A Study on the Impact of Integrated Handloom Cluster Development Scheme (IHCDS) on Economic Conditions of Weavers in Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract-Handloom is an important cottage industry of India having glorious past and traditional value handed down from generation to generation. In the current scenario unemployment is a very vital problem in a developing country like in India. In this aspect up to some extent the handloom products of the handloom industry solve this problem. Handloom is a rural based and labour intensive small scale industry. To make rural people economically independent, rural industrialization is a vital necessity through handloom industry. Besides meeting one of the basic need of clothing this industry play a vital role in country's economy. The industry is an age old source of livelihood for millions people in the country. Around 4.3 million people are directly depending on the industry to eke-out their livelihood while many more millions of people are depending upon the subsidiary occupation connected with the handloom industry. But the standard of living of weavers on Handloom Industry is very poor. So, the present study analyses the economic conditions of the handloom weavers and puts forward some measures for improving the welfare of the handloom workers..

Keywords-Handloom, economic, weavers, development, sector.

I. INTRODUCTION

In India, one of the leading family-based traditional industries is handloom sector. This sector is the part of Indian culture and tradition. The Handloom sector is a pre-market, pre-capitalist industry that produces fabric using hand-operated looms (Mukund and Sundari, 2001). The handloom sector embodies the rich traditional, historical and cultural diversity that distinguishes India from the rest of the world (Mamta Chaudhary et al. 2015). The artisans of India are famous for hand spinning, hand printing and hand typing. They are accustomed to the art of weaving as a hereditary occupation. The strength of handloom sector lies in the introducing innovative designs, which cannot be replicated by the power loom sector. It is also pertinent to note that certain important recommendations relating to loom improvement and better ergonomics, setting up of permanent marketing complex could not be implemented due to budgetary constraints. The emphasis in the Twelfth Five Year Plan is on consolidation of past gains and strengthening of marketing systems. The other priority focus is on the welfare of the weaver in terms of providing better working conditions, access to credit and coverage under health / life insurance etc.

Handlooms have always been a sector of high importance in the policy framework of the Government of India. In 1975, Office of Development Commissioner for Handlooms, a separate Directorate with sole responsibility for dealing with Handlooms, was established. The office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms has the mandate to develop a strong, competitive and vibrant handloom sector to provide sustainable employment to the weavers. It implements all the schemes pertaining to Handloom Sector and also enforces the Handloom Reservation Act, 1985. Human factor is the most vital factor for taking initiatives for the development of handloom industry in India. The socio-economic profile of the industry gives an understanding on the status of the human resources of the industry and helps in designing policies and programmes for the promotion of social and financial inclusion of the deprived sections of the society.

Table 1: Distribution Handloom Households by Social Groups

Social groups	Number of households		
	Rural	Urban	Total
Scheduled Castes (SCs)	236,188 (8.49)	36,868 (1.32)	273,056 (9.81)
Scheduled Tribes (STs)	598,574 (21.50)	16,703 (0.61)	615,277 (22.11)
Other backward Castes (OBCs)	928,613 (33.37)	210,332 (7.55)	1,138,945 (40.92)
Others	657,742 (23.63)	98,251 (3.53)	755,993 (27.16)
Total	2,421,117 (86.99)	362,154 (13.01)	2,783,271 (100.0)

Source: NCAER, Handloom Census 2009-10.Ministry of Textiles and Handlooms, Government of India

The data presented in Table-1 reveals the distribution of handloom households by social groups in rural and urban parts of the country. It can be seen from the table that the largest group of handloom weaving households belongs to Other Backward Classes (OBC). Out of the total, 40.9 per cent weaver households are from Other Backward Classes. Schedule Tribes are the 2nd largest group and their share in the total handloom households in India is 22.1 per cent. About 10 per cent of the handloom households belong to Schedule Castes (SC). The other social groups constitute 27.2 per cent among the handloom households. Out of the total 86.99 per cent of handloom households are in rural areas and 13.01 per cent of handloom households are in urban areas. It can be inferred from the data that the handloom industry is largely located in rural areas and about 73 per cent of handloom households belong to socially and economically deprived sections of the society.

Several schemes are being implemented for Development of economic conditions of Handloom Weavers in Andhra Pradesh both through 100 per cent State and Central Government Schemes and matching schemes of the Central Government with State matching share as per the budget provisions. The Government of Andhra Pradesh also implemented the Centre initiated Integrated Handloom Cluster Development Scheme (IHDS) in 2007-08 with the specific objectives like focus on formation of Handloom Weavers Group as a visible entity, develop the Handloom Weavers Groups to become self-sustainable, inclusive approach to cover weavers both cooperative and outside co-operative fold, skill up-gradation of handloom weavers/ workers to produce diversified products with improved quality to meet the market requirements.

In addition to the Central Government Schemes, the State Government also introduced some schemes for the development of socio economic conditions of the weavers and also the industry as a whole. The following are some of the schemes of the State Government such as: Interest Subsidy, Old Age Pensions to Weavers, State Government Loan Weavers Scheme, Indiramma Housing Programme, Payment of Ex-Gratia to the Families of Suicidal Weavers, Establishment of Samishti Handloom Sales Emporia, Netha Bazaars, Scheme for Training and Infrastructural support to Handloom Sector, and Subsidy on Purchase Hank Yarn, Dyes & Chemicals from NHDC and APCO.

Ashis Mitra et.al (2009) in their work on "a diagnostic report on cluster development programme of Shantipur handloom cluster, Nadia, West Bengal" examined the cluster development programme of Shantipur handloom cluster to formulate a sustainable business plan as well as marketing plan to assist this cluster to compete in the ever challenging textile business. The study also describes the evolution/historical background of the cluster, its geographical location, existing cluster structure and infrastructure analysis to facilitate formulation of a sustainable business-cum marketing plan. Not many studies have exclusively been found devoted to examine the economics of Handloom clusters in India.

II.   REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rao (1979) pointed out the declining employment opportunities in the handloom industry. The weavers were trying to change their profession and taking up alternative jobs. According to the researcher, inadequate financial support from government, the weavers are facing the problem of hike in raw material cost, scarcity of necessary inputs, lack of proper production, marketing and financial facilities. Mahapatro (1986) the study revealed that the major evil in the handloom industry is master weavers. He pointed out that the master weavers have become exploiters of the poor weavers. However, the growth of the co-operative sector might lead to automatic shrinkage and ultimate extinction of the master weaver system. Rama Mohan Rao (1990) in his book "Development of Handloom Industry" has touched the socio-economic profile of the weavers in handloom industry in Andhra Pradesh. He has presented an overall view of the performance of primary weavers' co-operative societies.

Lakshmi Narasaiah and Krishna (1996) studied the crisis in handloom industry. This study found that handloom industry has been facing the problem of improper financial facilities and irregular supply of yarn. As a result the raw material price increases every year and the cost of the handloom cloth have increased than the power loom Cloth. Gurumoorthy and Rengachary (2003) found that the main problems are shortage of input, poor working capital, pricing of handloom products, accumulation of huge stock and marketing of handloom products. Mubarak Ali (2004) has stated that weaving community is feeding the finch in every aspect of their working life, be its production or marketing or finance or anything else. The community has been today pushed to the mercy of the government. Kasturi et al. (2006) in their paper on "DESI-Story of Many Threads" stated that the handloom industry, if managed well, can provide wealth and prosperity to rural India. This needs people who can understand how to invest in social and natural capital over a long period, with a concurrent ability to manage the process. Mahendra et al. (2008) studied the problems and prospects of the handloom sector in Andhra Pradesh. The master weavers, middle men and independent weavers are examined in their

study with support of field work. They analyzed the threat of power loom and its competition on handloom

Gezahegn Ayele (2009) examines the handloom weaver's clusters in Ethiopia. He stated that in many developing countries, rural non-form development plays a key role in generating employment. In the rural non-form sector, clustering is an important industrial organization. The study explains the mechanism and performance of clustering in remote rural areas, illustration of its vitality and flexibility in adapting to restricted environments. Bajpeyi et al. (2010) mentioned that 75 percent of the India's handloom wavers live in the North East, mainly Assam. Handloom weaving is not only the form of a cultural constituent for the people of Assam but also a traditional house hold activity for women, which yields family income and raise standards of their living. In Assam, weaving activity is commonly done for self - consumption as well as for commercial purposes. Arif Anjum and Thakor (2011) analyzed the functioning and the problems of power loom industry and stated that the Indian textile industry has an awesome existence in the Indian economy. It is second largest employer after agriculture in India. It is one of the largest in the world with massive raw material and textiles manufacturing base. Indirect employment including the manpower engaged in agricultural based raw-material production like cotton and related trade and handling could be stated to be around another 60 million. The Indian textile industry has their main segments as mill sector, handloom sector and decentralized power loom sector. Mahvish Anjuam and Ullas (2012) studied cottage industry in India and explained that the sector has created great opportunity of employment for the people who are living in rural sectors with low socio- economic standards. A great proportion of the total population is engaged in cottage industry. 169 workers engaged in 52 cottage industries were interviewed for the study purpose and they identified various industrial processes and work place environment responsible for different health hazard physical and mental disorders.

Apparao and Venkata Rao (2012) studied on suicides of handloom weavers that drew lot of attention from various sectors. They explained that the root cause for suicides of handloom weavers is the development of mill sector and the failure of handloom weavers to compete with it. The similarities and differences in the coping strategies of two castes of weavers and their consequences are examined. The occupational association of the caste has continued to be the key characteristic of Indian society. The phenomenon however is not uniform in all the weaving centers. Fayaz Ahmad and Aasif Husain Nengroo (2013) analyzed the growth and performance of handlooms in Jammu and Kashmir State. Their study revealed that there is high positive and strong

correlation between production and employment levels in the handloom sector. Rama Ramaswami (2013) stated that handloom is the second largest employment provider after agriculture in India. According to the research, the clusters of handlooms and handicrafts got good success in the country. Marketing has been a general problem in the handloom industry in India. The Chanderi (M.P) Madhya Pradesh and Kannur (Kerala) clusters are the best set examples of making inroads into international markets. Sageeta Pandit et al. (2013) identified four broad problem areas related to seating, treading, flying shuttle and cloth rolling operations where design modifications are required to improve work efficiency with reduced manual efforts. Addressing the issues by looking into ergonomic aspects in existing workstations will have direct impact on quality as well as quantity of outcome thereby, improving the productivity as well as operational wellness.

Konita Basumatary (2014) mentioned that in Assam districts in Bodoland territorial area is leading in production of handloom products. Handloom products are in great demand in this district as well as state and national market. In employment generation as well as rural development, and play in vital role in Assam. The researcher analyzed achievements of handloom sector in BTAD (Bodoland Territorial Area Districts Assam) and also the problems related to socio-economic conditions of weavers. Subramanyam Naidu and Jayachandra (2014) in their study stated that co-operative societies which are traditional form useful for the growth and development of India. 15000 weavers' co- operative societies are present; 35 million weavers are benefited across the country. Many villages of the country of Andhra Pradesh have weaving activity and manufacturing various types of sarees, dhotis and khaadi. The studies referred in the earlier paragraphs confined to either certain regions or some specific issues of handloom industry. None of the studies focused on handloom clusters and measured the impact of the clusters on the socio-economic conditions of the weavers. The present study has been taken up to fill the gap and to contribute for the development of the handloom industry.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to analyze the economic conditions of the member weavers covered under handloom cluster scheme of Andhra Pradesh in India.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND HYPOTHESES

The required data are collected through primary and secondary sources. The secondary data was collected from the Department of Handlooms and Textiles, Government of Andhra Pradesh, APCO, and other related government offices. Data and information was also collected from research reports, journals, publications and district offices. Secondary data are also collected from the administrative office of the selected clusters. The primary data was collected from weavers working under cluster scheme. The Andhra Pradesh state is selected for the study. Since the weavers are present in all most all the district of Andhra Pradesh in large number, the census study is beyond the capacity of the researcher. Therefore, three districts namely Ananthapur, East Godavari, and Srikakulam are selected based on existence of large number of clusters compared to other districts of Andhra Pradesh. The member weavers of all the 14 clusters form the sample frame. Survey method is used to collect information from weavers. The research instrument was structured questionnaire. Since the size of the population is large, quota sampling method is used to decide sample size. The size of the sample for each district was 150 weavers working under cluster scheme. Thus, the sample size of the three selected districts was 450. Simple random sampling technique is used to select sample units.

The following hypothesis has been formulated for testing:
H_0: There is no significant impact of the IHCDS on the Economic conditions of member weavers.
H_A: There is a significant impact of the IHCDS on the Economic conditions of member weavers.

V. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The study analyzes the demographic profile of the respondents with reference to age, gender, education background, monthly income, and place of residence as shown in table 2.

Table 2: Demographic Profile of Respondents *(n=450)*

Factor	Districts			Total
	Srikakulam	Guntur	East Godavari	
Age				
30 & below	8 (1.77)	9 (1.99)	11 (2.44)	28 (6.22)
31 – 40	48 (10.66)	36 (8.00)	33 (7.33)	117 (26.00)
41 – 50	48 (10.66)	38 (8.44)	42 (9.33)	128 (28.44)
Above 50	46 (10.22)	67 (14.88)	64 (14.22)	177 (39.33)

Gender				
Male	101 (22.44)	98 (21.77)	121 (26.88)	320 (71.11)
Female	49 (10.88)	52 (11.55)	29 (6.44)	130 (28.88)
Education				
Illiterate	121 (26.88)	129 (28.66)	127 (28.22)	337 (83.88)
SSC	22 (4.88)	14 (3.11)	16 (3.55)	52 (11.55)
Intermediate	5 (1.11)	4 (0.88)	5 (1.11)	14 (3.11)
Graduation-tech	1 (0.22)	3 (0.66)	2 (0.44)	6 (1.33)
Diploma	1 (0.22)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	1 (0.22)
Place of residence				
Rural	120 (26.66)	100 (22.22)	120 (26.66)	340 (75.55)
Urban	30 (6.66)	50 (11.11)	30 (6.66)	110 (24.44)
Monthly income				
Rs. 5000 and below	25 (5.55)	15 (3.33)	48 (10.66)	88 (19.55)
Rs 5000 - 10000	117 (26.00)	84 (18.66)	56 (12.44)	257 (57.11)
Rs 10001 - 15000	14 (3.11)	16 (3.55)	18 (4.00)	48 (10.66)
Above Rs.20000	4 (0.88)	8 (1.77)	45 (10.00)	57 (12.66)

Source: Primary Data

The table-2 reveals the demographic profile of the respondents. The age of the respondents varied between below 30 years and above 50 years. The data reveals that the largest groups of the respondents are in the age group of above 50 years (39.33 percent). Out of the total, 28.44 per cent of the respondents are in 41-50 years age group and 26 per cent of the respondents belong to 31-40 years age group. The respondents who are in the age group of 30 years and below are very less in number representing 6.22 per cent. It can be inferred from the data that the handloom sector is unable to attract youngsters in to this profession. The gender wise distribution of respondents reveals that out of the total, 71.11 per cent of the respondents are males and about 29 percent are females. The female respondents are relatively more in East Godavari and Ananthapur districts. The female respondents are less in number in Srikakulam district. The district wise educational background of the respondents shows that about 84 per cent of the respondents are illiterate persons. There are 11.55 per cent of the respondents who studied SSC. The

respondents who completed intermediate education were 3.11 per cent. Graduates are 6 in number representing 1.33 per cent of the total, while 1 respondent completed diploma course.

The analysis regarding the place of residence shows that 76 per cent of the respondents belong to rural areas and while 24.44 per cent of the respondents carry out the profession in urban areas. The monthly family income of the respondents varied between Rs. 5,000 & below and above Rs.20,000. The monthly family income of 10.66 per cent of the respondents is in range of Rs. 10,000 to Rs.15,000 and 57.11 per cent of the respondents varied between Rs.5,000 and Rs10000. There are 12.66 per cent of the respondents whose monthly income is more than Rs.20,000 while the monthly family income of 19.55 of the respondents was Rs.5,000 and below.

The study attempts to know the impact of Integrated Handloom Cluster Development Scheme on economic conditions of weavers using mean and percentage score values. As per the findings of the study the null hypothesis of Economic conditions is rejected. The impact of Integrated Handloom Cluster Development Scheme on economic conditions of weavers has been assessed based on the opinion of the respondents as shown in table 3.

Table 3: Impact of IHCDS on Economic Conditions of Weavers (n=450)

Economic Conditions	Mean	Percentage Score
Family income from the profession increased	1.55	13.94
The growth in income is to our satisfaction	1.56	14.00
We could get loans easily for the work requirements	2.78	44.72
The enhanced quality of work rewarding us fairly	1.58	14.61
There is adequate economic support from the cluster	1.69	17.28
We are confident that our economic conditions will improve further	1.60	15.11
Average	1.79	19.94

Source: Primary data

The data shown in Table 3 reveals that the mean value of the six statements varied between 1.55 and 2.78. None of the six statements got the mean value of more than three. Thus it can be inferred from the data that in the opinion of the respondents there is no significant impact of Integrated

Handloom Cluster Development Scheme on economic conditions of the member weavers.

Table 4: Type of Health Problems Faced Frequently

Health Problems	District			Total
	Anant hapur	East Godavar i	Srikak ulam	
Respiratory problems	8 (3.47)	9 (3.91)	4 (1.73)	21 (9.13)
Muscle strain and weakness	19 (8.26)	13 (5.65)	21 (9.13)	53 (23.04)
Chronic illness related to nerves	16 (6.95)	13 (5.65)	8 (3.47)	37 (16.08)
Eye problems	19 (8.26)	25 (10.86)	38 (16.52)	82 (35.65)
Back pain	9 (3.91)	7 (3.04)	4 (1.73)	20 (8.69)
Hand and leg pain	8 (3.47)	5 (2.17)	4 (1.73)	17 (7.39)
Total	79 (34.34)	72 (31.30)	79 (34.34)	230 (100.00)

Source: Primary data

The type of health problems faced by respondents frequently are Respiratory problems, Feeling of weakness, Chronic illness related to nerves, Eye problems, Back pain, and Hand and leg pain. The data shown in Table 4 reveals that the respondents who are facing eye problem constitute 35.65 per cent and the respondents suffering with muscle strain and weakness are 23.04 per cent of the total. The respondents who expressed chronic illness related to nerves as serious health problem constitute 16.08 per cent.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

MLR (Multiple Linear Regressions) analysis was carried out to study and establish the relationship between the demographic factors (District Gender, Age, Education and Monthly Income) of respondents and Impact of social conditions on handloom cluster weavers as shown in table 5.

Table 5: Regression Analysis:
Economic conditions versus District, Gender, Age, Education and Income

Source	DF	Adj. SS	Adj. MS	F-Value	P-Value
Regression	13	2.2373	0.17210	2.24	0.008
District	2	0.9590	0.47950	6.25	0.002
Gender	1	0.4396	0.43961	5.73	0.017
Age	3	0.0453	0.01511	0.20	0.899
Education	4	0.5723	0.14308	1.86	0.116
Income	3	0.1933	0.06442	0.84	0.473
Error	436	33.4716	0.07677		
Lack-of-Fit	96	7.2592	0.07562	0.98	0.535
Pure Error	340	26.2124	0.07710		
Total	449	35.7089			
R-sq 6.27%					

Source: Primary data

The R-Sq value shows that regression model explains 6.27 per cent of the variance in strength, indicating that the model does not fits the data fairly well. The R-square value considers the regression equation in the model and examines the strength of the independent variables in predicting the dependent variable. It exemplifies that there is no significant linear relationship between the demographic factors extracted above and their probability of association with various statements related to Impact of social conditionsof handloom cluster weavers. Two variables (District, Gender) out of five contributed significantly to the equation at 5 per cent level i.e., the analysis of variance table indicates that the relationship between district and economic conditions is significant (P = 0.001) as shown in table 6.

Table 6. ANOVA Test Results towards Statements on Impact of Clusters on Economic Conditions of the Respondents

District	N	Mean	SD	F-Value	P-Value
Ananthapur	150	1.8667	0.2774		
East Godavari	150	1.77	0.3309	6.98	0.001
Srikakulam	150	1.7567	0.2181		

Thus, the finding of the study rejects the null hypothesis. So, 'there is no significant impact of the IHCDS on the Economic conditions of member weavers'.

VI. CONCLUSION

The handloom sector has been slowly deteriorating over the years. Handloom weavers are facing severe livelihood crisis because of adverse government policies, globalization and change in socio-economic condition. Ineffective implementation of the schemes, increased unfair competition from the power loom and mill sectors are responsible for the crisis. Handloom is unparalleled in its flexibility and versatility, permitting experimentation and encouraging innovations. The strength of Handloom lies in the introducing innovative designs, which cannot be replicated by the Power loom sector. Concerted efforts are being made through the schemes and programme to enhance production, productivity, and efficiency of the handloom sector and enhance the income and economic status of the weavers.

The impact of Integrated Handloom Cluster Development Scheme on economic conditions of weavers has been assessed based on the opinion of the respondents. The mean value of the six statements varied between 1.55 and 2.78. None of the six statements got the mean value of more than three. Thus, it can be inferred from the data that in the opinion of the respondents there is no significant impact of Integrated Handloom Cluster Development Scheme on economic conditions of the member weavers.

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