

Concept Note on Enhancing Livelihoods of traditional weavers by Skill Building in Maharashtra State

Introduction

As per third handloom census, 2010 indicates that the handloom industry need urgent intervention to sustain and grow of handloom sector in India. Now the life style of Indian people changing rapidly along with life style also changing value system and perception about traditional and custom make difficult to revival back the handloom sector in India. The day is not far away that the handloom is likely to become a museum piece of craft of the history if we did not take some action to preserve the handloom tradition. Decline rate of 7% per year in number of weavers, during the past years is a clear indication of the sun-setting trend of the handloom sector. In the positive side, the third census shows a rise in the number of handloom households, from 25 lakhs in the second census to 27.8 lakhs; an increase of about 11%. Of the total handloom households, 87 % are rural and 13 % are urban.

Handloom in India

Handloom weaving is one of the largest economic activities after agriculture providing direct and indirect employment to more than 43 lakh weavers and allied workers. This sector contributes nearby 15 percent of the cloth production in the country and also contributes to the export earning of the country. The handloom sector has a unique place in our economy. It has been sustained by transferring skills from one generation to another. The share of cloth production of handloom with total cloth production in India is around 12 per cent in the year 2016-17 and as per data of ministry of textiles this share of cloth production increasing every years. In India around 14 per cent total industrial production are from textiles industries and nearly 30 per cent total export of India. Cotton textiles industries is second largest employment generator after agriculture direct employment to 65 lakh of work force and millions indirectly including substantial segments of SC/ST and women. As per data of Handloom censuses 2013 out of total handlooms in India 72 per cent are engaged in cotton weaving about 16 percent in silk weaving and 12 percent are from art silk and mixture. The handloom industry is primarily a rural based economic activity with a vast majority of handloom households residing in rural areas. As per the third Handloom Census, there were a total of 23.77 lakh looms in the country, of which approximately 87% were being operated in the rural areas. Further, out of a total of 43.31 lakh persons engaged in weaving and allied activities 84% were in rural areas.

As per six economic Census 2016 there are total number of Handicraft/Handloom establishments was 1.87 million (1.71%). These establishments provided employment to 4.2 million persons (3.12%). Out of the total establishments, 78.9% were without hired workers. About 67.0% of the handicraft/handloom establishments were outside the household without fixed structure or inside household. Majority of establishments i.e. 96.6% were owned by proprietors. Further, 21.89% establishments were owned by females while 77.74% establishments were owned by males. Nearly 68.22% of proprietary establishments of handicrafts/handloom were owned by Hindus, 24.78% of these by followers of Islam and 1.88% by Christians. Out of these proprietary establishments, 47.6% were owned by OBCs, 13.87% by SCs and 6.51% by STs. •

Challenges of Handloom sector in India

Shortage of Raw Materials

In spite of India being the leading producer of cotton in the world, the yield in production remains low as compared to global averages and also relative to other cotton producing countries. During the year 2016-17, while the cotton yield in India was 542 kg/ha, the global average was 784 kg/ha. The yield of cotton production in India is substantially lower when compared to that of the second largest producer of cotton, China (1708 kg/ha). Moreover, wide fluctuations are observed in the case of cotton production. The variations in production and low yields cause hurdles in production planning.

There has been a fluctuation in the prices of yarn on account of sharp fluctuation in the prices of cotton. There have been occasions of shortage of cotton domestically, that can be attributed to low levels of domestic production coupled with augmentation in exports. This has led to an escalation in the domestic prices of cotton, sometimes at levels higher than the international price. This creates difficult circumstances for the weavers, who then have to forgo profitability, to maintain capacity utilization.

Completion with Power Loom

The time consumed in the production of cloth when produced by handlooms is substantially higher as compared to the time involved in the power loom industry. The cloth/fabric produced by the power loom industry is cheaper and the delivery is faster. According to industry sources, while the fabric produced by the power loom would cost Rs. 30 per metre that produced on handloom would be around Rs. 500 per metre. Due to the higher prices of handloom products, a very limited section of the society can afford to buy the handloom produce, and a relatively larger section opts for the power loom fabrics.

Lack of Credit Availability

The credit for handloom faced two main issues one is lack of access to credit and expensive cost of credit. The cost of availing credit is exorbitant and the build-up of debts by the handloom cooperatives worsens the situation. According to the third handloom census, it was estimated that approximately 44.6% of the weavers relied on the master weaver for the provision of credit, and nearly 13.4% depended on the money lenders. It was specified that only 14.8% of the handloom weavers had access to institutionalized sources of credit. As per studies of Handloom weavers and producer has lack of awareness associated with the schemes for the welfare of the weavers.

Issues of Product Design

There is no formal mechanism to receive direct feedback from customers about their product so they are not able to update their product as per demand of the customer. Due to not availability of feedback weavers always depend upon the traditional designs with no innovation in the product development. The power looms always coping the product design of the handloom so customers are unable to distinguish between the products produced by the handloom sector from those produced on power looms. The limited endeavors to highlight the attractive features of handloom products has led to a major setback for the sector. The attempts towards advertising the handloom produce is done occasionally, which leads to periodic sales. Additionally, handloom products lack consistency of quality in terms of finishing, color and dye.

Institutional Inefficiencies

The weavers of state formed primary weaver's cooperative societies (PWCS) but this societies don't have leadership to transformed weavers to competing globalized world. This weavers societies facing the problem of deficiency in financial robustness and ineffectiveness intensified by their unorganized nature. The dearth in proficiency of the institutions involved in the financial flow of credit add to the woes of the handloom weavers. The District Central Cooperative Banks (DCCB) provide credit to the PWCS for their operations. In some occasions the DCCBs are financially weak, while in some cases the PWCS lack monetary soundness – in either cases, the handloom weavers are adversely impacted.

Un-organized Nature of Industry

The manufacturing of the handloom sector is mostly fragmented and involves numerous players without any integration in activities. Most of handloom unit having small and owned locally without being legal registration. The production of handloom predominantly a household where engages entire family. This fragmented and unorganized features of Indian handloom having lots of limitation for grow as a business unit.

Technological Backwardness

Today handloom weavers sector practiced old way traditional methods production without any application of technology. The handloom sector of India far away from the advance technology of textile industries. There is urgent need of handloom sector of India is upgrade and replace old looms for increasing and smoothly production. If modern technology introduce in handloom sector in India will be increased labour productivity and also improve competitiveness of handloom product and possibility to boosting handloom sale.

Paucity of Novelty Designs

The handloom sector practiced old way method of production and never using modern technology for design products as per the need of the consumers. In today competitive market with lots of global players in textiles sector required more creative and innovation in designs to sell product in global market. There is possibility that students from fashion institution can be placed for skill enhancement of weavers and product development.

Inconvenient Working Conditions

The basic unit of handloom production is household and the weaver to sit and operate the loom using his/her hands and run the pedals by his/her foot. This incorporates recurring and stressful movement of the upper and lower parts of the body. The fundamental needs of the weavers such as clean drinking water, electricity and sanitation needs are not met, which indirectly obstructs the productivity of the handloom weavers.

Insufficient Research and Training

The traditional means of the production largely ignored by the formal education system and research institution and handloom industries is one of them. To introducing innovation and creativity in this sector has been overlooked by various research institution. To bring innovation in patterns and designs product is reserved exclusively by the weavers and they are unable to perform various innovation in this sector.

Lack of Information on Schemes

The government both central as well state designed and declared various schemes for welfare of weaver community. The lack of awareness about various schemes among weaver community also one of the cause of underdevelopment of this sector. The government develop various policy for weaver community. Inadequate implementation of the schemes also affect the formulation of various policies for the weaver community.

Reduction in Number of Weavers

The younger generation of the wavers feels that there is less opportunity in this sector and they are giving less preference for weaving as a profession. The wages being offered to the weaving are

considerably low and the volume of sales are scanty and irregular so most of younger population do not want to be a part of the weaving community. The supply of the untrained and reducing weavers is main concern for the handloom sector.

Handloom in Maharashtra

Handloom weavers in Maharashtra exist in the pockets scattered throughout the state. The uniqueness of handloom is its regional specialization of a particular kind of product that is known by the name of the place from where it is woven, e.g. Nagpur sarees, Paithani sarees, Mahendargi choli khans etc. In Maharashtra these industries remain totally decentralized.

Table 1: Maharashtra Handloom Map

Name	Region	GI status	Period of origin	Materials	Loom Type	Design Pattern
Paithani	Aurangabad	Protected	17 th Century CE	Silk	Fly Shuttle, pit loom	Oblique square design and a pallu with a peacock design
Himroo	Aurangabad	Protected	15 th Century CE	Silk and cotton	Throw Shuttle	Geometrical and floral, intricate creeper designs
Khana	South Maharashtra	Protected	15 th Century CE	Silk and art silk and pure cotton yarn	Pit loom having no warp beam	Geometrical honeycomb pattern, flowers, creeper, fruits and seeds.
Solapur Chadar	Solapur	Protected	16 th Century CE	Cotton	Jacquard Machines	Geometrical and floral patterns
Ghongadi	Nandurbar	Not protected	16 th Century CE	Organic Virgin wool	Pit loom	Geometrical patterns
Dhurrie	Vidarbha	Not Protected	16 th Century	Cotton, Wool, jute, silk	Pit loom	Geometrical patterns
Hand block Prints	Vidarbha	Not Protected	16 th Century CE	Hand-woven silk	NA	Floral and animal designs
Narayan Pethi	Solapur	Not Protected	16 th Century CE	Silk	NA	Floral and animal designs

Ganga Jamuna saree	Solapur	Not Protected	NA	Silk	NA	Floral and animal designs
Ganeshpur Kosa silk	Bhandara	Not Protected	NA	Tussar silk	Pit loom	Floral and animal designs
Nagpur Saree	Nagpur	Not Protected	NA	Tussar silk	Wooden doobby and fly Shuttles	Floral and animal designs
Karvat Kati Sari	Bhandara, Nagpur, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli	Protected	18 th Century CE	Silk, tussar and cotton yarns	Wooden doobby and fly shuttles	Floral and animal designs
Munga and Ghicha Fabric	Bhandara, Nagpur, Chandrapur and Gadchiroli	Protected	18 th Century CE	Silk, Tussar and cotton Yarns	Wooden doobby fly shuttles	Floral and animal designs

A SWOT Analysis of Handloom Sector of Maharashtra

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill availability • Availability of raw material • Low capital cost/ investment • Presence of government support • Work carried out from home • Desire to upgrade • Supply of short length fabrics to valued clients 	<p>Weakness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low yield • Not much change in technology and design • Lack of marketing linkages • Products of average quality • Varied level of artisans • Survival on government subsidies • Absence of professionalism
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusive handwoven fabrics have good domestic and export market • Possibility of more value addition • Dovetailing with available government schemes • Versatility in changing designs and texture with minimum investment • Product innovation and diversification 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition from powerloom and machine made products • Weaver are moving to other occupations • Competition of similar products from other states.

The handlooms sector, with an employment ratio per handloom of 1:3, has great untapped potential to increase income level as well as to sustain employment levels and skills by appropriated design inputs, technology upgradation, creating value-added fabrics and systematic marketing directed at the elite of society, apart from producing low and medium-cost fabrics for the masses. In Maharashtra the handloom weavers are cover under three basic segments first is private operators/ master weavers with captive looms and weavers who work for them, second is wavers under cooperative fold and third is handloom corporation covering the weaver outside cooperative fold.

In Maharashtra cooperative movements was started with the intention to free individual weavers from the clutches of master weavers and middlemen who consumed the higher proportion of the profit thus reducing the weavers to poverty. Unfortunately the cooperative system has suffered because of the intense completion from power loom and mill sector, except for specialized or value added products like the Paithani, tussar sarees etc. In Maharashtra there is lots of scope for development of handlooms if we overcome the issues of handloom weavers and this issues are i) lack of consistent work and satisfactory wages ii) children of handloom weavers do not opt for the waving profession iii) languishing traditional art, migration of weaver to non-craft activities iv) lack of trust building, planned training with follow-up development, monitoring and support continuity v) poor infrastructure and support in design, technology and marketing and vi) low productivity and inconsistent quality.

Statement of Purpose

Microsoft World is one of the largest company in information technology in world and through the platform Sangam working for improve the waver's life by revive the dying skills since last 3 years. The Sangam is a platform using information technology to captures all the activities or work processes involved in the development of the drape called Saree and ultimate reaches to the consumers. Last three years Microsoft Corporation India working for developing platform for preserving and developing skill of weavers in India, the objective of proposed project are:

1. To study the socioeconomic status of the weaver community in Nasik and Aurangabad district of state of Maharashtra.
2. To develop support systems for weavers to register their designs under the copywriter Act, 1957 and provide protection under intellectual property rights to them for their designs.
3. To developing eco system to increase the standard of living of weaver community in Nasik and Aurangabad district of the state of Maharashtra.
4. To draw intervention strategies for improvement of Sangam platform and provide strategies to scale up Sangam to another three state of India namely Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Gujarat and then rolled out across the country.
5. To motivated weaver for using Sangam E-commerce platform for increasing their sales of products and link weavers with consumers across the globe.

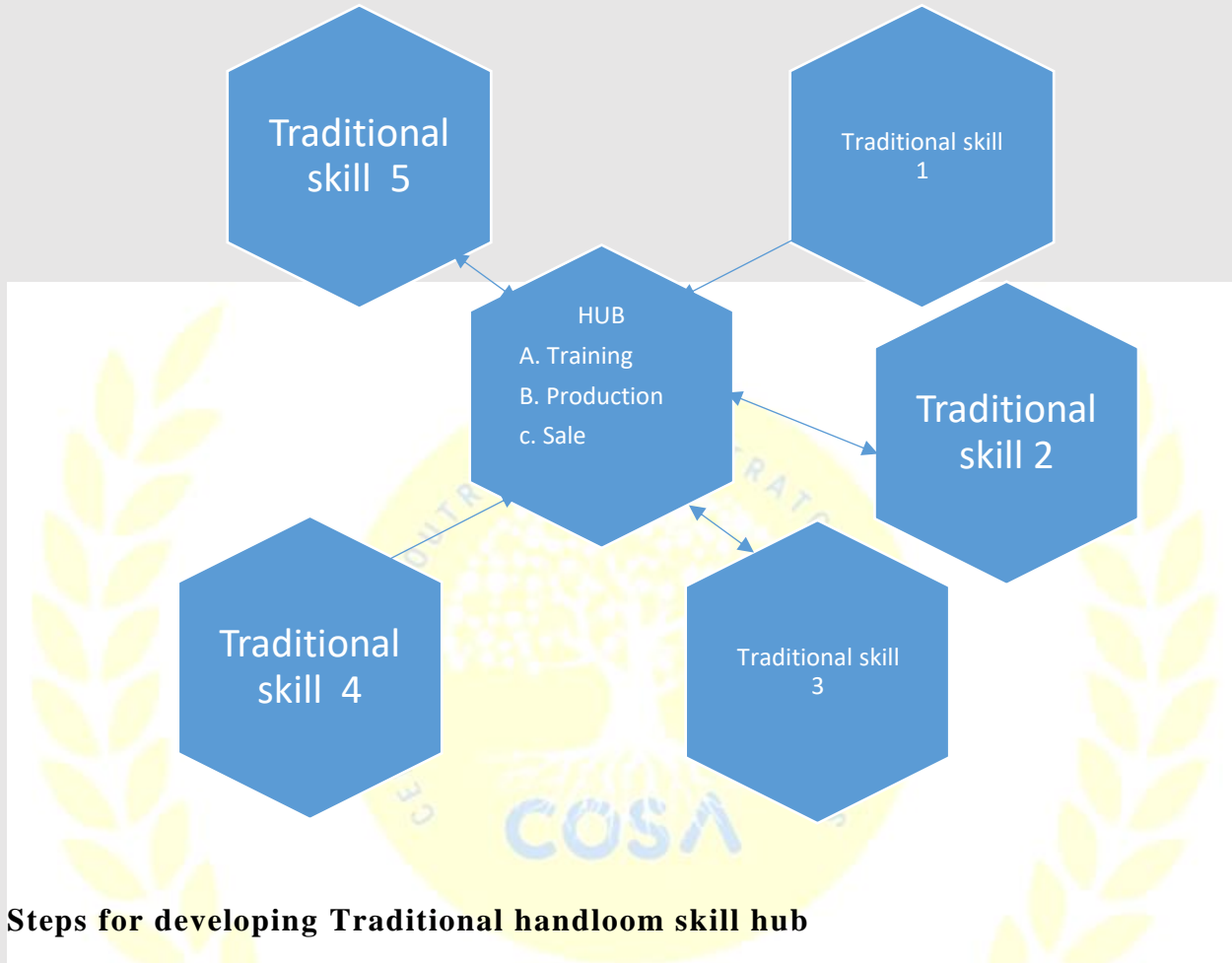
6. Developing traditional weaving skill hub in Palghar district for training on traditional weaving skill with support from government of Maharashtra.

The initiative more focus on the marginalized community from weavers section and ensure that economically or socially weaker section should not lose the opportunity which is created by Sangam.

Process of the Project

1. Research study on socioeconomic status of the weaver in Nasik and Aurangabad district of state of Maharashtra.
2. Identifying need of the weaver community and develop eco system to overcome the issues and problems of weaver community.
3. Creating awareness about intellectual property rights and various legal provision of copywriter Act, 1957 and registering weaver design under the Act.
4. Identifying philanthropists for providing seeds funds to weaver for scale up their productions.
5. Dialog with government officers for providing short term fund to the weavers.
6. Creating data bank of various government schemes for weavers and developing linkage systems for link weavers for various government schemes.
7. Building relationship with raw materials suppliers for continuous flow of quality raw materials for undisturbed productions.
8. Providing information about various government schemes which was design for weavers and link weavers to various schemes.
9. Creating awareness and training about information technology, Sangam platform, e-commerce and social media for increasing sale of weaver's products.
10. Identifying of master weavers on 13 traditional handlooms weavers who will be relocated with their families in Palghar.
11. Developing training on 13 traditional handlooms and conducting training of handloom weaving for tribal youth of Palghar.
12. Starting production house for each traditional handloom with the help of master weaver and trained tribal youths of Palghar.
13. Developing traditional handloom skill hub in Palghar and sharing skill and business with respective traditional skill region like hub and spoke business model

Design of Hub for traditional handloom skills



Steps for developing Traditional handloom skill hub

- A. Identification of master weaver for each traditional handloom in Maharashtra.
- B. Relocated master weaver from their region to Palghar handloom hub
- C. Developing training center for each traditional handloom at hub
- D. Training to Tribal youth on handloom skill in hub
- E. Starting social enterprises of each handloom at the hub
- F. Developing traditional handloom production center for each handloom
- G. Providing new design from National institute of design to handloom hub as well as respective traditional handloom region.
- H. Marketing center for each handloom production at handloom hub as well as respective handloom areas for example for handloom Paithani there will be production as well as marketing center at Palghar as well as Nasik and Aurangabad.
- I. Sharing knowledge with different handloom weaver at their respective region by handloom hub
- J. Providing marketing support like Sangam for each handloom which are located in their respective areas and also in the hub at Palghar

Partners

Center for Outreach and Strategic Alliances (COSA) and Terna Trust

Center for Outreach and Strategic Alliances (COSA) is the high end consulting and outreach arm, earlier with TISS and now with Terna Trust. It is conceived as an organization that will not only provide field based grounded solutions to complex problems of corporate but also provide Government on various social issues. It also has alliances which will provide academic stimulus to innovative programs bridging the academic and industry gaps. The Centre draws its strength from well-known academicians and SMEs to develop solution and papers for nation building.

Microsoft Corporation- India

Microsoft Corporation India is one of the fastest growing subsidiaries of Microsoft Corporation, the worldwide leader in software services and solutions. The Microsoft India story began in 1990, picked up greatly in the new millennium and has grown steadily since then as India takes its place as a leader in the global knowledge economy. Microsoft is one of the important active partners in the Indian economic growth.

Schedule of Implementation for one year: May 2019- April 2020

No	Activities	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
1	Research study and writing report				
2	Dissemination of Report				
3	Need Assessment & Strategies development				
4	Awareness of Copywriters Act, 1957				
5	Training on Copywriters Act 1957				
6	Data bank on Government schemes				
7	Linkage with Government Schemes				
8	Data Collection of design of weavers				
9	Registration of design under intellectual property rights				
10	Awareness & training on digital technology				
11	Registration for Sangam Platform				
12	Awareness & training on social media				
13	Training on Financial literacy				

A. Research study and writing report: May 2019 to Sept 2019

1. Developing household questionnaire and guideline on FGD's
2. Collection of Household data
3. Conducting focus group discussion with weavers community
4. In-depth interviews with various stakeholders
5. Data Analysis and writing report
6. Dissemination of research finding with various stakeholder
7. Meeting with Director of west region weavers service center of GoI

B. Need Assessment and developing strategies: Aug 2019

C. Awareness activities and link with Government schemes: Aug 2019- Jan 2020

1. Meeting on copywriters Act, 1957 with weavers communities
2. Creating data base of various government schemes
3. Creating awareness on government schemes
4. Link weavers to various government schemes
5. Data collection on various design from weavers
6. Registration of weavers design under intellectual property rights
7. Awareness on digital technology and training on digital technology
8. Registration of weavers for Sangam Platform

D. Creating eco-system for weavers: Aug 2019 to April 2020

1. Identifying needs of individual weavers
2. Developing details business plan for individual weavers
3. Identifying philanthropists for providing seeds funds for weavers scale up
4. Providing mentoring to the weavers for scale up the business
5. Dialog with all stakeholders for smooth functioning of weavers
6. Media advocacy for creating goodwill about weavers & awareness of Sangam
7. Developing Sangam platform for trading of weavers products
8. Utilization of social media platform for trading of products

Impact of the Program

When program Re weave implemented in a large scale than it will be transformational impact on the educational as well as livelihood prospects of the weavers and the immediate impact are:

1. Developing strategies for improvement Sangam initiative by Microsoft India
2. Consolidation of the weavers design and register their design as a patents under the intellectual property rights.
3. Developing supply chain for quality raw materials for uninterrupted production
4. Advocacy for the implementing government scheme for the weavers
5. Developing E-commerce for increasing sales and profits of the weavers
6. Providing seeds fund to weaver community through philanthropists
7. Starting group social enterprise of the weavers

8. Developing traditional handloom hub at Palghar
9. Providing new design by the National institute of design
10. Developing strategies for scale up Sangam in three state of India

Core Program Implementation Team

Professor S Parasuraman, Vice Chancellor of Terna Global University, Former Director; TISS (August 2004 to February 2018); Adjunct Professor, National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj, (MoRD, GoI), Hyderabad; Advisor to MIT Pune to establish World Peace University.

Professor Manoj Aiyer, Pro-vice chancellor, Terna Global University, former Ratan Tata Chair Professor, Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Professor Nisha CP, Yunus Centre, VES, Mumbai. Asst .Prof.Santosh Birwatkar & Asst Prof.

