

A STUDY ON SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS AND HEALTH PROBLEMS OF HANDLOOM WEAVERS OF GADAG – BETGERI

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ABSTRACT India is a land of villages and the economy is rural based. India's progress is based on the progress of the village. India has always been known for its splendid crafts and art man ship. Indian handlooms have created an aura among the people all over the world. Though weaving industry provides employment to millions of people and thus makes itself the largest provider of rural work force, it has not been given due attention like other sector in textile. Handloom weavers are facing several livelihood crises because of adverse government policies, globalization and changing socio-economic conditions. The national and state governments do have several schemes pertaining to production inputs, market support and development, meant to safeguard the interests of the weaving community. Ineffective implementation of the schemes and the changed context of textile industry, increasing competition from the power loom and mill sectors have been largely responsible for the crises in the handlooms. The handloom weavers failed to compete with power looms and mills. As a result they have tried to adopt occupational other than handloom weaving. They have adopted different types of coping mechanism along with occupation in order to overcome the crises.

Hence this study has been taken up to know the socio-economic status and also the various hazards faced by the handloom weavers of Betageri village, of Gadag District, Karnataka. The main objectives of the study are to study the present socio-economic status and health hazards to the working environment, to know the products being manufactured by the weavers, to find out the technology being used in weaving industry, to identify the sourcing for raw materials and semi-finished products and their method of use in the cluster and to asses problems being faced and to examine livelihood problems of weavers in the cluster.

The results shows that majority of the respondents belongs to the aged group of 31-40 years. By application of Chi-square it was observed that educational levels of male weavers were more than female weavers. By the application of Chi-square test it was observed that female weavers are having more health problems compared to male weavers like dust allergy, asthma, back pain, muscle pain and hearing problems. Weavers are skilled they are competitive enough to weave any type of products and still using traditional technology in weaving rather than modern technology. Thus the hypothesis of evolution or change in the handloom industry did not bring any significant improvement in the socio-economic condition and health related problems of the weavers was accepted.

Key words: Hand Loom, Socio Economic Status, Health Problems, Type of Products and Technology.

INTRODUCTION

India is a land of villages and the economy is rural based. India's sociology is mainly the rural life and development of its culture took place from the villages. India's progress is based on the progress of the village. Till recently an Indian village is the symbol of economic self-reliance by the skillful interweaving of agriculture and industry and because of their comparatively larger population, the Indian village is still at adherent of the modern age largely self-sufficient and home of a contented community .it is an aggregate of several families sharing the same habitation.

India has always been known for its splendid crafts and art man ship. Indian handlooms have created an aura among the people all over the world. Weaving is an art which has been known since ages and weavers pass this art to their generations as handlooms in India are mostly used at homes with weavers being assisted by their children and other family members. Thus it can be said that weaving is an inherited art in indeed and rural artisans adopt his art as an income generation activity. Though weaving industry provides employment to millions of people and thus makes itself the largest provider of rural work force, it as not been given due attention like other sector in textile.

The textile industry occupies unique place in our country. One of the earliest to become into existence in India. In accounts for 14% of the total industrial production, contributes nearly 3% of the total exports and is the second largest employment generator after agriculture. The handloom sector plays a very important role in the countries economy. It is one of the largest economic activities providing direct employment to over 65lakhs persons engaged in weaving and allied activities. Handloom weaving is one among such occupational practiced by specific casts of people in different part of India. The handloom sector occupies a distinct and unique place in the Indian industry. It is largest generator of non-from rural employment. India is high handloom producing country in the world. As Seamanthini N Soumya [2001] reported, it is providing employment to 12.4 million people and thus stands next to agriculture, out of these, 60% of women, 12% sc[schedule caste] and 20% ST [schedule tribes] with 38.91lakh handloom in India.

Handloom weavers are facing several livelihood crises because of adverse government policies, globalization and changing socio-economic conditions. The national and state governments do have several schemes pertaining to production inputs, market support and development, meant to safeguard the interests of the weaving community. However, current thinking at the apex policy level is that the handloom sector is a redundant profession and is a burden on the government exchequer. Political leadership, in general, as been avoiding taking up cudgels on behalf of the weaver community.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Gadag-Betageri was selected after a careful examination of situations at different weaving centers of Dharwad district of Karnataka. Gadag-Betageri is a weaving center with significant population of weavers. The weavers are engaged in different sectors within handloom as well as power loom weaving.

OBJECTIVES:

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To study the present socio-economic status and health hazards to the working environment.
2. To know the products being manufactured by the weavers.
3. To find out the technology being used in weaving industry.

HYPOTHESIS:

1. The handloom industry had not undergone any specific change, both in terms of quantity and quality of production.
2. The evolution or change in the handloom industry did not bring any significant improvement in the socio-economic condition and health related problems of the weavers.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

The main purpose of this study is to examine the socio-economic conditions of the handloom weavers of Gadag-Betageri. This study is relevant because handloom products of Gadag-Betageri cluster show the rise and fall of its products.

METHODOLOGY:

- a) Primary data.
- b) Secondary data.

a) PRIMARY DATA:

Primary data is obtained from original sources by researcher. It is not a published source of data. It has to be created.

In the study primary data is obtained by survey technique method. In the questioning or survey method well informed and desirable person are questioned by the personal interview.

The survey technique is intended to secure one or more items of information from a sample of respondents of a larger group. As data is gathered by asking question to person who were thought to have desired information is called questionnaire technique also.

b) SECONADRY DATA:

Secondary data are readily available for processing. It saves time. It is a cheaper source of data. Cost of information is low. It may not give higher accuracy, reliability.

Sources of secondary data are published books, library research. Government publications, newspapers, magazines, trade journals etc.

In the study secondary data is collected from the records available with the Project Come Quality Control Administrator of "KHDC" (a government of Karnataka enterprise), Gadag-Betageri-582102.

PROCEDURE:

The survey was conducted to elicit the information regarding socio-economic status and health hazards of handloom weavers of Gadag-Betageri.

1. Formulation of research design.
2. Construction of the questionnaire.
3. Locale of the study.
4. Selection of the sample.
5. Conducting the pilot study.
6. Compilation, analysis, interpretation of the data and statistical analysis of selected data.

1) FORMULATION OF RESEARCH DESIGN:

An attempt is made to study the factors responsible for the socio-economic development and health related hazards of handloom weavers of Gadag-Betageri, survey was the method used.

2) CONSTRUCTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE:

Questionnaire was used as a tool to collect the necessary information, according to Kothari {1990}, "A questionnaire consist of a number of questions printed or typed in a definite order on a form or set of forms".

3) LOCALE OF THE STUDY:

Gadag-Betageri was selected due to the following reasons:

- ❖ It occupies a significant place in the Handloom Industry of Karnataka.
- ❖ There are about 3,600 active working handlooms in the cluster.
- ❖ Around 10,000 people are depending on handloom as well as power loom industry for their livelihood.

4) SELECTION OF SAMPLE:

Samples of 100 handloom weavers of Gadag-Betageri were selected at random.

5) **CONDUCTING THE PILOT STUDY:**

To determine the feasibility of the study the pilot study was conducted on 10% of the samples.

6) **COMPILATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA AND STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF SELECTED DATA:**

The data collected from the survey is presented in % table for each question. The result obtained was compiled, analyzed, and interpreted.

The above tabulated results and discussions are presented in the results and discussions. Few tables were also statistically tabulated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A survey of socio-economic status and health related problem of handloom weavers illustrates the point. The survey helps in understanding the problem of a vital segment of the society in the country. In this chapter, the collected data are analyzed tabulation and results are discussed in detail. Few data has been graphically represented, and some of the data also has been statistically analyzed.

Table-1
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

SL.NO.	EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	NO.OF RESPONDENTS	%	X ²
1	Uneducated	28	28%	210.46
2	Foundation level	41	41%	
3	Middle school level	29	29%	
4	High school level	02	02%	
5	Diploma	-	-	
6	Graduate	-	-	
7	Profession	-	-	

[Sources: Kuppuswamy's Socio-Economic Scale]

Table-VI denotes that 28% of the respondents are Uneducated, 41% of the respondents belong to Foundation Level, and 29% of the respondents come under Middle school Level, whereas only 02% of the respondents belong to High School Level.

It is observed that from the above table their majority of the respondents are up to the foundation and middle school level. But no one is having higher education. The reason being they don't require qualification for their weaving profession.

The above Chi-square test concludes that educational level of male weaver was more than female weavers. The reason being woman are from semi-urban based area are less exposure to education compared to men.

Table-2
TOTAL INCOME OF THE FAMILY (P.M)

SL.NO.	TOTAL INCOME (P.M)	NO.OF RESPONDENTS	%	C.V
1	=1520	01	01%	20.08
2	1521-4555	90	90%	
3	4556-7593	05	05%	
4	7594-11,361	04	04%	
5	11,362-15,187	-	-	
6	15,362-30,374	-	-	
7	=30,370	-	-	

[Sources:

Kuppuswamy's Socio-Economic Scale]

From the above table it can be observed that 01% of the respondents belongs to the total income Rs.1520 p.m., where as 90% of the respondents belongs to the total income of Rs.1521-4555 p.m., 5% the respondents belongs to the family income of Rs.4556-7593 p.m., and 4% of the respondents belongs to the total income of Rs.7,594-11,361 p.m.

From the above total we observed that no weavers are getting total income more than 11,361 Rs .per month. Since they are getting other privilege from Nekarara Kalyna Yojane and free accommodation they are able to manage the family within their monthly income.

The above test concludes that the wages among the weavers is less variation. Most of the weavers are getting wage in between the class interval of 1521-4555 Rs. per month. According to Kuppuswamy's Socio-Economic Scale weavers score is 2.

Conclusion: The co-efficient of variation is greater is said to be more variable or conversely less consistent, less uniform. On the other hand the co-efficient of variation is less is said to be less variable or more consistent, more uniform.

Table-3
SKILL LEVEL OF THE WEAVERS

SL.NO.	SKILL LEVEL	NO.OF RESPONDENT	%	X ²
1	Un-skilled	-	-	173.1
2	Semi-skilled	17	17%	
3	Skilled	83	83%	

It is interesting to observe the table X that majority i.e., 83% is skilled weavers, whereas only 17% are semi-skilled. It is surprising that no respondent belongs to the group of unskilled. The Chi-square test concludes that weavers are generally skilled.

Table-4
ASSET OF THE FAMILY

SL.NO	TYPE OF ASSET	NO.OF RESPONDENT	%	X
1	Building	44	21.56%	2.04
2	Land	56	27.45%	
3	Vehicle	66	32.35%	
4	Others	38	18.62%	

The above table explains that most of the respondents acquire land and vehicle as the asset of the family. 21% of the respondents are having their own building other than free accommodation given by KHDC only 18% of the respondents are having gold, fixed deposits, sites other than land, building and vehicles.

The mean or average no. of assets having by the weavers was calculated to be 2.04. Hence an average of 2 assets was considered.

Table-5
INFRA-STRUCTURE OF WORKING AREA.

	VARIOUS ASPECTS	EXCELLENT	V-GOOD	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR
1	Light	28	32	28	12	-
2	Ventilation	30	44	18	08	-
3	Floor	27	48	21	14	-
4	Roof	10	11	42	37	-
5	Sanitation	06	02	69	23	-
6	Water	06	12	18	64	-
7	Comfortable work place	21	28	39	12	-

With respect to light 32% of the respondents expressed as very-good, whereas only 12% of respondents considered light as average. 44% of the respondents ranked very good for ventilation and only 8% of the respondents as average. 44% of respondents considered floor as very good where as 14% of them are not satisfied with the flooring of working area. 42% of the respondent good for a roof because the roof is made up of cement sheets and 37% of the respondents expressed as average.

69% of the respondent expressed sanitation as good only 2% consider it as very-good. Majority of them ranked drinking water as the main problem in their cluster area. 39% of the respondent are satisfied with the comfortable work place, they ranked it as good, whereas only 12% of them ranked them average for comfortable work place.

Table-6
TYPE OF PRODUCTS BEING WEAIVED

SL.NO.	TYPES OF PRODUCTS	NO.OF RESPONDENTS	%
1	Saris	3	3%

2	Traditional 9 yard series	2	2%
3	Terry towels	2	2%
4	Bed sheets	1	1%
5	Suiting & Shirting	1	1%
6	Floor covering	2	2%
7	Table Mats	2	2%
8	Foot mat	2	2%
9	Home furnishing	4	4%
10	All types	81	81%

Table XVI is clearly indicating that almost all the weavers are skilled they are competitive enough to weave any type of products given by KHDC. Like bed sheets, table mats, terry towels and home furnishings, 81% of the weavers were expressing that they are capable of weaving all types of products.

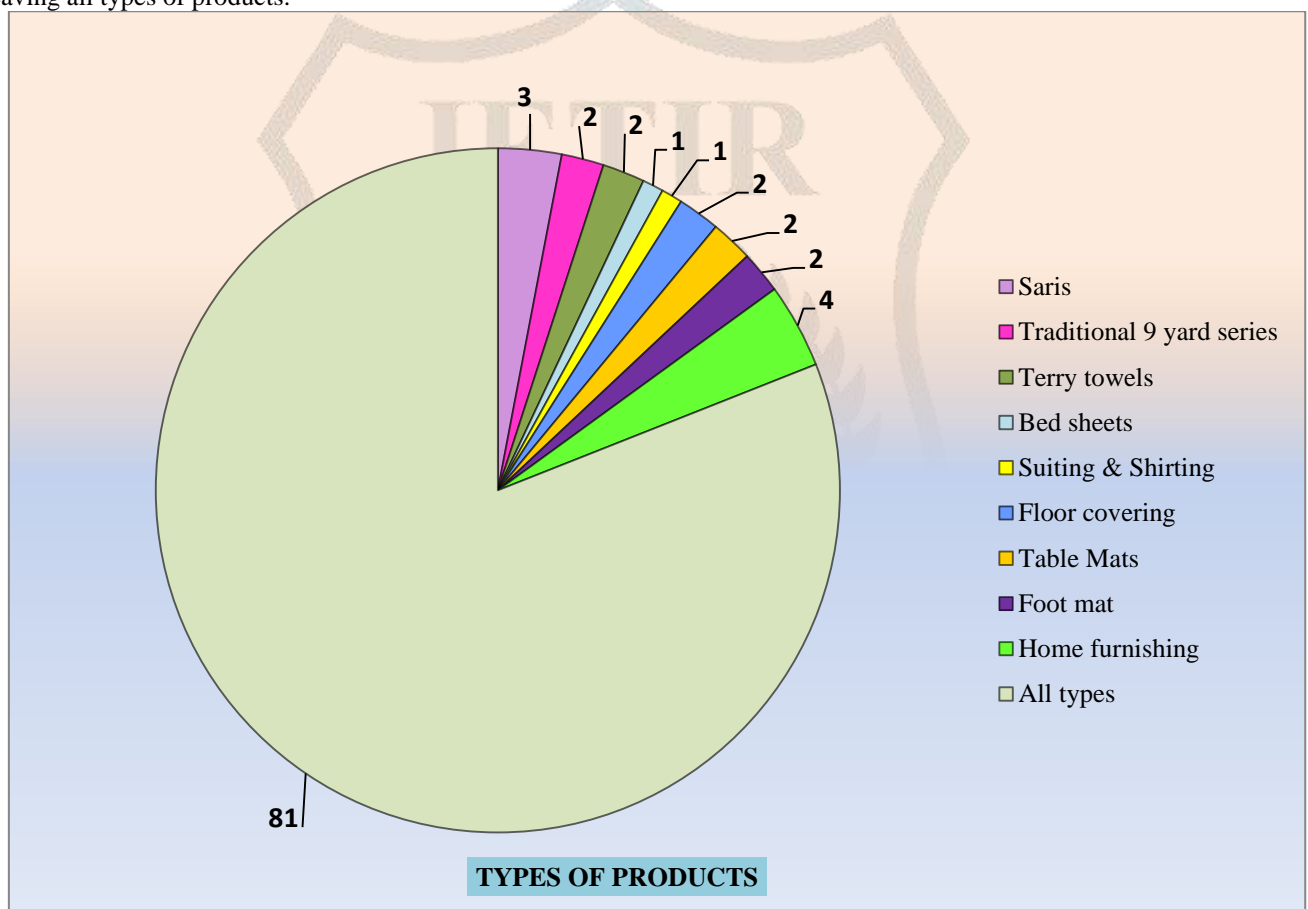


Figure 1. Types of Products

Table-7
TYPE OF HEALTH PROBLEM AFTER JOINING THIS PROFESSION

SL.NO.	TYPE OF HEALTH PROBLEM	NO.OF RESPONDENTS	%	X ²
1	Dust allergy	37	22%	129.29
2	Asthma	18	11%	
3	Back pain	59	34%	
4	Muscle pain	45	26%	
5	Hearing problem	12	07%	

The above table reveals that 34% of the respondents are suffering from back pain. After joining this weaving profession, 26% of the respondents are having muscle/ joint pain, 22% of them are suffering from dust allergy, 10% of them are suffering from asthma and only 7% of the respondents express that they are having problem after joining this profession.

The reason being for their health problem is long duration of working hours, heavy sound and dust of the raw material.

The χ^2 test is applied to the above table to assess the health of weavers both male and females. The test concludes that female weavers are having more health problems compared to male weavers. Reasons being female weavers are more prone to the disease than male because of the immunity capacity.

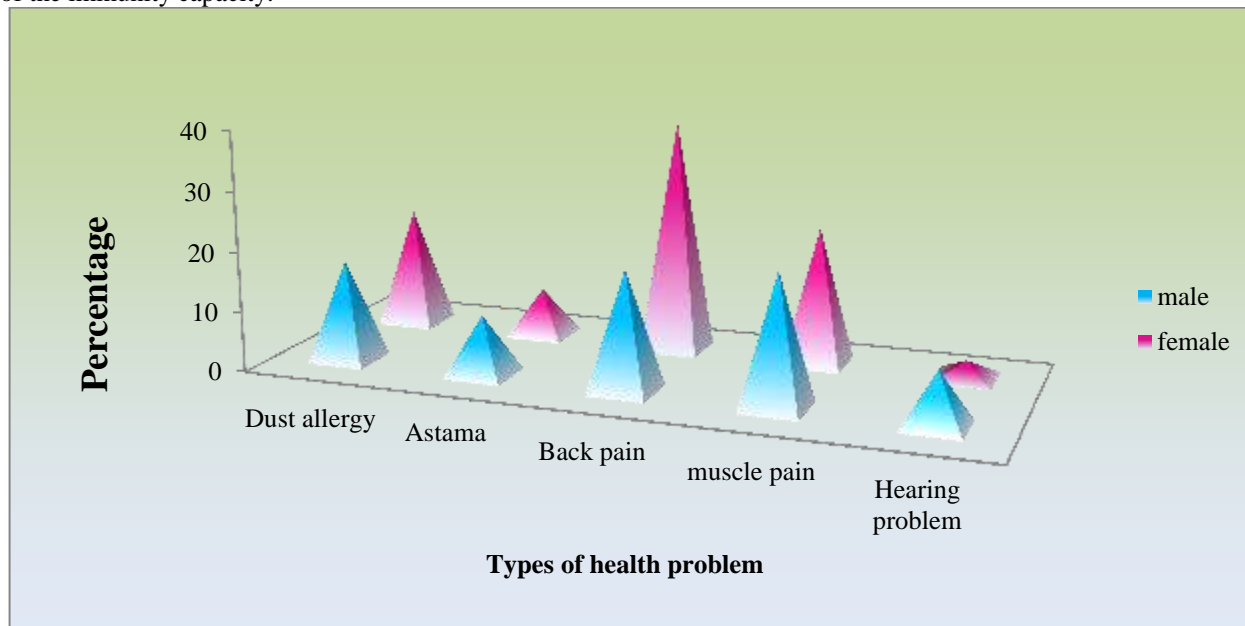


Figure2. Types of Health Problem

Table-8
TYPE OF STRESS IN DOING WORK

SL.NO.	TYPE OF STRESS	NO.OF RESPONDENTS	%
1	Physiological stress		
	a. Feeling discomfort	12	07%
	b. Headache	24	13%
	c. Back pain	22	12%
	d. Joint pains	48	30%
2	Psychological stress		
	a. Boredom	53	28%
	b. Feeling depressed	08	04%
	c. Feeling uneasy	02	01%
	d. Frustration	09	05%

The above table express that most of the respondents express that they are going through stress while performing same work for long duration. In physiological stress 30% f the respondents suffering from joint pains, where as 7% of them are suffering from feeling of discomfort

In psychological stress 28% f the respondents express they get boredom with same work, and only 1% of the respondents feel uneasy in doing the work.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The main objective of the study was to study the present Socio-economic status and health hazards of the weavers, to know the products being manufactured by the weavers

It was hypothesized that evolution or change in the handloom in the handloom industry had undergone and did not bring any significant improvement in the Socio-economic condition and health related problems of the weavers.

The procedures for the research study involved with the survey method on hundred weavers were selected. As data is gathered by asking question to person who were thought to have desired information related topic.

By application of Chi-square it was observed that educational levels of male weavers were more than female weavers. The findings indicates that the wages among the weavers id less variable. Most of the weavers are getting a wage between 1521-4555 Rs per month. According to Kuppuswamy’s Socio-economic scale of income range the weavers score is 2. Majority of the respondents accepted that weaving is their traditional occupation.

Regarding infra-structure of the working area most of them expressed infra-structure as good with respect to light, ventilation, floor, roof, sanitation and comfortable work place. Majority of them expressed drinking water as their main problem in their cluster area.

The finding indicated that no weavers are wearing any protective device or instrument while weaving. By the application of Chi-square test it was observed that female weavers are having more health problems compared to male weavers like dust allergy, asthma, back pain, muscle pain and hearing problems. Majority of the respondents are aware of availability of primary health care centers at this locality. Most of the respondents expressed that they are undergoing by back pain and joint pain as this physiological stress, some of them expressed boredom and frustration as their psychological stress.

CONCLUSION:

Indian handlooms speak for themselves and they need no reference. Handloom weaving still forms an important sector of Indian textile industry for its exceptionality and impressive characteristic. Apart from providing employment to a large section of society, Indian handlooms showcase Indian's matchlessness in the globalized world.

With regard to the socio-economic status of weavers of Gadag-Betageri is that they are able to manage and meet all the basic necessary needs with the utilization of fund and facilities provided by KHDC and Weavers Welfare Fund.

Regarding health hazards female weavers are having more health problems compared to male weavers. Reasons being female weavers are more prone to the disease than male because of the immunity capacity.

The study indicates that almost all the weavers are skilled they are competitive enough to weave any type of products like saree, traditional 9 yard saree, J/Q bed sheet, suiting's, bed sheets, table mats, terry towels and home furnishings, etc., weavers were expressing that they are capable of weaving all types of products.

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