

**SOCIO ECONOMIC CONCERNS OF KHADI HANDLOOM
WEAVERS- AN EMPIRICAL STUDY IN KARIMNAGAR DISTRICT OF
TELANGANA STATE**

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ABSTRACT

This paper is mainly based on primary data which is collected from Khadhi workers. This paper highlighted the socio economic characteristics of Khadhi handloom labours. The study also found that the khadhi weavers are not getting minimum wages. This paper also found that the Khadi weavers are facing problems like poor living conditions, high working hours, low wage rate and lack of social security measures. However finally the paper conclude the appropriate policies to uplift the Khadhi handloom weavers

Keywords: *Khadhi village industries workers poor living conditions, socio-economic characteristics, social security measures*

Handloom sector plays a pivotal role in the Indian Economy in terms of generating employment. This sector directly and indirectly generating the employment by using minimum capital. India's Handloom Industry has been spread throughout the country, i.e., in almost every village. It can be called cottage Industry or household craft, since the work is done largely at home involving the whole family members. However the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is a statutory body established by an Act of Parliament (No. 61 of 1956, as amended by act no. 12 of 1987 and Act No.10 of 2006. In April 1957, it took over the work of former All India Khadi and Village Industries Board. The production and employment in village industries have grown from Rs 431.57 crore in 2000-01 to Rs 468.3 crore in 2005-06 and generating employment is 8.64 crores 2004-05

This sector¹ is next to agriculture in providing employment to about 6.5 million persons and produces about six thousand two hundred millions sq.mt. cloth which is about 16 percent of the total textile production. In terms of exports the estimated foreign exchange earned during (i.e. 2005-06) the last year is Rupees four thousand crores. The people of other countries were wondering at the skill of the handloom weavers in India. Before British period, the Indian handloom industry was world popular. The ancient India not only produced raw cotton but

also exported a considerable amount of finished fabrics woven on handlooms². How ever several studies have also discussed the problems and policy measures of handloom sectors.

H.N. Satyanarayana³ tries to highlight the importance of our handloom sector particularly its capability in the international market. However, In spite of its significant role in the national economy, it is confronting several problems for its survival. While stressing the importance of handloom sector, L.C. Jain⁴ states that the handloom weavers could not get enough work due to the increasing competition from power looms. Diverting the attention on to the handloom industry in Andhra Pradesh then the minister for handlooms and Textiles, Sri K.V. Keshavulu⁵ opines that the slump in the consumer market resulted in the accumulation of unsold cloth. He further stated that the inability of the weavers to secure quality dyes and chemicals, made them inefficient in the export market. L.C. Jain⁶ opines that “handloom sector has manifold problem such as obsolete technologies, unorganized production system, low-productivity inadequate working capital, conventional product range, weak marketing link, overall stagnation of production and sales and above all competition from power loom and mill sector.

However, in India majority of handloom weavers are facing manifold problems like poverty, low standard of living, hunger, poor health, malnutrition, illiteracy, deceases, and poor sanitary housing, communication and infrastructure facilities. These reasons are growing indebtedness, increasing risk, prices uncertainty and low income levels are leads to commit suicides of the weavers.

However, this paper has made an attempt to highlight the socio economic conditions of handloom weavers.

Objectives

- To study the socio economic characteristics of handloom weavers in this study area.
- To asses the income level of handloom weavers in the study area.
- To study the expenditure and debt level of handloom weavers in the study area.

Methodology

The data has been collected from primary as well as secondary data, for the purpose of the primary data out of 180 handloom weavers 60 handloom weavers were selected in each weaving KVIC society in Karimnagar District(i.e Metpelli and VavilalaKhadi Gramodyog Pratistan) The data was collected from in the years of 2012-13, percentages and averages are used to analyse the data. Apart from the questionnaire the oral information collected at the time of data collection and also being used for analysis.

Analysis of data

Table – 1 depicts the age wise composition of sample respondents, majority of the weaver’s falls under the age group between 51-68 years i.e. 33.33 percent. A few respondents fall in the age group of 20-30 years, whose percentage is about 11.11 percent, about 17.77 percent handloom weavers were falls in the age group of between 61-70 years. About 22.22 percent of the respondents in our sample fall in the age group of 41-50 years. A few respondents in sample belong to 31-40 years constituting about 15.55 percent. It is observed that handloom industry is providing from young to even old age people. About 61-70 age group people were also working for catering minimum needs of their family. But in a civilized society are cannot expect such age group to work.

Table – 1

AGE COMPOSITION OF HANDLOOM WEAVERS OF SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

Age Group (Years)	No. of Respondents	Percentage to Total
20 – 30	20	11.11
31 - 40	28	15.55
41 – 50	40	22.22
51 – 60	60	33.33
61 – 70	32	17.77
Total	180	100

Source : Primary data

Table – 2 reveals that the majority of the respondents in our sample did their primary education. A few respondents have completed under graduation. Only twenty two respondents were illiterates in our sample ranging a percentage of 12.22 some respondents seem to have discontinued their education due to their economic position. Out of all, only eleven respondents were in higher education. In fact, it appears to have become necessary for

a few young respondents that often they are forced to this trade to eke out their livelihood in the existing circumstances. In some cases, it has become necessary for young boys to settle themselves in this profession to maintain their family and parents. As the job opportunities are meagre, it is a compelling force to settle automatically in this profession

Table – 2
EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS
UNDER DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS

Educational Level	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	Total	Percentage to Total
Illiterate	-	1	2	5	14	22	12.22
Primary	22	19	21	26	-	88	48.88
Middle	4	9	18	5	-	36	20.0.
Higher Secondary	11	7	3	2	-	23	12.77
Higher Education	4	5	1	1	-	11	6.11
Total	41	41	45	39	14	180	100

Source : Primary data

Table –3 presents the data on the size of the family of handloom weavers. Out of 180 families, ten respondents which different age groups are having 1-2 children. The large number of respondents, i.e., 92 respondents has three to four children excluding the respondents. Next in the order of preference comes about 5-7 children owned by each of 78 respondents. No family on the whole is having children above seven. The weavers seem to have not gone for larger families. It is stated notion among the economists that the poor people will have more children, but this study does not corroborate the notion. However the old weavers have gone for more than 4 children, but the modern weavers, i.e., below 40 years of age group have restricted there children to 1 - 4 only.

Table – 3
SIZE OF THE FAMILY OF RESPONDENTS*

Size of family	Age Group						Percentage
	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	Total	
1 – 2	6	2	1	1		10	5.5
3-4	12	18	33	22	7	92	51.11
5-7	7	12	23	36		78	43.33
Total	18	32	57	59	7	180	100.00

Source: Primary data.

Note: * = Including adults and children

Table – 4 explores the occupation distribution of hand loom weavers out of 180 respondents 168 were selected weaving as a main occupation. Rest of the respondents adopts this profession as a subsidiary activity as it fetches them more income.

Table – 4
OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Occupation	Total	Percentage to total
Main Occupation	168	93.33
Subsidiary occupation	12	6.66
Total	180	100.00

Source : Primary data

Table – 5 gives details of housing owned by the handloom weavers out of 180 respondents 54.44 percent have the houses with tiles. The next comes in the order of Thatched. About 36 respondents, i.e., 20.00 per cent have houses with Thatched. Only twenty respondents (i.e., 11.11 per cent) have RCC roof house. And about Twenty Six respondent did not possess houses at all.

Table – 5
PARTICULARS OF HOUSES OWNED BY THE RESPONDENTS

Type of the House	No. of Respondents	Percentage to Total
Tiles	98	54.44
RCC	20	11.11
Thatched	36	20.00
Nil	26	14.44
Total	180	100.00

Source : Primary data

Table – 6 explains that 74 percent of the respondents were in the income group of less than 2500 the rest of 28 percent handloom weavers were getting less than 3500 income group. It reveals that the weaver's income may not be sufficient to meet all types of requirements in the changing globalizing circumstances.

Table – 6
INCOME LEVEL OF THE RESPONDENTS

Sl.No.	Monthly Income (In Rupees)	No. of Respondents	Percentage in Total
1	1500-2000	56	31.11
2	2000-2500	74	41.11
3	2500-3000	35	19.44
4	3000-3500	15	8.33

	Total	180	100
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Source : Primary data

Table –7 denotes the expenditure particulars of handloom weavers. Most of the respondents were spending more than their income levels, in such cases either they have to reduce their expenditure on essential commodities or may be in due to the additional earning of their family members or barrow money from others. It is observed that most of the handlooms weavers are not having sufficient money to catering minimum needs. The study also found that less than 3000 income group was 91 percent but less than 3500 expenditure is only 47 percent. In this acses they are entering in debt trap. It is also found that in the debt burden leads most the cases are committing suicides

Table – 7
EXPENDITURE LEVEL OF THE RESPONDENTS

Sl.No.	Expenditure range In Rupees)	No. of Respondents	Percentage in Total
1	2500-3000	21	11.66
2	3000 – 3500	65	36.11
3	3500 – 4000	76	42.22
4	4000 – 4500	18	10.00
	Total	180	100

Source : Primary data

Findings

On the basis of field study following findings is summarized.

- It is observed that socio economic conditions of the weavers were not improved substantially.
- There were not implementing any single scheme for welfare of Khadi weavers excluding Spurti scheme so far
- 33.3 percent handloom weavers were fall under age group between 51-60 years.
- 22 percent of handloom weavers were illiterates, due to cause of low income level, poverty, to assist weaving house hold work, women security, transportation and other economic conditions.
- The family size of weavers shows that every weaver has average 2 to 3 children.
- 54 percentages of the weavers were lived in tiled houses.
- It is observed that majority of handloom weavers has taken weaving has main occupation.

The study also explores that handloom weaver's expenditure is grater than their income levels it leads to burden of debt. The reasons for debt is to catering minimum needs, medical expenditure (Private medical), purchasing input and raw materials, built work sheds and houses, giving good education to their children, performing traditional, religious ceremonies (Marriages, obitituarries, worship of god), to paying interest and clear old loans from non-institutional sources. It is also found that in the debt burden leads most the cases are committing suicides of weavers

Suggestions

- Weavers require MGNREGP employment guarantee scheme in KVIC to get minimum 150 days employment.
- Under this scheme the KVIC production is distribute to the central government departments like social welfare hostels, army and other Government organizations
- To increasing income level of handloom weaver's government should take measures to enhancing minimum wages through paying through KVIC.
- Government should take measures to providing food security and wage employment programmes to all weavers
- There is a need to introduce like Abhayastam pension and insurance scheme to all weavers
- For more self employment crash programmes like computer, communication skills, need to generating employment to all weavers
- Public, Private and NGO's take more interventions to consume handloom products every citizen to reducing handloom weaver suicides.
- Provision of house sites through housing co-operative societies may be made.
- Security margin / guarantee by bank for the poor among rural weavers are to be relaxed.
- Research and development to evolve appropriate technology may be applied.
- Gradual modernization of weaver industries to improve levels of production and earnings may be executed.
- Good communication network, such as good roads, must be developed.
- Skills up gradation design development should be imparted to artisans to meet the market challenges
- Promotion of Handloom products is essential in a big way by organizing stage shows cum exhibitions, handloom fares, and meals apart from electronic and print media.
- KVIC System should be strengthening with HR, Financial markets.

- Institutional finance should be increased at all level for the weaver families to avoid suicide deaths
- It is also need to design and implement like Food for work programmed to get minimum wage and generating 365 days employment of the weavers

If these issues are attended with the better of spirit the condition of weavers to a major extent can be improved substantially. More ever success of handloom weavers depends on the commitment for implementation but not in formatting.

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