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A Study on Socio-Economic Conditions of Handloom Weavers of Varanasi City

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ABSTRACT

The handloom sector has a unique place in our economy. It is necessary for all round development of any state to ensure that the economic and social benefits of development should reach all the sections of society. so it is basic need to firstly we know about the socio-economic conditions of handloom weavers. The present study has been conducted in Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh which is one of the major handloom hubs. It is based on primary and secondary data. The present study was conducted in two cluster- Ramnagar and Bajardiha. Out of 350 Handloom Co-operative Society 15 Co-operative Society were randomly selected and each societies 10 Handloom weavers were randomly selected.50 Master weavers and 100 Independent weavers were purposively selected from densely populated area of Varanasi of handloom weavers. Total 370 Handloom weavers were selected. A structured interview schedule was prepared and administered on respondents through personal interview method and observation method of data collection. Secondary data for study collected from the published and unpublished sources, annual reports, research, journals and various related websites. Data were analyzed with the help of appropriate statistical tools like Frequency, Percentage, Mean, Standard Deviation-test and x2test.The computer software SPSS 16 was also used to find results. for finding out the socio –economic background of respondents the B.G.Prasad's scale of Socio Economic Status 2017 were used and results were drawn from it. The study results revealed that the situation of handloom weavers was pathetic because of illiteracy, financial constraints, lack of fulfillment of their basic requirements, marketing practices, increasing the price of raw material and government support. Handloom weaving is the only sources of their livelihood so we should have made an effort to improve their present conditions. It is compelling us to revised the policies for their betterment.

KEY WORDS: Handloom, Handloom Weavers, Co-operative Society

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INTRODUCTION

Indian Textiles Industry has an overwhelming presence in the economic life of the country. Apart from providing/g one of the basic necessities of life, the textile industry also plays a pivotal role through its contribution to industrial output, employment generation and export earnings of the country. It contributes about 14% to India's industrial production and 13% to the country's export earnings. (Annual Report 2014-15).The Handloom sector plays an important role in the economic development of the rural poor in the state. It contributes significantly by generating more employment opportunities and providing bread to the rural poor. The handloom sector is a major employment generating sector, as is also noted in the Approach Paper for the 12th Plan. As per the latest (3rd) Handloom Census of 2009-10, there are 23.77 lakh handlooms in the country, providing employment to 43.32 lakh handloom weavers and ancillary workers. This includes 38.47 lakh adult handloom weavers and ancillary workers, of which 24.72 lakh are engaged full time and 13.75 lakh on part time basis[1]. The handloom sector has a unique place in our economy. This sector has been sustained by transferring skills from one generation to another.

Varanasi is the heritage city of India. It is holy and pours city which is situated at the bank of river Ganga and called the temple town. It is world famous city. Every year many pilgrims come here for its culture, value and tradition. Varanasi is famous for its culture, value, tradition, religion, handicrafts, handloom weaving specially Banarasi brocades; Zari brocades Tanchui, Munga and other silk products. Banarasi silk product is very famous and popular in India as well as in the whole world and its demand is increasing day by day globally. Handloom industry is always the Centre point of attraction for everyone like electronic media, print media as well as political leaders also. Textile industry had a vital importance in the economy of Uttar Pradesh, after agriculture, the textile sector and its ancillary manufacturing units provide high employment opportunities. Textile industry is a labor intensive industry and has vast potential for the development of the State. It is an acknowledged fact that Uttar Pradesh provides an extremely high percentage of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers to textile units across the country. Despite strong competition from mill made textiles, the hand loom products are still in demand to a great extent. Weavers are the strong pillar of hand weaving but they are facing lots of problem. Time to time we read the news in the newspaper that the weavers had committed suicide. In view of above the investigator thought to investigate in depth the present conditions of the hand loom weavers. In present study, an effort has been made to trace the hand loom weaver's Socio- economic conditions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Handloom industry is today in doldrums. The 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. In recent years, many of weavers ended their lives due to various problems. Some of them starved and some committed suicides. According to the ranking given by the respondents to the above disaster, lack of Government assistance, competition from power loom products, creditors force, middle men involvement etc., are the major causes for these miseries and crisis. Most of the Handloom weavers in all areas are living below poverty line means that there is no proper pucca house, no healthy food, and no clothes[2].Mainly those who have inherited this occupation, are in a pitiable condition owing to the poor socio-economic conditions. The majority of them are wage weavers who earn minimal wages in spite of working for more than ten hours a day. It is interesting to note that the educational status among the weavers' community was not discouraging. Almost sixty-five per cent of the community belonged to Low income group, engaged with working under middlemen[3]. Handloom weavers are facing severe livelihood crisis because of adverse government policies, globalization and change in socio-economic condition. Suicides are on the rise. Ineffective implementation of the schemes, increased unfair competition from the power loom and mill sectors are responsible for the crisis[4]. Handloom forms a part of the heritage of India and exemplifies the richness and diversity of our country and the artistry of the weavers. Keeping this in view the study was conducted with the following objectives:

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

1- To study the socio-economic conditions of Handloom Weavers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study has been conducted in Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh which is one of the major handloom hubs. It is based on primary and secondary data. The present study was conducted in two cluster-Ramnagar and Bajardiha. Out of 350 Handloom Co-operative Society 15 Co-operative Society were randomly selected and each societies 10 Handloom weavers were randomly selected.50 Master weavers and 100 Independent weavers were purposively selected from densely populated area of Varanasi of handloom weavers. Total 370 Handloom weavers were selected. A structured interview schedule was prepared and administered on respondents through personal interview method and observation method of data collection. Secondary data for study collected from the published and unpublished sources, annual reports, research, journals and various

related websites. Data were analyzed with the help of appropriate statistical tools like Frequency, Percentage, Mean, Standard Deviation-test and x2test.The computer software SPSS 16 was also used to find results for finding out the socio –economic background of respondents the B.G.Prasad's scale of Socio-Economic Status 2017 were used and results were drawn from it.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of the study were discussed according to the objectives of the study under the following sub headings.

Socio economic status (SES) of respondents:

The socio economic status of the respondents was presented in following tables.

Table no. 1.1 reveals that majority of respondents (49.5%) belonged to age group of 36 to 50 years followed by 26.2% respondents belonged to the age group of 35 and below 35 years. Only 24.3% respondents belonged to the age group of 50 and above 50 years. Table 1.2 reveals that majority of respondents (83.5%) belonged to the male followed by 16.5% respondents belonged to female. Table 1.3 reveals that the majority of respondents (51.1%) were Muslims while (48.9%) respondents were Hindu. Table 1.4 reveals that majority of respondents (44.8%) belonged to the scheduled cast while (43.0%) respondents belonged other backward cast and only (12.2%) respondents belonged to general caste. Table 1.5 shows that majority of respondents (83.0%) were married. 1.9% of respondents were divorced. 1.9% respondents were widows and 1.4% were widower. Table 1 .6 shows that majority of respondents (36.8%) were illiterate and 22.0% respondents had high school education and 16.2% respondents has primary level education. 15.7% respondents had intermediate level education and 7.6% respondents had middle level education and 2.4% respondents had under graduate level education. Very few only 0.8% had post graduate level education and 0.5% respondents had professional level education. Table 1.7 shows that majority of respondents (63.5%) had joined family, 36.5% respondents had nuclear family. Table 1 .8 shows that 77.0% respondents has 6 to 10 members in their family followed by 11.9% respondents had more than 10 members in their family and 11.1% respondents had 1 to 5 members in their family. Table 1.9 shows that majority of respondents (75.1%) were urban while 24.9% respondents were rural.

Table : 1-Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table No-1	Title	S No.	Categories	Number	%
1.1	Age (In Years)	1	Up-to 35	97	26.2
		2	36-50	183	49.5
		3	>50	90	24.3
			Total	370	100.00%
		Average age ± sd =43.27 ±10.94, Range=(18-27)			
1.2	Sex	1	Male	309	83.5
		2	Female	61	16.5
1.3	Religion	1	Hindu	181	48.9
		2	Muslim	189	51.1
			Total	370	100
1.4	Caste	1	General	45	12.2
		2	OBC	159	43
		3	SC	166	44.8
1.5	Marital Status	1	Married	307	83
		2	Unmarried	44	11.8
		3	Divorced	7	1.9
		4	Widow	7	1.9
		5	Widower	5	1.4
1.6	Educational status	1	Illiterate	136	36.8
		2	Primary	60	16.2
		3	Middle	28	7.6
		4	High	74	20
		5	Inter	58	15.7
		6	UG	9	2.4
		7	PG	3	0.8
		8	Professional	2	0.5
1.7	Type of family	1	Joint	235	63.5
		2	Nuclear	135	36.5
1.8	Family size	1	01-May	41	11.1
		2	06-Oct	285	77
		3	>10	44	11.9
		Average family size ± SD= 7.84 ±2.44 Range=(3-25)			
1.9	Residential Region	1	Urban	278	75.1
		2	Rural	92	24.9

Table: 2- Religion wise distribution of respondents on the basis of their educational status and family size.

S No	Educational Status	Religion					
		Hindu		Muslim		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1	Illiterate	29	21.3	107	78.7	136	100.0
2	P-H.S.	109	62.3	61	37.7	162	100.0
3	Inter and Above	51	70.8	21	29.2	72	100.0
	Total	181	48.9	189	51.1		
X2= 66.77, df-2, P< 0.001 (Significant)							
	Family Size	Religion					
		Hindu		Muslim		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1	1-5	17	41.5	24	58.5	41	100.0
2	6-10	155	54.4	130	45.6	285	100.0
3	> 10	9	20.5	35	79.5	44	100.0
	Average family size ± S.D.	7.19 ± 2.21		8.46 ± 2.50		7.84 ± 2.44	
t= 5.16, df=368, P< 0.001 (Significant)							

Table no. 2 shows that religion wise distribution of the respondents. The table shows that 70.8% of Hindu respondents were having educational qualification of inter and above followed by 62.3% of Hindu respondents were having primary to high school while 21.3% of Hindu respondents were illiterate. The table also shows that 78.7% of Muslim were illiterate. 37.7% of Muslim respondents were having educational qualification of primary to high school while 29.2% of respondents were having educational qualification of inter and above. The statistical test X^2 shows that there was significant difference among educational status and religion.

It also reveals that 54.4% of Hindu respondents in their family had 6-10 members. 41.5% of Hindu respondents had 1 to 5 members while 20.5% of Hindu respondents had 10 members in their family.

It also reveals that 79.5% of Muslim respondents had 10 family member in their family while 58.5% of Muslim respondents had 1-5 members. 45.6% of Muslim respondents had 6 to 10 family members in their family. The statistical test t-test shows that there was significant difference among family size and religion of respondents.

Table : 3-Distribution of Respondents according to presence of Ration card alon with their colors

S No	Presence of Ration Card	Number	%
1	Yes	366	98.9
2	No	4	1
	Total	370	100
	If yes then color	**Number**	**%**
1	Yellow (APL)	248	67.8
2	White (BPL)	100	27.3
3	Red (Antyodaya)	18	4.9
	Total	366	100

The table no.3 shows that majority of respondents (98.9%) had ration card while only 1% respondents had no ration card. It also presents that 67.8% respondents had yellow color card, 27.3% respondents had white color ration card and 4.9% respondents had red color ration card.

Table : 4-Distribution of respondents on the basis of type of house and ownership of the house

S No	Type of house	Number	%
1	Kachha	85	23
2	Pakka	106	28.6
3	Kachha-Pakka	179	48.4
	Total	370	100
	Ownership of house	**Number**	**%**
1	Own	227	61.4
2	Rented	143	38.6

The table no.4 shows that majority of respondents (48.4%) were living in kachha- Pakka house, 28.6% respondents had Pakka house, 23.0% respondents had kachha house. It also reveals that majority of respondents (61.4%) were the owner of their house and rest of them (38.6%) were living in rented house.

The table no. 5 shows that majority of respondents (55.4%) had 7000 to 10000 monthly income while 25.9% respondents had monthly income between 4000 to 7000. 11.6% respondents had monthly income between 10001 to 20000, only 7.1% respondents had more than 20000 monthly income.

Table: 5-Distribution of respondents according to their monthly income

S No	Respondents monthly income	Number	%
1	4000-7000	96	25.9
2	7001-10000	205	55.4
3	1001-20000	43	11.6
4	>20000	26	7.1
	Total	370	100
Average monthly income of respondents ± SD=10500.00± 6350.77, Range=(4000-50000)			

Table : 6-Distribution of respondents according to their socio economic status

S No	Socio economic status	Number	%
1	938-1875 (Upper lower)	180	48.6
2	1876-3126 (Lower-Middle)	128	34.7
3	3127-6253 (Upper-middle)	32	8.6
4	> 6253 (Upper)	30	8.1
	Total	370	100
Average MPCI ± SD= 2887.00 ± 3090.37, Range= (1000.00-22727.27)			

The table no. 6 shows that majority of respondents (48.6%) had upper-lower socio-economic status. 34.7% had lower-middle socio-economic status and 8.6% respondents had upper-middle socio-economic status. 8.1% respondent had upper socio-economic status.

Table : 7- Distribution of respondents based on the possession of material in their house

S No	Possession of material	Yes		No		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1	T.V.	366	98.9	4	1.1	370	100
2	Fridge	73	19.7	297	80.3	370	100
3	Cooler	100	27	270	73	370	100
4	Mixer Grinder	111	30	259	70	370	100
5	Mobile	355	95.9	15	4.1	370	100
6	Fan	360	97.3	10	2.7	370	100
7	Cycle	239	64.6	131	35.4	370	100
8	Motor Cycle	182	49.2	188	58.8	370	100
9	Radio	214	57.8	156	42.2	370	100

The table no. 7 shows that 98.9% respondents possessed television, 97.3% respondents had fan, 95.9% respondents had mobile phone, 64.6% respondents had cycle, 57.8% respondents had radio, 49.2% respondents had motor cycle, 30% respondents had mixer grinder, 27% respondents had cooler and 19.7% respondents had fridge.

FINDINGS

1. The findings of the present study reveals that majority of respondents (49.5%) belonged to age group of 36 to 50 years.

2. Majority of respondents (83.5%) belonged to the male followed by 16.5% respondents belonged to female.

3. Majority of respondents (51.1%) were Muslims.

4. Majority of respondents (44.8%) belonged to the scheduled cast and only (12.2%) respondents belonged to general caste.

5. Majority of respondents (83.0%) were married. majority of respondents (36.8%) were illiterate.

6. Majority of respondents (63.5%) had joined family, 36.5% respondents had nuclear family. 77.0% respondents have 6 to 10 members in their family. Majority of respondents (75.1%) were urban. 21.3% of Hindu respondents were illiterate and 78.7% of Muslims were illiterate. The statistical test X^2 shows that there was significant difference among educational status and religion. 79.5% of Muslim respondents had 10 family member in their family while 54.4% of Hindu respondents in their family had 6-10 members. The statistical test t-test shows that there was significant difference among family size and religion of respondents.

7. Majority of respondents (98.9%) had ration card. 67.8% respondents had yellow color card(APL)

8. Majority of respondents (48.4%) were living in kachha- Pakka house, 28.6% respondents had pakka house, 23.0% respondents had kachha house.

9. Majority of respondents (61.4%) were the owner of their house and rest of them (38.6%) were living in rented house.

10. According to their economic status majority of respondents (55.4%) had 7000 to 10000 monthly income, only 7.1% respondents had more than 20000 monthly-income.

11. Majority of respondents (48.6%) had upper-lower socio-economic status.

12. 98.9% respondents possessed television, 97.3% respondents had fan, 95.9% respondents had mobile phone.

Majority of the respondents prefer gold work and Government service as an occupation for their children. The income of the weaver households determines the standard of living and financial status. In the study area, all the weavers are dependent on weaving as their lone activity for their livelihood. Majority of the respondents are earning wages below ` 50,000 per annum[5].

RECOMMENDATIONS

Encourage and facilitate weavers to sell their products in Varanasi as well as other cities. For increasing the export and to provide satisfaction to customers, there is a need of improving and promoting marketing practices. Weavers must get benefit from the government so that they would enjoy a better standard of living development in their socio economic status in the society. Concerted efforts have been made through the schemes and programme to enhance production, productivity, and efficiency of the handloom sector and enhance the income and socio-economic status of the weavers.

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