



WWJMRD 2017; 3(10): 202-205  
www.wwjmr.com  
International Journal  
Peer Reviewed Journal  
Refereed Journal  
Indexed Journal  
UGC Approved Journal  
Impact Factor MJIF: 4.25  
e-ISSN: 2454-6615

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## Pattern and Impact of Carpet Industry: A Household Level Study in West Bengal

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### Abstract

Development of rural inhabitants has been the primary objective behind all man-made enterprises. The carpet weaving industry is highly labour intensive and almost 100 per cent export oriented industry in India. This paper tries to examine the pattern of the industry, socio-economic status of the carpet weavers and to study the impact of the carpet industry on poverty reduction in sample households in sample villages. The carpet weavers increase their monthly income more than two and half times in respect of their previous (before joining carpet weaving) monthly income and about 80 percent of total incomes are generated from carpet weaving activity of sample weavers' households. So the carpet weavers reduce their poverty by increasing their income. Carpet weaving activity helps to reduce poverty to the sample weavers' households and also helps to the rural poor to improve their socio-economic conditions.

**Keywords:** Carpet industry, employment, poverty

### Introduction

Development of rural inhabitants has been the primary objective behind all man-made enterprises. Carpet Industry is one of the oldest man-made industries in India. The carpet weaving industry in India is highly labour intensive and forms a considerable part of the handicraft industry. It is an almost 100 per cent export oriented industry. The industry provides livelihood to approximately 2.5 million artisans and earns significant foreign exchange for the country. Export earnings from carpet industry have been increasing over the years especially from 1996 onwards and over U.S \$1081 Million were earned by the industry during 2012-13. India has around 29% share of the world market for handmade carpets and floor coverings US is the largest importer accounting for about 50% of the total exports.

### Significance of the Study

The study is helpful to know the trend and pattern of employment in this industry and households survival strategy in rural area. The study is relevant for policy making for rural development. It is relevant for bypass the problems which are emerged due to large-scale industrialization-led displacement. Findings of the study will also help in designing plans for reduce unemployment and poverty.

### Objectives of the Study

The study on carpet industry set the following objectives for itself:

- i) To examine the pattern of employment generation of the industry.
- ii) To examine the socio-economic status of the weavers' household engaged in the carpet industry.
- iii) To examine the impact of this industry on sustained livelihood and poverty alleviation in sample households of sample villages.

### Methodology

To serve our purpose, we resort to primary data. Stratified random sampling has been used to collect primary data on characteristics of the sample weavers' households, earnings of the

weavers etc. Pingla Block of Paschim Medinipur district in West Bengal is purposely chosen for our in-depth study. Four villages have been selected randomly among the carpet weavers dominated villages in the sample block and twenty (20) weavers' households from each sample village have been randomly selected. Thus our sample comprises 4(four) villages and 80 households for our in-depth study on carpet industry in relation to poverty reduction. Simple statistical tools like percent- age, mean have been used to analyze the data.

**Findings of the Study**

**Pattern of Employment Generation**

Total number of workers employed in 80 sample weavers' households of four sample villages is 132. Largest number

of workers is employed in sample weavers' households in the village Gangra (36) followed by Abdullya (34), Lakshmipari (33), and Bagnabard (29). Lakshmipari village (35 percent) registered highest percentage of households employed two weavers per household followed by Gangra (30 percent), Bagnabard (25 percent) and Abdullya (20 percent). Whereas, both the villages Abdullya and Gangra each registered 25 percent households employed three weavers per household followed by Lakshmipari (15 percent), and Bagnabard (10 percent) (Table 1).

**Table 1:** Distribution of Sample Weavers Household by Number of Weavers per Household and total Number of Weavers per Sample Village

| Village      | Only one weaver per household | Two weavers per household | Three weavers per household | Total number of families | Total number of weavers |
|--------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Abdullya     | 11 (55.00)                    | 4(20.00)                  | 5(25.00)                    | 20(100)                  | 34                      |
| Bagnabard    | 13 (65.00)                    | 5(25.00)                  | 2(10.00)                    | 20(100)                  | 29                      |
| Gangra       | 9(45.00)                      | 6(30.00)                  | 5(25.00)                    | 20(100)                  | 36                      |
| Lakshmipari  | 10 (50.00)                    | 7(35.00)                  | 3(15.00)                    | 20(100)                  | 33                      |
| <b>Total</b> | 43(53.75)                     | 22(27.50)                 | 15(18.75)                   | 80(100)                  | 132                     |

Source: Field survey, 2017

Note: Parentheses represent the percentage of total.

**Status of Poverty**

Table 2 shows the percentage of poor households (BPL families) out of the total sample weavers' households at sample villages. 45 percent sample weavers' households of

Bagnabard and Gangra are poor and they belong to below poverty line (BPL) whereas in Lakshmipari and Abdullya the percentage of BPL households are 40 percent and 35 percent respectively.

**Table 2:** Distribution of Sample Weavers Household by Number of BPL Households (Five Years Back)

| Village     | Number of BPL families (Three Years Back) | Number of APL families | Total number of families |
|-------------|---|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Abdullya    | 7(35.00)                                  | 13(65.00)              | 20(100)                  |
| Bagnabard   | 9(45.00)                                  | 11(55.00)              | 20(100)                  |
| Gangra      | 9(45.00)                                  | 11(55.00)              | 20(100)                  |
| Lakshmipari | 8(40.00)                                  | 12(60.00)              | 20(100)                  |

Source: Field survey, 2017

Note: Parentheses represent the percentage of total

**Level of Education**

From the view point of educational qualification out of all the persons involved in carpet weaving activity in the sample villages about 18 percent have primary education, about 63

percent have above primary and below secondary education and only 19 percent have secondary & above education. So most of the weavers involved in carpet industry are semi-literate (Table 3).

**Table 3:** Distribution of Number of Sample Weavers by Level of Education

| Village      | Primary   | Class V -- IX | Secondary & above | Total number of weavers |
|--------------|-----------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Abdullya     | 4(11.76)  | 21(61.76)     | 9(26.47)          | 34(100)                 |
| Bagnabard    | 5(17.24)  | 19(65.52)     | 5(17.24)          | 29 (100)                |
| Gangra       | 7(19.44)  | 23(63.89)     | 6(16.67)          | 36(100)                 |
| Lakshmipari  | 8(24.24)  | 20(60.61)     | 5(15.15)          | 33(100)                 |
| <b>Total</b> | 24(18.18) | 83(62.88)     | 25(18.94)         | 132(100)                |

Source: Field survey, 2017

Note: Parentheses represent the percentage of total

**Land Holdings**

Lakshmipari registered the highest percentage (50 percent) of sample weavers' households possess below 25 decimal of land followed by Abdullya (45 percent), Bagnabard (40 percent) and Gangra (40 percent). Bagnabard village shows the highest percentage (55

percent) of weavers' household's possess the slab of land holdings are above 25 decimal and up to 1 acre followed by Gangra (50 percent), Abdullya (45 percent) and Lakshmipari (35 percent). Most of the sample weavers' households possess least quantity of landholdings (Table 4).

**Table 4:** Distribution of Sample Weavers Household by Land Holdings

| Village      | Below 25 decimal. | 26dec.to 1 acre | Above 1 acre | Total no. of weavers household |
|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| Abdullya     | 9(45.00)          | 8(40.00)        | 3(15.00)     | 20(100)                        |
| Bagnabard    | 8(40.00)          | 11(55.00)       | 1(5.00)      | 20(100)                        |
| Gangra       | 8(40.00)          | 10(50.00)       | 2(10.00)     | 20(100)                        |
| Lakshmipari  | 10(50.00)         | 7(35.00)        | 3(15.00)     | 20(100)                        |
| <b>Total</b> | 35(43.75)         | 36(45.00)       | 9(11.25)     | 80(100)                        |

Source: Field survey, 2017

Note: Parentheses represent the percentage of total

### Income Generation

Average monthly income per weaver before joining carpet weaving activity is highest in the sample village Abdullya (Rs 2519) followed by Gangra (Rs 2485), Lakshmipari (Rs

2439) and Bagnabard (Rs 2407). Only 11.36 percent weavers' monthly income was above Rs 3000 before joining the carpet weaving (Table 5) industry.

**Table 5:** Distribution of Sample Weavers Household by Earnings per Weaver per Month (before Joining this Activity)

| Village      | Up to Rs 2000 | Rs 2001 to 3000 | Above Rs 3000 | Total number of weavers | Average monthly income |
|--------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Abdullya     | 13(38.24)     | 16(47.06)       | 5(14.71)      | 34(100)                 | 2519                   |
| Bagnabard    | 12(41.38)     | 15(51.72)       | 2(6.90)       | 29(100)                 | 2407                   |
| Gangra       | 14(38.89)     | 16(44.44)       | 6(16.67)      | 36(100)                 | 2485                   |
| Lakshmipari  | 13(39.39)     | 18(54.55)       | 2(6.06)       | 33(100)                 | 2439                   |
| <b>Total</b> | 52(39.39)     | 65(49.24)       | 15(11.36)     | 132(100)                | 2463                   |

Source: Field survey, 2017

Note: Parentheses represent the percentage of total

Average monthly income per weaver from carpet weaving activity is highest in the sample village Abdullya (Rs 6322) followed by Gangra (Rs 6085), Lakshmipari (Rs 6010) and Bagnabard (Rs 5948). The sample village Lakshmipari registered the highest percentage (73 percent) of weavers earns above Rs 5000 per month followed by Gangra (72 percent), Bagnabard (69 percent) and Abdullya (68 percent) (Table 6).

Comparing the data Table of 6 and 7 it would be clear to us that the weavers increase their monthly income more than two and half times of their previous monthly income. So the carpet weavers reduce their poverty by increasing their income by joining this industry. Therefore it is clear that the carpet weaving activity helps to reduce poverty to the sample weavers' households.

**Table 6:** Distribution of Sample Weavers by Earnings per Weaver per Month from Carpet Weaving

| Village      | Up to Rs. 5000 | Rs 5001 to 6500 | Above Rs 6500 | Total number of weavers | Average monthly income |
|--------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Abdullya     | 5(14.71)       | 23(67.65)       | 6(17.65)      | 34(100)                 | 6322                   |
| Bagnabard    | 4(13.79)       | 20(68.97)       | 5(17.24)      | 29(100)                 | 5948                   |
| Gangra       | 6(16.67)       | 26(72.22)       | 4(11.11)      | 36(100)                 | 6085                   |
| Lakshmipari  | 5(15.15)       | 24(72.73)       | 4(12.12)      | 33(100)                 | 6010                   |
| <b>Total</b> | 20(15.15)      | 93(70.45)       | 19(14.39)     | 132(100)                | 6069                   |

Source: Field survey, 2017

Note: Parentheses represent the percentage of total

Percentage share of different sources of income to total income reveals that 88 percent to 92 percent incomes are generated from the carpet weaving activities. Only 7 percent income is generated from agricultural and allied activities

and rest 1 percent to 5 percent income is earned from other sources like trade or business activities. So the principal sources of income of sample weavers' households are carpet weaving (Table 7).

**Table 7:** Percentage Share of Different Sources of Annual Income (Rs.) of Sample Households in Sample Villages

| Village     | Income from Carpet industry | Agricultural and allied income | Trade &    | Total |
|-------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|-------|
| Abdullya    | 75802(89.86)                | 5750(6.82)                     | 2800(3.32) | 84352 |
| Bagnabard   | 60998(88.02)                | 4800(6.93)                     | 3500(5.05) | 69298 |
| Gangra      | 50908(88.40)                | 3780(6.56)                     | 2900(5.04) | 57588 |
| Lakshmipari | 70804(92.50)                | 4675(6.11)                     | 1070(1.40) | 76549 |

Source: Field survey, 2017

Note: Parentheses represent the percentage of total

Per capita monthly income of carpet weavers' household is highest (Rs. 1512) in the sample village Abdullya followed by Lakshmipari (Rs 1340), Bagnabard (Rs 1302) and Gangra (Rs 1267). Similarly per capita monthly income from carpet

weaving activities is highest (Rs. 1289) in Abdullya followed by Lakshmipari (Rs 1183), Bagnabard (Rs 1124) and Gangra (Rs 1086) (Table 8).

**Table 8:** per Capita Income (Rs.) (Monthly) from Different Sources of Sample Households in Sample Villages (in Rs.)

| Village     | Income from Carpet industry (in Rs.) | Agricultural and allied income (in Rs.) | Trade & Business (in Rs.) | Total (in Rs.) |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|----------------|
| Abdullya    | 1289                                 | 183                                     | 40                        | 1512           |
| Bagnabard   | 1124                                 | 125                                     | 53                        | 1302           |
| Gangra      | 1086                                 | 136                                     | 45                        | 1267           |
| Lakshmipari | 1183                                 | 142                                     | 15                        | 1340           |

Source: Field survey, 2017

### Conclusion

The weavers increase their monthly income more than two and half times of their previous (before joining carpet weaving) monthly income and percentage share of different sources of income to total income reveals that 88 percent to 92 percent incomes are generated from the carpet weaving activities. So carpet industry has a great impact on poverty reduction by increasing their income and wealth. Therefore it is clear that the carpet weaving activity helps to reduce poverty to the sample weavers' households. As a result their socio-economic conditions will be improved and better afterwards.

### Acknowledgment

This paper is a portion of Minor Research Project sponsored by UGC and the author is thankful to the U.G.C. for providing the financial assistance for carrying out the Project.

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