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## Sustainable Development Strategies for Handloom Industry Post Covid-19 Era in Salem District

**S. Jothi, Subramaniyabharathy**

### Abstract

Sustainable development periods are listed in every aspect of life. The broader perspective of sustainable development and its three dimensions: ecology, economy and community, allows its continued use in any action taken by people or organizations. Initially the term was mostly used as an environmental aspect, but today, all its dimensions are taken into account. It is time to integrate the sustainable development concept with the handloom sector – a very broad sector in which sustainable development is very effective. Industry provides one of the above standards for sustainable development and mitigation of undesirable effects on the environment. Presently the handloom industry in the post-pandemic period is facing many difficulties related to raw material, marketing and sales network etc. We argue that this study reveals sustainable development strategies that can make a positive contribution to generating standard employment opportunities and the handloom industry will continue to thrive.

**Keywords:** Handloom industry, sustainable strategies, employment opportunity, thrive, Salem, Post pandemic, COVID-19

### Introduction

#### History of Handloom- Early Days

Indian handlooms predate the Indus Valley Civilization. Even in ancient times, Indian clothes were exported to Rome, Egypt and China.

In earlier times, almost every village had its own weavers who made all the clothing necessities of the villagers like sarees and dhoti. In some areas there were some wool weaving centers which were cold in winter. But everything is hand folded and hand knitted.

Traditionally, the entire process of making cloth has been self-sustaining. The cotton/silk/wool came from farmers, forest dwellers or pastoralists, and was cleaned and replaced by cotton weavers or agricultural labor communities. The process used small, simple tools, including the popular spinning wheel (also known as a saraka), mostly used by women. This handloom yarn was later turned into cloth on linen by weavers.

#### Decline of Handloom

During the British rule, India became an exporter of raw cotton and the machine was flooded with imported yarn. To increase the consumption of this book, the British authorities resorted to violence and coercion. In short, it completely lost the livelihood of the spinners at first, and the handloom weavers relied on machine thread.

When yarn had to come and buy from a distance, yarn sellers and financiers became necessary. With no small credit for the average weaver, the industry fell into the hands of more and more middlemen. Thus, the freedom of most weavers disappeared, and most of them came to work for a trader on a contract / wage basis.

Despite this Indian handloom, the Indian market was flooded when the machine imported up to World War I was making clothes. The advent of power looms in the 1920s, the integration of mills, and the high cost of yarn created unjustified competition, which led to the fall of handlooms.

### **Revival of Handloom**

Mahatma Gandhi started the Swadeshi movement and reintroduced hand spinning under the name Khadi, which means hand spinning and hand weaving. Every Indian was forced to spin a thread using a reel and wear khadi. This led to the closure of Mills in Manchester and a major turning point in the Indian independence movement. People burned imported clothes and chose to wear khadi.

### **Handloom – Post Independence**

After independence, textile and spinning mills continued to operate in India. Today, there are many weaving styles that use machine yarn, and these fabrics are referred to as linen. Also, fabrics made from handloom yarn are called khadi fabrics.

Although textile and spinning mills continued in independent India, handloom / khadi was given a lot of protection from unfair competition. Thus, the fabric was widely used and affordable for everyone.

### **Current Scenario**

Since 1985, especially after the liberalization of the 90s, the handloom sector has had to face competition from cheap imports, and design shades from power looms.

In addition, government finance and policy protection are greatly reduced. The price of natural fiber yarn has increased tremendously. Compared to synthetic fibers, the price of natural fabrics has gone up. This makes it uncontrollable for ordinary people. But the wages of handloom weavers have been frozen for the past decade.

Unable to compete with cheap poly blended fabrics, many weavers leave weaving and go to unskilled labor work. And many more are pushed into extreme poverty.

### **Handloom is Timeless**

Handloom is a beautiful fabric and special because both fabrics cannot be identical. Of course, the output depends on the skill set of the weaver. But even if we weave two weavers with the same skills weaving the same fabric it will be different in one way or another.

Every fabric is a reflection of the weaver's mood - the fabric is a little tight when a weaver is angry, while losing when he is sad. Thus, each part is unique to itself.

There are different types of weaving in different parts of the country in India, sometimes as wide as 20-30 different styles in the same region. From simple plain fabrics, tribal motifs, geometric designs, tie and dye, to complete art in muslin. Our weavers were master craftsmen. No other country can boast of such an exclusive wide range of rich textile art.

Like the paintings and photographs, each woven sari is a masterpiece. Saying that handloom is time consuming and labor intensive compared to power loom is like saying that painting, photography, clay modelling by 3D printers and graphic designs will become obsolete.

The tools needed for this whole process are made from wood, sometimes bamboo and no electricity required operating them. The whole process of fabric production is completely manual in earlier times. So, this is a very eco-friendly way to produce clothes.(Chinmaya Uphar, 2019)

### **Strategies for the Handloom sector**

The current business model used by handloom companies is currently feasible and not successful. We need to

restructure this overall business strategy. To make a profit the handloom industry must market its products and compete with other products. The customer should evaluate the handloom products more than other products. Any industry in marketing must confront the industry structure and certain competing forces that manage its profits. There are three successful common strategy approaches to outperform other companies in an industry to overcome these competing forces.

1. Overall cost leadership
2. Differentiation
3. Focus

### **Overall cost leadership**

Cost leadership is a strategy where a company is the most competitive product on the market, i.e. it is the cheapest. You see examples of cost leadership at many large companies such as Walmart, McDonald's and Southwest Airlines as a strategic marketing priority.

### **Differentiation**

Another strategy difference to compete in the market.

A different strategy allows a company to compete in the market for anything other than a lower price. For example, a confectionery company may distinguish their candy by improving the taste or by using healthier ingredients.

### **Focus**

Focus strategy or niche strategy is, in simple terms, to focus on a narrow and specific segment of the market. Creating, marketing and selling a specific product to a specific customer in the background of the focus strategy.

Hoskisson, Ireland and Hit defined a focus strategy as a marketing strategy that focuses on delivering a product or service to a specific market segment. Companies often choose a strategic option that focuses on increasing their penetration into a specific market segment. It enables businesses to establish competitive advantage through performance.

### **Strategy suitable for handloom sector**

The overall cost leadership strategy in the handloom sector cannot function. Named "Handloom" because the products are made by hand, it is very labour intensive and it becomes expensive. The handful of industry targets seem to be less price sensitive to the middle income group and handloom products seem to be more expensive due to manual labour, which is why on the one hand low / middle income groups avoid buying these products, on the other hand the products are rich enough to tap the elite or upper class.

The focus strategy will be limited to a specific area. This strategy shortens the scope of the handloom industry. It is therefore recommended that a differentiation strategy be followed to improve the handloom sector.

The difference strategy creates something innovative, which is very relevant to the handloom industry. The difference can be achieved by creating different functions as follows.

### **Identification of new product**

As each yarn is converted to weave intricate designs, the fabric can be woven by mixing different yarns and designs, making it impossible to produce power loom. The vast majority of weavers involved in the making of durrie can

diversify into home furnishing material and upholstery material. In the handloom sector, especially for each cluster, Jaipur district products such as reusable - weight packet furnishing types such as yoga mats, carpets, pooja mats etc. can be made.

#### **Quality Assurance system**

Quality assessment of yarn, woven fabric, dyeing, finishing and packaging should be done well. Creating a permanent place for handloom products in the national and international market quality guarantee is very important.

#### **Promotion:**

In the case of handloom, first of all, it is necessary to create awareness about the features and benefits of handloom products. Effective advertising should be done through the appropriate media mix. Print and electrical media can be used in the right proportions. A regular buyer-seller meeting is required so that weavers can get a platform to market their products.

#### **Distribution channel**

The difference in the distribution channel can be made through online sales through the website, consulting with marketing staff, making an agreement with boutique owners to sell handloom products, accessing ready-made garments from chain sales such as Westside & Big Bazaar.

**Aims:** The paper attempts to understand sustainability in handlooms by first delineating its role in society and understand its local relevance.

#### **Sustainable Development Strategy**

##### **1. Cooperative societies will must to be strengthened the practices:**

More recently, weavers have been claiming that cooperative practices are going to failure. Because, it is faced on so many problems for low level of sales rate, after that low level of production for such reason does not provide raw materials in a proper manner. Pay adds up late.

##### **2. The government will need for create awareness about the benefits offered to the handloom weavers**

They said government not aware of any concession offered by the government. Promotion about privileges should be made more aware through Television, Radio, Prophet, Newspaper, online advertisement and also want to adopt digital marketing.

##### **3. Weavers will must come forward to receive all the concession offered by the government:**

Weaver needs to explore and learn about all the benefits offered by the government. In order to get the benefits, you have to find out through the relevant association or by asking the sub employees.

##### **4. Avoid too much of brokers**

The government offered lot of benefits for the handloom weavers. But reason all benefits not properly reach to the weavers. Because there are too much of intermediaries and brokers they take advantage of all the benefits offered by the government. The rest of the relatives claim to be benefiting from isolation as acquaintances.

##### **5. The government should come forward to help private weavers**

The government should come forward to bring in concession not only to the co-operative society weavers but also focus to the private weavers.

##### **6. The impact of taxation should be minimized:**

Developments of handlooms industry has been going to declining stage. Since the come-on advent of excise duty and taxes of GST. Only traders and textile shop experts will get most of the benefit of make a profit of 5%. But the case of grassroots weavers said there is no increase the status or income.

##### **7. The government will need to minimize the issue of post COVID -19:**

The impact of COVID -19 issues through lockdown period does not properly supply to raw materials. In these issues create a demand for due to the reasons of unemployment and suffering from famine. Then, post pandemic period onwards the handloom weavers working is not in a proper manner.

#### **Review Of Literature**

1. (Nallaval & Monto, 2014) Studied traditional handloom and their role in sustainability at the local (village) and global (national) levels. Provides in-depth appreciation of the extensive morphological technology of traditional handlooms and its social and environmental consonant. A simulation model was developed to assess and predict stability in traditional handlooms. Although the role of traditional handlooms in sustainability is strong, the relocation of skilled weavers to current (unskilled) jobs poses a direct threat to the sustainability of traditional weaving practices.
2. (Vyshak, Athira, & Anandavalli, 2018) Studied the public awareness of the declining status of the sector. We found that there is a constant interest in using these products. The study concludes with the optimistic note that the position of these sectors can be re-established and revived in our economy through strategies appropriate to a sector-specific context.
3. (Vandita & Mahua, 2017) He explored the challenges faced by handloom weavers by giving a complete picture of the value chain of handloom industries. The stability of the value chain is analyzed through field research in the cities of Chandipur and Fulia in the Nadia district of West Bengal. A cost-benefit analysis tool is used at each stage of the linen value chain. The focus is on Jamtani, Chandipuri, Baluchari and Dungeon Sarees value chain. The difference between short-term profit and long-term profit is derived between the two groups of weavers. Cooperative community weavers and independent weavers are explored.
4. (Dissanayake, Srimala, & Thusari, 2017) One of the possible ways to achieve consistency in the fashion industry is exploring the craft practice of highlights. Through a case study derived from the handicraft industry, this paper explores a production approach that is committed to ensuring fair-trade policies and preventing waste. We argue that this study reveals a business model that could positively contribute to job creation and sustainable household income for the rural community.
5. (Rachana & Ruby, 2014) Investigates the problems of the handloom industry and further recommends the appropriate strategy. Senior officials of both government agencies to accomplish these objectives. The Rajasthan State Bunker Co-operative Society

(RRPS) and the Rajasthan Handloom Development Corporation (RHDC) are included in the study. Data were collected through a semi-structured interview schedule, monitoring system and secondary sources. The results revealed that the handloom companies did not follow any appropriate strategy for raw material procurement, product planning and advertising activities. Based on the challenges, a strategic plan that brings profit and understands every opportunity available in the market is recommended.

6. (Angayyarkanni & Elango, 2020) Studied that the handloom industry creates significant benefits to the economy in terms of micro and large economic impacts. It plays an important role in reducing poverty in the country, increasing employment and increasing household income and consumption. The handloom sector has a positive contribution to employment and economic growth. But the sector faces various challenges, which are the reasons why looms are not functioning. Therefore, the government and NGOs should come with confidence with financial, technical and policy support for the development of the handloom industry. The handloom sector is, to some extent, capable of overcoming these obstacles as a result of genuine government involvement through the use of financial assistance and various progressive and welfare schemes. Accordingly, handloom arrangements are an invaluable part of the generational tradition and demonstrate the fruitfulness and multiplicity of our nation and the skill of the weavers.
7. (Subramaniya, Bharathy; Jothi, 2017) The condition of the weavers was pointed out. Prevents and prevents the most important factors associated with physical problems in the handloom industry and their physical condition problems.
8. (Subaramaniya & Jothi, 2020) Consumers can find good buying linen products and the implications of preventing them. The study concluded that reducing

GST and increasing awareness about the uniqueness and uniqueness of handloom production will help sustain the handloom industry in Salem district.

9. (Bharathy & Jothi, 2020) studied that

**Statement Of the Problem**

This study undertaken to analyse which are the problems faced by the weavers in the field of handloom. Presently the handloom industry facing so many complications in their field related to in proper circulation of raw materials, delay payment poor planning of marketing and sales network and competing from power loom and other mill made production process. In this situation affect their normal life and poor economic conditions highly in the pandemic period. in this study exhibit the suitable development strategies for their problems and suggests suitable remedial actions.

**Objectives**

1. To explore the sustainable development strategies for handloom industry in Salem District and find their suitable suggestion.

**Research Methodology**

The research is mainly aimed at understand the impact of weaving on family environment: a sociological issue affect their professional life and measure sustainable development strategies. Percentage research approaches have conventionally favoured for explain about the need of sustainable development strategies. The research paper is an attempt of exploratory research, based on the primary sources and secondary resourced from journals, websites, book, and articles. The researcher adopted sampling techniques for convenience sampling. The sample sizes of the respondents are 150 handloom weavers.

**Data Analysis and Interpretation**

**Opinion Of the Respondents Need to Sustainable Development Strategy**

Factors		No.of Rspndents	Percenta ges
<b>1</b>	<b>Cooperative societies need to be strengthened the practices</b>		
1	Strongly Agree	95	63%
2	Agree	35	23%
3	Neutral	2	1%
4	Disagree	10	6%
5	Strongly disagree	8	5%
<b>Factors 2</b>	<b>The government will need for create awareness about the benefits offered to the handloom weavers</b>		
1	Strongly Agree	93	62%
2	Agree	34	22%
3	Neutral	15	10%
4	Disagree	3	2%
5	Strongly disagree	5	3%
<b>Factors 3</b>	<b>Weavers will must come forward to receive all the concession offered by the government</b>		
1	Strongly Agree	89	59%
2	Agree	47	31%
3	Neutral	10	6.60%
4	Disagree	2	1.30%
5	Strongly disagree	2	1%
<b>Factors 4</b>	<b>Avoid too much of brokers</b>		

1	Strongly Agree	98	65%
2	Agree	46	30%
3	Neutral	6	4%
4	Disagree	0	0%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0%
<b>Factors 5</b>	<b>The government should come forward to help private weavers</b>		
1	Strongly Agree	110	73%
2	Agree	34	22%
3	Neutral	3	2%
4	Disagree	2	1.30%
5	Strongly disagree	1	1%
<b>Factors 6</b>	<b>The impact of taxation should be minimized</b>		
1	Strongly Agree	122	81%
2	Agree	23	15%
3	Neutral	5	3.30%
4	Disagree	0	0%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0%
<b>Factors 7</b>	<b>The government will need to minimize the issue of COVID 19</b>		
1	Strongly Agree	112	74%
2	Agree	36	24%
3	Neutral	2	1.30%
4	Disagree	0	0%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0%

Sources: Primary data

From the above table it is 63% of the respondents only strongly agreed that the need of Co-operative societies needs to be strengthened the practices strategy. 62% of the respondents only strongly agreed that the need to create awareness about the benefits offered by the government to handloom weavers strategy. 59% of the respondents only strongly agreed that the need to Weavers must come forward to receive all the concession offered by the government strategy. 65% of the respondents only strongly agreed that the need to avoid too much of brokers strategy. 73% of the respondents only strongly agreed that the need

to the government should come forward to help private weaver's strategy. 81% of the respondents only strongly agreed that the need to the impact of taxation should be minimized strategy. 74% of the respondents only strongly agreed that the need to we need to minimize the issue of COVID 19 strategy. Very less number of respondents only strongly disagreed that the no need to the sustainable development strategy. It indicates that necessity for working with modified the scenario and adopting the new strategical development.

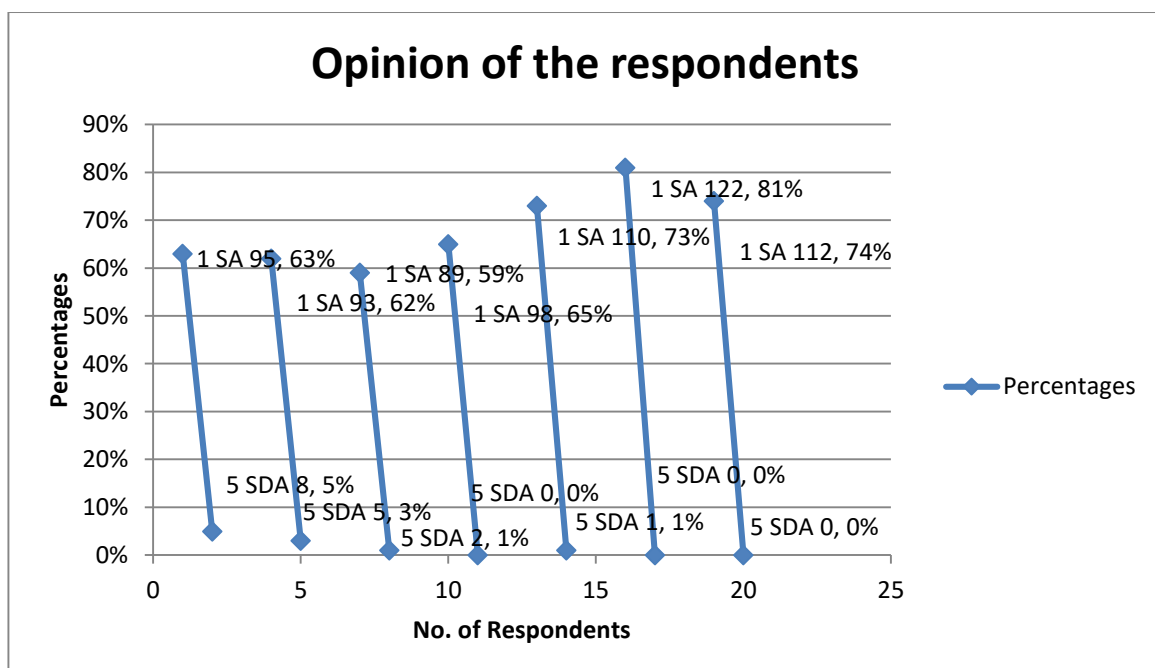


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### Suggestions

Handloom is a venerable traditional industry affected with multi-farious problems. The industry, thus, involves a multi-pronged approach to pervade life and sustain its development. Handloom industry is providing one of the most basic needs of the people and holds significance continuing constant growth for improving living standards of the weavers. Having studied the sustainable strategies for handloom industry, an attempt has been made in this section to offer a few suggestions for enlightening the difficulty of handloom weavers.

1. Usually, the yarn spinners are primarily not located within or near the handloom clusters and they do not sell yarn directly to the weaver/master weaver/co-operatives. Numerous agents are involved in the process of delivering the yarn from mill to the weaver, which increases the price of the yarn and sometimes creates an artificial shortage of raw material, which increases the price of yarn. The growth of the raw material bank at a cluster level will not only ensure continuous supply of raw materials but also help reduce the price of raw materials.
2. Due to this problem many consumers are reluctant to buy handloom products. Use age old dying facility is the reason behind such quality issue, which will help in increasing the demand of handloom products and its price as well. The use of aging quality die facility is the reason for such quality problem which will help to increase the demand for handloom products and its price. All of dyeing units are closed in Salem district. It needs to be refurbished and open to dye units with new technology. This is will help in solving this quality issue, which will help in increasing the demand of handloom products and its price as well.
3. By coordinating the practices of cooperative society to improve the traditional weavers and member of the society it will lead to upgrade the way of improving in their quality of life.
4. Raising the awareness about all the benefits offered by the government. It will be help to weavers are aware of all the benefits and it will continue to be involved in the handloom industry
5. Weavers can reduce the domination of the concept by seeking and retreat all the benefits offered by the government.
6. By reducing the number of brokers it will all the offers will reach the weavers directly and get in the right way.
7. The government could also improve the support of handloom weavers working in the private sector.
8. Reducing the impact of taxation can boost the growth of the handloom industry.
9. By preventing the supply of raw material from being depleted by the impact of Covid19. They can be prevented from doing unemployment and famine.
10. Supporting handloom weavers in product and design development will help reduce production costs and create more value-added products that can be sold at a higher premium. This facility can be provided to handloom weavers at the cluster level through training or opening facility center. It is important to note here that the Ministry of Textiles implements many such interventions through different schemes. The measure of innovative espousal of those involvement influence

stand prolonged to expand the effect on overall handloom industry.

### Conclusion

From the present study, it has been concluded that the handloom industry generates significant benefits to the economy in terms of micro and large economic impacts. It plays an important role in reducing poverty in the country, increasing employment and increasing household income and consumption particularly in the post pandemic situation. The handloom sector has a positive contribution to employment and economic growth. But the sector faces various challenges due to the impacts of COVID-19, which are the reasons why looms are not functioning. Therefore, the government and NGOs should come with confidence with financial, technical and policy support for the development of the handloom industry. As a result of genuine government involvement through the use of financial assistance and various progressive and welfare schemes, the handloom sector is, to some extent, capable of overcoming these obstacles. Accordingly, handloom arrangements are an invaluable part of the generational tradition and demonstrate the fruitfulness and multiplicity of our nation and the skill of the weavers. In the post COVID-19 situation the introduction of sustainable growth assumption is essential for weavers. But, for the rapidly changing reality and conditions in handloom industry it require major initiatives from the government to create awareness about the various schemes aimed at the welfare and progress of the handloom industry.

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