

ABSTRACT

Hand weaving is the primary link between agriculture and industry. According to survey, in these two districts most of the weavers are from refugees families of erstwhile East Bengal. Investigative data from various locations in these districts show that maximum weavers are local people. The head of the household (in most cases the eldest member of the family) leads the whole process of handloom production and the other adult members of the family, including children collectively carry forward the whole production process.

The occupational structure of the handloom community consists of three categories:

- The *mahajans* enjoying maximum profit,
- Some independent master weavers are in the middle position,
- A large number of weavers and allied workers depending on piece rate system for their wages, posited at the bottom level with minimal profit.

Areas of problems of handloom textile sector in Nadia and purba Bardhaman districts are conservative attitude of the weavers and their lack of proper training and knowledge about the current fashion and trend of the market, inappropriate reservation policy, sealing of powerloom products as handloom products, negative impact of GST on handloom, effect of flood, poor economic condition of weavers and allied workers, *mahajani* clutch, negative effect of partition of India as well as Bengal, health related issues etc.

The areas of prospects are as follows: Good reputation of products, product diversifications, environment friendliness etc. Especially after partition of the country as far as employment of people are concerned handloom proved most important. Though the handloom sector provides only a meagre income to the weavers, still their monthly income is better than the hired labours in the agricultural sector of the region. Handloom has a large share in revenue generation and regional concentration in industrial development. Handloom industry creates different types of linkage, like human linkage, commodity linkage and monetary linkage in these districts. Government should take proper policies for the development and sustainability of handloom, not as subsidy, but as investment for profit generations.

Key words: Handloom, Government Policy, Problems and Prospects, development, profit generation.