

PROBLEMS OF HANDLOOM INDUSTRY IN KERALA: A CASE STUDY OF BALARAMAPURAM HANDLOOM INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

Handloom sector has often been hailed as the engine of economic growth for countries as it plays a crucial role in providing large-scale employment opportunities at a lower cost of capital, while also uplifting rural and backward communities through industrialization, resulting in a more equitable distribution of national income and wealth. Handloom is one of the important traditional sectors of our economy. Small scale industries are important because it helps in increasing employment and economic development of Kerala. Since independence, our handloom sector has been at the peak stage. But at present, modernization and mechanization caused the vanishing of traditional handloom sectors.

Keywords: Handloom sector, small scale industries, modernization and mechanization

INTRODUCTION

Handloom sector plays a substantial role in generating employment in rural areas with minimum investment. These industries use eco-friendly, local resources and generate higher employment opportunities. In India, handloom sector gives daily bread to most of the population next to agriculture. Handloom industry is a largest segment and also an unorganized sector. It plays a dynamic role in India's socio-economic development. Being an important traditional craft, it occupies a significant place in the decentralized sector of the Indian economy. It has a long tradition of excellence. It forms a part of ancient cultural heritage. It is a traditional cottage industry. It is highly labour intensive in character. Hence, the handloom industry occupies an important place in the economy of the country.

Handloom is an ancient industry in India. Handloom weaving is one of the largest economic activities after agriculture providing direct and indirect employment to more than 43 lakh

weavers and allied workers. This sector contributes nearby 15% of the cloth production in the country and also contributes to the export earning of the country. The handloom sector has a unique place in our economy. It has been sustained by transferring skills from one generation to another. The strength of the sector lies in its uniqueness, flexibility of production, openness to innovations, adaptability to the supplier's requirement and the wealth of its tradition. The adoption of modern techniques and economic liberalization, however, has made serious inroads into the handloom sector.

Handloom cloth is regarded as the heritage and unique craftsman ship of Kerala. Handloom industry in Kerala stands second to the coir sector in providing employment among the traditional industries of the State. Kerala stood fourth in handloom production in the country, just behind, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh. In comparison with many other Indian states, Kerala is blessed with diversity of Handloom products. Kerala Handloom textile is a symbol of tradition, culture, hand-woven, and eco-friendly and natural product. A very large number of looms are located in rural areas. In early days majority of handloom weavers followed the hereditary line.

The handloom industry is a traditional industry in Kerala . In Kerala, Handloom weavers are concentrated mainly in the Trivandrum, Kannur, Calicut, Ernakulam and Palakkad districts. There are 493 handloom societies in Kerala with a membership of 60000 weavers in its starting phase. The handloom industry in Thiruvananthapuram district is most popular as its monuments; the area like Balaramapuram,Dhanuvachapuram, Manackavilakam and Idichakampalamudu are very popular for its handloom products.

Balaramapuram is famous for its rich and variety of traditional handloom sector. In the period of 20th century we trade our handloom product to other countries. But now days, our traditional handloom became lost and it is in the stage of wipe out. When modernizations started, our traditional handloom sector became lost and the industry is well mechanized. So in this stage to develop the traditional handloom industry there are about 50000 co-operative societies was started around India. In Balaramapuram there is a co-operative society to co-ordinate different weavers to attain the prosperity and for the development of traditional handloom sector.

In Balaramapuram, weavers get remuneration on piece rate basis. Competition from power looms and mill sector, availability of cheaper imported fabrics, changing consumer preferences and alternative employment opportunities have threatened the vibrancy of handloom sector. The Government of India, since independence, has been following a policy of promoting and encouraging the handloom sector through a number of programmes and schemes.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Handloom is one of the important traditional sectors of our economy. Problems faced by handloom industries are severe competition from power and automatic looms both in the local and export markets. Availability of cheaper fabrics and changing consumer preferences are also constraints. At the same time, the handloom sector is also handicapped by lack of modernisation. Given the low wages, hard physical labour involved, and stagnant state of the industry, it is difficult to retain skilled workers in this sector.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ❖ To study the socio-economic background of weavers with special reference to Balaramapuram handloom industry
- ❖ To identify the problems of Balaramapuram handloom industry in Kerala.
- ❖ To analyse the impact of covid on handloom industry in Balaramapuram

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

For the present study both secondary and primary data were used. Primary data were collected from 30 small scale entrepreneurs in Balaramapuram textile industry. For the collection of primary data, a structured interview schedule was prepared and administered among the respondents. Direct interview also made for collecting data from various respondents. Secondary data are collected from authentic books, periodicals, research papers and articles etc

Data Analysis

SEX WISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Sex wise composition of the population is one of the primary demographic characteristics of human population. Sex ratio is widely used tool to measure gender distribution of population.

Table 1: SEX WISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

PARTICULARS	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
MALE	6	20
FEMALE	24	80
TOTAL	30	100

Table 1 shows that out of the 30 sample surveyed for the study, majority 80% of respondent belong to female category and only 20% belong to male category.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Education is a significant factor that influences individual's status in the society.

Table 2: EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

QUALIFICATION	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Below SSLC	8	26
SSLC	14	47
Plus Two or Pre-Degree	4	13
Graduate	2	7
Post Graduate	0	0
Other	2	7
Total	30	100

Most of the respondents belong to the qualification of SSLC. 26 percent of respondents are below SSLC.

AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Age has supreme importance in identifying an individual's ability to perform various tasks of life. Most of the respondents belong to the age group of above 50.

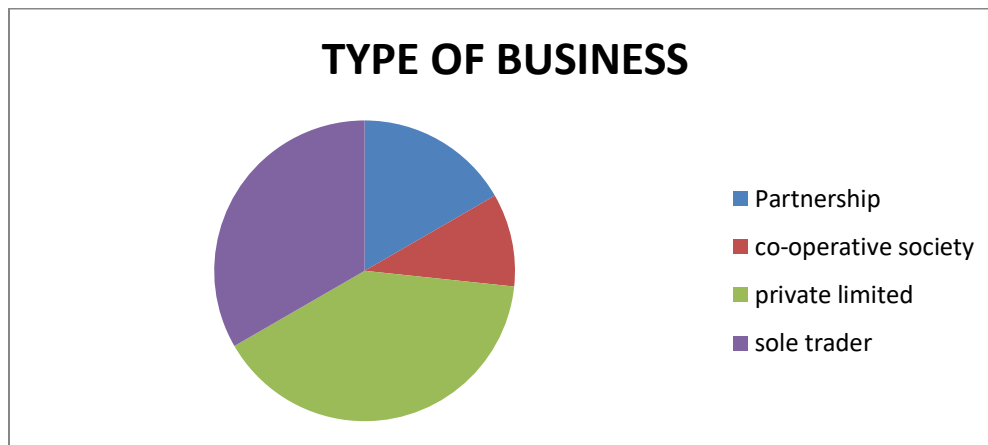
Table 3: AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Age of the Respondants	No of Respondents	Percentage
Below 25		0
25-35	3	0.1
35-45	5	16.7
45-50	8	26.7
Above 50	14	46.7

Type of Business

This Table shows whether the business is private limited or partnership.

Table 4: Type of Business



Majority of the respondents belongs to the private limited enterprises (40%) whereas 33% belongs as sole trader

STAFF STRENGTH

Table 5 : STAFF STRENGTH

PARTICULARS	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Less than 10	15	50
10-20	12	40
20-30	2	7
Above 30	1	4
Total	30	100

Here, the number staff employed by the individual enterprises under study is assessed. It is noted from the table that vast majority of the enterprises under study viz 50 percent has got less than 10 staff members and 40 percent of them staff strength between 10-20 ,while just 7 percent has got staff strength in the range 20-30. Micro enterprises having staff strength above 30 are very rare, not even 4 percent.

SOURCE OF CAPITAL

Table 6 : SOURCE OF CAPITAL

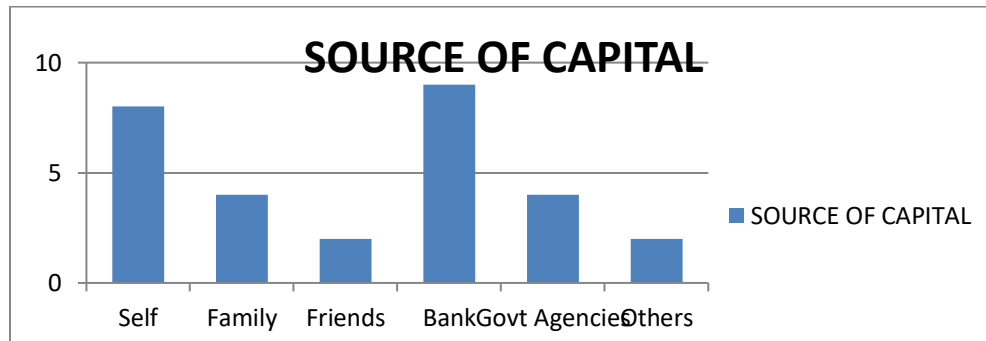


Table shows that nearly one-third (30%) of the surveyed entrepreneurs have raised capital funds for starting business from bank. Next largest share is that of the group comprising of entrepreneurs who have raised from own sources(27%).Thirdly comes those who have raised funds from formal financial intermediaries like family(14%).Fourthly comes those who have raised capital from Friends(14%).Only less than 10 percent (7%),to be of the respondent have relied on government sources for raising capital

GROWTH OF NEW ENTERPRENEURS

Table 7: GROWTH OF NEW ENTERPRENEURS

PARTICULARS	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Less than 0 percent	10	34
0-50 percent	6	20
50-100 percent	8	27
Less than 100 percent	6	20
Total	30	100

As all entrepreneurs aim at maximizing their profit, profit generated is growingly recognized as the acid test of their performance. Table shows the distribution of enterprises based on the business growth averaged .It is noted that vast majority of 34% of the units under study have business growth in the range less than 0 percent, only 27% of them have growth in the range of 50-100%.Atmost 20 percent of them have growth in the range 0-50 percent and less than 100 percent.

SUPPORT FROM GOVERMENT

Table 8: SUPPORT FROM GOVERMENT

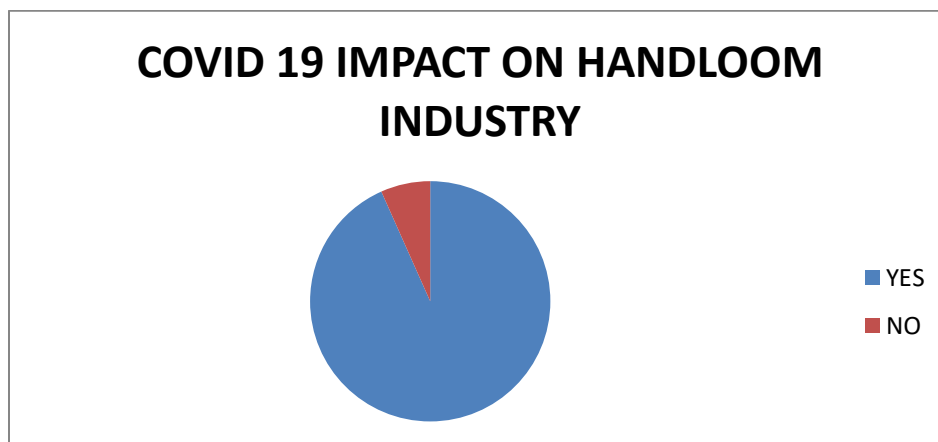
PARTICULARS	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Very Easy	0	0
Easy	0	0
Difficult	14	47
Very difficult	16	53
Dont know	0	0
Total	30	100

Majority (53%) of the respondents respond that it is very difficult to find a business support and advice in Kerala. Majority of respondents opined that it was very difficult to get support for the promotion of business.

COVID 19 - IMPACT ON HANDLOOM INDUSTRY

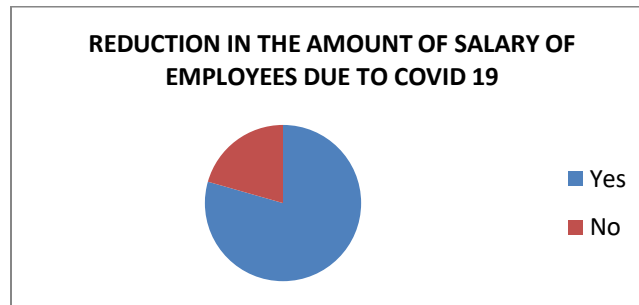
Majority (93%) Entrepreneurs said that covid 19 create strong impact in the performance of micro enterprises. Sales of products were reduced largly. Most of the respondents were in difficulty situation to find fund and raw materials.

Table 9: COVID 19 - IMPACT ON HANDLOOM INDUSTRY



REDUCTION IN THE AMOUNT OF SALARY DUE TO COVID 19

Table 10: REDUCTION IN THE AMOUNT OF SALARY DUE TO COVID 19



Majority (77%) Entrepreneurs face the situation to reduce the salaries of their employees and only 5% entrepreneurs doesn't reduce their employees wage.

EMERGENCE OF NEW ENTERPRISES IN COVID 19 PANDEMIC

Table 11: EMERGENCE OF NEW ENTERPRISES IN COVID 19 PANDEMIC

GROWTH	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
INCERASED	0	0
DECREASED	25	83
NEUTRAL	5	16
Total	30	100

Majority(83%) entrepreneurs said that sale and purchase of their business reduced at low rate due to covid 19 situation and only 16% entrepreneurs said that there is neither loss nor profit situation due to covid 19.

MAJOR PROBLEMS FACED BY THE HANDLOOM INDUSTRY

Table 12: MAJOR PROBLEMS FACED BY THE HANDLOOM INDUSTRY

PARTICULARS	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Capacity utilisation	2	6
Raw materials	9	30
Finance	13	5
Technology	2	6

Marketing	1	43
Labour	3	10
Total	30	100

It is noted that micro enterprises under study face a number of problems. The first problem is that finance(43%).second problem is that obtaining Raw materials(30%).The third problem is that Labour(10%).

Conclusion

Handloom is considered as the soul of Indian culture. In India, handloom production and its uses are done from many years. It is a traditional handicraft which has consumers in many parts of the country and even abroad. Indian handloom have earned richness from its past history itself, therefore handloom societies are not only introduced for co-coordinating employees but also for developing our traditional handloom sector and provides wide employment opportunities for experienced workers. But now a day's mechanization and industrialization had affected the production of handloom very badly. Many things like entrepreneurs' problem, employees' problem, entrepreneur satisfaction, employees' satisfaction and the financial position of the society are to be considered. A direct contact between weavers and Government can help the weavers to get their incentives directly. Availability of subsidized rate of raw material should be implemented. Incorporation of a comprehensive and exhaustive entrepreneurship development programme would provide basic management skills to entrepreneurs of micro enterprises. Awareness for the marketing of handloom products in social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, You Tube etc will promote the sales. The Government should encourage industry associations and other training institutions for imparting training for micro enterprises.

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