AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF HANDLOOM INDUSTRY IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The handloom industry has developed a lot over a period of time. It is spread throughout the country. Since most of the handloom units are run either as sole-proprietors or on partnership basis and the owners lack the needed professional outlook in the overall handing of their units, many of them are not even aware of the modern techniques of marketing such as product development brand promotion, packing, advertising market, surveys and demand forecasts. To maximize their sales volume, it has become very important to know how one can get maximum result/response by using different marketing strategies. For increasing the export, to provide satisfaction to customers there is need of the study of marketing practices.
The handloom industry rolls its carpet back to the ancient times. The very first fragment of Indian handloom was excavated from the parts of Egypt. After that, finely woven and dyed cotton fabrics were found in Mohenjo-Daro (Indus Valley Civilization). There were some more excavations that speak of the golden history of Indian handloom. In fact, traditional handloom style has been one of the oldest forms. Even, the Vedic literature has mention of Indian weaving styles. Apart from this, few examples are also seen in Buddhist era scripts about the woolen carpets.

Prior to imperialism and colonization, all the natural fabrics (silk, cotton and jute) were hand-woven and Khadi was among the prevalent materials at that point of time. Later on, the mechanical system created ways for the faster completion of spinning and weaving. After the introduction of machinery, the technicalities were given due care and the finesse came in a better way. This also helped the weavers, embroiders and hand-printers to create new designs. At the time of British, the export business of cotton and silk also started. This enabled the Indians to showcase the talent of their expertise in other countries also. Indian handloom created a special place for itself in India and abroad too. With so many varieties of handloom from different states, India has collected a precious wealth of innovation. After all, this has lead to the emergence of India as the most richly cultured country.

The Office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms has been implementing, since its inception in the year 1976, various schemes for the promotion and development of the handloom sector and providing assistance to the handloom weavers in a variety of ways.
SOME OF THE MAJOR PROGRAMMES RELATE TO THE HANDLOOM SECTOR ARE

- Modernization and Upgradation of Technology
- Input Support
- Marketing Support
- Publicity
- Infrastructural Support
- Welfare Measures
- Composite Growth Oriented Package
- Development of Exportable Products
- Research & Development

The various schemes implemented by the Office of Development Commissioner for Handlooms address the needs of weavers who constitute the disadvantaged of social strata and occupational groups, which are at the bottom of the economic hierarchy. Concerted efforts are being made through the schemes and programme to enhance production, productivity, and efficiency of the handloom sector and enhance the income and socio-economic status of the weavers by upgrading their skills and providing infrastructural support and essential inputs.

EXPORT & IMPORT FACET OF INDIAN HANDLOOM

Indian handloom is crossing borders to be a part of foreign style also, not just in terms of popularity; but also for originality. This handloom sector has seen various developments to
match its steps with the growing demands. Whether it is a foreign customer or Indian, the Indian handloom is strong enough to meet their requirements. In fact, it has become a fashion statement and is attracting designers also. The present trend in handloom sector is that of mingling old designs with new techniques and creating originality out of it. This has also leaded the Indian handloom markets to step out of their country. And that’s why; export of Indian handlooms is gaining momentum.

The Handloom emporiums and shops are steadfast in giving shape to the ideations of their customers. Moreover, this handloom sector is high in demand in foreign countries. The use of vibrant colours and traditions embroidered or painted on finest fabrics in India has been attracting foreign buyers. And this has led the manufacturers to export Indian handloom materials to other countries. On the other side, some of the manufacturers import threads and modern style machinery or looms from other countries to enhance their work efficiency. The first Jacquard weaving loom was made by Joseph Marie Jacquard in 1801. In today’s scenario, computerized printing and weaving technologies are getting prevalent. And this has led the handloom manufacturers to fetch the modern computer embroidery machines from abroad. After all, it is the increasing demand for fineness and creativity that has enabled them to cross boundaries. The lessening of import and export duties has also given a boost to this business.

HANDLOOM EXHIBITIONS IN INDIA

The handloom sector in India is one such sector that showcases the true blend of artistic beauty and durability of materials. In fact, this field of creativity is the representative of traditional culture in India. From the times immemorial, various styles, patterns, fabrics and designs of handloom have been prevalent in India. Each and every state in India has some or the other specialty associated with it, which lends them their individuality. The magic of
Indian handloom is such that it has attracted numerous fashion designers, who have used this art in creating exclusive designer clothes and fusion dresses. In doing so, they have maintained the richness of traditionalism in Indian handloom.

HANDLOOM EXHIBITIONS IN INDIA

- DilliHaat, New Delhi
- Surajkund Crafts Mela, Faridabad
- Indian International Trade Fair, New Delhi
- Pushkar Fair, Pushkar (Rajasthan)
- Dussehra Mela, Kota (Rajasthan)
- Marwar Festival, Jodhpur (Rajasthan)
- Kumbh Mela, Haridwar
- Lavi Fair, Kullu
- Dussehra, Kullu
- Sair Festival, Manali
- JhiriMela, Jammu and Kashmir
- Goa Carnival, Goa
- ChitraVichitra Tribal Fair, Gujarat
- Kutch Desert Festival, Gujarat
- Hemis Festival, Ladakh
- Baisakhi Mela, Punjab
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Leeladhar V (2005) has observed that the limitations of the microfinance institutions were in terms of their sustainability and their inability to draw commercial capital and grow rapidly. The emerging sectors were identified as construction, non-farm enterprise, handloom, clusters that involve garment making and quarrying, etc. According to them, there was scope for both the banks and the microfinance institutions to intervene. Chatterjee Amit K. (2005) has observed that handloom and power looms are mainly used to manufacture various home furnishing products like table mats, durries, cushion covers etc.

Though these products are manufactured in many states all over India - two geographical pockets have excelled in production and export of home furnishing products: Karur in Tamilnadu and Panipat in Haryana. Sivakkannan M. (2005) has pointed out that The Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC) is well aware of its role as a catalyst in revitalizing the handloom industry in the context of the post-Multi-Fiber Agreement era to cater to the increasing global demand. Jayaswal Rajeev (2005) has noticed that desi looms are fast changing into dollar minting machines. Growing demand for ethnic Indian products abroad has caught attention of foreign entrepreneurs. Encouraged by the growing foreign interests in Indian handicrafts business, domestic exporters have decided to set up handicrafts and handloom stores abroad. Ramanurjan (2005) has observed that a plan for the preservation of skills through the Gurukulam concept has been formulated to stop the migration of children of handloom artisans. A school of weaving on the pattern of Gurukulam will not only nurture the talents of the ‘disciples', but will surely create a congenial atmosphere to make them proud of their profession.
Sivakkannan M. (2005) has observed that the Handlooms (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act, 1985 was enacted to reserve certain items for the industry. The Planning Commission recently constituted a Steering Committee on Handloom to make recommendations and take the industry to a position of strength and provide inputs for policy formulation. In the latest EXIM Policy, Madurai, Karur, Kannur and Panipat have been declared towns of excellence in respect of handlooms and a number of fiscal concessions are made available. Shingi P M (2006) has observed that a village level handloom cooperative, brings out various dimensions in relation to the survival of a handloom industry. He has also pointed out that extremely low level of wages given to the handloom weavers is the major reason why the weavers are leaving handloom and entering into other trades which promise them relatively more income. PTI (2006) has enumerated that 'Great Indian Heritage Promotional Scheme' aims at branding Indian handloom products and secures a niche market for them in domestic as well as international markets.

Sharma Shantanu Nandan (2006) has examined that North-East India may soon have a business facilitation centre to train first generation entrepreneurs. This along with the proposed design house for handloom and handicraft products in Guwahati may help young entrepreneurs and increase export volume. The proposed business facilitation centre will help guiding these entrepreneurs. Several government and semi-government agencies like NEDFi, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), Development Commission (Handloom), state handloom and handicraft commissioner’s office are working on the same agenda with no synergy among them. IST (2006) has marked out that Punjabis could soon provide the justification of existence of the ailing handloom sector in India as the state becomes the biggest consumer of handlooms. New machines have also been provided to weavers to improve product quality.
Export of Handloom Products in Last Ten Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period.</th>
<th>Export. (Rs. in Crores)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>1500</td>
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<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>1600</td>
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<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>2200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>2260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>2860</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source:  http://panipat.nic.in/Industry.htm

Small Scale Industries are growing at a tremendous rate. The investment limit of Plant and Machinery of SSI units is Rs.5.00 Crores. The detail of SSI units is given as under:-

Table 1.4 Small Scale Industries of Handloom Products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Up to 31.03.2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of units</td>
<td>3497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Investment</td>
<td>Rs.30130.73 Lacs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>53,223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Production</td>
<td>Rs.96717.97 Lacs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items Manufactured</td>
<td>Handloom, Power loom Products, Shoddy/Spinning Cotton Yarn, Dyeing and Processing Units, Agro based Industries, Foundries, Textile Machinery, Nuts and Bolts etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HANDLOOMS- THE LARGEST COTTAGE INDUSTRY

Handlooms are an important craft product and comprise the largest cottage industry of the country. Millions of looms across the country are engaged in weaving cotton, silk and other
natural fibres. There is hardly a village where weavers do not exist, each weaving out the traditional beauty of India's own precious heritage. In the world of handlooms, there are Madras checks from Tamil Nadu, ikats from Andhra and Orissa, tie and dye from Gujarat and Rajasthan; brocades from Banaras, jacquards from Uttar Pradesh, daccai from West Bengal and phulkari from Punjab. Yet, despite this regional distinction there has been a great deal of technical and stylistic exchange. The famed Coimbatore saris have developed while imitating the Chanderi pattern of Madhya Pradesh. Daccai saris are now woven in Bengal, not Dhaka. The Surattanchoi based on a technique of satin weaving with the extra weft floats that are absorbed in the fabric itself has been reproduced in Varanasi. Besides its own traditional weaves, there is hardly any style of weaving that Varanasi cannot reproduce. The Baluchar technique of plain woven fabric brocaded with untwisted silk thread, which began in Murshidabad district of West Bengal, has taken root in Varanasi. Their craftsmen have also borrowed the jamdani technique.

Woollen weaves are no less subtle. The Kashmiri weaver is known the world over for his Pashmina and Shahtoosh shawls. The shawls are unbelievably light and warm. The states of Kashmir and Karnataka are known for their mulberry silk. India is the only country in the world producing all four commercially known silks - mulberry, tasser (tussore), eri and muga. Now gaining popularity in the U.S.A. and Europe tasser is found in the remote forests of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. Another kind of raw silk is eri. Eri is soft, dull and has wool like finish.

**CONCLUSION**

The handloom industry has developed a lot over a period of time. It is spread throughout the country. Since most of the handloom units are run either as sole-proprietors or on partnership basis and the owners lack the needed professional outlook in the overall
handing of their units, many of them are not even aware of the modern techniques of marketing such as product development, brand promotion, packing, advertising, market surveys, and demand forecasts. To maximize their sales volume, it has become very important to know how one can get maximum result/response by using different marketing strategies. For increasing the export, to provide satisfaction to customers there is need of the study of marketing practices.

REFERENCES

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