

# Analysis of Handloom industry and its major problems In Dakshin Dinajpur of West Bengal

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**ABSTRACT:** *Glorious history of handloom of India as well as of West Bengal is well known to all. Present of handloom has also the fame in respect of its versatility and uniqueness. It is such a sector which providing a huge numbers of employment next to Agriculture. This industry is a high labour and low capital intensive and sustainable in nature. The statistics exhibiting that handloom sector provided with direct employment to over 6.5 million people in India and in West Bengal it is 6.6 lakh in weaving and allied activities. As an industrially black and boarder attached and so called back ward district Dakshin Dinajpur is performing its crucial role in employment generation through Handloom sector. Among the eight community development blocks of Dakshin Dinajpur Gangarampur has the highest concentration of handloom industry. In Dakshin Dinajpur such a “Green Industry” in recent days is facing a numbers of problems like- crisis of raw-materials, low wage, sharp decline of number of weaver, lethargy of new generation in adopting weaving as their livelihood, competition with power loom sector, small domestic market etc.*

**Key Words:** *Handloom industry, weavers, glory, employment generation, depressed economic condition.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Handloom is one of the most important cottage industries in India. The handloom weaving industry is playing a very imperative role in India's economy (Shaw 2010). As a small scale and cottage industry it deserves a special attention as it need a small capital investment. This industry is labour intensive and decentralized in nature. Handloom sector also has the competence to minimize the regional imbalances as it are decentralized in nature and even in the most remote and backward areas handloom industry may flourish. The strength of Handloom lies in introducing imperative designs which cannot be replicated by the power loom sector. Handloom is unparallel in its flexibility and versatility (MoT 2001-02). The handloom industry exhibits extreme diversity in terms of products, modes of production, as well as in relations within the production structure (Das 2017). India is facing, at the present day, evil of unemployment in its every state. In this situation eradication of unemployment may be favorable with the progressive development of this handloom sector. According to the 3<sup>rd</sup> handloom census, conducted in the year 2009-10, Handloom sector is providing 6.5 million people in India. In west Bengal handloom is leaving a good imprint of employment generation and positive impact in the economy in the concerned areas of concentration of handloom industry. As per the report of Directorate of Textile, Govt. of West Bengal, 2009-10 there are 3.51 lakh total handlooms which giving direct and indirect employment of 6.66 lakh person over the state. This sector also earns a good amount of foreign currency through exporting the handloom goods (Das 2017). But the present scenario of handloom West Bengal as well as of Dakshin Dinajpur is changing rapidly. It is facing a numbers of problems such as insufficient supply of raw material and rising price; acute crisis of labour or weaver; unequal competition with powerloom sector; woeful economic condition of the weavers; poor infrastructural condition and ill management; collapse of Primary Weavers Cooperative Societies and so on. Eventually the sector is leading towards the disappearance of its glory. Ultimately the number of weaver and looms are decreasing at a considerable rate. The post-liberalization period has also seen the largest decline in handlooms, either because of transition from handloom to power loom or exit from handloom (Bhattacharya and Sen 2018). One of the important employment generators- the handloom industry now a day's facing a numbers of problems and future of it is questioned (Kumudha and Rizwana 2013). Handloom industry unfortunately is today under threat of extinction due to the competition from the cheaper machine made or power loom product and side by side the imported handloom products which have affected adversely the weavers livelihood. (Sengupta, 2011). The problems of handloom industry lie in that the middlemen impede the manufacturers by purchasing the product at low price but sales the goods at higher price to the customers. They also held responsible the new revised foreign policies and globalization processes for the depressed condition of the handloom industry (Joy and Kani 2013). Decline is observed in

various terms, from absolute decline in production or commerce to relative decline, to declining production diversity, to declining artisan agency or standards of living (Ian C. Wendt).

## 2 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The current study has the following objectives.

- To analyse the current status of industry in Dakshin Dinajpur District
- To analyze the situation of handloom industry of Dakshin Dinajpur.
- To search the major problems of the handloom sector in the district.
- Make an assessment of the problems of the same.

## 3 DATA AND METHODS

### 3.1 Data base

Both the primary and secondary data have been collected. Primary data has been collected from field survey & Secondary data from the plausible sources are- Census Data, District statistical handbook by Bureau of Applied Economic and Research, Kolkata, Directorate of textile, handloom, West Bengal, Directorate, Micro & small scale enterprise, Govt. of West Bengal etc., Published research paper, District Handloom Development Office, Gangarampur.

### 3.2 Methodology

In order to identify the foremost problems of the handloom industry in Dakshin Dinajpur District has been chosen. A large numbers of the handlooms are distributed in the district of Dakshin Dinajpur. In the year of 2012, out of the 35506 weavers in whole Dakshin Dinajpur district 19663 weavers are concentrated in the block of Gangarampur which exhibiting the leading geographical concentration of weavers in Gangarampur. The data have been collected on handloom by in-depth interview, observation and group discussion. To identify the problems of Handloom sector in Dakshin Dinajpur District, 150 weaver's perceptions were taken from the weaver concentrated mouzas of the block along with the Gangarampur Municipality area. To unfold the problems of the sector weavers were selected by simple random sampling technique.

With the purpose of regionalization of problems related to the Handloom Industry in Dakshin Dinajpur the following methodological stages have been incorporated. The following sections, deal with the whole methodology.

- i) Intensity of each problem of Handloom industry has been calculated in percentage for each of the blocks and Ratings have been assigned following Singh and Dhillon's method (2006).
- ii) Block wise weighted Rating (WR) of each problem has been calculated.
- iii) Composite Weighted Rating (CWR) has been calculated for each block of the blocks of Dakshin Dinajpur by using the following formula.

$$CWR = \frac{\sum WR}{\sum R}$$

Where,

CWR = Composite weighted Ranking

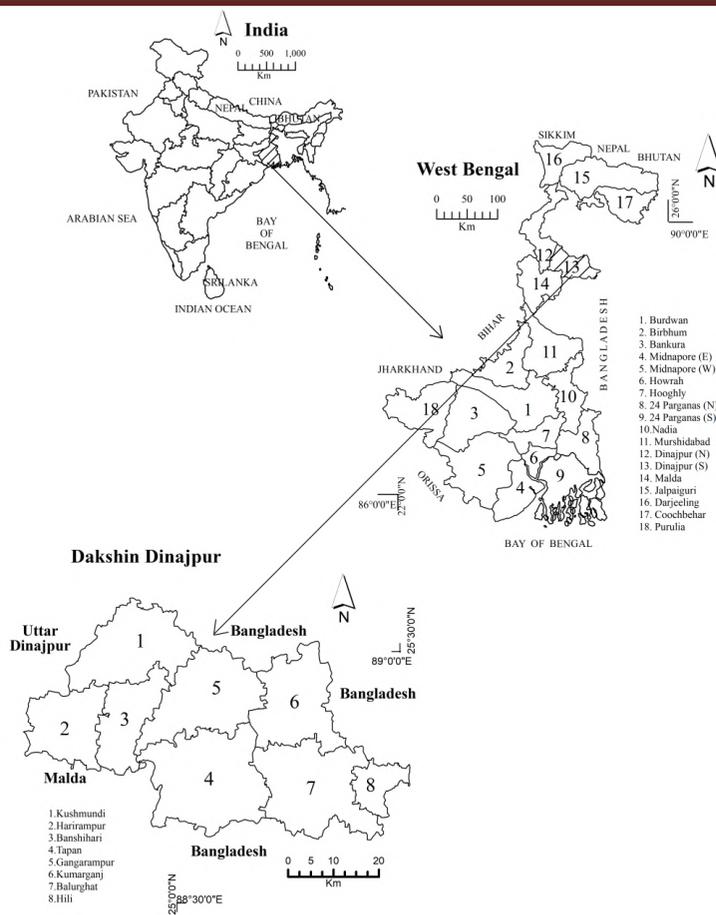
$\sum WR$  = Sum of weighted Ranking

$\sum R$  = Sum of Ranking

- iv) Lastly the regional variations of the problems both in individual level and composite level have been displayed by using suitable classification schemes on the basis of their Weighted Rating (WR) and Composite Weighted Rating (CWR).

## 4 STUDY AREA

In this research work Gangarampur block of Dakshin Dinajpur district has been taken. The district of West Dinajpur was bifurcated on 01.04.1992 and formed two separate districts viz: Uttar Dinajpur having its headquarters at Raiganj and Dakshin Dinajpur having its headquarters at Balurghat. Dakshin Dinajpur spreads across 2162 Km<sup>2</sup> of land. The district has its international boundary with Bangladesh on its east and south and Uttar Dinajpur on its north. To its west lie Uttar Dinajpur district and a part of its southern margin lies adjacent to Malda district. Geographically the district is located between 26° 35' 15" N - 25° 10' 55" N Longitude: 89° 00' 30" E - 87° 48' 37" E. There are three main rivers in the district of Dakshin Dinajpur – a) Atryee, b) Punarhaba and c) Tangon. These entire rivers have their origin in Bangladesh and following the general slope of the land from north to south direction and finally merge with directly or indirectly with the Ganga River. Out of 2162 Sq. Km. of its geographical area only 932 hectares of land is covered by forests. The Bangladesh border attached eastern and southern part of the district is characterized with forested land. Except the block of Tapan all other seven blocks of the district are characterized with fertile alluvial soil. Tapan block has also the alluvial soil but with lateritic soil in its few parts.



**Figure 1:** Location map of the study area

## 5 INDUSTRIAL PROFILE OF DAKSHIN DINAJPUR:

It is a well known fact that whole North Bengal is 'industrially dark'. Being a part of North Bengal Dakshin Dinajpur is not so vibrant in respect to industry. With the discouraging industrial scenario Dakshin Dinajpur district is moving with its strong agricultural base. According to 'Directorate of Micro & Small Scale Enterprises', Govt. of West Bengal, (2017-18) in the district of Dakshin Dinajpur there are 956 registered industrial units, though all are medium and small scale, where only 6590 person are working. Dakshin Dinajpur is set against an agrarian background with sloppy, industrial growth, not remarkable progress in the secondary and tertiary sectors and sluggish all round development which has subjected the economy to great pressure to boost its growth rate (Ministry of MSME, Govt. of India, 2017-2018). Rice mill, oil mill, husking mill, brick kiln industry etc are the mentionable industries in this district. The most of the industries are agro-based mainly manufacture of food and tobacco products. In these circumstances, few cottage industries like handloom are playing a crucial role in carrying the livelihood of the people and also in employment generation. According to the report of Handloom Development Officer, in Dakshin Dinajpur, about 35506 persons are engaged in handloom sector (31<sup>st</sup> March, 2013). So handloom weaving and allied activities in this district are playing a positive role in employment generation. The concentration of handloom is found mainly in three blocks viz. Gangarampur, Kushmundi and Kumarganj block.

## 6 SITUATION OF HANDLOM INDUSTRY OF DAKSHIN DINAJPUR IN WEST BENGAL

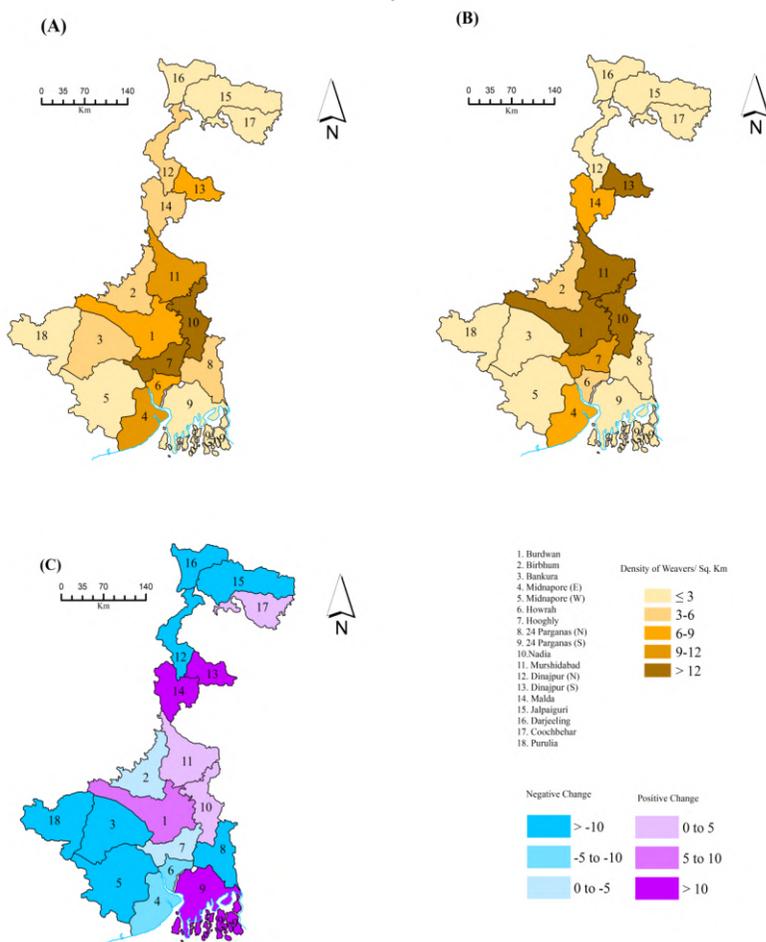
West Bengal enjoys a significant and leading position in respect of production of handloom product, numbers of weavers and also in employment generation. According to the 3<sup>rd</sup> handloom census, conducted in the year of 2009-10, there are 779103 weaver and allied workers having 307829 looms in West Bengal. Most of the handloom hubs are mainly concentrated in Nadia, Burdwan, East Midnapore, Birbhum, Hoogly, Bankura and Murshidabad district of South Bengal. Contrary to this North in Bengal only two district viz: Uttar and Dakshin Dinajpur have the significant concentration of handloom (Fig. 2). At present there is a

dramatic fall (95.18%) in numbers of weaver in the Uttar Dinajpur district from 2005-06 to 2009-10. But Dakshin Dinajpur is showing the significant growth (17.64%) of number of during the same year. The main weavers concentrated areas of this district are- Narayanpur, Shukdebpur , Jalalpur , Boaldaha , Maharajpur , Thengapara , Jaypur, Karial , Nandanpur , Belbari , Keshabpur ,Paton , Tilna , Burinagar , Bhaktipur , Durgapur , Kadighat , Bordangi and Gangarampur Municipality. The Primary Weaver Cooperative Societies of the district used to weave ordinary cotton sarees, finer quality cotton sarees with doby and without doby and jackward sarees, tangail, jamdani along with bed sheets, lungi, towel, curtain cloth, table cloth etc. the handloom product of the area has good demand in the local market and also the other part of West Bengal. The sale activity of handloom products of the district have boosted up through establishing a ‘Tant Kapar Hat’ at Gangarampur Municipality Shopping Plaza. However the scenario of handloom sector is changing gradually. The present situation of the district is exhibiting actual number of weaver is declining, a numbers of looms have been stopped, number of PWCSs has been shortened, handloom units are converting into powerloom units, markets are squeezing etc.

Among the blocks of Dakshin Dinajpur Gangarampur has the maximum concentration of weavers. This block is holding more than 55% of handloom worker of the district. There are three important handloom clusters viz: i) Gangarampur, ii) Bordangi and iii) Thangapara cluster in Gangarampur block. The scenario of handloom sector of Dakshin Dinajpur district is recently changing after 2010.

**7 PROBLEMS OF HANDLOOM INDUSTRY IN DAKSHIN DINAJPUR**

There is no industry in the world that does not face with any kind of dilemma. No exception is found in the case of handloom. In every states of India handloom sector facing various kinds of problems but the basic problems are more or less identical. Report of the Steering Committee on Handlooms and Handicrafts Constituted for the Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012 – 2017) pointed out that, “Weavers in the sector are mainly from the vulnerable and weaker sections of the society”.



**Figure 2:** (A) Density of handloom Weaver in District of West Bengal (2005-2006), (B) Density of handloom Weaver in District of West Bengal (2009-2010) & (C) Growth Rate of Weavers from 2005-06 to 2009-10.

**Table 1:** Number of worker in handloom weaving in the Districts of west Bengal 2005-06 to 2009-10.

Sl. No.	Districts	2005-06	2009-10	AGR
1	Bankura	36183	11791	-13.48
2	Bardwan	61800	84899	7.47
3	Birbhum	24093	19464	-3.84
4	Coochbehar	4639	5583	4.07
5	Darjeeling	404	89	-15.59
6	DakshinDinajpur	<b>16910</b>	<b>31824</b>	<b>17.64</b>
7	Uttar Dinajpur	15179	732	<b>-95.18</b>
8	Jalpaiguri	4520	176	-19.22
9	Hoogly	38365	36779	-0.83
10	Howrah	10173	7020	-6.20
11	Malda	17800	50897	37.19
12	East Medinipur	39866	27744	-6.08
13	West Medinipur	25300	3363	-17.34
14	Murshidabad	62520	74228	3.75
15	Nadia	270775	294815	1.78
16	North 24 pargana	22471	8964	-12.02
17	South 24 pargana	1155	6536	<b>93.18</b>
18	Purulia	5133	102	-19.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>West Bengal</b>	<b>657340</b>	<b>665006</b>	<b>0.23</b>

**Source:** Directorate of Handloom, Government of West Bengal.

**Table 2:** Block wise distribution of handloom workers of Dakshin Dinajpur District, 2012.

Name of the blocks	Total workers	Main weavers	Allied workers(>18)	Allied workers(<18)
Balurghat	15	05	09	01
Bansihari	1531	1353	121	57
Gangarampur	19663	6929	10420	2324
Harirampur	2644	2314	121	209
Kumargange	107	51	48	18
Kushmundi	10658	9166	458	1034
Tapan	888	716	113	59
Hilli	00	00	00	00
<b>Total</b>	<b>35506</b>	<b>20534</b>	<b>11290</b>	<b>3682</b>

**Source:** District Handloom Development officer, Dakshin Dinajpur, Govt. of West Bengal.

In India about 57% of the weavers are under BPL category (the Third Handloom Census -2009-10). So problems starts from this point that they do not have the sufficient amount of capital for large investment and there by the development of the sector. The report has also pointed out that, "The impact of the economic downturn has been most severely felt by weavers and artisans, majority of whom belong to the marginalized social groups. They are, therefore, far more adversely impacted when faced with market fluctuations and infrastructure gaps as well as the challenges posed by the growing machine-made products (T Shaw). Technological change (power-loom), low wages and rising price of yarn (raw material) have adversely affected the handloom sector as well as handloom weavers (T. Shaw). It is also true that handloom weaving as an activity is in deep crisis with low productivity, low wages, low literacy levels, firmly entrenched middlemen and very little formal bank finance flowing to the sector (B.I.R.D, Lucknow 2016). Keeping in view of the infrastructural variability of the various districts of West Bengal, in State Draft Textile Policy, Govt. of W.B (2013-2018), the state is divided into four distinct Zones for differential handling under this Policy. The aim was to develop the industry in every district keeping pace with the local socio-

economic environment. In this zoning Dakshin Dinajpur district is falling in the group 'D' in which maximum numbers of facility, subsidy schemes etc. have been provided to make a business environment there. Having the various Govt. schemes for the development of handloom sector a number of constrains are prevailing there. Handloom of Dakshin Dinajpur has also been trapped with many typical dilemmas which have been extracted out in the present study.

### **7.1 RAW MATERIALS:**

The basic raw material of the handloom industry is yarn. Type and quality of yarns are considered with their 'Yarn count' or thickness of yarn. The mass per unit length of yarn is its count. As the number of count is higher, the yarn is finer. Easy availability of yarn at reasonable prices remains a persistent problem for weavers across the country, especially in the NER States (Dr Sudhanshu et al 2016). Yarn Supply Scheme (YSS), formerly well-known as Mill Gate Pricing Scheme (MGPS), is the foremost scheme to endow with yarn and also dyes to the handloom weavers at rational prices to the weavers. MGPS is implemented by National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC) through 788 yarn depots reach all over the country. To access the weavers of the remote areas mobile vans are used. Currently, the NHDC estimates that it meets around 15% of the yarn requirement for the Handloom sector (Planning Commission Government of India. October, 2014). But the reality is different here. The cost of yarn has been raised for the policy of G.O.I due to withdrawal of 'Cenvat'. A provision for the P.C.W.S has been maintained still as 'Cenvat free' yarn, if the P.C.W.S purchases yarn only from Tamrolipta cooperative Spinning Mill Ltd. and NHDC in a bulk amount of yarn. As the P.C.W.S and individual master weaver of this area are economically feeble they are not capable to afford huge cash for bulk purchase of yarn from the above mentioned authorities and they are to procure yarn at the high price from the neighboring market. The weavers collect their necessary yarn from the local Mahajon who also collect the yarn from Kolkata. So a high rate of yarn has to pay the weavers to purchase the yarn.

### **7.2 WAGE OF LABOUR:**

The problem related the wage of labour is very much extensive in the handloom sector in Dakshin Dinajpur. The handloom weavers under the master weavers do not have the day wage or weekly or monthly. Rather they get their wage per Saree weaving. Normally a weaver can weave at best two ordinary tant Saree having the wage of Rs. 60/- per Saree. In this way he can earn Rs.120/- per day. Though weaving of Tangail of Jamdani sarees are little profitable than the ordinary tant saree, but weavers of such category is less in number. However one can easily guess that this little amount of earning in present days is not sufficient for a family to sustain with the minimum basic needs. More over the working hours is not fixed for the weavers. To weave two ordinary tant Saree someone needs 8 to 10 hour, or someone needs more than 10 hours. In this way the work becomes monotonous to the worker. The master weaver or the weavers, who have 8 to 10 looms with hired weavers, they have to sale the Saree at a margin of profit of Rs.20/- per Saree. However he can earn Rs.300-Rs.400 per day. At the same time minimum wage of day labour is Rs.250/- in other type of work like mason labour, construction labour, agricultural labour. Due to low wage the youths are reluctant to join the sector rather often they opted to go to the other states, like Punjab, Haryana, Tamilnadu, Gujrat, Delhi, even outside the country, under the 'Thikadar' or in 'Dadan' system.

### **7.3 WORK ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Handloom weaving involves a numbers of steeps in which there are different processes like physical arrangement of raw materials, dyeing the fibers, spinning and so on. So a healthy work environment is required. The work environment can be composed of physical conditions, such as work place office temperature, or equipment, such as personal computers. It can also be related to factors such as work processes or procedures (B.I.R.D, Lucknow, 2016). In Dakshin Dinajpur district this healthy work environment in the workplace in handloom sector is absent in most of the areas. Infrastructural weakness of handloom has been noticed in all over the district of Dakshin Dinajpur. Nearly all of the looms are old and weak infrastructure are clearly exhibiting that there is little interest to upgrade and develop the same. A few of weavers have aspiration to improve or set up new looms but they do not have required capital. In pursuance of Budget (2011-12), Revival, Reform & Restructuring (RRR) package of Rs.3884 crore was approved by the Government on 24.11.2011 to cover 15000 Co-operative Societies and 3 lakh weavers from across the country(Government of India Ministry of Textiles,2015). There are specific norms for being eligible in this scheme. But 9642 Primary Weavers Cooperative Societies (PWCS) and only 54226 individual weavers were qualified according to the eligibility norms. So, financial support from the end of Government to the weavers is often goes in vain. Weak infrastructure of handloom sector has limited the production of the sector in Dakshin Dinajpur.

#### 7.4 LABOUR CRISIS

One of the major problems of the handloom sector in the district of Dakshin Dinajpur is acute labour crisis. Even the weavers do not want that their next generation come in this sector. More over there are acute shortage of hired labour or weavers. A master weaver named Sankar Das stated that, "Now I have nine looms with eight hired weavers, all of them are middle aged or aged, one has already left the work and joined as hotel servant, his seat is vacant now, again if one left or dies then his seat will also be remain vacant." The reason behind it is that they claimed are mainly insufficient wage in comparison to the workload and monotonous work with long time span in a day. It is found that in case of individual weaver all the family members are engaged in this work in different ways. The allied workers in the family contribute their labour but their wage is not visible in reality. However there are labour crisis is very crucial.

#### 7.5 INTEREST OF NEW GENERATION IN THIS SECTOR

Handloom weaving is a monotonous and time consuming process. The weavers have to keep patient with this work. So, new generations with education are not much positive to enter into this job. The Third Handloom Census (2009-10) only 25% of the weaver households reported that their next generations have the interest in adopting the handloom as their future livelihood. In the case of Dakshin Dinajpur the scenario is more discouraging. Very little of the future generations are hopeful with this sector. In this way weaver crisis is found and in some cases the loom are left vacant leading to bring to an end of factories.

#### 7.6 COMPETITION WITH POWER LOOM SECTOR

The most striking aspect of the weaving sector in India since independence has been the phenomenal growth of power looms at the expense of textile mills and in the post liberalization period (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2018). Handloom and power loom are both co-exist in Dakshin Dinajpur. There is keen competition between the handloom and powerloom product. There are new growths of powerloom along with conversion of handloom unit to powerloom unit for more benefit. The production capacity of handloom is less than the powerloom sector and there by more profit in later one. Though, the uniqueness and versatility of design of handloom cannot be copied by powerloom yet often the eye of buyers unable to distinguish both similar products. Moreover the cost of powerloom products is less than the handloom products. When a customer gets a powerloom Saree within a budget, then they do not go to buy handloom products and the shop owners sell the power-loom cloths as handlooms to the customer (T. Shaw, 2015). As a result the original market of handloom is falling with the uneven competition with powerloom. The Handloom Reservation Act, 1985, reserved 22 articles which to be weaved only in handlooms and later in 1996 this was restricted to 11 articles. According to some handloom weaver the powerloom sector of Dakshin Dinajpur illegally producing few reserved items of handloom.

#### 7.7 ECONOMIC CONDITION

The unequivocal response from all respondents in all the study areas is that the handloom industry is in crisis because of low earnings for the weavers (Bhattacharya and Sen-2018). Nearly 47 per cent of handloom worker households own Below Poverty Line (BPL) ration cards, and 10 per cent households own other BPL cards or the Antodayas Anna Yojana (AAY) ration cards. Together, therefore, total BPL households account for 57 per cent of the total handloom households and in West Bengal the average annual income of the weavers family is Rs. 26934/- in the year 2010 (Planning Commission Government of India. October, 2014). At the present day the situation has not changed much in Dakshin Dinajpur district. So with the poor economic condition the weavers fails to invest a huge capital for the necessary in infrastructural development, adopt the technological upgradation and market promotion.

#### 7.8 MARKETING & MIDDLEMAN

The problems concerned to marketing of handloom products, which are mostly exists because of current system's drawbacks. There are few challenges for handloom because of changing market environment like globalization, industrialization and mechanization (R. R. Nadh et. al 2013). The Competition from mechanized sector such as mill and power loom Sectors is considered as a as a major marketing problem followed by Lack of attractive promotion (Kumudha and Rizwana 2013). The weavers of this district have little information about marketing of handloom products which creates problem in the market. There are lack of customer feedback that is why the weavers fail to percept the customer choice and demand leading to squeezing of the market.

#### 7.9 COLLAPSE OF PRIMARY WEAVERS COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES

The handloom sector in India was encouraged to adopt a co-operative model and the Government policy facilitated the formation and running of Primary Weavers Cooperative Societies (PWCS) at the village / taluka level and Apex Weavers Cooperative Societies (AWCS) at the State level (BIRD, Laknow, 2016). Unluckily within last 10 years most of the PWCS are found non- functioning in the district of Dakshin

Dinajpur due to poor professional management and decrease in numbers of weaver from the society. Here the PWCS are functioning in a unorganized along with inefficient production systems. The numbers of active Primary Weavers Cooperative Societies (PWCS) in this district are declining sharply. So, development of handloom sector along with the weavers is questioned.

**Table 3:** Scenario of degradation of PWCS in Dakshin Dinajpur

Year	No. of registered co-operatives	No. of active co-operative	No. of dormant co-operative
1999-2000	29	14	15
2001-02	29	09	20
2006-07	27	09	20
2008-09	27	08	21
2017-18	27	03	26

**Source:** District Handloom Development officer, Dakshin Dinajpur, Govt. of West Bengal.

**8 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The primary survey was conducted in the year 2017 on 150 weavers of seven block of Dakshin Dinajpur District. The result of primary survey says that the weaver of each block of Dakshin Dinajpur suffer from the problem related to supply of yarn, dyes etc. but Gangarampur, Kushmundi and Banshihari block faces the same with highest degree. Low wage of labour is a severe problem for the weavers of whole Dakshin Dinajpur. Among the all other problems this problem ranks frist in handloom of Dakshin Dinajpur. It has the highest intensity in Gangarampur, Tapan and Kumargang Block. The problem of poor wage is so wide that the weavers are compelled to adopt substitute job. Work environment is very much poor in Harirampur, Banshihari and Tapan block. Relatively better infrastructure has been noticed in the block of Gangarampur and Kumarganj Block. Banshihari, Kumarganj and Tapan Blocks are facing the constrain of poor labour availability as a result the number of weavers are decreasing rapidly.labour problemis comparatively less in Harirampur,Gangarampu and Kushmundi blocks. The result of primary survey is most discouraging in regard of entry of new generation in the handloom sector. Except Kushmundi and Gangarampur, almost in all the blocks, the entire respondent replied that neither their sons are egger to adopt handloom as their future profession, nor they themselves are interested to push up their next generation into this sector. Competition of handloom with powerloom is moe severe obstacle in Gangarampur, Banshihari and Kushmundi blocks and Tapan block facing the problem in less intensity.

**Table 4:** Problem related with Handloom Industry in Dakshin Dinajpur

C.D. Blocks	Problem-1 Supply of Yarn	Problem-2 Wage of Labour	Problem-3 Infrastructure	Problem-4 Availability of Labour	Problem-5 Interest of New Generation	Problem-6 Competition with Powerloom	Problem-7 Economic Condition	Problem-8 Marketing & Middleman
	Intensity in% (Rating)	Intensity in% (Rating)	Intensity in% (Rating)	Intensity in% (Rating)	Intensity in% (Rating)	Intensity in% (Rating)	Intensity in% (Rating)	Intensity in% (Rating)
Balughat	40 (2)	80 (4)	28 (2)	80 (4)	100 (5)	60 (3)	100 (5)	40 (2)
Banshihari	50 (3)	90 (5)	40 (2)	90 (5)	100 (5)	70 (4)	80 (4)	50 (3)
Gangarampur	43 (3)	93 (5)	18 (1)	73 (4)	81 (5)	75 (4)	71 (4)	24 (2)
Harirampur	33 (2)	87 (5)	40 (2)	60 (3)	93 (5)	60 (3)	80 (4)	13 (1)
Kumarganj	20 (1)	100 (5)	10 (1)	100 (5)	100 (5)	40 (2)	100 (5)	20 (1)
Kushmundi	46 (3)	93 (5)	33 (2)	73 (4)	77 (4)	70 (4)	70 (4)	37 (2)
Tapan	40 (2)	100 (5)	40 (2)	100 (5)	100 (5)	20 (1)	60 (3)	20 (1)
Hili	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A

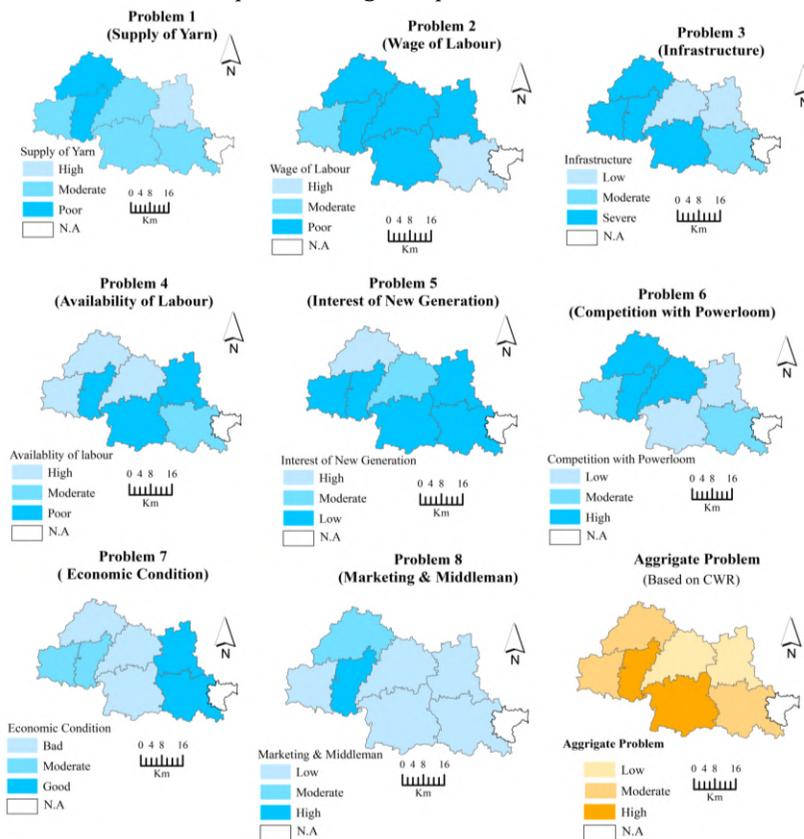
Source: Field Survey. Figure within brackets indicates the rating values (Intensities are calculated by Author)

**Table 5: Weighted Ranking of the various problems of blocks of Dakshin Dinajpur**

Blocks	Problem-1 WR	Problem-2 WR	Problem-3 WR	Problem-4 WR	Problem-5 WR	Problem-6 WR	Problem-7 WR	Problem-8 WR	CWR
Balurghat	80	320	56	320	500	180	500	80	75.41
Banshihari	150	450	80	450	500	280	320	150	76.77
Gangarampur	129	465	18	292	405	300	284	48	69.68
Harirampur	66	435	80	180	465	180	320	13	66.88
Kumarganj	20	500	10	500	500	80	500	20	85.20
Kushmundi	138	465	66	292	385	280	280	74	82.50
Tapan	80	500	80	500	500	20	180	20	78.33
Hili	N.A	N.A							

Source: Field Survey. (WRs are calculated by Author)

Most of the blocks are found with depressed economic of the weavers. A little good economic condition of weavers are noticed in Tapan, Kumarganj and Harirampur blocks. The problem of marketing and middleman is found with relatively less intensity in most of the blocks of district except Banshihari block. The result of primary survey explore that, in all the blocks, the handloom industry is suffering from a numbers of problems. But the intensity of aggregate of problems is higher in Kumargaj, kushmundi and Balurghat blocks and lowest in Harirampur and Gangarampur Blocks.



**Figure 3: Block-wise allocation of various problems of Handloom Industry of Dakshin Dinajpur District**

**9 CONCLUSION**

At the end of the discussion it has been observed that the handloom sector of Dakshin Dinajpur district was quite flourishing in very recent past and a glorious history. But now it is suffering seriously with many troubles. Glory of the industry is about to be lost. Though various government interventions, to develop the

handloom sector in this district are visible, but it seems, these are not enough and sufficient for the improvement of the present status of the sector. Low wage of labour and effect of this scarcity of labour along with ill competition with powerloom sector are ruining the industry day by day in this district. One thing is to be remembered that the versatility and uniqueness of handloom product is supplying oxygen to the handloom sector. Few respondents were also found, in the time of primary survey, with optimistic voice about the sector and some weavers are hopeful about the bright future of handloom sector. Such positive thinking is the key to keep alive the handloom sector in Dakshin Dinajpur district in future.

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