

A case study of handloom weaver's health hazards and their new livelihood prospects of its clue in Bishnupur District, Manipur

¹ Pebam Surjit Singh ² Dr. Kumam Praphullo Singh

¹Asst. Prof. (Statistics), ²Asst. Prof. (Statistics)

Department of Statistics, Thambal Marik College, Oinam
(NACC Accredited Government college, affiliated under Manipur University)

P.O. Nambol- 795134, Manipur, India

Email - ¹Pebamsurjitsingh71@gmail.com, ²kpraphullo@rediffmail.com

Abstract: Handloom is one of the oldest industries in India especially in Manipur. Where a considerable number of rural people are engaged in weaving. Bishnupur is the smallest district of Manipur representing 2.22 percent of the total area and the proportion of rural population is 63.1 percent whereas 36.9 percent lives in urban areas. The district has contributed an important share in handloom products. This paper aims to study to extend the knowledge and suggest measures to uplift them socially more specially from the health front. Lastly to study the impact of various government welfare schemes on the weavers working in the handloom sector.

Key Words: Enterprise, Health hazard, Merging money, Weaver comprehension.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Handloom Weaving is an ancient industry and it comprises of textile cottage industry. Cotton industry, Cotton silk and dying, lace embroidery, silk twisting etc. The importance of handloom sector in the national economy cannot be over emphasised on account of having the advantage of flexibility of small production run, uniqueness, innovation and adaptability to the exports requirement. Weaving is the basic process among various manufacturing stages of handloom clothes and is defined as a frame for weaving equipped with some wooden devices. The handloom industry in Manipur started from small home based enterprise. Nearly every housewife was capable of weaving all the cloth need by her family. For every Meitei women to be trained in weaving because it was believed that a woman without the knowledge of weaving did not possess the quality of womanhood.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Metgud et al. studied on women workers in a woollen textile factory for identification for health related problems. He found that observational cross sectional study conducted on a sample of 100 women workers who volunteered, outlines their cardio-reparatory and musculo-skeletal profile before during and at end of work. However, the musculo-skeletal problems were found to be abundantly present with pain in 91% of the subjects, Regionwise mapping of pain revealed that postural pain in low back were present in 47% while in neck was 19%. Pain and fatigue were found to be main problems for women in the spinning section.

Mr. Ashish Kumar, Dy. General Manager, Mr. Simaran Kaur Manager (2018), analyzed the characteristics of the handloom sector in India, export and import trends in handloom, different government schemes for the uplift men of the handloom sector. Handloom sector is being facing various problems such as competition from power loom and mill sector, shortage of raw materials, lack of credit availability, marketing issues, institutional inefficiencies, parcily of novelty in designs, inconvenient working conditions, unorganized nature of industry, insufficient research and training, inappropriate quality of designs, lack of information on schemes and reduction in number of weavers.

Kalyan Sarkar (2016), analyzed the health issues bieng faced by the weavers and suggested measures uplift weavers in various aspects, weavers are suffering from different health issues like back pain, neck pain, foot pain and joint pain. The reasons for health problems are poor ergonomic design at the workplace and no safety measures being follow at the workplace. The researcher recommended that the government should take legislative measures to provide hygienic, clean and safe environments at the workplace, the conduct of awareness programs on health issues and the conduct of regular health camps to monitor weavers health condition.

Jasneem Shazli (2014), analyzed the female work participation in the handloom industry, especially in Mubarakpur town, U.P. He found that female weavers are facing various problems such as poverty because of gradually declined the handloom industry due to intra-riots which have hampered the trade, competition from the power loom, health problems due to the involvement of physical work, level of education, and health facilities are very poor. Suggested that the government should take initiation for qualitative modification, guidance, and protection for the balanced development of the handloom industry.

In his Prime Ministerial Speech Shri. P.V. Narasimha Rao (1993). Shree P.V. Narashimha Rao (1993), at the meeting of the State Ministers In charge of Handloom, New Delhi, 4 March 1993, stated that from his own experience

that the price of something handmade in the Western markets may be hindered time more than the same thing made on a machine. In the handmade things, no things can be identical

He pointed out the necessity of having a massive programme of supplying loom to the loom less weavers, importance of credit and availability of funds. He stated that weavers of their country cannot be neglected any longer

Dogra, 2009 Indian weavers subsist on low wages are highly indebted, uneducated and carry an impending risk of insecure livelihood and starvation. The crisis of weavers has reached a situation whereas significant numbers of weavers are been forced to give up their traditional skills.

3. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

- To study the health hazards among the handloom weavers.
- To study the various schemes implemented sponsored by both Central Government and State Government.
- To aware and extend the knowledge to the handloom weavers.

4. METHODOLOGY:

In order to evaluate challenges faced by Handloom weavers and to identify and to extend the knowledge that the welfare schemes being implemented by both Central Government and State Government, data has been collected from both Primary data and Secondary data.

Primary data was collected from respondents through questionnaire directly which is based on random sampling from Bishnupur District.

Secondary data collected from the sources via Annual reports and Publications of Co-operative Department, Industries Department, Report of Handloom Census, Annual report of the Directorate of Information and Public Relations, Government of Manipur, Internet etc.

5. FINDING AND DISCUSSION:

The best wealth of a man is health. Good health can be defined as the state of being where a person is free from all kinds of physical or mental illness. It is the most precious possession of a man.

Weavers use hand-operated loom that require the weavers to sit at the loom and operate foot pedals that hang below. These actions require repetitive movement of the upper and lower limbs to operate pedals and shuttles with arm raised away from the body. Long work hours and strenuous activities put weavers risk for work related musculo-skeletal disorders (WMSDS) predominantly low back pain (LBP), MMSDS are a major health problems among workers in both industrialized and industrially developing countries. Other related diseases are eye sight, early cataract, loss of vision for the work, high or low blood pressure, harts problem, damage of lungs, arthritis etc.

Bishnupur District is covered with 63.1 percent by rural. The district has contributed an important share in handloom products and handloom is the only source of income and livelihood actively next to agriculture. In this regarded a large number of rural worker involved in this profession.

This study is important not only from the occupational health hazards and financial point of view of the weavers. It will increase work efficiency, production and workers quality of life. For this purpose, some schemes that sponsored by-both Central Government and State Government are here under given below :-

5.1. HEALTH INSURANCE: Health insurance is a mechanism by which a person protects himself/herself from financial loss caused due to accident and/or disability. The government of India is providing a Health Insurance scheme for weavers for providing access to healthcare facilities for all existing diseases as well as new diseases from the financial year 2007-08 onwards through ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Limited. The schemes envisages covering not only the weavers but also his/her spouse and two children. The ICICI Lombard shall pay reimburses the expenses incurred by the weavers in course of medical treatment availed of in any hospital or nursing home within the country to the limit of Rs. 15000 for family per annum out of which Out Patient Department (OPD) covering is Rs. 7500.

5.2. LIFE INSURANCE: The Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bheem Yojana (MGBBY) is being implemented for providing life Insurance coverage to the handloom weavers in case of natural or accidental death, total and partially disability due to accident since 2005-06 by the Government of India. This Scheme is being operated by LIC of India. In addition under this scheme is scholarship of Rs.100 per month per child is given to the students studying in ix and xii standards for a maximum period of four years.

Pradhan Mantri Jeeban Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) were launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 9th May, 2015 for creating a universal and affordable Social Security

System. While PMJJBY provides life insurance cover, PMSBY provides accidental insurance cover for accidental death or disability.

5.3 WEAVERS COMPREHENSIVE WELFARE SCHEMES:

The Health Insurance Scheme aims at financially enabling the weaver community to access the best of healthcare facilities in the country. The scheme is to cover all pre-existing diseases as well as new diseases and keeping substantial provision for Out Patient Department (OPD).

The ancillary Handlooms workers like those engaged in warping, winding, dying, printing, finishing, sizing, Thala making, Jacquard, cutting etc are also eligible to be covered. The scheme is sponsored by both Central Government and State Government.

6. TRANSFORMING INDIA :

In the 12th Five Year Plan, the Health Insurance scheme was established on the pattern of the Rasthriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) of Ministry of Labour and employment. The scheme is aimed toward financially enabling the weaver community to access the best of healthcare facilities in the country. The scheme would cover the weaver along with his wife/husband and two children to cover all pre-existing diseases as well as new diseases and keeping substantial provision for OPD.

Other Government and Health Welfare related scheme are :

PM's scholarship scheme.

Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme.

National Family Benefit Scheme.

Atal Pension Yojana.

Widow Pension scheme etc.

SOURCE: NATIONAL PORTAL CONTROL MANAGEMENT TEAM (Ministry of Textile's, 03-01-2008)

With the great potential, the sector was implemented various promotional, development and Welfare Schemes for the better earning and well being of Weavers. They are :

6.1. MERGING MONEY: It is a form of financial assistance provided to weaver to avail credit facilities from FI/Bank. The amount so provided deposited in the bank account of the agency or SHG. The rate merging money under Dean Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana (DDHPY) implemented for 2002 to 2007 was Rs. 4000 and Rs. 6000 per weaver under Integrated Handloom Development Scheme (IHDS) from 2007 to 2013-14. A total of 18272 were covered with 698.40 lakh in these two schemes with contribution of 10% as state share.

6.2. SKILL UPGRADATION(Training) : In order to facilitate weavers to switch over from low value items to better and high value added products, assistance for skill up gradation was given to 14497 weavers with Rs. 471.80 lakh under DDHPY from 2002 to 2007 and IHDS from 2007 to 2014 as 100% funding of Government of India, Additional 11550 weavers will be trained by Rs. 1262.41 lakh under Integrated Skill Development Scheme (ISDC) within 2017 and within 10% as state share.

6.3. COMMON FACILITY CENTRE(CFC) : In order to carry out common activities, like warping, dying, pre and post-loom operation, a total of 155 CFCs were constructed with an amount of Rs. 553.93 lakh under DDHPY from 2002 to 2007 and IHDS from 2007 to 2014 with contribution of 10% as state share. (Source : [https:// www. ifp.co.in](https://www.ifp.co.in))

6.4. LOOM, JACQUARD, DOBBY AND ACCESSORIES: New loom for loom less, accessories for new loom. Jacquard and Dobby for producing new designs were provided to 28412 weavers for amount of Rs. 866.88 lakh under DDHPY from 2002 to 2007 and IHDS from 2007 to 2014 with contribution of 10% as state share.

6.5. CONSTRUCTION OF WORK SHED: In order to create a better working atmosphere with better light and environment, 17042 work sheds were constructed for the cost of Rs. 600.67 lakh under Work shed-Cum-Housing Scheme from 2003-2006. (Source : [http:// www.ifp.co.in](http://www.ifp.co.in))

6.7. MUDRE SCHEME: Credit requirements of handloom weavers are met under Weavers MUDRA Scheme, a component of NHDP. Under the scheme, Credit is provided at concessional interest rate of 6% to the handloom weavers with margin money assistance up to Rs. 10,000 per weaver and credit guarantee for a period of 3 years.

6.8. YARN SUPPLY SCHEME : The aims of this scheme is to aid in constant supply of basic raw materials and varieties of Yarn to handloom weavers at a sustainable level off the mill gate price. This scheme constitutes three elements namely, supplying yarn at mill gate price; providing 10% subsidy on price of domestic silk, wool and cotton hank yarn and costly, investing in NHDC.

7. CONCLUSION:

The handloom industry is a high risk occupation to develop various types of occupational disorders. Awareness programs and local group discussions are essential for improving the health status of weavers. Proper medical checkups should be conducted by the employers for the worker from time to time.

With such as large number of rural workers involve in this profession minimizing the occupational hazards through improved workplace ergonomics will increase work efficiency, production and worker's quality of life.

Lastly, it concludes that almost of the weavers are not aware of Central and State Government Scheme. Hence, immediate necessary action should be taken up by the Government to increase the awareness and satisfactory usage of these scheme to improved the livelihood and enhance income of the weavers.

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