

HUMAN CHALLENGES IN WEAVING INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

Weaving community falls under small-scale industry. Small-scale businesses help every economy to achieve industrial growth and industrial diversification. This paper attempts to understand how problems faced by weavers and weaving communities. As an HR advocate, issues are initiating me to find out as to what are the grounds for such situations in weaving industry. Through my study, I would be glad to provide the best suggestions and recommendations that can support the employees and employers to find the means for the betterment of their profession as well as their way of living. The most important is to empower them in an effective way that should include social, economical and technical upliftment.

Any industry for that matter to get established in a full-fledged manner, would have faced plenty of ups and downs in the means of survival. Those variations may be with respect to finance, marketing, human resource, and technology. It is not easy to for an industry like weaving to survive for ages together without a proper management strategy, without a centralized leadership, and no even motivation; it has faced its own pros and corns. In an industry, it is common to face the tribulations and get the solutions for the same. However aged an industry might be, however well they have been living to tell the tale for the future generation, the process of update is essential irrespective of any phrase. In the process of improvement and updating themselves on the new way of working and new technologies, every industry analyzes the current situation through which they can find out the loop holes. This will intern help them to work on enhancement and perfection. Human resource plays a major role in all the stages mentioned in the organization/ industry.

KEY WORDS: SSI, industrial diversification, proper management strategy, Human challenges and work on enhancement etc.

INTRODUCTION

Weaving is a method of fabric production in which two distinct sets of yarns or threads are interlaced at right angles to form a fabric or cloth. The other methods are knitting, lace making

and felting. The longitudinal threads are called the warp and the lateral threads are the weft or filling. The method in which these threads are inter-woven affects the characteristics of the cloth.

Cloth is usually woven on a loom, a device that holds the warp threads in place while filling threads are woven through them. Weft is an old English word meaning "that which is woven". A fabric band, which meets this definition of cloth (warp threads with a weft thread winding between), can also be made using other methods, including tablet weaving, back-strap, or other techniques without loom. The way the warp and filling threads interlace with each other is called the weave. The majority of woven products are created with one of three basic weaves: plain weave, satin weave, or twill. Woven cloth can be plain (in one color or a simple pattern), or can be woven in decorative or artistic designs.

WEAVING AS A COMMUNITY

Like any other industry, weaving also started by human to full fill one of the very important basic needs of his – Clothing. Slowly they became a community all together in the society by getting a separate recognition. The task of weaving is not an easy one. It needs a complete involvement of an individual; he must be given a special training to weave. Weaving is a series of processes where in if you start with one; the other processes will not take place automatically soon after the first process is completed successfully. It requires a person's attention to proceed further. So an individual must be assigned for each loom/ two looms. It is an ancient art, which started with threading, handlooms, and then power looms as the technology grew. Handlooms were demanding a person for each loom to operate. It had involved high amount of physical stress, lot of time consumption in the manufacturing.

The existence of power looms has made the weaver's life simpler. He can handle more than one machine depending on the cloth that he is weaving. In this industry, Man plays a very vital and important role. He is one of the must and basic resources, his skills act as a directory for the smooth flow of the manufacturing process.

As mentioned above about the importance of human resource in weaving industry, they are not getting the returns for their role in the industry which they actually deserve. Weavers are facing number of human resource issues. The very noticeable factors are level of education among weavers, uneven wages, no permanent income to the weaver's families, lack of or not job security, and lack of healthy working conditions. In this study there is an attempt made to know what are the problems of weavers, what are the causes for such problems, what can be the remedies, and find out the ways to improve their present conditions. Weavers were playing an important role to contribute for one of the human's basic needs since from the beginning, they are and they will be.

For such work force it is sad to say that they have not been familiar with any medical benefits, insurance, pension schemes, gratuity, provident fund or other social security schemes by the employers from 64 years of independence in India. The study focuses on the reasons behind

this growth, and the lack of awareness among the weavers. Small scale businesses Enterprises are mainly of four categories namely:

Small Scale Industrial Undertaking: A Business Enterprise will be called Small Scale Business Undertaking if Investment in Fixed Assets, in Plant and Machinery, whether held on Ownership basis or on Lease or on Hire Purchase does not exceed 10 million Rupees and it is in no way owned, controlled or subsidiary of any other industrial undertaking.

Ancillary Industrial Undertakings: Ancillary Industrial Undertaking is that business enterprise which is engaged in manufacturing and supplying of parts, components and intermediaries or is engaged in providing services by the amount not less than 50% of its total production or services and the total investment in fixed assets, in plant and machinery, whether held on ownership basis or on lease or on hire purchase does not exceed 10 million rupees.

Tiny Enterprise: Tiny Enterprise is that business enterprise in which total investment in plant and machinery does not exceed 2.5 million rupees.

Enterprise by Women Entrepreneurs: If a small business, enterprise is operated by one or more women entrepreneurs, if there is women proprietorship, or if women have individually or jointly not less than 51% capital investment as partners or shareholders, then the business, enterprise will be graded as Enterprise by Women Entrepreneurs. The contribution of Small Scale Business to the country is enormous.

Weaving unites fall under the third category – Tiny Enterprise. As Small Scale Businesses are less capital intensive and highly labor oriented, they really have a huge opportunities in India where our economy is called ‘Labor-abundant, Capital-scarce Economy’. Small-scale industry acts as a backup for the Indian economy.

THE ORIGIN OF WEAVING IN INDIA

The origin and growth of Weaving in Indian started from the time of Indus Valley civilization itself, through handloom textiles. Weaving started with the help of handloom, which did not require the supply of power. Whereas the newer version of weaving took place through power looms, which run with the help of power, quicker than, hand looms. The growth can be discussed under the following headings:

- a) Indus Valley Civilization
- b) Vedic period
- c) Mauryan period
- d) Greek influence
- e) Indian brocades
- f) Shawls of India

- g) Indian embroidery
- h) Indian Dyed and Printed Fabrics
- i) Eighteenth Century
- j) Nineteenth Century

⑥① Indus Valley Civilization: Late in 1921, a systematic excavation work was undertaken at Harappa and more and more important discoveries were made 400 miles south of the Indus. This place is known as Mohenjo- Daro. It was soon realized that an Urban Civilization, known as Indus Valley Civilization, was in existence in this area within the Indus river basin around 3000 B.C.

In the absence of any specimen of the dresses, it is not possible to get the exact knowledge of the clothing of the Indus people of the past. However, Spindles and Spindle whorls found during the excavations indicate that spinning of cotton and wool was very common in those days. There is evidence to believe that the Indus people were practicing the art of spinning of cotton and wool and of dyeing of cloth. Some dyeing vessels have been found in the ruins of these cities.

⑧① Vedic Period: The classical Indian Civilization developed from the earlier Vedic Civilization, which was created by the Aryans, an invading people, who first came to India around 1500 B.C. The Aryans used iron weapons and helmets and coat-of-mail. These fierce warriors armed with iron weapons and armour, riding horse - driven chariots had defeated the physically weak Dravidians and the aborigines who had less powerful weapons.

The Aryans settled in North India and slow amalgamation of Vedic culture with that of the Dravidians began. Finally, the Dravidians settled down, turned to cultivation and began to inter - marry with the native Indians. The Aryans had spread southeast from the Indus valley, reached the plains adjacent to the Ganga and the Yamuna rivers and made them their chief areas of development. Spinning and weaving were highly advanced occupations in rig Vedic society. Their weavers were busy weaving cotton and woollen fabrics and there were others who did the work of dyeing and embroidering. There were female weavers called "Vayitris" and "Siris". The terms "Vasas", "Vasana" and "vastra" refer to Gangetic cotton manufacturers. A woollen thread called "Varna Sutra" is mentioned in the later Samhitas and the Brahmanas. There are reference used by men and women, to sandals made of boar-skin, cotton, woollen, and silk clothes, dyed and embroidered clothes.

⑩① Mauryan Period: Alexander, the Great, who conquered the Mediterranean world and the Persian Empire of Darius III, crossed the Indus River and moved on to the Indian Plains in 326 B.C. When Alexander died in 323 B.C. in Babylon, as the first emperor of India,

Chandragupta Maurya reigned from his capital at Pataliputra for 24 years (322 -298 B.C) over an empire which covered all of North India from Ganges to the Indus and into the mountains of the Hindukush. Even before the Christian era, the fame of the Indian Printed Cotton fabrics had spread abroad.

Herodotus, the Greek historian wrote about India in 445 B.C. "They process a kind of wild plant, which instead of fruit produces a wool of a finer, better quality than that of sheep, and of this the Indians made clothes". He was obviously referring to cotton. Another Greek writer of the same century mentioned the bright colours of these printed fabrics and their popularity with the women of the eastern Mediterranean. It is believed that this period marks the stabilization of costume design in India. During this period, costumes became regional or zonal in character. Royalty, soldiers, priests and other Professions were given distinctive costumes.

② Greek Influence: Bactrian Greeks, Parthians, Kushans and Shakas influenced the Indian dress, as depicted on their coins. One of their goddesses is shown wearing a close-fitting long sleeved bodice or tunic for the upper part of the body and trousers. A typical sari arrangement is found in the images of Greco - Buddhist Hariti both from the north - west and from Mathura. When Alexander invaded India in 327 B.C. he was impressed by our advancement. He took back with him some of our printed cottons, as well as many of our finely woven silks, comparable to those of the master weavers of China, though the manner of decoration was similar to that of Persia. When the Mohammedans invaded India in 711 A.D. they were intrigued by the Indian painted and printed cotton fabrics. The famous ancient Indian fabrics include Mulmul khas (king's muslin), jamdani (figured muslin), Banarasi brocade, Chand-tara, Dhupchhaon, Mapchar, Morgala, Bulbul chasm, Doshala, Kasaba or chaddar - Rumal Kashmir shawl, Kanikar, Jamaiwar, Amilkar (all shawls), Kashida, Phulkar, Bagh, Makmal, and other fabrics.

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- ✂️① Shawls of India: The woollen textiles, superb woollen shawls, pre-moghul in origin and design, are made in Kashmir, Amritsar and Ludhiana. Kashmir shawls have become world - famous. The common colors used in the shawls are yellow, white, black, crimson, blue, green, purple and scarlet. Formalized imitations of nature such as leaves of chenar tree, apple blossoms, almond, tulip, birds etc, are used as the mofits. Kashmir shawls of the finest quality are made of pashm or pashmina, the wool of the Asian mountain goat. The wool from the underbelly, which is shed at the beginning of the summer, is the best fibre.
- 🧵① Indian Embroidery: Embroidery was practiced in ancient India during the Indus valley civilization (3rd millennium B.C). Ajanta cave wall paintings also show embroidered garments. The Indian craftsman excels in hand embroidery on cotton, silk, wool and velvet such as the Kashmir kashida embroidery, the Punjab phulkari, the patna kantha, the Hyderabad silks worked in gold and silver threads, the lucknow Mukhmals (velvets) with gold embroidery. The famous embroidery of Paithan is in gold and silver thread, the designs being taken from old Moghul miniatures and the frescoes of the Ajanta caves.
- 🧵① Indian dyed and printed fabrics: The saris of central and western India may be in cotton, silk, mercerized cotton or manmade fibre. The fabrics are of best quality in pastel or brilliant hues, tints and shades. South Indian Sarees are in silk and in soft cotton and generally are in dark shades. The best saris come from Arni, Ambur, Dharmavaaram, Kanchipuram, Kellegal, Molla, Karmura and Trivandrum. Silk sarees of Bengal and Madhya Pradesh are decorated with leaf and flower mofits regularly distributed over the surface of the fabric.
- 🧵① Eighteenth Century: Handloom industry, which is the oldest industry in the country, has a glorious past. In the long history of its development, the industry has withstood several adversities. This is the fate of the industry even today. Historians consider India as the birthplace of cotton manufacture, which is recorded to have originated during the Vedic period, as everything is traceable to Vedas in India. With the establishment of the first textile mill in Bombay in 1851, the handloom industry started facing competition from indigenous textile mills too. The textile mills which had till then supplemented the efforts of handloom industry by supplying yarn now started supplanting handloom industry by denying yarn as more yarn is consumed within the mills itself. Since 1851, textile mills started expanding by leaps and bounds in the country.
- 🧵① Nineteenth Century: By 1879 there were 56 mills with 1.43 million spindles and 13000 looms in the country. The rate of expansion was further accelerated since the beginning of the 20th century and by 1913-14 there were 150 mills with 6.62 million spindles and

96688 looms in the country. They offered unfair competition to the handloom industry. An All India Handloom Board was constituted in 1945 which functioned till 1947. Meanwhile to ensure yarn supply a scheme was evolved according to which the entire production of yarn by mills in India (free yarn as it was called after consumption in their own weaving sheds) was pooled together and distributed to various states for supply to consumers, the principal consumers being handlooms, power looms and miscellaneous textile sectors.

It is evident that the Indian textile industry is as old as the Vedic age. Cotton clothes were largely exported to other countries. The yarn was hand spun and the cloth hand woven and this super skill of weavers has been handed over from generation to generation. The Handloom is the largest economic activity after agriculture, providing direct and indirect employment to more than 30 lakh weavers. This sector contributes nearly 22 percent of the total cloth produced in the country and contributed substantially to the export income of the country. Due to effective Government intervention through financial assistance and implementation of various developmental and welfare schemes, this sector has been able to withstand the competition from the power loom and mill sectors.

As a result of these measures, the production of handloom fabrics registered more than tenfold increase from a level of 500 million sq. meters in the early fifties to 7862 sq. meters in 1997-98. The anticipated production for 1998-99 is 7170 million square meters.

Power loom sector plays an important role in producing a wide variety of fabrics at economical prices for all the fabric requirements. The Strategy of the State focuses on:

- i) Promoting private investment in power loom sector for producing fabrics required for fashionable garments. Encouraging modernization of looms by availing assistance under Technology Up gradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) through introduction of shuttle less and automatic air jet and water jet looms.
- ii) Initiating measures through the existing financial institutions for timely provision of finances for modernization of power loom.
- iii) Strengthening physical infrastructure facilities in all power loom clusters under Textile Centre's Infrastructure Development Scheme (TCIDS).
- iv) Setting up of Common Facility Centers for Fabric (CFCF) dyeing, processing, and finishing.
- v) Strengthening Research and Development and testing facilities through the existing Power loom Service Centres in the State.
- vi) All Assistant Directors of the Districts where Textile Parks are coming up shall become the Park Administrators.

- vii) Power loom Federation shall be placed with orders for supply of livery to Govt. Departments after exhausting the limitations of APCO.

STRONG REASONS FOR INTRODUCING POWER LOOMS IN INDIA

There are some strong reasons, which influenced the commencement of power looms.

- i) To increase the production
- ii) To reduce the cost of production
- iii) To save the time in Work-in-process
- iv) To increase the exports
- v) To attain high rate of Productivity and low rate of Turnaround Time (TAT)
- vi) To increase the revenues to the Indian Economy
- vii) To simplify the employees work life and reduce some part of stress
- viii) To give the variety in the cloths, material, quality, and design

The structure of the textile industry is extremely complex with the modern, sophisticated and highly mechanized mill sector on the one hand, and the hand spinning and hand weaving (hand loom) sector on the other. Between the two falls the small-scale power loom sector. The latter two are together known as the decentralized sector. Over the years, the government has granted a whole range of concessions to the non-mill sector as a result of which the share of the decentralized sector has increased considerably in the total production. Of the two sub-sectors of the decentralized sector, the power loom sector has shown the faster rate of growth. In the production of fabrics, the decentralized sector accounts for roughly 94 percent while the mill sector has a share of only 6 percent.

ROLE OF WEAVERS IN THE INDUSTRY

Human resource is one of the mandatory resources required in weaving industry. Without a structured human resource management intervention, the human resource of the industry is suffering from many differences and dissatisfaction. Weaving demands a separate set of technical qualities of employees, they must be skilled and really well trained to run the looms. The employees train their children about the special occupation from the childhood. This activity creates a bunch of future weavers. Weaving can't be learnt in few weeks or months. It needs a continuous focus and dedication to learn, to be an independent weaver.

Male and female both are the part of human resource. Though the power looms are huge and massive, demands technical skills, women have not taken a step back from working. When the power loom became efficient, women replaced most men as weavers in the textile factories

PROBLEMS TO EMPLOYEES

1. Education among the Weavers

Education is the one of the basic needs of the country today. It is mandatory that a child must undergo studies at least till the age of 14 to get minimum education of 10th standard/SSLC. The weavers have a very low opinion about education. The reason behind this is their financial status. They find it difficult to fulfill the basic needs for the family and themselves. In such situation, education is a luxurious good for them; moreover, weaving profession does not demand any certificate or a degree. It's all about technical skills. Since their education qualification is low or nil, they are not able to upgrade them with the facilities available for them.

2. Uneven Wages

There is no minimum wage followed or fixed for weavers. The wage depends on the performance, production, regular supply of power, and raw materials. If any of the above is missing, the weaver's wage will get a punch. There is fixed wage or salary for weavers, so if the weaver earns Rs. 6000 this month, next month it may be Rs. 5000 or Rs. 7000. This troubles him to meet his financial crunches.

3. Regular Source of Income

Like uneven wages to a weaver, he does not have a continuous income, and a regular source of income. If there is work, there is income. If no work because of various hindrances, he cannot depend on that source of income for that particular week or month. Unfortunately, since most of them are not educated they are unable to do any other job also. Furthermore, they are into weaving from childhood, they are not competent to do other tasks. They feel very sad to say 'we know only this profession'.

4. Job Security

Weaving belongs to the category of small-scale industries. Here there is no security for the jobs of the weavers. Even the weavers are prepared for the same; they are with one factory today; with some other next week. They know very well, there is no particular factory for them to continue working for 5 or 10 years. They are not even aware of the importance of job security.

5. Working Conditions

The factories of weavers own very bad working conditions. There will not be proper ventilation, restrooms, water facility and toilets. Some factories will be so congested that the weaver will not have a proper place to stand and work.

6. **Lack of Awareness about the Benefits Available**

Weavers have many benefits from the state and central government. But most of them are not aware of any of them. One of the strong reasons is their education level. The second reason is, they are could not take out some time to know about the facilities since each minute is important to produce the cloth. That is their piece of bread, which they do not want to miss.

7. **Medical Benefits/ Securities**

Weaver's standard of living and level of income is lower than middle class people of the society are. Their average income per week will not cross Rs. 1500 to Rs. 2000 in Bangalore. The cost of living in Bangalore is becoming higher and higher every day. With the maximum income of Rs. 8000, how difficult it would to be fulfilling the basic needs? How will they think about going for medical securities?

Social Security Schemes:

The owners of the weavers do not provide the facilities of provident fund, gratuity or pension. The weavers are also in a position to avail any of the social security schemes by themselves. So they don't have any sort of financial back up for the old age.

8. **Lack of Continuity of Work:**

The work will not be permanent for the weavers. The reasons are lack of regular power supply, supply of raw materials, conflicts at work place, and decrease in the demand for the material in the market. All these will give birth to no continuity of work.

9. **No Rules, Regulations or Standards Fixed for Work:**

There are no rules or regulation fixed for employees in terms of break time, working hours, holidays, work culture, leave system etc. in weaving industry. Only because of the child labour act, there are not child workers in the factories. Otherwise there are not restrictions on the joining and retirement of an employee.

Problems to Employers

10. **Uneven Production**

There are two reasons why this problem has taken place. First reason is the frequent power cuts and the second reason is poor efficiency of the employees. They don't take their work seriously.

11. **Employee Retention**

It is one of the big problems of weaving industry today. The employees do not stick to an owner or a factory for long time. They go on shifting because of their instable mind for

better opportunities and comfort zones. The owner of the factory faces a huge problem due to this attitude of the worker.

12. Lack of Demand for the Product in the Market

The demand for woven cloth or material will not be same throughout the year. It fluctuates depending on inflation and recession. Therefore, when there is no demand or poor demand for the product, the owner has to reduce the production. This will again lead low income and there will be an indirect effect on retention of the employees.

13. No Supply of Raw Material

Sometimes it so happens that there will be problem in the supply of raw material in the market. The required materials will not be available from the source. Recent example, the flow the raw silk from China had a negative impact on the silk of India. Nevertheless, the major effect will be to the uses of the silk.

14. Absenteeism & poor Efficiency of the Worker

Since already mentioned, there are not work rules or regulations fixed for the employees of weaving industry, the employees take any number of leave they want. They do not even feel like informing the owner many a times. Few situations it's so happened that, the employee would have already joined elsewhere and the old factory owner will be in the assumption that he is on long leave. Efficiency of the worker depends on his mood.

15. Conflicts

Conflicts are common everywhere in industries. There may be a conflict between employee and employer, or employee and employee. Due to which the work will get affected in terms of production.

16. Supply of Labor/ Skilled Workforce

It is a newborn problem for the owners in weaving industry. The supply of skills work force is reducing day by day. The number of people who are learning the art of weaving is decreasing. One of the strong reasons for this is the child labour act where in children must not be employed. Weaving is an art, which needs training from the childhood. Most of weavers started educating their children by sending them to schools. It is not bad activity, but they are unable to train their children after they come from school.

Due to the problems in the weaving industry, and their bad experiences to survive with this profession has made them decide that let our children do not undergo the life, which we are leading. They reveal let our children be educated and adopt some other profession. They are not thinking about the future skills force to run the ancient profession – Weaving.

The main objectives of the study are as follows.

1. Analyze the causes for the issues faced by employees and employers in weaving industry: Weavers are facing many issues with respect to their wage system, proper rules and code of conduct at work place, number of working hours, job security, poor annual income, social security schemes, awareness about the benefits from the state and central government. The first objective of the study is to find out what are the causes, which are bringing these issues into the weaving industry.
2. Explore the actual problems faced by weavers (for Employers and Employees): Weavers may be facing many issues in terms of the factors mentioned above, but through the study, an effort is made to understand the actual problems of weavers by conducting a face-to-face interview with the planned questions. It makes the way to go in depth of the problems in the day-to-day life of a weaver.
3. Find out the possible ways to reduce the intensity of the crisis which will help them to update the way they work and the way they live: After making rigorous efforts to know the problems of the weavers and the causes for such critical problems, there is an attempt made to find out some means by which the intensity of the crisis can be reduces. It will be a challenge, but an essential part of the study. The study aims to update the weavers with the facilities they have got from the state and central government and related information.
4. Provide suitable recommendations and suggestions to resolve the discrepancies among the workers and owners: The very important and interesting component of any research work would be recommendations and suggestions, which will show few means to resolve the problem. If not able to make the mind up; at least to reduce the strength of the problem.

CONCLUSIONS

In the broad sense of a significant participation of India in world textile trade, the Indian textile industry had been 'globalized' in the last 350 years. The early nineteenth century, and again the period 1950-85, when the level of participation in the international economy retreated, would appear as brief interludes rather than turning points. The global humankind of the present times, of course, is a vastly different one from that of the late eighteenth. Investment, for example, is far more mobile now than before, and therefore textile manufacturing more dispersed, and more competitive.

One of the lessons of my study is that the dominance of the weavers can be seen as a constant across time. If we take a long view, the development of the weaving units would seem like an anomaly, remarkably long-lived historically, but eventually revealing itself a special case

rather than the norm. There is a need for structural changes in the weaving industry of Bangalore to favor the employees and employers. Few of these changes has to be made by the weavers only for their betterment, the rest is the Government's responsibility to make the weaver's life easy and smooth. The human resource management in the weaving units is in a bad shape. There are no basic functions of management – planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling of the human resource are present in the management of these weaving factories. It is accepted that these units are small-scale enterprises, but any business for that matter needs the intervention of management to be successful.

Future research needs to deal with this slow, decisive and many-sided transition in the weaving units and its constituents – from family to wage-labor, women to men and back to women again, settled to migrant, personalized recruitment to market-based hiring and contractual employment, personalized knowledge to market purchased skills, informal to formal training, simple tools to complex tools, and so on. The related transformation of the labor market has not necessarily involved a drastic move from the home to the weaving units. More often, it has involved a rather graduated shift from the home to the small handloom/ power loom workshop. Yet, it invariably means significant and sometimes permanent adjustments in labor-time allocation by the artisan household.

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