



## **Study on Problems Faced by Handloom Weavers with Special Reference to Varanasi**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The Indian textile industry is incredibly prevalent in the nation's economy. One of the main hubs for handlooms in Uttar Pradesh is the Varanasi district, where the current study was carried out. Both primary and secondary data form its basis. There were 370 sample respondents in all for the research. 100 cluster weavers were chosen at random to participate in the current study, which was carried out in two clusters—Ramnagar and Bajardiha. 15 cooperative groups and ten handloom weavers from each of the 350 handloom cooperative societies were chosen at random. A purposeful selection process was used to choose 50 Master weavers and 100 Independent weavers from the heavily populated Varanasi handloom weavers area. Using the personal interview approach and the observation method of data collection, a structured interview schedule was created and given to the respondents. Secondary data for the study was gathered from a variety of relevant websites, yearly reports, research, publications, and unpublished and published sources. Appropriate statistical tools, such as frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation test, and  $\chi^2$  test, were used to analyse the data. The B.G. Prasad's 2017 Socio-Economic Status scale was utilised to determine the socio-economic background of the respondents, and conclusions were derived from it using the computer programme SPSS 16.

The study's findings showed that the weavers' precarious status was caused by illiteracy, poor marketing, design, and skill upgrading; competition from powerlooms; a shortage of skilled labour; financial limitations; health issues; and inadequate government support. However, with the help of the government's effective financial aid and the implementation of numerous welfare and development programmes, the handloom industry has been able to overcome these obstacles to some extent.

**Keywords-** Textile industry, Handloom, Handloom weavers, Powerloom

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### **Overview**

The handloom industry supplied all of the world's needs for cloth until the 19th century, when there were no machinery available to produce it. As the largest cottage and labor-intensive industry in India, handloom weaving represents the vast artistic talent of its weavers and has been contributing significantly to the nation's economy. With a vast supply of raw materials and robust production capabilities throughout the value chain; India has one of the biggest textile industries in the world.

The Indian industry's intrinsic ties to the nation's agriculture, customs, and culture allow it to produce a wide range of goods suitable for both the home and international markets. The textile sector accounts for 15% of India's export revenue, 2% of the GDP, and 7% of the industry's value output. The textile industry employs about 45 million people directly, making it one of the major employers in the nation. (Report Annual 2017–18). India produces 95% of the hand-woven fabric used worldwide. In our economy, the handloom industry holds a special position. This industry has survived by passing on expertise from one generation to the next. The industry's distinctiveness, production flexibility, openness to new ideas, and capacity for adaptation are its main strengths. 3.32 lakh handloom weavers and related workers are employed by the 23.77 lakh handlooms in the nation. 38.47 lakh adult handloom weavers and ancillary workers are included in this, of which 24.72 lakh work full-time and 13.75 lakh work part-time. The handloom industry employs about 27.83 lakh households for weaving and related activities. Third Handloom Count of 2009–2010.

Varanasi is India's heritage city. Along with its culture, values, customs, and religion, Varanasi is well-known for its handicrafts and handloom weaving, particularly for its Tanchui, Munga, and Banarasi brocades. Products made from banarasi silk are highly popular in India and throughout the world, and demand for them is rising steadily. The foundation of hand weaving is its weavers, although they have numerous obstacles to overcome. The degree of exploitation in this sector has peaked. The employees were not paid in full. Thus, they had begun to search for more favourable prospects. Many skilled artisans from Varanasi have left the handloom weaving industry to explore other career options in other cities. These days, the handloom market is dominated by a little number of handloom owners. But when it comes to textiles made of specific yarn types or with specific loom-woven designs, the handloom has a clear advantage, and it will keep going as long as there is a big enough market for these textiles. But Varanasi handloom could not hold the market. Only 20% of weavers in Varanasi are said to be working on handlooms; the majority, 80 percent, are employed at power looms. (Raja Srinivasa

(2017)the deplorable conditions weavers endure, as well as their deficiencies stemming from lack of resources, education, marketing barriers, and government assistance. Shailaja and Amrita Singh (2009).

Banaras' handloom weavers, who have inherited this profession, live in abhorrent conditions as a result of their poor socioeconomic level. Most of them work as wage weavers, putting in over ten hours a day in exchange for meagre pay. The middle class included just over half of the population, who were either master weavers or members of cooperative societies. Singh (2014). The handloom weavers of Varanasi have lost their prestigious old trade. It is the outcome of India's extensive industrialization. Capitalist production, the invention of the power loom, rising yarn prices, low wages, and labour disputes force the handloom to disappear.

A specific entrepreneurial elite known as Gaddidars or master weavers controls the majority of the industrial system (Tanusree,2015).Over time, the industry has steadily declined and the handloom sector has been gradually decreasing. Even though this industry has a very bright future and a great deal of potential to create jobs, it currently confronts a lot of challenges. The crisis is the result of rising unfair competition from the power loom and mill sectors, as well as ineffective scheme implementation. In 2018, Rao and Kumar. Considering the aforementioned, the researcher decided to look into the current state of the handloom weavers in great detail. An attempt has been made to trace the limitations that Varanasi's handloom weavers encounter in this study.

## Objectives of the Study

1-To find out the various constraints faced by handloom weavers of Varanasi.

2-To find out the opinion regarding sufficient income for the family and its relation with their religion, region and socio-economic status.

## Materials and Methods

One of the main hubs for handlooms in Uttar Pradesh is the Varanasi district, where the current study was carried out. Both primary and secondary data form its basis. There were 400 sample responders in all for the study. 100 cluster weavers were chosen at random to participate in the current study, which was carried out in two clusters—Ramnagar and Bajardiha. 15 cooperative groups and ten handloom weavers from each of the 350 handloom cooperative societies were chosen at random. A purposeful selection process was used to choose 50 Master weavers and 100 Independent weavers from the heavily populated Varanasi handloom weavers area.

Using the personal interview approach and the observation method of data collection, a structured interview schedule was created and given to the respondents. Secondary data for the study was gathered from a variety of relevant websites, yearly reports, research, publications, and unpublished and published sources. Appropriate statistical tools, such as frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation test, and x2 test, were used to analyse the data. The B.G. Prasad's 2017 Socio-Economic Status scale was utilised to determine the socio-economic background of the respondents, and conclusions were derived from it, together with the software programme SPSS 16.

## Results and Discussion

Results of the study were discussed according to the objectives of the study.

Table-1.1

Table Showing Demographic Profile of the Respondents

TableNo-1	Title	S.No.	Categories	number	Percentage
1.1		1	Up-to 35	107	26.75
		2	36-50	194	48.5
		3	>50	99	24.75
			Total	400	100 %
		Average age $\pm$ sd =43.27 $\pm$ 10.94, Range=(18-27)			
1.2	Sex	1	Male	327	81.75
		2	Female	73	18.25
			Total	400	100
1.3	Religion	1	Hindu	196	49
		2	Muslim	204	51

		3	Total	400	100
1.4	Caste	1	General	54	13.5
		2	OBC	171	42.75
		3	SC	175	43.75
			Total	400	100
1.5	Educational Status	1	Illiterate	139	34.75
		2	Primary	67	16.75
		3	Middle	31	7.75
		4	High	78	19.5
		5	Inter	61	15.25
		6	UG	11	2.75
		7	PG	7	1.75
		8	Professional	6	1.5
				400	100

From the above mentioned table No. 1.1 it is clear that majority of respondents (48.5%) belonged to age group of 36 to 50 years followed by 26.75% respondents belonged to the age group of 35 and below 35 years. Only 24.75% respondents belonged to the age group of 50 and above 50 years.

From the above mentioned table No. 1.2 it is clear that majority of respondents (81.75%) belonged to the male followed by 18.25% respondents belonged to female.

From the above mentioned table No. 1.3 it is clear that the majority of respondents (51%) were Muslims while (49%) respondents were Hindu.

From the above mentioned table No. 1.4 it is clear that majority of respondents (43.75%) belonged to the scheduled cast while (42.75%) respondents belonged other backward cast and only (13.5%) respondents belonged to general caste.

From the above mentioned table No. 1.5 it is clear that majority of respondents (34.75%) were illiterate and 19.50% respondents had high school education and 16.75% respondents has primary level education. 15.25% respondents had intermediate level education and 7.75% respondents had middle level education and 2.75% respondents had under graduate level education. Very few only 1.75% had post graduate level education and 1.5% respondents had professional level education.

Table No.-2

**Distribution of Respondents Opinion Regarding Sufficient Income for the Family According to their Religion, Region and Socio-Economic Status**

S.No	Problems	Faced by the respondents		Not faced by the respondents		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1.	Availability of market	376	94	24	6	400	100%
2.	Payment Frequency	328	82	72	18	400	100%
3.	Design upgradation	246	61.5	154	38.5	400	100%
4.	Education	182	45.5	218	54.5	400	100%
5.	Finance	256	64	144	36	400	100%
6.	Technological issue	372	93	28	7	400	100%
7.	Skilled Workforce	215	53.75	185	46.25	400	100%
8.	Training and Development	167	41.75	233	58.25	400	100%
9.	Unawareness	348	87	52	13	400	100%

10.	Hurdles in getting government incentives	278	69.5	122	30.5	400	100%
11.	Lack of young People	108	27	292	73	400	100%

From the above table it is clear that majority of respondents i.e. 94% faced the problem of market availability for their product in nearby areas, only 6% respondents were able to find appropriate market to sell their product. As per the geographical area it is a very serious concern for the respondents. On the other hand 82% respondents faced the problem related with the frequency of payment. Lot of goods is being sold on credit to the retail vendors who sell the product first and then made the payments to the vendors it also impact the payment frequency to the labour involved in the production. Very less percentage of respondents found to have significant frequency related to the payment. A good number of respondents' complaint about the frequency of design upgradation. Less than 50% of the respondents were bothered about the level of education of the workers in the field and found it difficult to meet the market expectations. 93% of the respondents were observed to face the technological issues and admitted that they have not updated themselves up to the latest technology. According to 53.75% Respondent there is a problem of availability of skilled workforce; on the other hand 41.75% respondents raised the issue related with the availability of good training and development facility. During the research it is found that a good number of respondents were not aware about the various schemes initiated by the government. 69.5% respondents found it difficult to know about the information about Government initiatives. Very less number of respondents i.e. 27% of the total respondent's complaint about the availability of young people.

## Conclusion

From the present study it can be concluded that the handloom weavers are facing lot of problems. It may be availability of market, training and development of employee, upgradation of technology and so on. But the in the core of the entire problems one common problem which is there is the lack of knowledge about various Government initiatives etc. Here one this is worth mentioning that Government should focus on incentives provided to the handloom industry along with the intensive awareness campaign so that the benefit can be availed by the good number of respondents and other help seeker. As far as the education, age and gender is concerned it does not have any significant impact in contribution to the industry because people from all caste, age and gender is contributing significantly.

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