

Socio-Economic Status Of Handloom Weavers With Reference To Mandwi R.D Block, West Tripura District, Tripura

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Abstract

Tripura has a long history of producing a variety of crafts. The primary craft in Tripura is handloom. The primary form of the art and craft industries are intricately woven handlooms, as well as silk, cane, and bamboo products. Tripura handloom is distinguished by its prominent vertical and horizontal stripes and widely dispersed multi-coloured embroidery. Rural Tripuri women like to weave their own Risa and Rignai, which are components of their traditional clothing. The primary design element of Tripuri handlooms is stripes, both vertical and horizontal, with sporadic embroidery in various colours. There are several locations in the rural areas where the creative handloom business is concentrated. To weave, one uses a lion loom. These ancient looms are straight forward, affordable, and simple to use. They are easily transportable and lack bulky frames or fixed fixtures. These looms also provide an infinite variety of design options. Today, the handloom sector is crucial to the state's economy and gives local farmers a secondary source of employment and income.

Keyword: Handloom, Embroidery, Employment, Income, Risa, Rignai, etc.

1. INTRODUCTION

People in Tripura consider weaving to be an integral element of life. Generating from generation to generation, the industry has survived. Tribal women in Tripura dedicated their lives to weaving. Each and every tribe family has a history of starting the ritual with the presentation of flowers and a lovely piece of Rignai and Risa that were provided by the great grandmother. Infact learning how to wave was a requirement for all indigenous girl. Popular handloom products being produced include scarves, bed sheet, shoulder bags, table cloth, cushion cover, etc. Tripura is renowned for its distinctive and vibrant clothing fashioned from various handwoven materials. In the state of Tripura, handloom weaving is the most significant craft source of income. The Tripuri women weave the Risa and Rignai, two of the state's primary traditional garments. Vertical and horizontal stripes and multicoloured embroidery are the major designs seen in Tripura's handwoven textiles. The majority of these handloom fabrics are produced in rural areas, particularly in the Belonia, Kailasahar, Sonamura, Sadar, and Khowai sub-districts.

HANDLOOM IN INDIA

In India, handloom is second only to agriculture in terms of employment opportunities. 43.31 lakh people are employed in this sector, working on approximately 23.77 lakh handlooms, of which 10% are from scheduled castes, 18% are from scheduled tribes, and 45% are from other backward sections. The pride of Indian tradition and symbol of its culture are always been the handloom. The handloom industry has grown its importance since the civilization. The fundamental purpose of Indian handloom is creating different types of design and maintaining tradition. The handloom industries are primarily a cottage based industry. The industry also involved in transferring skills from one generation to another and spread in many small towns and villages. A large number of artisans, mostly women from semi-urban and rural areas, especially from the economically weaker section of the society are involved in handloom weaving. The handloom sector also plays a vital role in bringing the world close to Indian tradition.

HANDLOOM IN TRIPURA

Tripura the 3rd smallest state in India shares national boundaries with Assam and Mizoram and international boundaries with Bangladesh. The hilly states has a unique tradition of art and crafts, sculptures and architectures, textiles, wood carving, cane and bamboo work etc. with the indigenous people, an important part of the population, they have a variety of crafts especially textiles which are associated to the indigenous life socially and culturally. Handloom weaving is the most important craft of Tripura. The handloom item includes weaving of Risa, Rignai, scarves, with the unique design and colour that represent the indigenous people of Tripura. The handloom industry also plays a vital role in the economy

of the states and also provides employment opportunity to the Indigenous population. The loin loom is used for weaving in Tripura. The old aged looms are simple and easy to operate. The Tripuri handloom is vertical and stripes with scattered weaving in various hues. In Tripura the handloom weaving also varies from tribe to tribe. Handloom weaving is the most important craft in the state. The main feature of Tripuri handloom is vertical and horizontal stripes with scattered embroidery in different colours. The handloom design are rich and differ from tribe to tribe.

2. REVIEW LITERATURE

Dr. B. Sadanandam (2016) the handloom industry under the informal sector is one of the major industries that needs immediate care and attention. The handloom sector is next only to agriculture in respect of employment potential and with this declining trend in handloom sector the problems of unemployment will aggravate. While the country is depending equally on the entire three sector i.e handloom, power loom and the mills to meet the clothing needs, the declining trend in handloom sector is certainly an unhealthy phenomenon.

Ani Debbarma et.al (2017) in the study says that the present study uncovers that the women handloom weavers have turned out to be financially autonomous subsequent to taking up the entrepreneurship. Presently these women are assuming liability to give legitimate instruction to their kids. In spite of the fact that they have began acquiring through entrepreneurship despite everything, they confront money related limitation as they do not have capital. Less sparing possible as all the income are spent in the youngster training and other family unit use because of this reason they cannot put more in the business. Financial strengthening is accomplished in the wake of beginning enterprise and furthermore the basic family problem and recommending that there ought to be modest credit offices and information about various sort of entrepreneurship development that are important for women with the goal that they are urged to enter into entrepreneurship.

Santu Durlov et.al (2019) in the study says that all type of weavers belong to low socio- economic condition and they were exposed to different work of stressors and hazardous environment. Hence they are suffering from different types of health problems like body pain, eye problem and respiratory problem etc. It also says that they not only sit for lengthy period of time to weave, but they also bend forward to create a flawless art piece under dim light. Heat and poor ventilation make things worse in the summer.

B. Prensundar & J. Kannan (2013) 2.57 lakh of handloom workers' chosen alternative source of income (including women) and may double or thrice in future unless it is safeguarded and cared by the Indian Government. This decline exhibits the socio economic insecurity in handloom weaving though the skill development programmes are initiated by the Government of India. The study also says that even the weavers are not interested to choose weaving as their profession because of losing fame and prosperity. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of India wanted the weavers to shift from handloom weaving to mechanization. Only long term vision, strong policies and schemes can protect this old age custodian, in particular, the frequent supply of raw materials will exempted this art and its barriers from the list of endangered traditional arts.

Dr. R.S. Sripoorni (2018) Indian industry faces many problems it leads to industrial sickness. It was mostly seen in small scale industries. Especially the handloom industry weavers face many problems in day to day transaction. To recover them the Government of India also spend huge amount of money and trying to build them with new research techniques. But still the handloom industry goes on backwardness. Many weavers also migrated for their source of livelihood.

Dr. Dharma Chand Jain et.al (2017) The Indian handloom industries have wide demand in the local as well as foreign markets. Since most of the handloom units are run either as sole proprietor or on the partnership basis so the owners lack the professionalism in their overall handling of the work. It says that most of the weavers do lack of knowledge about the modern techniques of production, packaging, designing, promotion etc.

3. METHODOLOGY

The present study tries to understand the status of the rural handloom weavers in Mandwi RD Block, West Tripura District, Tripura and the problems faced by the artisans. The study is based on primary as well as secondary data for analyzing the issues as per the objectives.

Objectives

1. To study the socio-economic status of the handloom weavers
2. To study the problems of the weavers

Source of data collection

The data has been collected both from primary and secondary sources. The primary data has been collected from the respondent through a structured interview schedule. The data is collected from the villages under the Mandwi RD Block, West Tripura District, Tripura. Secondary data was collected from different sources like journals, articles, books, reports, sites etc. A sample of 270 respondents is selected among the rural handloom artisans. It is to analyze the socio economic status and the problems of the artisans. Tools of data collection are a structured interview schedule with forty one question

has been framed for the collection of data among the respondents.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: Age-Wise Distribution Of The Respondent

Sl.No	Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Less than 20	17	6.29
2	20-30	53	19.62
3	30-40	62	22.97
4	40-50	78	28.89
5	Above 50	60	22.22
	Total	270	100

Source: Computed

Table 1, explains the age of the respondents. Age is a determining factor in an individual physical growth, mental maturity, decision making, physical and confidence level differs on the basis of age. The distribution of respondent shows the age wise distribution of the respondent. There are 270 respondents, of which 17 respondents belong to the age group of less than 20, 53 respondents belong to the age group of 20-30, 62 respondents belongs to the age group of 30-40, 78 respondents to the age group of 40-50 and 60 respondents to the age of above 50. In this table it is found that 270 respondents 78(28.89) respondents are at the age of 40-50 yrs followed by the age group of above 30-40 yrs that comprises 22.97% of the total respondents. It is concluded that the age group of above 40-50 yrs is more engaged to the handloom weaving.

Table 2: Sex Wise Distribution Of Respondent

Sl. no	Sex	No. of Respondent	Percentage
1	Male	15	5.56
2	Female	255	94.44
	Total	270	100

Source: Computed

The above table shows the sex wise distribution of the respondent. In this table out of 270 respondents' male respondents are 15 of 270 respondents and 255 respondents are female. In this context out of 270 respondents 94.44 per cent belongs to the female respondents where they are engaged in handloom weaving and 5.56 percent belongs to the male. So it is referred from the above analysis that more females are involved in handloom activities as compared to males.

Table 3: Educational Status Wise Distribution Of The Respondents

Sl. no	Educational status	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Illiterate	20	7.40
2	Primary	78	28.89
3	High school	126	46.67
4	Higher secondary	36	13.33
5	College/ university	10	3.70
	Total	270	100

Source: Computed

In table 3, it explains the educational status of the respondents in the rural areas. It explains that out of 270 respondents 20 respondents, 7.40 percent are illiterate. 78 respondents, 28.89 percents are up to the primary level. 126 respondents, 46.67 percent are up to high school and 36 respondents, 13.33 percentage up to the higher secondary level of education. There are 10 respondents 3.70 percent having the educational level up to college/university. So it can be referred that only 3.70 percent respondents in the study area have the education level up to the college/universities.

Table 4: Marital Status Wise Distribution Of The Respondent

Sl.no	Marital status	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Married	197	72.96
2	Unmarried	61	22.60
3	Widow	9	3.33
4	Divorced	3	1.11
	Total	270	100

Source: Computed

The above table 4 shows the marital status of the respondents in the study areas. In this table it explains that out of 270 respondents, 197 respondents, 72.96 percent of the respondents are married and 61 respondents, 22.60 percent of the respondents are unmarried. It also shows that there is widow among the respondents in the study areas which consists of

9 respondents 3.33 percent. Among 270 respondents 3, 1.11 percent respondents are divorced. So we can conclude that married respondents are more engaged in the handloom activities as compared to unmarried. 197 (72.96%) of the respondents are married in the study area

Table 5: Caste Wise Distribution Of The Respondents

Sl. no	Caste	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	ST	230	85.18
2	SC	27	10
3	OBC	13	4.82
	Total	270	100

Source: Computed

In the above table 5, it shows the involvement of respondents from different community in handloom in the study area. Of the 270 respondents, 230 respondents belong to the Schedule Tribe (ST) community which comprises of 85.18 per cent of the total respondent. So, it can be explain that the Schedule Tribe community is more involved in the handloom weaving activities as compared to the schedule caste (SC) 10 per cent and the other backward caste (OBC) . 4.82 per cent as the area is mostly dominated by the schedule tribe community. It also explains there is no involvement of other community in the handloom activities other than the schedule tribe.

Table 6: Distribution Of Respondents According To Types Of Family

Sl. no	Family type	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Nuclear	257	95.18
2	Joint	13	4.82
	Total	270	100

Source: Computed

The table 6 explains the type of family of the respondents in the study area. It explain that out of 270 respondents, 257 respondents, 95.18 percent are living in the nuclear family, as the respondents in the study area preferred to live in a nuclear family as it lesser his/her responsibility as compared to the joint family. Only 13(4.82%) respondents out of 270 respondents choose to live in a joint family. So it can be concluded that maximum respondents 257 respondents, 95.18 percent in the study choose to live in the nuclear family as compared to joint family.

Table 7: Distribution Of Respondents According To Types Of Houses

Sl. no	Types of Houses	NO. of respondents	Percentage
1	Bricks	129	47.78
2	Bamboo	20	7.40
3	Mud	82	30.37
4	Tin	30	11.11
5	Other	09	3.33
	Total	270	100

Source: Computed

The above table 7 explains the type of houses among the respondent in the study area. In the study area, out of 270 respondents, 129 respondents, 47.78 percent of the respondents have bricks houses. 20 respondents, 7.40 percent have houses built with bamboo. 82 respondents, 30.37 percent of the respondents have mud houses, and 30 respondents, 11.11 percent of respondents have houses built with tin and 9 respondents, 3.33 percent of the respondents are having their houses built in some other materials in the study areas. So it can be concluded that majority of the respondents 47.78 percent have their houses built with bricks, followed by mud house which have houses 30.37 percent of the respondents. 11.11 percent of respondents are having tin houses, followed by 7.40 percent with bamboo. Only 3.33 percent of respondents have houses built with other materials.

Table 8: Distribution Of Respondents According To Family Income Annually

Sl. no	Income (Rs)	No. of Respondent	Percentage
1	Below 50,000	08	2.97
2	50,000-70,000	55	20.37
3	70,000-90,000	75	27.78
4	90,000-1 lakh Above	132	48.89
	Total	270	100

Source: Computed

The above table 8 shows the income of the respondents of the study area. It states that 2.97 percent, 08 respondents of 270 respondents have the annual income below 50,000. The respondents with 20.37 percent have an annual income of

between 50,000-70,000 that comprise of 55 respondents off 270 respondents in the area. 75 respondents, 27.78 percent have their annual income of 70,000-90,000. 132 respondents, 48.89 percent of the respondents are having the annual income of 90,000 - 11laks above in the area. The table canbe concluded saying that only a maximum respondents of 123(45.56%) of the respondentsare earning an annual income of Rs.90, 000- 1laks on the basis of the work done or products sold by the artisans

Table 9: Distribution Of Respondent According To Sources Of Savings

Sl. no	Sources of Savings	No. of Respondent	Percentage
1	Public sector Banks	137	50.75
2	Private sector Banks	09	3.33
3	Chit funds	05	1.86
4	LIC	23	8.52
5	Post-office	49	18.14
6	Cash	47	17.40
	Total	270	100

Source: Computed

The table 9, here shows the sources of savings of the respondents. There are different types of savings sources which the artisans preferred for their better future. Herethe data shows that 137 respondents out of 270 respondents have their savings in public sector banks, as it can be easily accessible to the respondents, followed by the Post-Office which comprise of 49 respondents.47 respondents of 270 respondents have their savings cashin house. 23 respondents are having an LIC policy and 5 respondents in chit funds. So it can conclude that 50.75 percent of respondent preferred public sector banks for their source of savings, followed by the post office with 1.14 percent of the respondents. 17.40 percent of the respondents have their savings in cash. It also shows that there are 8.52 percent of respondents with LIC policy and 1.86 percent in chit funds.

Table 10 Distribution Of Respondents According To Problems Of Handloom Weavers

Sl.no	Problems	Respondents	Percentage
1	Supply of Raw Materials	19	7.03
2	Price of Raw Materials	26	9.63
3	Improvement in Design	13	4.82
4	Infrastructure	7	2.60
5	Power loom competition	195	72.22
6	Other	10	3.70
	Total	270	100

Source: Computed

Table 10, the study shows 72.22 % of the respondents are having the challenges with thepower loom sector which comprises 205 respondents off 270 respondents, followed by 9.63% of the respondents having problems of price of raw materials. 7.03% of the respondents are having supply of raw materials. 4.82% and 3.70% of the respondents are having improvement in design and other problems respectively and only 2.60% of the respondents are having the infrastructural problems.

CONCLUSION

The study finds out that all the handloom weavers are from the indigenous community (Tribal)in Tripura which are fully dominated by women in the state. The handloom sectors are mostly engagedamong the women of the Tripuri community of Tripura residing in the rural areas. The handloom sectors have provided the employment opportunities either primarily or secondarily to the rural womenmass. The rural handloom weavers are also facing a deep challenge to the power loom sector,problems in the supply of raw materials, price of raw materials, and improvement in design, infrastructure and other problems. Thus, it is necessary to take a step ahead to tackle the problems of the weavers.

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