

ANALYSIS OF WEAVING INDUSTRY AND ITS CONSTRAINTS IN JAIPUR DISTRICT OF RAJASTHAN

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abstract

Handlooms form a vital part of the generational legacy of ancestral heritage and exemplify the richness and diversity of Indian culture and the artistry of the weavers. Handloom fabrics are an essential part of the heritage of India and show the richness and diversity of our country and the artistry of the Indian weavers. As an economic activity, the handloom sector occupies a place second only to agriculture. The present study was aimed to analyze the growth and performance of Handloom industry of Rajasthan in Western India. The study concentrates on the implementation of handloom government programmes, products woven, trained weavers and constraints faced. The respondents comprised of all the beneficiaries (500) and senior officials (50) of the two government organizations viz. Rajasthan Rajya Bunkar Sahkari Sangh (RRBSS) and Rajasthan Handloom Development Corporation (RHDC). The primary source data was collected through the semi structured interview schedules and observation method. Secondary data was collected from annual reports and sale statements. The study further suggests improving operational effectiveness, & suitable strategy for sustainability and success of handloom industry.

Keywords: Handloom, Cooperative, Cluster, Rajasthan Rajya Bunkar Sahkari Sangh (RRBSS), Rajasthan Handloom Development Corporation (RHDC).

Introduction

Handloom is a traditional weaving craft practised by generations of artisans to create attractive textile designs. The handloom sector of India has the advantage of being less capital intensive, eco-friendly, having less power consumption, and the ability to adapt to market conditions. According to the Fourth All India Handloom Census, the total number of households in India engaged in handloom activities (weaving and allied activities) is 31.45 lakhs.

The state of Rajasthan is widely known for its significant contribution in the field of handloom industry. Jaipur known as Pink City all over the world is the heart of Rajasthan. The city has great potentials for marketing and export of handloom products which directly or indirectly affect the productivity, technical know-how, socio economic condition and standard of living of weavers. Being the capital city it is also the central place from where all the government policies and programmes are implemented throughout the state for the development of Handloom weavers and industry.

The present study was carried out in Jaipur district. The respondent selected for this study included the beneficiaries (180 from RRBSS & 320 from RHDC making total of 500) and senior officials (30 from RRBSS & 20 from RHDC making total of 50) of the two government organizations i.e. Rajasthan Rajya Bunkar Sahkarisangh (RRBSS) & Rajasthan Handloom Development Corporation (RHDC)

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The data was collected both from primary and secondary sources. The primary source data was collected through the structured, semi structured interview schedule and observation method. Secondary data have been collected from annual reports and sale statements. This paper reveals weavers awareness regarding government programmes, training & analyses the constraint faced.

Results Pertaining to Government Programmes

More than ten development programmes have been implemented till date in Rajasthan. The implementation of development programmes revealed that the data in government report depicts the number of weavers benefitted by government programmes did not match to the data collected from survey in the field. To probe the real situation & to see the beneficiary benefitted information regarding the awareness about the present programme & no. of weavers benefitted was recorded as seen in table 1.

Table 1: Awareness Regarding the Existing Government Programmes

S.No.	Variable	n=500	
		f	%
1	Aware about the present government programmes		
	Yes	292	58%
	No	208	42%
2	No. of programmes benefitted	n=292	
	One	174*	60%
	Two	131	45%
	Three	88	30%

*Multiple responses

The data from the above table indicates that 58 percent weavers were aware about the existing programme and 42 percent were unaware. Among the aware ones 60 percent revealed that they got benefitted from one programme, about 45 percent got benefitted from two programmes & 30 percent from three programmes. This shows that remaining 42 percent either did not get benefitted or were unable to recollect about any benefit gained during the time of data collection.

Table 2: Difference in No. of Weavers Actually Benefitted & Recorded

S. No.	Name of the scheme	No. of weavers benefitted according to government records(Data from govt. records) n=500	Weavers Benefitted actually(Data from field survey) n=500
1	Integrated Handlooms Development Scheme (IHDS)	270(54%)	275(55 percent) trained weavers* 180(36 percent) weavers living in worksheds*
2	Health Insurance Scheme	400(80%)	300(60%)*
3	Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana (MGBBY)	190(38%)	59(20%)*
4	Handloom mark scheme	-	-
5	Study tour for Handloom weavers	25(5%)	10(2%)*
6	Bunkar purnskar yojana	15(3%)	5(1%)

*Multiple responses

Table 2 shows that data from government reports indicated that from IHDS programme 54 percent weavers were benefitted, whereas field survey revealed that 55 percent were trained and 36 percent weavers were living in work sheds (karghaghar yojana was running earlier which was now merged into (IHDS). Moreover government data revealed that from health insurance scheme 80 percent weavers were benefitted, whereas field survey indicated this data as 60 percent. Similarly government data showed that 38 percent weavers benefitted from Mahatma Gandhi bunker bima yojana whereas field survey revealed it as 20 percent. Handloom mark was still not been used in the district. The report of government indicated that 5 percent weavers went for study tour in other states and 3 percent weavers benefitted from bunkar purnskar yojana respectively, whereas 2 percent & 1 percent of the weavers mentioned about the benefits of these schemes.

Therefore it can be concluded that the implementation of development programmes revealed that the data in the government report depicts that the number of weavers benefitted by government programmes did not match to the data collected from survey in the field. One of the reasons for this gap

could be weavers forgetfulness when probed on the benefit received. They didn't remember the name of the programme i.e. karghagar yojana & health insurance scheme under which they received benefit. They recollected that the work sheds in which they were living were constructed by the government for them. They knew about the health insurance card, that this card was for the health treatment of their family and this was issued by the government to them but weavers didn't know the name of the programme. During the data collection it was also observed by the researcher that the President of the society helped in making the weavers remember about the benefits availed by them through various programmes. This shows the apathetic attitude of the weavers and there is need to make weavers more aware.

In response to the constraints faced in implementing programme, the office superintendent (middle management) remarked: *"The funds were not allocated on time. It took lot of time to get allocated money from the center. The staff members were least interested in proper implementation of the scheme, there was no extra incentive or bonus for the staff to go in the field and work."*

In the views of one of the U.D.C. (lower management): *"Schemes are designed at the central level and then implemented by the State organizations, and there is no possibility for feedback from weavers. There is no monitoring system of the government program, at the feedback stage, to assess the weavers' reaction to the scheme. There is also no means to incorporate weaver's suggestions during the implementation of the scheme. No indicators have been proposed to assess the success or failure of the scheme."*

The officials of middle management raised two issues that are the staff members were least interested in implementing programmes and required incentive to go in the field.

Therefore it can be concluded that the implementation of government programmes was not satisfactory, on evaluating the data it can be concluded that except 1-2 programmes the other programmes have not reached the weaver. The primary objective of all these schemes was to improve the condition of weavers. Yet, the condition of common weavers in the district has not improved.

Details of Products Woven

An attempt was made to know about the detail of various products woven & their related attributes. The various products woven in Jaipur district were, durries patti, gauge bandage, bedsheet, suiting's material for uniforms, durries/rugs, khes, dusters, table cover and table mat, gamcha, towel, grey material.

Perspectives of office superintendent (middle management) as regards to the product woven: *"The most important element of good product is quality and packaging. The product should reach to big malls. If the presentation of the product is good then only it can be sold. The senior officials don't make an effort to check the quality of the product."*

Views of one of the U.D.C. (lower management) working under marketing section as regards to handloom products: *"People are very specific in terms of design and style hence handloom textiles don't attract them much. The best way to improve the handloom products is to revive it in a modern way to match the tastes of today's generation."*

Middle management officials raised two issues that the quality & packaging of the handloom product needs to be improved but in reality no quality assessment of yarns, woven fabric and dyeing was done. An example to quote here is the quality assessment procedure for gauge bandage

On the other hand perception of lower management was that now customer wants something innovative, stylish but still the weavers were making age-old pattern of these products with no changes in their designs as their looms were outdated. Thus the system of organization was not a responsive system. It does not respond to the changing market needs. The products were not being produced after knowing customer requirement, incorporating the changes according to the current market trends.

An effort was made to explore the various channels of distribution and promotional activities undertaken by the organization. In response to the various promotional activities used by the RRBSS, it was revealed by chief marketing officer that no use of print & visual media, posters, and neon signs was being done. Sometimes discount in the exhibitions was given. Promotion was done only through retail outlets and participation in exhibitions & fairs. The sales were handled by sales incharge.

The information collected through primary data also revealed the constraints faced by the organization in promotion of handloom products in the market.

Table 2: Constraints Faced in Promotion of Handloom Products

n=30

S.No.	Constraints	f	%
1	Inadequate budget	20	67%
2	Improper scheduling of the promotional activities.	10	33%

(Source: Goswami & Jain, 2011)

Table 2 shows that inadequate budget was the major constraint faced by the organization as revealed by two third (67 percent) of the respondents. For one third (33 percent) of the respondents it was improper scheduling of promotional activities. The organization ought to plan their budget and promotional activity in such a manner that the volume of sales continue to rise.

The products such as durrie patti, gauge bandage, bed sheet and suiting material were supplied to government departments like government hospital, social welfare department, government schools, and other government organizations. These are on order basis

To sale out the products another channel was participation in fairs and exhibitions. Participation process of cooperative societies in exhibitions & fairs was through advertisement in leading newspapers.

About 10 exhibitions at Jaipur district were observed and it was found that at the peak hours and even on Saturday and Sunday's majority of the exhibitions had very few customers, the same opinion was reflected in the informal discussion with the salesperson present at the stall. Instances were there that sometimes there were no customers and hence no sales in the stall of RRBSS. Customers at the exhibition had the opinion that there was not much variety in their products and display was unappealing to the viewers. It was also observed that in exhibitions the majority of the customers were middle class or a traditional follower of handloom products who finds the handloom products expensive for the quality produced.

The constraints faced by the organization in physical distribution were also revealed by the officials during interview. An insight into the constraints faced in the channel of distribution given by Assistant manager (marketing) (middle management) was that, "Power loom and handloom products look similar and price of power loom product is low as compared to handloom product. Customer wants to buy low priced products. Customer comes and sees but goes without purchasing."

Views of UDC (lower management) as regard to cost of handloom products in exhibitions & retail showrooms: "Customers think that handloom products are expensive. Although marketing and quality of the products is not a problem, there are other challenges such as rising price of yarn."

"The advantage of handloom products is the extreme durability, be it furnishings, bedspreads or other products. That, at times, works out to the disadvantage for sellers too. Once the customer purchases the product he doesn't come for 3-4 years."

The opinion of the assistant manager was no one can differentiate between power loom and handloom products, so customer goes for cheaper products resulting into purchasing power loom products. In the view of lower management handloom products were expensive, other than marketing and quality of products the high priced yarn are also a big problem.

Details of Weavers Trained

The role of weaver's service center for up-gradation of skills of the handloom weavers can be done by assessing their participation in the training and implementation of the training by the weavers in dyeing, weaving and designing.

Table 3: Details of Weavers Trained in Jaipur

S.No.	Type of Training	No. of Weavers trained in Jaipur District		
		RRBSS	RHDC	Total
1	Dyeing	85(53%)	65(57%)	150(55%)
2	Designing	75(47%)	50(43%)	125(45%)
	Total trained weavers	160(32%)	115(23%)	275(55%)
	Total Sample weavers			500

*Multiple Responses

It was revealed from the table 3 that in Jaipur district out of the total 500 weavers, 275(55 percent) were trained. Out of the trained weavers, 55 percent weavers were trained in dyeing and 45 percent weavers in designing.

From the 275 trained weavers 32 percent belonged to RRBSS and 23 percent belong to RHDC. If we see the trained weavers by the two organizations individually 53 percent weavers of RRBSS & 57 percent of RHDC were trained in dyeing and 47 percent of RRBSS & 43 percent of RHDC weavers were trained in designing. There was not much difference in the number of trained weavers of both the organizations.

The constraints faced by the officials in imparting the training were assessed and quantified which are discussed in table 3 below

Table 4: Constraints faced in Organizing a Training Programme
n=20

S. No.	Constraints	f*	%
1	Weavers were not self motivated	10	50%
2	Weaving is a tedious job with less earning	5	25%
3	Weavers didn't wanted to come leaving their daily earning	7	35%
4	Weavers don't have the enthusiasm for self-development.	10	50%
5	Weavers come for stipend and not for technical up gradation	10	50%

*Multiple Responses

The results show that the weavers were not self-motivated for handloom weaving (50 percent), they don't have enthusiasm for self-development (50 percent) and weavers were not interested in their technical growth instead they come to attend training just for the amount they get as stipend (50 percent). The other constraints faced were, weaving is a tedious job with less earning (25 percent) and weavers don't want to come for training leaving their daily earning (35 percent). Even after knowing the scenario related to training among weavers WSC has so far devised no means to take feedback from weavers.

Recommendations

After going through the result at a glance it can be said that handloom organizations have not been successful to meet out the basic purpose i.e. yarn procurement & marketing of products for which they were established. Hence it is necessary for the handloom sector to be operationally effective and also to follow a suitable strategy.

Informal education/Adult education/Night schools can be organized.

Weavers need to be equipped with computer and social-media skills to help them leverage the Internet and tap into the new opportunities.

- Awareness camps can be organized.
- Free medical camps and mobile health centres.
- The handloom organization should publish monthly newsletter to update members about latest happenings in handloom sector.

Electronic Data Interchange or EDI (in which the transmission of information between the members is done by electronic means) should be implemented. This will help in reducing the lag periods or lead times that are generated while orders are processed downstream in a supply chain. Capacity building of the weavers should be done through ICT (Information and communication technology). In the case of agriculture ICT application has been introduced recently in the form of KCC (Kisan Call Centre) can be followed. It provides the provision of agriculture knowledge at free cost to the farmers as and when desired. The same kind of interactive facilities could be made available to the weavers.

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