

THE STATUS OF HANDLOOM INDUSTRY IN ANDHRA PRADESH

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Abstract

The handloom sector in India is largest cottage industry with a position next only to agriculture in providing employment to rural artisans with low capital investment and environment friendly. Handloom sector in Andhra Pradesh is known to manufacture exclusive sarees with intricate and distinctive designs. Every piece woven is often different from others. Every piece symbolize a job done carefully by the artisan. There are about 3.50 lakhs Handloom weavers depending on weaving and allied activities. Out of which approximately 50% are covered under 1282 Weavers Cooperative Societies in the State.

Key words: Handloom sector, Handloom weavers, Weavers cooperative societies

1. Introduction

The handloom sector has a unique place in our economy and plays a vital role in the economic development of the rural poor. It is one of the largest economic activities providing direct employment to over 65 lakhs persons across the country, engaged in weaving out of this, more than 40 percent are women and majority of them are low caste and extremely poor, working in small family units. This sector contributes nearly 19 percent of the total production of the cloth produced in the country also adds substantially to the export earnings. Andhra Pradesh is occupied prominent place in Indian handloom sector. As there are about 2, 00,310 handloom weavers in cooperative fold and 1, 58,902 in outside cooperative fold. There are 1282 Weavers Cooperative Societies in the State consisting of Cotton-896, Silk-325, and Wool-61. There is one Apex society i.e. APCO for marketing the handloom products. Most of the looms in

the state, located in rural areas and primarily household activity, with mainly men involved in weaving and women and children involved in preparatory work. The tradition of weaving fabrics is age old in this state and it is in the stage of shrinking from past few decades. The glory of handloom weavers is now fading away. The main aim of this paper is to show the present status of handloom industry in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

2. Significance of handloom sector in rural economy

The handloom sector has a unique place in India economy and plays a vital role in the economic development of the rural poor. It is one of the largest economic activities providing direct employment to over 65 lakhs persons engaged in weaving out of this, more than 40 percent are women and majority of them are low caste and extremely poor, working in small family units. This sector contributes nearly 19 percent of the total production of the cloth produced in the country and also adds substantially to the export earnings

3. Need of the study

The situation of handlooms sector in Andhra Pradesh is not in favour due to diverse reasons. The stake holders of the industry viz., handloom weavers undergone several problems and then even striving hard for survival. Despite several measures taken by the government by the way of institutional support and direct financial assistance to the handloom weavers, they have been in miserable state due to myriad problems and are sustaining continuous losses. Therefore, there is a need to study methodically the present status of Handloom sector in Andhra Pradesh.

4. Methodology

To offer realistic and comprehensive information about the present status of handloom industry in Andhra Pradesh, data have been garnered from both principal and secondary roots. To develop a broad framework of this study, Primary data were gathered from reports of Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi and Annual reports of ministry of textiles, Government of India, Department of handlooms and textiles Govt. of AP and through examination of various annual reports and renewed information from other agencies, Secondary data were compiled from books, diaries and other published stories.

5. Objectives

1. To study the present status of handloom industry in Andhra Pradesh.
2. To examine the performance of handloom industry and to analysis the looms and usage pattern in the state.

6. Handloom Sector as rural employer

Handloom sector is one of the largest employment providers after agriculture. It is essentially a very big labour intensive and low capital industry. It offers employment to the most vulnerable sections of the society, viz., women, scheduled castes (SCs), scheduled tribes (STs) and other backward castes (OBCs). Out of the 43.31 lakh persons engaged on about 23.77 lakh handlooms, of which, 10 per cent are from scheduled castes, 18 per cent belong to scheduled tribes, 45 per cent belong to other backward classes and 27 per cent are from other castes.

7. Looms and Usage

According to the handloom census report 2010, in the state of Andhra Pradesh, there are 1.2 lakh working looms existed, out of which 94.1 per cent are pit looms, 4.3 percent are frame looms, 0.1 percent are pedal looms and 1.5 percent are other looms. Out of 1.2 lakh looms about 85.4 percent are operated by households and remaining 14.6 percent are non-household looms. Out of the total capacity available in the state, 83.9 percent looms are being used for commercial, 2.7 percent looms for domestic production and 13.4 percent looms are being used for both domestic and commercial purpose.

8. Products and production process

Usually Weavers in the state can produce a wide varieties of cloth. According to the market demand the list of cloths produced by weavers are listed in table: 7.1

Table: 9.1 various types of fabric produced by Weavers

Fabric	Production in % age
Angavastram	0.01
Chaddar	0.01
Saree	44.16
Shawls	0.02
Towel/ Napkin	0.61
Bed sheets	1.12
Lungi	0.44
Dhoti	0.68

Source: Handloom Census in 2010

From the table above it is observed that, sarees occupied major share in various products produced with more than 44 percent followed by bed sheets.

9. Raw material and usage pattern

Though the Weavers in Andhra Pradesh produce wide range of cloths, it is predominantly cotton based and uses various types of yarn. In addition to cotton yarn other types of yarn used for cloth production are Viscose, Muga silk, Eri silk, Mulberry silk, wool and Polyester blends. Cotton yarn is main input and available in different counts has used by many weavers as their primary input. Mulberry silk occupied the next place with 36.5 percent. Usage of various types of yarn including percentage distribution is shown in table: 3.3

Table: 10.1 Usage of various types of Yarn (in % age)

Types of Yarn	Usage in % age
Cotton (1-20)	3.5
Cotton (21-40)	8.4
Cotton (41-80)	34.2
Cotton (above 80)	12.5
Viscose & blends	0.1
Muga silk	0.2
Eri silk	0.3
Mulberry silk	36.5
Other silk	2.4
Wool	1.3
Polyester & blends	0.4

Source: Handloom Census in 2010

10. Conclusion

Handloom weaving is an artistry with traditional heritage and culture. It has been sustained through transferring the skill of weaving over generations. Though there is snugness in the handloom sector, the handloom products are quite famous for their artistic elegance and complicated designs. There are historical records show that handloom fabrics of India had built their reputation in the International market long before the historic industrial revolution. The status of handloom sector in the state is deprived as many of the weavers shifting to other professions due to poor earnings, unemployment and poor demand for their products.

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