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A STUDY ON PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF SILK WEAVERS IN THICO SILKS, TAMILNADU, INDIA.
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Abstract

This researchpaper aims to examine the expectations of the weavers of THICO Silks Ltd., and their level of satisfaction. This study also examines the various services offered by the study unit to its members,the problems encountered by the silk weavers and the various suggestions offered to remove the gap between expectations and services offered. From this study it can be understand that the weavers facing problems like lack of continuous work, power holidays, lack of expansion and modernization and lack of government support, etc., and the researcher provides the suitable prospects like the government subsidies, the THICO Silks Ltd., should provide continuous work to the weavers, etc., all the objectives of the study are met. Therefore the researcher concluded that the weavers of THICO Silks Ltd. are facing problems and the suitable suggestions are provide for growth and development of them.

Key word: Handloom, weavers, THICO Silks Ltd., Members

INTRODUCTION

India is an agricultural country. Almost all people rely upon land for their livelihood. The very next occupation where nearly 10 million people depend upon handloom industry. Its 3.8 million Handlooms accounting for livelihood of 20 million people scattered all over India. Out of the total 3.8 million handlooms, about one third has been covered by the co – operative sector of the total Handlooms in India about 72 percent are engaged in cotton about 16 percent in silk weaving and the rest are related to Art silk and mixture.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Many studies have been conducted on various sectors of textile industry at international and national levels. Some of the important studies reviewed here:

[1]The authorobserved that various government policies towards handloom industry were a bundle of contradiction. Further he observed that the government has spent huge resources to agricultural sector and other large scale sectors, and neglected the handloom sector. It is the cause for the main problems of handloom sector. He suggested that the government should give priority to prepare plans and allot huge resources to handloom sector.

2The objectives of the study are to bring out the cost structure of the silk yarn and to analyse the financial management of the silk cooperatives in Thirubuvanam. He has selected five silk weavers' cooperative societies in Thirubuvanam for his study. He observed that the capital structure of the cooperative silk societies is imbalanced and there is scope for improvement. He concluded that two societies are doing well and other three societies showsnegative result, indicating its failure to adopt the techniques of financial management. He suggested that efforts should be made to increase the profitability utilizing the existing resources through capacity utilization, control over operating expenses and redemption of loans obtained at higher rate of interest. He also stated that the involvement of government and its share towards the productivity should be increased considerably.

3The handloom industry in Tamilnadu faced the problem of lack of financial facilities[3]. The commercial banks and District Central Cooperative Banks failed to provide sufficient finances to the weavers' Cooperative societies. As a result of this the cooperative movement in Tamilnadu, failed and more number of cooperative societies run on dominant lines. At the same time, the unexpected growth of power looms is the cause of artificial scarcity of yarn. There is a great need to develop the industry; hence, the government should supply yarn to handloom sector.

4The Study has outlined that the textile industry has been experiencing a high cost of production over the years. He suggested that the industry should take the result oriented actions to control the cost of production and strengthen its research and development area in this regard.

5The authorhas stated that the handloom sector has been experiencing a lot of difficulties in marketing its products. He suggested that in order to make the handloom sector highly competitive and sustainable, the government should work out a long-term feasible solution which remove all the hurdles that the handloom sector has been facing all over the years.

6The textile industryIndia and China are compared and the relative merits and demerits in textiles between both countries are compared. He outlined that China was much ahead of India in textile industry due to availability of cheap labour, sourcing of good quality of raw materials needed for the textile industry at cheap cost and adoption of modern technology and innovation. The author suggested that India should learn more from China and adopt the same in order to improve its textile industry.

7In this study, the marketing problems faced by handloom units in Andrapradesh is pointed out. She suggested the critical problems, such as poor working capital management, lack of product diversification, stiff competition from power loom units and mill sector, lack of access to bank credit at favourable terms and frequent fluctuations in the prices of raw materials which have been daunting the handloom sector for many years. She suggested that innovative product design, easy access to credit at favourable terms and adoption of latest technology were the only measures to be adopted by handloom sector in order to come out of marketing crisis.

8The measures taken by the Government of India are listed to modernize the power loom sector in order to make it competitive both domestically and internationally. Various task

committees were set up by Government of India to streamline the complicated procedures the power loom sector has been facing and to chalk out hassle-free procedures. He suggested that infrastructure of power loom sector should be strengthened and the Government of India has a major role to play in this core area.

[9]Various functional problems that has been experiencing by Erode Hand Loom Cooperative Societies are outlined and critically the problems are pointed out, such as poor quality of looms and lack of product diversification among all the problems. He suggested that the quality of looms can be made good by resorting to latest technology and strongly advocated that hand loom units must focus on creativity to diversify its product in order to solve the problem of lack of product diversification.

[10]The glory of handloom products are outlined which has been thriving in India for innumerable number of years. She also categorically spelt that handloom products in India have grown with Indian culture. The handloom products have been taken as the rich tradition that people of the country adore. She finally suggested that, despite the competition from powerloom and mill sector, handloom products has carved a unique place in the society despite a little government patronage.

[11]This study have explained the need for establishing more training institutes in India to provide training to the workforce to be employed by the textile industry. They felt the existing institutions in India were offering only very few training programmes which considered inadequate to train the labour to the textile industry. As a result, the industry was absorbing labour force into it without formal vocational training which hit the performance of textile industry so badly.

[12]The study dwelt upon the various measures and initiatives taken by the government to infuse fresh blood to the handloom sector in order to face stiff competition in export markets. Among the measures, capital subsidy, the Technology Up gradation Scheme, opening more yarn depots, the handlooms (Reservation of Articles for production) Act were noteworthy to mention. He felt that, with the government support, the handloom sector will flourish both in domestic markets and export markets in future.

[13]This study have discussed the initiatives of the Indian government to boost the competitiveness of its textilesector. It has framed a scheme of Neighbourhood Apparel and Textile Training Institutes for Job Assurances (NATIJA) for training of workers, and is framing a strategy for market expansion and product diversification to facilitate greater value realization for products and better market access. The Government of India also plans to revitalize handloom cooperatives in the pattern of agricultural cooperatives and had announced a relief package which reduces basic customs duty on certain items relating to textilesector as refund of service tax paid by exporters on taxable services linked to exports.

[14]He attempts to familiarize with the current status and livelihood problems of unorganized women handloom workers and argued on the importance of social security. The author pinpointed the condition of women for weaving and the reasons why they diverted to weaving in a much generalized form, He also took up the issue relating to health a women weaver faces. The study lacks the specific points which can be noted alongside the data comprises Pan

[15]examined the Indian Handloom in context of Globalization, It has been believed by the author that design process help weavers to identify opportunities hence the design program has been conducted in 6 handloom clusters of Assam. The paper aims at producing a sustainable business plan which comprises mainly the marketing plan to assist the competitiveness of cluster in the ever challenging market.

The above studies concentrated on various sectors of textile industry. Few studies have dealt with the performance of handloom, knit wears and power loom of textile industry. The studies rarely highlighted the problems and prospects of silk weavers in THICO Silks ltd. There was no comprehensive study to realize the problems and prospects of silk weavers in THICO silks Ltd.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

THICO Silks Ltd., weavers suffer many problems like low productivity resulting in poor earnings, shortage of working capital, high incidence of un employment, lack of adequate institutional support in raw material, technology.

In this research study, the researchers have identified the attitude of weaver's performance, level of satisfaction and the problems faced by the weavers of Handloom industry

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study has been an in-depth study relating the Members (weavers') of THICO Silks Ltd. Thirubuvanam. This study would confine to services offered by the THICO Silks Ltd. to its weavers, expectations of silk weavers of THICO Silks Ltd., problems encountered by the silk weavers with THICO Silks Ltd. The inferences drawn through the analysis is led to valuable findings which paves way for suitable suggestions for growth and development of silk weavers in THICO Silks Ltd. in the days to come.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This paper aims to examine the expectations of the weavers of THICO Silks Ltd., and their level of satisfaction. This study also examines the various services offered by the study unit to its members,the problems encountered by the silk weavers and the various suggestions offered to remove the gap between expectations and services offered.

HYPOTHESES

There is no significant association betweendemocratic factors of respondents and level of satisfaction of respondents with services provided by the THICO Silks Ltd

SOURCES OF DATA:

Survey method has been followed for the study both Primary and Secondary sources of data were used. The Primary data were collected from the Well Structured Schedule from the weavers'. The Secondary data were collected from the Books, Journals, Web Portals and various unpublished records of THICO SILKS, etc.,

TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION:

The primary data was collected through the Interview schedule method consist of optional type and Likert's 5 point scale type questions. The schedule covered the questions relating to demographic profile of the silk weavers of THICO Silks Ltd., profile of silk weavers of THICO Silks Ltd., level of satisfaction of silk weavers with services offered by the THICO Silks Ltd., problems faced by the silk weavers of THICO Silks Ltd. and silk weavers expectation towards betterment of silk weavers of THICO silks Ltd.

SAMPLE SIZE:

In THICO Silks Ltd. contributes significant percent of total number of silk weavers in Thirubuvanam, it has been chosen for the study. 147 silk weavers of THICO silks Ltd.were selected for the study.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE:

The TIPPET'S TABLE Under the Simple Random Sampling Method was used to select the respondents in THICO SILKS Ltd.

STATISTICAL TOOLS

The primary data collected from the respondents were analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The following various statistical tools were applied for the present study.Percentage analysis, Friedman's Test, Cluster analysis; andNon-parametric Chi-square test and one way ANOVA.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This would underline the necessity of identifying the nature of weavers and problems of weavers' in the silk society and suggest suitable measures for copying with the problems.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

The research area of the study was restricted to members of THICO Silks Ltd. only.The information provided by the silk weavers of THICO silks Ltd. was purely based on their perception only. The quality and reliability of the data collected were the actual expression of respondents.

CLASSIFICATION BASED ON SILK WEAVERS' SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE THICO SILKS LTD.

In this section the classification of different type of clusters based on silk weavers' satisfaction with services provided by the THICO Silks Ltd. K-means cluster analysis is used to identify heterogeneous groups of silk weavers'. This analysis is helpful in identifying different groups of silk weavers' with homogeneous qualities.

TABLE – 1

Final Cluster Centers

Variables	Cluster		
	High	Medium	Low
Supply of raw materials	2.91	3.00	2.53
Wage structure	4.64	2.06	3.73
Bonus schemes	4.59	3.75	2.76
Loan facilities	4.06	4.03	3.07
Medical facilities	3.79	3.79	2.22
Government for the weavers'	2.21	2.21	1.47
Technical support	3.26	3.26	2.47
Availability of weaving assistants	3.97	3.97	3.69
Pension schemes	4.53	4.53	2.69
Dividend payments	4.70	4.70	4.53

Source: Primary Data

the first cluster is called a high cluster with high level of silk weavers' satisfaction with the services provided by the THICO Silks Ltd. The second cluster is called moderate cluster with the moderate level of silk weavers' satisfaction with the services provided by the THICO Silks Ltd. The third cluster is called a poor cluster in which the silk weavers' have low level of satisfaction with the services provided by the THICO Silks Ltd.

TABLE – 2

Silk Weavers' Satisfaction with services provided by the THICO Silks Ltd.

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	df	Sig
Supply of raw materials	2.8163	1.30342	4.15			
Wage structure	3.8027	1.27483	6.26			
Bonus schemes	3.8435	1.32779	6.32			
Loan facilities	3.7483	1.09697	5.87			
Medical facilities	3.2245	1.23752	4.92	396.49	9	.000
Govt. assistance for the weavers	1.9660	1.17866	2.57			
Technical support	2.9728	1.18174	4.26			
Availability of weaving assistants	3.8980	0.93439	6.29			
Pension schemes	3.8503	1.33629	6.37			
Dividend payments	4.6463	0.76573	7.98			

Source: Primary Data

The results of Friedman's Chi-Square test showed that there is a significant difference in the level of satisfaction of silk weavers with the services provided the THICO Silks Ltd. (χ^2=396.49, P<0.05). The mean ranks revealed the fact that the silk weavers of THICO silks are more satisfied with the payment of dividends (Mean Rank=7.98), reversely weavers are highly dissatisfied with the Government assistances to silk weavers (Mean Rank=2.57).

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY SILK WEAVERS IN THE THICO SILKS LTD.

There are various key factors which have a direct bearing on the problems of Silk weavers' of THICO Silks Ltd. Hence, in this regard, Friedman's test has been used to identify predominant problems among silk weavers' of THICO Silks Ltd.

TABLE – 3

Problems faced by silk weavers' of THICO Silks ltd.

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	df	Sig

Non-availability of raw materials	3.5510	1.35072	4.78			
Lack of expansion and modernization	3.1769	1.24252	3.82			
Higher rate of interest on loans	2.7347	1.24596	3.19			
Power holidays	5.000	0.0000	7.80			
Labour problems	3.9864	1.29798	5.68	559.34	9	.000
Lack of government support	4.7755	0.61706	7.27			
Price fluctuations in raw materials	5.0000	0.0000	7.80			
Weather condition lack	3.0204	1.51463	3.96			
Lack of continuous work	4.4694	0.82184	6.50			
Lack of awareness of welfare schemes	3.2585	1.48549	4.20			

Source: Primary Data.

The results of Friedman's Chi-Square test showed that there is significant difference in the problems faced by the weavers' of THICO Silks Ltd. (χ^2=559.34, P<0.05). The mean ranks revealed the fact that the weavers' of THICO silks Ltd. are greatly affected by power holidays and price fluctuations in raw materials followed by lack of government support.

WEAVERS' EXPECTATIONS TOWARDS BETTERMENT OF SILK WEAVERS' OF THICO SILKS LTD.

The expectations of weavers' to have betterment of handloom sector have been elicited. This exercise will bring to light the need for improvements to be made by various agencies and these expectations will form the basis for the authorities to frame effective policies and programs to help this sector to come out of dark days. In this regard, Friedman's Test (non-parametric) has been employed.

TABLE – 4

Weavers' expectations from the THICO silks ltd.

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	Df	Sig
Government's incentives and subsidies	3.0000	.00000	5.75			
Technological up gradation	2.9184	.27474	5.34			
Access to bank loans at cheaper rates	2.9320	.25265	5.41			

Simplification rules and regulations to loan accessibility	2.9320	.25265	5.41			
Uninterrupted power supply	3.0000	.0000	5.75	66.738	9	.000
Long-term loans for expansion and modernization	2.8707	.33663	5.11			
Continuous work	3.0000	.0000	5.75			
Training to handle the new production method	2.8980	.30374	5.24			
Housing facility	3.0000	.00000	5.75			
Weaving park	2.9456	.22762	5.48			

Source: Primary Data

The results of Friedman's Chi-Square test explored that there is a significant difference found among the various expectations of silk weavers' of THICO Silks Ltd. (χ^2=66.738, P<0.05). The expectations given by the silk weavers' of THICO Silks Ltd.ranked according to the order of priority as felt by themselves. At present, the government's incentives and subsidies, technological up gradation, simplification of rules and regulations to loan accessibility, uninterrupted power supply, Housing facility are the prime expectations of the weavers' of the THICO silks Ltd.

Table – 5

Comparison between weavers' experience with their Satisfaction, Problems and Expectations in THICO silks ltd.

Experience	Number of Respondents	Mean	Standard Deviation	ANOVA F Value	Sig.
Silk Weavers' Satisfaction with services provided by the THICO Silks Ltd.					
UPTO 10 years	8	24.6250	6.36817		
10-20 years	43	25.6047	4.58330		
20-30 years	41	25.1220	6.17736	.120	.948
ABOVE 30 years	55	25.1091	5.02834		
Total	147	25.2313	5.27863		
Problems faced by silk weavers' of THICO Silks ltd.					
UPTO 10 years	8	17.8750	3.39905		
10-20 years	43	19.4651	4.05527		
20-30 years	41	20.8537	4.27528	7.429	.000
ABOVE 30 years	55	22.8364	3.95233		
Total	147	21.0272	4.30983		

Weavers' expectations from the THICO silks ltd.					
UPTO 10 years	8	11.3750	1.76777		
10-20 years	43	13.7674	2.39878		
20-30 years	41	14.5610	2.55977	13.348	.000
ABOVE 30 years	55	16.7636	3.65637		
Total	147	14.9796	3.30726		

The results of ANOVA depicted that the satisfaction level had significantly differ among the problems and expectation of weavers. Their level of Satisfaction was not significant. The significant value was more than 0.05 (P>0.05). The mean scores of 10 to 20 years of experienced weaverswas (25.6047), above 30 years of experience shows (22.8364) and they have high expectations (16.7636). This indicate that the weavers those who have more than 30 years of experience face more problems.

MAJOR FINDINGS

The discussions highlight the demographic characteristics of the respondents, that Majority of of them were male, Maximum numbers of respondents were falls under the age group of above 50 years, Most of the respondents (95.9 percent) were married, The maximum numbers of respondents were studied Upto SSLC, More than 70 percent of them were in Nucleus family, The study point out nearly 38 percent of the respondents had an experience of Above 30 years. More than 95 percent of the respondents' handloom location was attached to their residence, Most of the respondents family, 2 members got membership in THICO Silks Ltd., In the analysis we found that 147 respondents have not membership in any other co – operative society, More than 50 percent of respondents' family, nearly 2 – 3 family members involving in weaving, Majority of the respondents required to complete a single silk saree on more than 7 days, Fifty percent of the respondents were desire to change the design the silk saree frequently, Most of the respondents do not have restrictions in producing the silk saree, The study inferred that the THICO Silks Ltd., pay advance money to the weavers, More than 95% of the respondents says that the THICO silks Ltd., allows the members to express their opinion in problems in Annual General meeting. Level of satisfaction of silk weavers are more than 80 percent of the respondents were satisfied with the dividend schemes. More than 70 percent of the respondents were dissatisfied with the government support. The problems encounter the weavers are 100 percent of the respondents were strongly agree with the power holidays and price fluctuations in raw materials. More than 30 percent of the respondents were strongly disagree and disagree with High rate of interest on loans and lack of awareness of welfare schemes. Their expectations are 100 percent of the respondents mostly needed the government incentives and subsidies, uninterrupted power supply, continuous work, and housing facility. More than 60 percent of the respondents not needed the weaving park and training to handle the new production unit.

SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

The THICO Silks Ltd., may provide continuous work to weavers, make an arrangement for provisional store facility, quarters facility, medical facilities, provide bank loans and give the technical support to silk weavers and improve their standard of living. From this study it can be understand that the weavers facing problems like lack of continuous work, power holidays, lack of expansion and modernization and lack of

government support, etc., and the researcher provides the suitable prospects like the government subsidies, the THICO Silks Ltd., should provide continuous work to the weavers, etc., all the objectives of the study are met. Therefore the researcher concluded that the weavers of THICO Silks Ltd. are facing problems and the suitable suggestions are provide for growth and development of them.

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

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