloom weavers:

Table 3 depicts the financial problems faced by the handloom weavers of Mubarkpur town. 70 per cent respondents reported that they had infrastructure and investment problems. 30 per cent handloom weavers had credit problem whereas no weavers have budget allocation, taxes and subsidies problem. Rao and Sreedhar (2017) also reported in their study that, the majority of the respondents had financial problems *i.e.* out of 120 respondents, 77.5 per cent weavers were facing financial problems.

Sr. No.	Financial problems	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1.	Infrastructure and investment	35	70
2.	Budget allocation	00	00
3.	Credit needs	15	30
4.	Taxes and subsidies	00	00

Marketing problems of handloom weavers:

Table 4 shows the marketing problems of the handloom weavers. 92 per cent weavers suffered from competition from mills and power looms. 4 per cent weavers had problems of marketing product and problem of market environment whereas no weaver reported that they had problems in free export and import trade. This may be due to the reason that, the weavers were not involved directly in export and import of the handloom products. Satyanarayana (2016) reported the problems of handloom weavers in his study. He found that 94 per

Sr. No.	Marketing problems	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1.	Competition from mills and power looms	46	92
2.	Marketing for products	02	04
3.	Free export/Import trade opportunity	00	00
4.	Market environment	02	04

cent of the respondents faced marketing problems, 82 per cent of the respondents faced financial problems, 97 per cent of the respondents had production problems, 89 per cent of the respondents had social and personal problems, and almost all the respondents were facing health problems.

Production problems of handloom weavers:

Table 5 depicts the production problem of handloom weavers. It was found that, 56 per cent respondents were facing problems due to lack of technological development, 44 per cent weavers were suffering from the problems of procurement of raw material. The Table 5 also shows that improvement in the designs was not the problem of handloom weavers of Mubarkpur town.

Sr. No.	Production problems	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1.	Lack of technology development	28	56
2.	Raw material problems	22	44
3.	Design Improvements	00	00

Problems in procurement of raw material:

Table 6 shows the problems in procurement of raw material by the handloom societies of Mubarkpur town. When asked about the problems faced regarding the procurement of raw material, 100 per cent weavers responded that they have problem of high price, further after analysis it was found that 50 per cent weavers had the problems of poor quality raw material and no respondents had the problems of transportation. Sadanandan (2016) reported in his study that, the handloom weavers had problems in procurement of raw material. He reported that, 11 per cent had the problem of transportation and problems of non-availability of credits whereas 9 per cent handloom weavers had problems of high price.

Sr. No.	Problems in procurement of raw material	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1.	Transportation	00	00
2.	Quality	25	50
3.	High price	50	100

Problems in storage of raw materials:

Table 7 shows the problems regarding the storage of raw material of handloom weavers. It was found that,

majority of the weavers (88 %) were facing the problem of lack of godowns. 12 per cent of the respondent reported that owners were charging high cost for storage. Table 7 also reveals that no weavers reported problems related to condition of the godown neither they had any other problem regarding storage of raw material. Sadanandan (2016) studied on problems, regarding the storage of raw material of handloom weavers. He reported in his study that, the majority of the handloom weavers were facing a problem of godowns and high cost of storage (70 %) whereas 15 per cent were facing the problem of lack of godowns.

Sr. No.	Problems in storage of raw materials	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1.	Lack of godown	44	88
2.	Godown not in proper condition	00	00
3.	High cost of storage	06	12
4.	Any other	00	00

System of marketing:

Table 8 depicts the system of marketing of handloom weavers. It was found that 70 per cent weavers were selling their goods through middle men, 40 per cent weavers sold their good in weekly bazaars and 30 per cent weaver were selling through their own retail outlets. No weavers opted any other method for selling goods. The above explanation is in accordance with the finding of Sadanandan (2016). He reported in his study the system of marketing opted by handloom weavers. He reported that the 21 per cent handloom weavers were selling through retail outlets 15 per cent handloom weavers sold to APCO and others depend on their own sales perspectives either on retail outlets or selling through middlemen.

Sr. No.	System of marketing	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1.	Selling through own retail outlets	15	30
2.	Selling through weekly bazaars	20	40
3.	Selling through middle men	35	70
4.	Any other method	00	00

Nature of competition:

Table 9 shows the nature of competition faced by handloom weavers. It was found that, 56 per cent weavers had competition from mill made cloths and 50 per cent weavers had completion from power looms. The Table 9 also reveals that no weavers have competition from plastic products or any other products. The above explanation is in accordance with the finding of Sadanandan (2016). He reported in his study that 80 per cent of the handloom societies have a great competition from power looms.

Sr. No.	Nature of competition	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1.	From mill made cloth	28	56
2.	From plastic products	00	00
3.	From power loom	25	50
4.	Any others	00	00

Conclusion :

The present study was undertaken to assess the problems of handloom weavers because the problems and challenges has haunt this sector, affecting its sustainability. Revival of the handloom industry is essential to protect India heritage, promote employment and development in Mubarakpur town of Azamgarh district. The result of survey showed that, handloom industry was gradually declining in Mubarakpur town over the years. There was lack of technological advancement in their handloom, so weavers were facing serious problems in weaving such as problem of yarn breakage, procurement of raw material and problem in marketing their products. There were less numbers of godowns in Mubarakpur town because of which the weavers were also facing the problem of storage. The weavers who inherited in this occupation were in a pitiable condition owing to the poor socio-economic conditions. These problems of the weavers can be eliminated by introducing some better policies by state and central government. Proper training, development programs and brain storming sessions can enhance their knowledge and awareness. These steps can provide better improvements in the social and economical conditions of handloom weavers of Mubarakpur town.

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