

Study On West Bengal Handloom Industry

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Abstract: West Bengal Handloom manufactured 35.3 % of total saree production in India and 12 % of Towel, Napkin, Duster and Gumcha production in India. Nadia and Burdwan district is popular in manufacturing of Tangail, Jamdani, Santipuri saree, whereas Hooghly is popular on Dhaniakhali,, Begamuri, saree and Fine Cotton Dhoti. Darjeeling is famous for woolen shawal. Bankura is popular for Baluchari Sarees, Silk Than, Shirting, Tassar Scarf, whereas Birbhum district is famous for Tassar Than, Shirting. The Baluchari sari traces its origins to 500 years ago and in west Bengal. The name came into existence because the weaving of these sarees started in a small village called Baluchar in Murshidabad district of West Bengal. Tangail sarees are made in cotton or by using silk materials with glamorous borders and style. Jamdani sarees are made of high quality cotton muslin. The saree is very thin and soft. As a result the saree becomes very light and airy. Jamdani sarees are characterised by eye-catching ornamental motifs woven onto the fabric. The Santipuri saree is named after Santipur in Nadia District of West Bengal, specially known for its saree with the jacquard design. Fine cotton yarn ranging from 60s to 100s is used both in warp and weft. Bengal Dhonekhali Tant Saree are woven from cotton threads and distinguished by its lightness and high quality. In West Bengal it is found that 21.24 % of people are SC and 7.28 % are ST, whereas 14.03 % of handloom workers are OBC. 86.2 % people of handloom workers are from rural area. In west Bengal, Hindu and Muslim community population share in handloom activities are 72.91 % and 26.45 %. Numbers of villages engaged in handloom work are major in Nadia, Medinapur, Dakshin Dinajpur, Hooghly and Burdhaman districts .

Keywords: Handloom, Saree, Tangail, Baluchari, Jamdani, Rural.

INTRODUCTION:

Handloom is an age-old Small Scale & Cottage Industry of West Bengal state. Bengal handloom is famous for its rich heritage of high craftsmanship & exclusive art in the hand of skilled weavers of Bengal. This industry provides widest avenue for employment opportunities only next to agriculture. P rime thrust has been given to implementation of schemes for promotion and development of handloom sector. In West Bengal, 3.51 lakh of handloom was running now, as per census of Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India. It is found that 6.67 lakh persons are directly or indirectly linked with this Handloom industry in this state. Yearly production of 1056 million meter . Important items of handloom products are value added Saress, Dhuties, Lungies, Napkins, Home Furnishings, Ladies & Gents Dress Materials, Scarves & Stoles etc. Well-known sarees of the locally named as Baluchari, Tangail, Tangail Jamdani, Dhaniakhali, Korial, Muslin & Santipuri are popular in this state. Export varieties of other items are Scarves & Stoles, Home Furnishings, Ladies & Gents Dress Materials, are important.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study is based on the following objectives-

- To make an overview of West Bengal Handloom Industry and its various products .
- To study the present status of the West Bengal Handloom industry.
- To study the export performance of the industry.
- To investigate the various Govt. Schemes for development of such industry.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The study is based on the secondary date collected from various sources. Mainly Handloom related data are collected from the websites of Ministry of Textiles and Handloom census 2019-20, West Bengal Handloom .Various national and International Journals, websites of various papers are studied to observe the West Bengal Handloom Industry. The data and information of Bengal Handloom industry are then taken into consideration for analysis and interpretation of this study

LITERATURE REVIEW:

The Hugli district is one of the most renowned names in the handloom industry of West Bengal and a good percentage of people are engaged in this heritage industry. The study is conducted in five handloom clusters of the district, namely – Dhaniakhali - Somaspur, Begumpur, Haripal, Rajbolhat and Balagar. The main objectives of this study were to investigate the effects of globalization on the rural handloom weaver community, in terms of their economic and social conditions. It is important that the handloom industry of the Hugli district is suffering from some inherent problems like low productivity, lack of product diversification and problems related to procuring raw materials. The co-operative sectors are indifferent to enlarging their market sphere. Though

there are plenty of efficient and skilled weavers but they are only doing their traditional practices, the adoption of modern techniques is significantly poor among the weavers. Therefore the new generations are totally unwilling to accept weaving as their main occupation because of the uncertainty of the industry. It is now urgent for the identification of modern trends, promotion of exports, market assessment so that this heritage industry can cope with the modern trends and utilize the benefits of globalization [1].

Handlooms have been known to India right from the historic ages. Basic needs of the human being are the food, clothes, and shelter. This study explores the dynamic of local level trade in household-based handloom product in Tufanganj of Cooch Behar district. The handloom weaving sector plays an important role in the economic development of the rural areas. It contributes significantly to generating more employment opportunities and providing bread to the rural poor. It is analyzed the socio-economic profile of handloom weavers and some problems of this industry in Tufanganj of Cooch Behar district. The situation of the weavers was worrying due to illiteracy, financial constraints, health problems, middle man problem, and poor Government support [2].

Over the years, increasing concerns among the scholars incline to see the adverse effects of globalization. One of the major reasons for this ever-increasing concern is the gradual infiltration of market-driven production system and global capitalism among different groups of people who earn their living either as wage laborers or artisans. This effect has been most profoundly noted among those whose place is on the fringe of the national economy. Another main reason is that the states are increasingly losing their capacity to govern and to regulate in this increasingly borderless world, where resource less artisans has become the worst sufferers both in the cultural and economic frontiers. It is found that the process of globalization has made among the silk weavers of Bishnupur region in West Bengal, India. It adopts a transformational approach and uses both contextual reading and ethnographic data collected through firsthand fieldwork among the aforesaid community. The ethnography describes the messy and unquantifiable relationship between local actors and the international process [3].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:

Table 1 explained the important handloom products manufactured in West Bengal .It is noted that West Bengal Handloom manufactured 35.3 % of total saree production in India and 12 % of Towel, Napkin, Duster and Gumcha production in India. The data are taken from Census studies 2019-20.Tamil, Nadu, Andhra Pradesh manufactured 15.6% and 13% respectively in total saree production in India. Assam and Tripura has 7.8 % and 7% share in saree manufacturing in India. It is found that Assam is the single largest state of Towel, Napkin, Duster and Gumcha manufacturing with 72.4% share in India

Table 1: Distribution of Production of Major fabrics

Major Fabrics	Major producing States	Share of overall production	Remarks
Saree	West Bengal	35.3%	It is found that West Bengal dominates in saree production having major share of 35.3% .Silk saree from Assam and Tripura also shared 7.8 % and 7% respectively. In south India Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh having share of 15.6 % and 13% in saree production .The major 5 states are contributing 78.6 % of saree production in the country.
	Tamil Nadu	15.6%	
	Andhra Pradesh	13 %	
	Assam	7.8%	
	Tripura	7 %	
Towel, Napkin,Duster,Gamcha	Assam	72.4 %	Two states , Assam and West Bengal are dominating in the production of Towel, Napkin, Duster and Gamcha production , having share in production of 72.4% and 12 % respectively .Other three states are Manipur, Meghalaya and Tripura has 9.3 5 total contribution in production of such items
	West Bengal	12 %	
	Manipur	4.2 %	
	Meghalaya	2.9 %	
	Tripura	2.2 %	

Source: Handloom Census 2019-20

Table 2 explained the district wise various handloom products manufacturing items. Nadia and Burdwan district is popular in manufacturing of Tangail, Jamdani, Santipuri saree, whereas Hooghly is popular on Dhaniakhali, Begumuri, saree and Fine Cotton Dhuti. Darjeeling is famous for woolen shawl. Bankura is popular for Baluchari Sarees, Silk Than, Shirting, Tassar Scarf, whereas Birbhum district is famous for Tassar Than, Shirting.

Table 2 : District wise handloom products manufacturing details

Name of District	Handloom products manufactured	Name of District	Handloom products manufactured	Name of District	Handloom products manufactured
Nadia	Tangail, Jamdani, Santipuri Sarees, Dress materials, Lungi, Exportable Fabrics (Scarf, Stole), Coarser Sarees, Gamcha	Hooghly	Dhaniakhali, Begumpuri Sarees, Fine Cotton Dhuti, Sarees, Coarser Sarees	24-Parganas (N)	Gauze, Bandage, Gamcha, Lungi, Coarser Sarees
24-Parganas (S)	Fine Cotton Sarees, Coarser Sarees, Gamcha	Howrah	Fine Cotton Sarees, Dhuti, Shirting, Furnishing Fabrics, Gamcha, Coarser Sarees	Burdwan	Tangail, Jamdani Sarees, Exportable Fabrics (Scarf, Stole, Home furnishing, Coarser Sarees, Gamcha, Lungi, Cotton Khadi Shirtings, Debipur Dhuti
Purba Midnapore	Coarser Sarees, Shirting, Furnishing Gamcha	Paschim Midnapore	Fine & Coarser Saree, Tassar Than, Cotton Shirting	Bankura	Baluchari Sarees, Silk Than, Shirting, Tassar Scarf
Purulia	Tassar Than, Silk Shirting, Coarser Cotton Sarees, Gamcha	Birbhum	Tassar Than, Shirting	Murshidabad	Silk Than, Silk shirting, Korial Saree, Coarser Cotton Saree
Uttar Dinajpur	Gamcha, Coarser Saree, Jute furnishing	Dakshin Dinajpur	Tangail Saree, Fine Cotton Sarees	Cooch Behar	Tangail Saree, Fine Cotton Sarees, Coarser Saree
Jalpaiguri	Coarser Saree, Gamcha	Darjeeling	Woolen Shawal, Coarser Saree		

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Table 3 explained the various handloom products of West Bengal. The products are now popular worldwide for its colorful appearance. Baluchori saree was originally woven in the Murshidabad district of West Bengal, and today in Bishnupur. Balucharis are rich silk sarees characterized by intricate weaving in the pallav and borders. It is depicting stories from epics, historical and religious texts. Baluchari silk sarees can easily be identified from the construction of long palloo and placement of its design motifs in perfect rectangular closed corners maintain continuity of the designs without break. Basic fabric is heavier and more compact than Banarasi Saree. The Baluchari sari traces its origins to 500 years ago and in west Bengal. The name came into existence because the weaving of these sarees started in a small village called Baluchar in Murshidabad district of west Bengal. The sarees are known for their intricate patterns and handwork on them. They are dominated by stories and characters from the Ramayana and Mahabharata. Sarees depicting the story of Bhagavad Gita is one of the most popular patterns. The sarees were originally woven using the purest silk thread.

Tangail sarees are made in cotton or by using silk materials with glamorous borders and style. They have different name like Tangail pure cotton saree, soft cotton saree, half-silk saree, pure silk saree, mixed cotton saree etc. In the centres of Tangail weaving in West Bengal, the weavers, as in other traditional centres of weaving, are producing a large variety of Sarees. The saree is no longer adhering strictly to the traditional pattern. The most important centres of cotton weaving are; Shantipur, Dhaniakhali, Bagampur and Farasdanga.

Jamdani sarees are made of high quality cotton muslin. The saree is very thin and soft. As a result the saree becomes very light and airy. Jamdani sarees are characterised by eye-catching ornamental motifs woven onto the fabric. These intricate motifs in thicker thread seem to float on the surface of the ultra-fine fabric. It is one of the most time and labor-intensive forms of hand loom weaving, and is considered one of the finest varieties of muslin, and the most artistic textile of Bangladeshi weavers. Jamdani is rich in motifs. Traditionally, these sarees are made of high-quality cotton. The word 'jamdani' is believed to be of Persian origin, derived from 'Jam' (meaning flower) and 'Dani' (meaning vase). Jamdani is more a weaving technique rather than a weave generic to a place. For the longest time it has been synonymous with Dhaka before the partition of Bengal. The Jamdani is a supplementary weft technique of weaving, where the artistic motifs are produced by a non-structural weft, in addition to the standard weft that holds the warp threads together. The difficulty level and the intricacy depend on the fineness of the base fabric, the fineness of the extra weft- like zari and the number of colour.

The Santipuri saree is named after Santipur in Nadia District of West Bengal, specially known for its saree with the jacquard design. Fine cotton yarn ranging from 60s to 100s is used both in warp and weft. Santipur has been famous for its elegant designs inspired by nature. The designs are Ganga-Jamuna, Benkipar, Bhomra, Rajmahal, Anspar, Do-Rookha, Visva-Bharati, Brindamani Mour-Par, Nilambari. The Santipuri saree is a Geographical Indication (GI) product of Bengal. A weaver takes around 2-3 days to complete a saree.

Bengal Dhonekhali Tant Saree are woven from cotton threads and distinguished by its lightness and high quality. It is considered to be the most comfortable saree for the Indian hot and humid climate. Dhaniakhali Saree has GI tag and traditionally has been in Kora or natural grey with either red or black plain border. Dhaniakhali sarees nowadays are produced in Haripal, Rajbalhat Rasidpur, Dwarhata, Ramnagar, Gurap and Antpur of Hooghly. Normally, cotton yarns of 80s to 100s count are used both in warp and weft with extra warp of 2/100s or 2/80s cotton yarn.

Table 3 ; West Bengal Special handloom products

Sl No	Name of the products	Characteristics of the manufactured products
1	Baluchari Saree	An interesting feature of earlier Baluchar Sarees was the stylised bird and animal motifs that were incorporated in paisley and other floral decorations. The silk yarn used at Baluchar was not twisted and therefore had a soft, heavy texture. The rich variety in the techniques, designs and texture of Bengal Baluchari Sarees are endearing, enticing and exquisitely enviable. To exploit this happy market situation and help weavers improve their lot, the Government of India and Government of West Bengal have jointly sponsored a Project Package Scheme for Bishnupur area of Bankura district. The project attempts product diversification, up gradation of technical skills of our artisans by imparting proper training, providing uninterrupted employment, improving the weaver's standard of living and strengthening the state's handloom industry.
2	Tangail Saree	Tangail Saree are famous with its extra-weft butis, tiny repeated motifs, all over the ground of the Saree, worked like embroidery on the loom. The most important centres of cotton weaving are : Shantipur, Dhaniakhali, Bagampur and Farasdanga.
3	Jamdani Saree	Originally a dress material for both men and women, but now a day it is made only in Saree lengths in an astounding variety of designs with geometrical motifs, on simple frame or pit looms. Traditionally, Jamdanis are white. However, today, very lightly dyed grounds with designs in white, maroon, black, green, gold and silver Saree and mega silk of a dark golden colour are also seen. Traditionally, Jamdanis are white, with designs in bleached white. However, today, very lightly dyed grounds with designs in white, maroon, black, green, gold and silver Saree, and muga silk of a dark golden colour are also seen.
4	Santipuri Saree	The anchal or pallava, the end of the Saree that hangs from the shoulder, often has butis or jamdani designs in extra weft beautifully arranged along with stripes of many different types and widths. Some tie-and-die designs are also being used lately in the anchals of Shantipur Sarees. A specialty and a traditional handloom item from Shantipur in Nadia District. Famous for their fine and uniform texture.

		The counts of cotton yarn range from 80s to 100s. The designs used in extra warp of side border give the varieties their names. The ground warp is fine cotton. For extra warp or border muga, Saree, mulberry, silk etc. are used..
5	Dhanekhali Saree	Dhaniakhali in Hooghly district, once famous for its superfine dhotis and saree. A number of large cotton weavers' villages have been weaving handspun Khadi yarn since the sixties.
6	Kantha Stitch Saree	kantha is the most typical and also the most creative. It is an expression of a local culture. The main characteristic of a kantha is the patterned running stitches in white tread with which the kantha-maker covers the whole surface of the piece. The stitches secure the layers together and the surface, the kantha-maker works in her embroidery, an expression of her love and affection, her thoughts and dreams.
7	Batik Saree	The word batik actually means 'wax writing' and that is basically what batik is all about. It is a way of decorating cloth by covering a part of it with a coat of wax and then dyeing the cloth. The waxed areas keeps its original colour and when the wax is removed the contrast between the dyed and un dyed areas makes the pattern. The creation of batik sarees is a three stage process of waxing, dyeing and de-waxing (removing the wax).
8	Home Furnishings	Home furnishing is a collective term for all kinds of linen, furniture, fittings, flooring and a plethora of other accessories used for decorating and beautifying our homes. It includes a wide, wide range of bedspreads, furnishing fabrics, curtains, rugs, durries, carpets, placemats, cushion covers, table covers, bed spreads, bath linen and much more. fabrics being cotton, polyester and silk, they are further embroidered with works like zari, phulkari, bandhani, beading, applique and patchwork. , materials used are suede, acrylic, cashmere, rayon, silk, linen and wool
9	Scarves	Scarves are garments made of warm and decorative fabrics. They are often worn around the neck for warmth during cold, rainy, dusty or other types of inclement weather. They can also often be worn for more fashionable motives by style-minded people. The most common type of scarf is knitted with a type of animal-hair yarn, such as wool or cashmere, or a synthetic equivalent to this type of fabric

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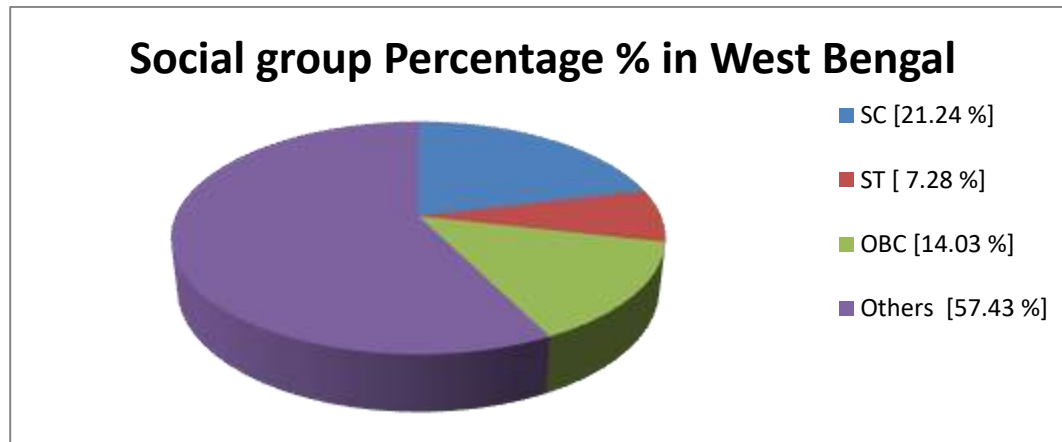
Table 4 and figure 1 explained the distribution of handloom workers by social groups in West Bengal and India. In West Bengal it is found that 21.24 % of people are SC and 7.28 % are ST, whereas 14.03 % of handloom workers are OBS. Rural population involving in Handloom manufacturing products are the major share compare to Urban population .It is found that, overall 86.2 % people of handloom workers are from rural area.

Table 4: Distribution of Handloom workers in West Bengal and India by Social Groups

State	Location	Scheduled castes[SCs]	Scheduled tribes[STs]	Other backward castes[OBCs]	Others	Total
West Bengal	Rural	100428	36796	69916	260588	467728
West Bengal	Urban	14832	2725	6226	51046	74829
West Bengal	Total	115260	39521	76142	311634	542557
% of the Total		21.24%	7.28%	14.03%	57.43%	100%
India	Rural	409810	558805	874864	904965	2748445
India	Urban	38927	42856	181018	133593	396394
India	Total	448737	601661	1055882	1038559	3144839
% of the Total		14.26%	19.13%	33.02%	33.02%	100%

Source: Census report of India 2019-20.

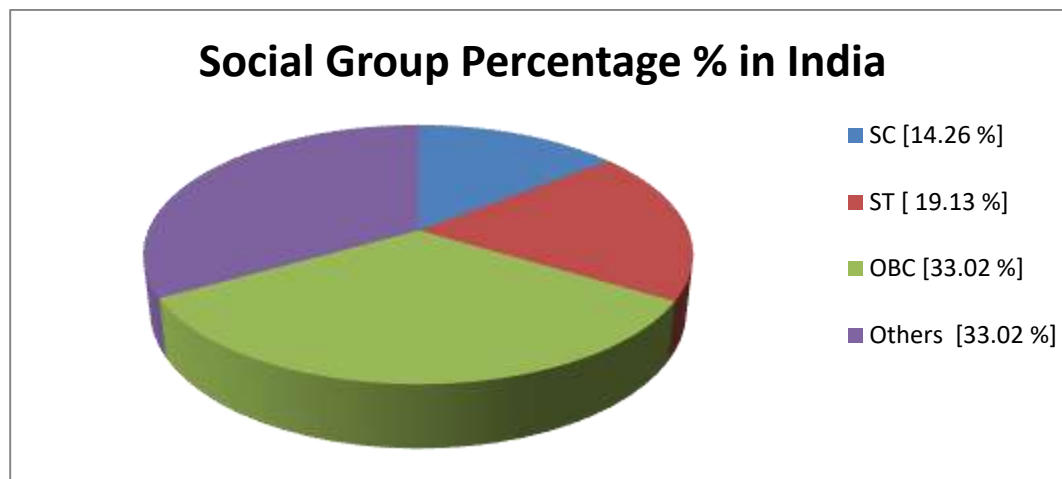
Figure 1 : Distribution of Workers by Social Group in West Bengal



Source: Census report of India 2019-20.

From Table 1 and Figure 2, explained the Social group distribution in India. It is found that there are 14.26% population is SC, 19.13 % are ST and 33.02% are OBS community in handloom manufacturing workers group in India. It is found that more than 87 % population of handloom workers are coming from rural area.

Figure 2 : Distribution of Workers by Social Group in India



Source: Census report of India 2019-20.

From Table 5 it is found that, rural population is major share compare to urban population in all our cases in West Bengal. Male population in allied activities is comparatively lower than Male Weavers. Female Weavers are comparatively less than Female Allied activities of Handloom production. Figure 3 explained that rural populations are major share in handloom production compare to urban population.

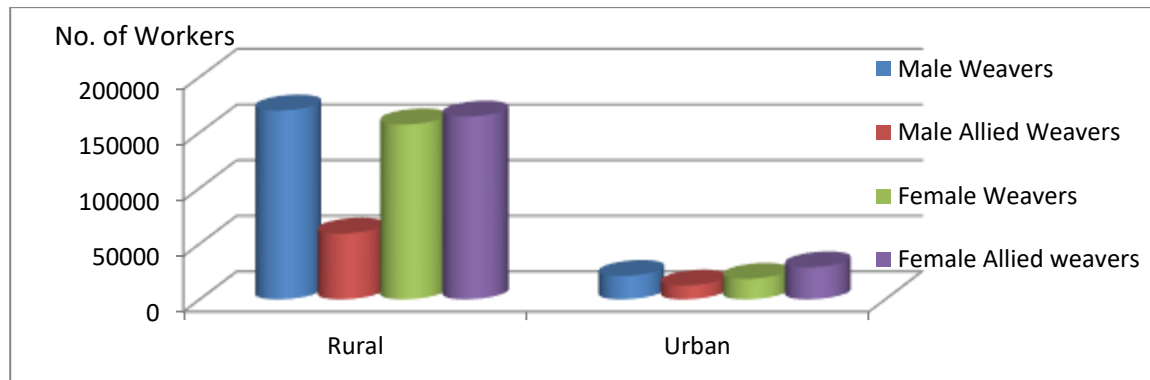
Table 5: Distribution of Types of Workers and Gender in West Bengal and India

State	Location	Male Weavers	Male Allied Workers	Female Weavers	Female Allied Workers
West Bengal	Rural	169809	59184	157318	164350
West Bengal	Urban	21090	12472	18433	28763
West Bengal	Total	190899	71656	175751	193113
	% of Total	88.95%=R	82.59%=R	89.51%=R	85.10%=R

		11.05%=U	17.41%=U	10.49%=U	14.9%=U
India	Rural	601562	177210	1754391	520125
India	Urban	157587	39374	160108	111661
India	Total	759149	216584	1914499	631786
	% of Total	79.24%=R 20.76%=U	81.82%=R 18.18%=U	91.63%=R 82.37%=U	82.32%=R 17.68%=U

Source: Census report of India 2019-20.

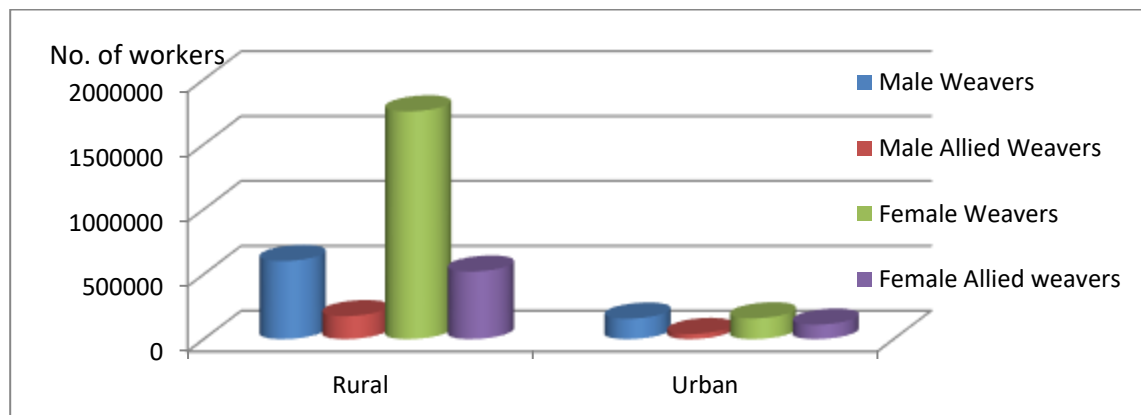
Figure 3 : Gender wise share of Weaves and Allied Workers at Urban and Rural areas in West Bengal



Source : Source: Census report of India 2019-20.

Figure 4 explained the gender wise share of weavers and allied workers in India. It is found that Female weavers are major in number at rural area. Population of all areas is lower in urban area compare to rural areas in India.

Figure 4 : Gender wise share of Weaves and Allied Workers at Urban and Rural areas in India



Source : Source: Census report of India 2019-20.

Table 6 : Distribution of Handloom Workers by Religions in West Bengal and India

State	Location	Hindu	Muslims	Jain	Sikh	Christian	Buddhist	Others	Total
West Bengal	Rural	332695	131588	18	881	1689	114	743	167728
West Bengal	Urban	62933	11824	2	56	3	6	5	74829
West Bengal	Total	395628	143412	20	937	1692	120	748	542557

West Bengal	% of the Total	72.91%	26.43 %	0.0036%	0.17 %	0.31 %	0.022%	0.13 %	100%
India	Rural	2055972	459665	218	2369	185305	23095	21821	2748445
India	Urban	271057	90102	74	650	24615	748	9148	396394
	Total	2327029	549767	292	3019	209920	23843	30969	3144839
India	% of the Total	73.99%	17.48%	0.0092%	0.095%	6.67%	0.75%	0.98%	100%

Source: Census report of India 2019-20.

Table 6 explained the handloom workers religion in India and West Bengal. In west Bengal, it is found that Hindu and Muslim community population share in handloom activities are 72.91 % and 26.45 % .Other religious community in West Bengal are comparatively less in population. Similar trend is observed in India . Hindu and Muslim population % in India are 73.99% and 17.48 % respectively.

Table 7 : Number of village for handloom work activities in West Bengal

Sl No.	District	No. of Blocks	No. of Villages	Sl. No.	District	No. of Blocks	No. of Villages
1	Bankura	22	116	10	Maldah	11	155
2	Bardhaman	25	208	11	Medinipur	45	644
3	Birbhum	18	128	12	Murshidabad	32	205
4	Dakshin Dinajpur	8	234	13	Nadia	37	762
5	Darjiling	4	13	14	24 Pgs North	19	156
6	Haora	9	67	15	Puruliya	4	4
7	Hooghly	25	221	16	South Twenty Four Parganas	7	31
8	Jalpaiguri	6	8	17	Uttar Dinajpur	6	18
9	Koch Bihar	12	55		Total	290	3025

Source: www. Handloom .nic.in

Table 7 explained the number of village /blocks in each districts for handloom activities. It is found that numbers of villages engaged in handloom work are major in Nadia, Medinapur,Dakshin Dinajpur,Hooghly and Burdhaman .In such states , more than 200 villages are engaged in handloom work activities . Other districts are Maldah, North 24 Pgs ,Bankura important.

CONCLUSION:

West Bengal is rich in tradition of Handloom Weaving. It is a part of our cultural heritage. The Handloom products of Bengal have attracted in National and International level .AS a result it is now worldwide attention of our handloom products and bears the timeless legacy of our cultural heritage. The Directorate of Textiles (Handlooms, Spinning Mills, and Silk Weaving & Handloom Based Handicrafts Division) under the M & SSET Department, Govt. of West Bengal, is the nodal agency to look after the development of Handloom sector in the State of West Bengal. Various schemes as classified under are being implemented by the Directorate to render support for development and promotion of this sector with a view for growth, marketing and welfare.

- Handloom clusters development projects
- Mega Handloom Cluster Development Project
- Handloom projects under Natural Fibre Mission,
- Comprehensive Handloom Development Programme at Dakshin Dinajpur.
- Indian Institute of Handloom Technology at Fulia.
- West Bengal Handloom Circuit, 2014.
- Integrated Skill Development Training (ISDS).
- Textile Policy 2013-2018 with special emphasis on Handloom Sector,
- Revival of primary weavers co-operative societies individuals/ SHGS / Apex society under Revival , Reform & Restructuring Package,
- 10% price subsidy on hank yarn under Mill Gate Price Scheme.
- Marketing support to handloom industry through organization of district level fairs, State Level Fair
- Weaver Credit Cards (WCC)

- Old Age Pension to handloom weavers

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