ISSN Print: 2394-7500
ISSN Online: 2394-5869
Impact Factor: 8.4
IJAR 2022; 8(6): 89-95
www.allresearchjournal.com
Received: 27-02-2022
Accepted: 13-04-2022

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A study on issues and challenges on production of handloom sector with special reference to rayalaseema and costal region of Andhra Pradesh

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.22271/allresearch.2022.v8.i6b.9823

Abstract
Handloom sector in Andhra Pradesh is known to manufacture exclusive sarees with intricate and distinctive designs. Every piece woven is often different from others. In view of the field work, the present study examines the problems and prospects of handloom sector of Andhra Pradesh which contributes significantly to the state economy and provides sustainable livelihood opportunities to natives of the state This study is concentrated in Rayalaseem and Costal Region of Andhra Pradesh, because in spite of decrease in handloom weaver population in the state of Andhra Pradesh. The studies also revealed that customers are willing to buy handloom and handcrafted products but they do not have this knowledge whether they are spending money on the original or the imitated product. The studies also revealed that customers are willing to buy handloom and handcrafted products but they do not have this knowledge whether they are spending money on the original or the imitated product. The visibility of handloom and handicrafts in the fashion and textile market had increased with the mobile applications and the handcraft will develop into a brand in itself with improved customer experience in Andhra Pradesh.

Keywords: Handloom, weavers, weaving, raw material, production

Introduction
Handloom industry in India has been facing hard challenges across the supply chain activities including production, marketing and financial. In this paper, the focus is to find out the problems faced by the handloom weavers in Andhra Pradesh with regard to production. The handloom fabric production has been imprinted with the growth rate of 6 to 7% during the 14th five year plan. The subsequent economic downturn has touched on the handloom sectors in India; as a result of this the production in handloom sector has declined in 2015-19. Nowadays there is a positive sign and yield has shown upward growth and recorded a figure of 6952 million sq. meters in the year 2020- 21. During 2019- 20, cloth production in the handloom sector is reported to 10116 million square meters. This sector is confronting the problem of deficiency of fiscal resources for renovating their looms, expanding the scale of operations and to meet working capital demands etc. As regards production, there are adversities like poor output, long working hours, outdated looms and working methods, increased raw material prices etc., which can have an impact on earning capability of the weaver. Poor productivity results in poor earnings, which in return may cause of the predicament of the weavers.

Review of Literature
Deshmukh (2013) concentrated on the analysis of the target customers buying behavior for handicrafts and handlooms products of CIDCO's (City and Industrial Development Corporation of Maharashtra) Urban Haat project which has been the policy of the Government of India's in setting up permanent marketing functions at primal locations in the nation to discard middle agencies. Determining Consumer Buying Behavior provides higher content to consumers. They conclude that the project has embraced the purchase decision process Marketing Concept, and is consumer targeted. The objective of this analysis is to determine target consumers, aspects that influence purchase decision mode, and to evaluate if

the product meets the targeted consumer's needs. The results indicated that young males and females professionals from middle-class families have been the targeted consumers who have a higher influence in the purchasing decision process of handicraft and handloom products. Yet their requirements are not compelling due to cost and various reasons.

Tanusree (2015) aims to understand the various problems of Handloom Weavers of Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. The problems are the evolution of new technology (power-loom), capitalist control, a drop-off in wages, increased price of yarn, and so on. The present study is descriptive in nature. The data have been collected through in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews, case studies, and focused group discussions. The study findings revealed that the handloom weavers of Varanasi have lost their prestigious traditional industry. It has occurred due to industrialization all over India. The capitalist production, an invention of the power loom, increasing price of yarn, low wages, and labour problems are pushed to handloom to margin. The production system is mostly under the control of a particular entrepreneurial class Gaddidar or master weaver. The Gaddidar possesses capital and power that they can control over the production unit and labour. The weavers do not sustain their life with the handloom. The handloom industry is one of the major industries that need immediate care and attention. The problems of unemployment will increase with this declining trend in the handloom sector.

Goswami and Jain (2014) conducted a study to identify the inadequacy faced by the weaving industry today. The research was used two government organizations Rajasthan Rajya Bunkar Sahkari Sangh (RRBSS), and Rajasthan Handloom Development Corporation (RHDC). This study was conducted based on a semi-structured interview schedule, observation method, and many other secondary sources. However, it was found that the handloom industry did not pursue any specialized strategies for procuring raw materials, product planning, and especially for marketing their fabrics. A clear strategy was derived to bring in more profit for the handloom sector on finding out the problems"

Mathiraj and Rajkumar (2008)10 made an analytical study on Handloom products production and marketing. It was found in their study that the Societies in Ramanathapuram District are facing wide fluctuation in yarn price, lack of availability of skilled labour force & was thus suggested for formulation of production pattern and sales design to accelerate the handloom products in the market.

Statement of the problem

Production is a technical process which involves conversion of inputs into desired output by adding marketable value. Handloom weaving is skill oriented work and the productivity depends on the nature of the loom used, type of fabric produce, material used and working methods employed etc. weavers add unique value to the product across the weaving. Production of cloth on handloom needs a series of activities and weavers facing many challenges like diseconomies, increased cost of production, poor productivity, and obsolete technology and so on. Hence, it is required to understand the various issues and challenges faced by the weavers in view of production.

Objective

To analyze the challenges faced by handloom weavers in the field of production in Andhra Pradesh.

Methodology

To study the objective, a schedule with 64 items was developed and administered on a sample size of 565 handloom weaver households out of which 316 were independent weaver households, 158 households were working for master weavers under finance and order system and 91 were society weaver households working independently for a purpose of analysis. Personal interview method was used to collect the data with the help of schedule.

The convenient random technique is employed to select the handloom weaver respondents in Andhra Pradesh. Chirala in Prakasam district, Venkatagiri in Nellore district, Uppada in East Godavari, Vemavaram in West Godavari, Mangalagiri in Guntur district and Dharmavaram in Anantapur district have been selected as study areas where most of the handloom weavers are located and cover all corners of the state. The gathered data are tabulated and statistical tools were employed to examine the data collected. Statistical tools used: Chi-square, ANOVA, Percentage and Cronbach's Alpha for reliability testing.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Type of loom using by sample respondents

Opinion of the Respondents	IWH		HWMWSWH				
	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	Total
Pit loom	184	58.2	88	55.7	58	63.7	330 (58.4)
Jacquard loom	76	24.1	41	25.9	15	16.5	132 (23.4)
Plain loom with dobby	36	11.4	18	11.4	10	11.0	64 (11.3)
Stand loom	20	6.3	11	7.0	8	8.8	39 (6.9)
Total	316	100	158	100	91	100	565 (100)
Pearson Chi-Square = 3.635, P-Value = 0.726							

Source: Field Survey

Loom is used to produce a cloth, and it is centre activity in the entire weaving chain, ranging from wrapping to weaving. There are different types of looms; all are not compatible to make complex designs. Certain type of looms can't be operated by all the weavers due to lack of consciousness about usage of advanced looms. Keeping this in view, the weavers were asked about the loom usage. The table1 indicates a lion share which is 58.4% of total respondents are using traditional pit loom followed by 23.4% respondents use jacquard looms in the study area. Conversely, 11.3% respondents using plain loom with dobby setup and 6.9% of the respondents were using stand looms. It is concluded from the above result most of the

weaver households in all categories using pit looms in their weaving activity.

Statistical Analysis: The variables "type of loom" and type of weaver are independent to each other as per the insignificant p- value of the chi-square mentioned above.

Table 2: Respondents opinion on number of hours working per day

Opinion of the Respondents	IWH		HWMW		SWH		Total
	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	
Upto 8 hours	59	18.7	26	16.5	23	25.3	108 (19.1)
8-10 hours	101	32	63	39.9	38	41.8	202 (35.8)
10-12 hours	99	31.3	43	27.2	15	16.5	157 (27.8)
12 and above	57	18	26	16.5	15	16.5	98 (17.3)
Total	316	100	158	100	91	100	565 (100)
Pearson Chi-Square = 11.190, P-Value = 0.083							

Source: Field Survey

The above table presents 19.1% of total respondents spend up to 8 hours on weaving followed by a major 35.8% of the respondents have spent 8 to 10 hours on work. Conversely, 27.8% of respondents answered that they spend 10 to 12 hours on work per day. 17.3% of respondents stated that they work 12 hours and above in a day.

It is concluded from above observations most of the weavers from all categories work 8 to 12 hours in a day in different time intervals.

Statistical Analysis: There is no significant difference in the proportions among the three types of weavers with regard to the number of working hours per day based on the insignificant p-value of the chi-square test.

Table 3: Respondents opinion on sources of purchasing yarn

Opinion of the Respondents	IWH		HWMW		SWH		Total
	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	
Open Market	238	75.3	113	71.5	65	71.4	416 (73.6)
Agents	30	9.5	21	13.3	14	15.4	65 (11.5)
APCO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0)
NDHC	48	15.2	24	15.2	12	13.2	84 (14.9)
Total	316	100	158	100	91	100	565 (100)
Pearson Chi-Square = 3.224, P-Value = 0.521							

Source: Field Survey

The above table presents the opinion of the respondents with respect to sources of purchasing yarn. A major 73.6% of total respondents were purchasing yarn from open market followed by 11.5% respondents procure yarn from agents and 14.9% of total respondents purchase from National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC). It is also observed none of the respondents purchase yarn from APCO. It can be concluded from the analysis that most of the weavers depend on open market to purchase required yarn.

Statistical Analysis: The statement "sources of purchasing yarn" and type of weavers are independent to each other at 5% level of significance.

Table 4: Respondents opinions to improve productivity

Opinion of the Respondents	IWH		HWMW		SWH		Total
	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	
Upgradation of loom	79	25	39	24.7	26	28.6	144 (25.5)
Technical Assistance	50	15.8	20	12.7	9	9.9	79 (14.0)
Financial Support	152	48.1	86	54.4	46	50.5	284 (50.3)
Training Support	35	11.1	13	8.2	10	11	58 (10.3)
Total	316	100	158	100	91	100	565 (100)
Pearson Chi-Square = 4.191, P-Value = 0.651							

Source: Field Survey

The above table presents the opinion of the respondents with respect to the suggestions given by sample weavers to improve productivity. It is interesting to observe from the data that the opinions elicited by the sample respondents reveal that 25.5% of total respondents viewed up gradation of loom would be the solution to improve productivity. It is evident from the data that 14% of total respondents stated that technical assistance is required for increasing output. Against the above tendency 50.3% of total respondents stated financial support to them helps in exploiting productivity. Whereas 10.3% of the total respondents proposed training support to the weavers can help increase productivity. It can be concluded from the above analysis that majority percentage of respondents from all categories wished for financial support which can help improve productivity.

Statistical Analysis: The insignificant p-value reveals that there is no significant difference in the opinion of the respondents on improvement of productivity

Table 5: Undue hike in raw material price

Opinion of the Respondents	IWH		HWMW		SWH		Total
	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	
Strongly agree	205	64.9	99	62.7	62	68.1	366 (64.8)
Agree	69	21.8	33	20.9	16	17.6	118 (20.9)
Neither agree nor							
disagree	16	5.1	11	7	5	5.5	32 (5.7)
Disagree	18	5.7	12	7.6	7	7.7	37 (6.5)
Strongly disagree	8	2.5	3	1.9	1	1.1	12 (2.1)
Total	316	100	158	100	91	100	565 (100)

Source: Field Survey

Table 5 is a canvas of respondent's reflections regarding the statement that undue hike in raw materials is one of the main problems related to production. It is interesting to observe from the data that the opinion elicited by the respondents have difference of opinion in three categories. It is evident that 64.8% of total respondents stated that they strongly agree to the view point. Conversely 20.9% of total respondents who stated that they agree to the above view point followed by 5.7% of total respondents were not agreeing or disagree to the above statement.

Against the above tendency, 2.1% of total respondents strongly disagree to the same view point, whereas 6.5% of total respondents stated disagree. It can be concluded from the above analysis that the extent of respondents who strongly agree is more as compared to other options regarding statement undue hike in raw materials is one of the main problems related to production as compared to who disagree and strongly disagree.

Table 6: Traditional methods of getting work done

Opinion of the Respondents	IWH		HWMW		SWH		Total
	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	
Strongly agree	152	48.1	70	44.3	44	48.4	266 (47.1)
Agree	109	34.5	54	34.2	31	34.1	194 (34.3)
Neither agree nor							
disagree	22	7	12	7.6	7	7.7	41 (7.3)
Disagree	20	6.3	12	7.6	6	6.6	38 (6.7)
Strongly disagree	13	4.1	10	6.3	3	3.3	26 (4.6)
Total	316	100	158	100	91	100	565 (100)

Source: Field Survey

Table 6 reflects of respondents reflections regarding the statement that traditional methods of getting work done is one of the production related problems in view of weaving. It is observed from the data that the opinion elicited by the respondents is mixed in nature. It is evident that 47.1% of the total respondents stated that they strongly agree to the about statement. Conversely, 34.3% of total respondents stated that they agree to the above statement or point.

Against the above tendency, it is interesting to observe that the same opinions was reflected on the statement that 6.7% of total respondents stated disagree followed by a meager 4.6% of total respondents stated that they strongly disagree with the above statement, whereas 7.3% of total respondents stated that they neither agree nor disagree. It can be concluded from the above analysis that the extent of respondents who strongly agree is more as compared to other options regarding statement that traditional methods of getting work done is one of the main problems related to production as compared to respondents who disagree and strongly disagree.

Table 7: Unable to produce complex designs on the looms used

Opinion of the Respondents	IWH		HWMW		SWH		Total
	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	
Strongly agree	121	38.3	49	31	28	30.8	198 (35.0)
Agree	129	40.8	71	44.9	33	36.3	233 (41.2)
Neither agree nor							
disagree	22	7	13	8.2	13	14.3	48 (8.5)
Disagree	25	7.9	11	7	11	12.1	47 (8.3)
Strongly disagree	19	6	14	8.9	6	6.6	39 (7.0)
Total	316	100	158	100	91	100	565 (100)
Pearson Chi-Square = 10.940, DF = 8, P-Value = 0.205							

Source: Field Survey

The above table presents responses regarding the statement that Unable to produce complex designs on the looms used. An observation is made with the help of opinions elicited from the sample respondents of all categories. It is apparent from the table that majority of the respondents have agreed on the statement. However, in between the categories the response is mixed. It is found that 35.0% of total respondents stated that they strongly agree with the statement. Conversely, 41.2% of total respondents stated that they are agreeing to the above statement.

Against the above tendency, 8.3% of total respondents disagree followed by 7.0% total respondents stated that they strongly disagree to the same statement. Whereas 8.5% of total respondents stated that they neither agree nor disagree to the above statement. It can be concluded from the above examination that the extent of agree is more as compared to

other options regarding statement Unable to produce complex designs on the looms used is one of the main problems related to production as compared to who disagree nd strongly disagree.

Statistical Analysis: With regard to the statement "Unable to produce complex designs on the looms used", the type of weavers does not play a significant role as per the insignificant p-value (0.205) of the chi-square test mentioned above at 5% level of significance.

Table 8: Unavailability of yarn in the required count

Opinion of the Respondents	IWH		HWMW		SWH		Total
	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	
Strongly agree	23	7.3	8	5.1	5	5.5	36 (6.4)
Agree	53	16.8	23	14.6	15	16.5	91 (16.1)
Neither agree nor							
disagree	46	14.6	22	13.9	20	22	88 (15.6)
Disagree	163	51.6	93	58.9	37	40.7	293 (51.9)
Strongly disagree	31	9.8	12	7.6	14	15.4	57 (10.1)
Total	316	100	158	100	91	100	565 (100)
Pearson Chi-Square = 11.382, P-Value = 0.181							

Source: Field Survey

The above table demonstrates the opinions elicited from sample respondents of all categories of weavers households. It is apparent from the table that majority of the respondents in three categories have endorsed a negative note on the statement. However, in between the units the response is mixed. About 51.9% of the total respondents stated that they disagree with statement "Unavailability of yarn in the required count is one of the problems of production", followed by that 10.1% of total respondents stated that they strongly disagree to the above statement.

Against the above tendency, that 6.4% of total respondents stated that they strongly agree, whereas 16.1% of total respondents stated that they agree. It can be concluded from above analysis that majority of respondents strongly disagree in three categories to the view point that Unavailability of yarn in the required count is one of the problems of production, as compared to respondents who stated agree and strongly disagree.

Statistical Analysis: With regard to the statement "Unavailability of yarn in the required count", all the three types of weavers opined more or less unanimous at 5% level of significance as per the insignificant p-value of the chi-square test

Table 9: Respondents view about obsolete technology

Opinion of the Respondents	IWH		HWMW		SWH		Total
	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	
Strongly agree	95	30.1	44	27.8	21	23.1	160 (28.3)
Agree	127	40.2	64	40.5	37	40.7	228 (40.4)
Neither agree nor							
disagree	52	16.5	29	18.4	14	15.4	95 (16.8)
Disagree	24	7.6	15	9.5	14	15.4	53 (9.4)
Strongly disagree	18	5.7	6	3.8	5	5.5	29 (5.1)
Total	316	100	158	100	91	100	565 (100)
Pearson Chi-Square = 6.939, P-Value = 0.543							

Source: Field Survey

The above table shows the opinions elicited from the respondents regarding statement that the outcome of using obsolete technology is poor productivity. It is clearly evident that 40.4% of total respondents have stated that they agree the above statement, followed by 28.3% of total respondents have strongly agree.

Against the above tendency, that 9.4% of total respondents stated that they disagree followed by 5.1% of total respondents who stated that they strongly disagree with the above statement, whereas a substantial 16.8% of total respondents stated a neither agree nor disagree to the statement outcome of using obsolete technology is poor productivity.

Statistical Analysis: Almost 70% of the respondents from all the three types of weaver's category opined positive about the obsolete technology. This shows that there is no significant difference in their opinion at 5% level.

Table 10: respondent's opinions on increased cost of production

Opinion of the Respondents	IWH		HWMW		SWH		Total
	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	
Strongly agree	140	44.3	84	53.2	48	52.7	272 (48.1)
Agree	92	29.1	47	29.7	20	22	159 (28.1)
Neither agree nor							
disagree	27	8.5	15	9.5	13	14.3	55 (9.7)
Disagree	47	14.9	7	4.4	5	5.5	59 (10.4)
Strongly disagree	10	3.2	5	3.2	5	5.5	20 (3.5)
Total	316	100	158	100	91	100	565 (100)

Source: Field Survey

The above table presents the opinions elicited from the respondents. It is observed from the data that a major 48.1% of total respondents stated that they strongly agree to the statement, that increased cost of production is one of the problems in view of handloom cloth production, followed by 28.1% of respondents stated that they agree to the above point.

Against the above tendency, 10.4% of total respondent stated that they disagree to the same viewpoint. Whereas a meager 3.5% of respondents stated that they strongly disagree. It can be concluded from the above analysis that the extent of respondents who strongly agree to the statement that increased cost of production is one of the problems of production of handloom products as compared to a response of disagree and strongly disagree

Statistical Analysis: Since the p-value of the chi-square test is less than 0.05, the level of significance so it is concluded that there is a significant difference in the proportions of the respondents with regard to the statement "increased cost of production" i.e., opinion of weavers belongs to IWH on increased cost pressure is significantly differ when compare with other two types of weavers.

Table 11: respondent's opinions on poor institutional support

Opinion of the Respondents	IWH		HWMW		SWH		Total
	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	
Strongly agree	36	11.4	18	11.4	12	13.2	66 (11.7)
Agree	129	40.8	78	49.4	41	45.1	248 (43.9)
Neither agree nor							
disagree	75	23.7	45	28.5	26	28.6	146 (25.8)
Disagree	58	18.4	11	7	5	5.5	74 (13.1)
Strongly disagree	18	5.7	6	3.8	7	7.7	31 (5.5)
Total	316	100	158	100	91	100	565 (100)

Source: Field Survey

Above data presents the opinions elicited from the respondents. It is observed from the data that about 11.7% of total respondents strongly agree to the statement that poor institutional support is one of the challenges faced in production of handloom products.

Conversely, 43.9% of total respondents stated agree to the above viewpoint. It can also be seen that 25.8% of total respondents opined that they neither agree nor disagree to the above statement. Against the above tendency 13.1% of total respondents disagreed to the same viewpoint. Whereas a meager 5.5% of total respondents stated that they strongly disagree with the statement.

Statistical Analysis: The proportion of respondents who were from IWH type is significantly different when compared with other two types of weavers as per the significant p-value of the chi-square test

Table 12: respondent's opinions on adverse climate conditions

Opinion of the Respondents	IWH		HWMW		SWH		Total
	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	No. of Respondents	% Age	
Strongly agree	51	16.1	26	16.5	17	18.7	94 (16.6)
Agree	117	37	68	43	40	44	225 (39.8)
Neither agree nor							
disagree	53	16.8	26	16.5	9	9.9	88 (15.6)
Disagree	70	22.2	27	17.1	19	20.9	116 (20.5)
Strongly disagree	25	7.9	11	7	6	6.6	42 (7.4)
Total	316	100	158	100	91	100	565 (100)
Pearson Chi-Square = 5.510, P-Value = 0.702							

Source: Field Survey

The above table presents the opinions of the sample respondents regarding the statement that adverse climate conditions is one of the problems of handloom production. It is observed from the data that the opinions given by the respondents, it is evident from the fact that 16.6% of total respondents stated that they strongly agree to the above view point, followed by 39.8% of the total respondents who agree to the above view point.

Against the above tendency, 20.5% of total respondent disagree to the same view point. Whereas a meager 7.4% of total respondents stated that they strongly disagree. It can be concluded from the above analysis that the extent of agreeableness is more regarding statement adverse climate conditions is one of the problems handloom production as compared to who disagree and strongly disagree.

Statistical Analysis: Further, it is concluded from the above table that the opinion of all the three types of weavers are more or less unanimous with regard to the "adverse climate conditions is one of the problems of handloom production" as per the insignificant p-value of the chi-square.

Table 13: Statistical Analysis for Production Related Problems

Type of Weaver	n	Mean	SD	F-Value	P-Value	Decision
IWH	316	3.3722	.36656			
SWH	91	3.3544	.48931	1.287	0.277	Not Significant
HWMW	158	3.2953	.35430			

The average opinion score of the weavers belongs to SWH is little bit greater than the remaining two categories of the weavers with regard to the dimension "Production problems" but the difference is not statistically significant as per the insignificant P-value (0.277) of the Anova (1.287) test mentioned above. Further, the mean scores for all the three categories of the weavers are more than 3.3, which is greater than neutral level that specifies that almost 43% of the respondents are disregard with the statements related to the production problems. The studies also revealed that customers are willing to buy handloom and handcrafted products but they do not have this knowledge whether they are spending money on the original or the imitated product. The visibility of handloom and handicrafts in the fashion and textile market had increased with the mobile applications and the handcraft will develop into a brand in itself with improved customer experience.

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