

Handlooms and Handicrafts

Introduction

Maharashtra is known for its rich and exquisite traditional handloom textiles and handicrafts. Handwoven textiles like Paithani brocades that have existed for more than 2000 years in original patterns, and woven with the same techniques even today, are prized heirlooms and possessions for many. New techniques and products were introduced by different dynasties, which ruled the state from time to time. These have left an indelible impression on the history of handwoven textiles and handcrafted arts of Maharashtra. Handlooms and handicrafts have played a crucial role in the state economy in providing employment and income.

However, since the early 20th century, with the introduction of mills and import of powerloom fabrics by the British, the expanding mill and powerloom sector in the country poses a threat to the handloom sector. Despite these constraints, the handlooms and handicrafts sector is an important segment of the rural economy. The immediate and essential requirements are careful nurturing and a development plan for facing market competition.

The production of these articles is achieved through labour-oriented methods by artisans/master craftsmen whose expertise and skills are handed down from one generation to the next, creating a distinctive regional identity and characteristics unique to the region. There have been improvements in designs, to a certain extent in technique, and in the use of contemporary fibres.

The use of modern technology is absent. This sector uses labour-intensive production technique, with less capital requirements; and it is best suited for India and under-developed countries, where labour is abundant and surplus, and capital is scarce. The technique has the potential to generate massive employment and raise the standard of living of people living below the poverty line. The handlooms and handicrafts, being cottage industries, production is carried out from household premises or in the open.

Under various schemes of the central and state Government, efforts have been made to construct common worksheds and common facility centres. As a production unit, a combination of land, labour, capital and entrepreneurial skills are required in order to manage the economic activity.

As the handlooms and handicrafts sector is totally decentralised, individual weavers and craftsmen face difficulties in procuring finance, raw material and in marketing. The wages of weavers are also so meagre that they are not in a position to invest in any kind of change or improvement either in technology or in product diversification. Thus, as they are unable to sell their products at a price in order to earn the minimum wages to survive, they are shifting to other occupations, with the exception of the weavers who produce specialised products, which do not face any threat from the powerloom sector or those fabrics, which cannot be economically produced on powerlooms.

High quality handloom fabrics and handicrafts were exported to England before the process of industrialisation in India acquiring recognition the world over. Mughal emperors, feudal lords and aristocrats were the main patrons of handlooms and handicrafts artisans and craftsmen.

The Industrial Revolution in England in the 19th century, British rule and the abolition of feudal lords led to the decline in the patronage of handloom weaving, and consequently, the handloom industry declined in India as it was unable to compete with technology-driven units of production with regard to price and consistency of fabric quality.

Post-Independence Policy on Handlooms and Handicrafts

In the post-Independence era, despite the thrust on heavy and medium industries for economic development of the country, due importance was also given to village and cottage industries because of the large employment potential. Handlooms and handicrafts sectors were the major sectors in terms of providing employment next only to agriculture.

Generation of massive employment is best-suited under Indian conditions, where capital is scarce and technology imports are not affordable by the nation; hence, the handlooms and handicrafts sectors are also best suited to achieve planned objectives of “self-sufficiency” and “self-reliance.” Owing to geographical specialisation, exports are possible, provided the production cost is minimal and the price is competitive in terms of the market.

Traditionally, these handcrafted products were patronised by royalty, the Indian aristocracy and foreigners. The quality of goods produced was not available elsewhere. Being labour-intensive, production takes its time and as there is an absence of modern technology, mass production is not possible. It is assumed that the use of modern technology leads to mass production, as it invariably brings down the cost of production and it is market-competitive because of its cost advantage, i.e. produced at the least cost. While these characteristics may or may not be present in the production of handicrafts, with labour being in abundance and cheaply available compared to the cost of labour in western countries, this industry needs special skills handed down from one generation to the next, which are “hereditary in nature”.

The Central Government, in coordination with the State Government, proposed a number of schemes, which included conversion to powerlooms, supply of improved appliances such as take-up motions, etc. to improve the quality of handloom fabrics. To provide newer designs and training for using improved appliances to the weavers who were living in remote areas with no knowledge of changing trends in the cities, Weavers' Service Centres were started by the Government of India in various areas of the country, beginning with Mumbai in 1956.

The use of these appliances, which were developed for the production of better quality and uniform fabrics were not adopted by the weavers because of both physical and mental blocks. However, in certain areas, for production of plain medium-count fabrics, semi-automatic looms were adopted for ensuring a superior quality of fabric. This chapter is divided into four sections as follows.

Section I

Development in Handlooms Sector

Apex Development Bodies

Ministry of Textiles, Government of India

The allocation of funds for the development of these sectors and for implementation of various schemes of the Government of India is done by the Ministry of Textiles through the Director, Weavers' Service Centre, Mumbai and Deputy Director, Weavers' Service Centre, Nagpur.

Development Commissioner for Handlooms, Government of India

The Office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms, with its headquarter at New Delhi, directs the research, development and training for the handlooms sector in Maharashtra through its western region office headed by the Director with branch office in Mumbai and other sub-offices in Aurangabad, Kolhapur and Nagpur.

Department of Textiles, Government of Maharashtra

The State Textile Department is, headed by the Secretary (Textiles) who is in charge for the development of the handloom sector and assists in achieving targets through the Director of Handlooms, Powerlooms and Textiles with headquarters located at Nagpur, and regional offices headed by Regional Deputy Directors at Mumbai, Solapur, Aurangabad and Nagpur.

Department of Industries, Government of Maharashtra

The State Government, through Secretary (Industries) is in charge of the development of the handicrafts sector and provides assistance to the artisans.

Maharashtra Small-Scale Industries Development Corporation (MSSIDC)

MSSIDC was established in 1962, initially as an agency for the supply of raw materials to SSI units and to also extend marketing assistance to these units in selling their products. The basic objective was to help small-scale industries to develop and grow to the fullest extent, enabling them to play their role towards the realisation of the national objective of accelerating the industrial development, generation of employment and income.

In the handlooms and handicrafts sector, MSSIDC had undertaken the project of the training centre at Paithan in 1973 and still continues with it.

MSSIDC has played a vital role in the revival of Paithani sarees of Paithan and Himroo weaving of Aurangabad. MSSIDC has also actively participated in the area of handicrafts by arranging training programmes, sales and marketing.

MSSIDC organises the marketing of handicraft items and also arranges to conduct training programmes in Paithani-weaving at Paithan and Yeola for the revival of this craft.

Maharashtra State Handloom Corporation (MSHC), Nagpur

The Corporation was set up in 1972 with the objective of providing gainful employment to handloom weavers not covered by the cooperative sector, by supplying raw materials and procuring the fabrics produced by the weavers after paying them conversion charges. The corporation, by these methods, has tried to generate employment for the weavers. This indicates that the corporation is a socio-economic organisation. The corporation has 13 production centres and 23 depots for selling fabrics produced by the weavers.

Private sector artisans and weavers are looked after by Maharashtra State Handloom Corporation (MSHC), Government of Maharashtra Undertaking. The coordination between the Director of Handlooms and MSHC is secured by appointment of the Director of Handlooms, Government of Maharashtra, as Vice-Chairman of the MSHC. The Chairman of Maharashtra State Handloom Corporation is a non-official political appointment. The Managing Director of MSHC is the chief executive of the corporation. Both the offices, viz. Directorate of Handloom and MSHC are located at Nagpur.

Maharashtra State Handloom Cooperative Federation Ltd. (MAHATEX), Mumbai

MAHATEX is a marketing organisation. Its main activity is to procure handloom products from member-weaver societies and arrange for its marketing through Retail Sales, Wholesale, and Exhibition Sales.

Government of Maharashtra Schemes

Various schemes and subsidies are available and organisations such as Khadi and Village Industries Board, Small-Scale Industries Development Corporation, Mahila Arthik Vikas Corporation, Mahatma Phule Development Corporation and

Annabhau Sathe Corporation are the facilitators to industrial artisans/units/cooperative-ventures/NGO initiatives, providing marketing, training facilities, loan, subsidy and credit. However, the achievements fall far short of expectations and expected levels of performance.

Handlooms in Maharashtra

Handloom weavers in Maharashtra exist in pockets scattered throughout the state. The uniqueness of handloom is its regional specialisation 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. As this industry is totally decentralised, efforts have been made to assemble artisans under a cooperative fold so that they can avail themselves of the various schemes of the Central and State Governments in an organised manner.

Maharashtra is one of the most industrialised state in the country today with the basic infrastructure, which can promote development. The state is divided into four regions, viz., Konkan, Western Maharashtra, Vidarbha and Marathwada with a total population of above ninety six million (Census, 2001). The ratio of rural to urban population is approximately 5:3. The total strength of handlooms and powerlooms in Maharashtra is given in Table 9.1.

In view of the changes in the economic environment through technological acceleration in industrialisation and to maintain a balance of employment even in rural areas, it is essential to tap every possible resource of production, income and employment generation.

The handlooms sector, with an employment ratio per handloom of 1:3, has great untapped potential to increase income levels as well as to sustain employment levels and skills by appropriate 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. A SWOT analysis of the handloom sector given in Table 9.1, underlines the strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to this sector. Keeping in view the intense competition from the powerloom

Table 9.1: A SWOT Analysis of Handloom Sector of Maharashtra

Strengths	Weaknesses
<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 	<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
Opportunities	Threats
<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 • Trust and capacity-building • Fashion fabrics for middle class and elite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition from powerloom and machine -made products • Moving to other occupations • Competition of similar products from other states

Source: Ramaswamy, V.S. and Namakumari, 2002

and mill sector, diversified production of fashion and high-value products should be stressed upon through channels of marketing. State Handloom Corporation were created to assist the weavers outside the cooperative fold and to function as a business organisation in order to sustain the industry by creating better products to suit contemporary market needs and organized marketing. There are various schemes for development, training, social welfare and marketing, offered by the Government of India (Table 9.3) through the Government of Maharashtra for the benefit of handloom weavers in the state under the aegis of the State Apex Handloom Cooperative Society, State Handloom Development Corporation and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs).

Tables 9.2 (a) and (b) indicate the total number of workers engaged in Powerlooms and Handlooms sector are 192,534 in the year 2003, respectively. Of which 153,012 are in powerlooms and 44,724 in handlooms. In terms of percentage, powerlooms are 77.4 per cent and handlooms are 22.6 per cent.

Year 2004 scenario of powerlooms and handlooms is such that number of powerlooms are 29,853 and handlooms are 32,792, both together total number is 62,345, whereas in 2003 the total number of powerlooms were 153,012 and handlooms 44724. The total of powerlooms and handlooms together is 197,736 in 2003. There has been a sharp fall in the number of powerlooms and handlooms in Maharashtra. Hence, the Tables 9.2 (a) and (b) indicate declining trends for the sectors in the state.

The Handloom Weavers are Covered Under Three Basic Segments in Maharashtra

- Private Operators / Master Weavers with captive looms and weavers who work for them,
- Weavers under cooperative fold,
- Handloom Corporation covering the weavers outside cooperative fold.

The cooperative movement 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

Table 9.2 (a): Production and Employment in Powerloom Sector in Maharashtra

Powerloom Sector				
Year	No. of Power Looms	No. of Workers	Total Consumption of Year 2003 (in kgs.)	Total Production in Meters
2003	1,53,012	1,15,059 (59.76)*	24,88,3251	272,32,4413
2004	29,853	-	-	-

Note: *Figures in bracket indicate percentage of total workers 192534 engaged in handloom & powerloom sectors in the year 2003.
Source: Director of Handlooms, Nagpur

Table 9.2 (b): Production and Employment in Handloom Sector in Maharashtra

Handloom Sector				
Year	No. of Hand-loom	No. of Workers	Total Consumption of Year 2004 (in kgs.)	Total Production in Meters
2003	44,724	77,475 (40.24)*	69,9176	58,97,104
2004	32,792	-	-	-

Note: *Figures in bracket indicate percentage of total workers 192534 engaged in handloom & powerloom sectors in the year 2003.
Source: Director of Handlooms, Nagpur

Table 9.3: Government of India Schemes for Handloom weavers

No.	Name of the Scheme	Implementing Agency
1	Input Related Scheme	
	Scheme for supply of yarn at Mill Gate Price	NHDC
2	Development Scheme	
	Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana	State Govt. Agencies
3	Welfare Schemes	
	1. Workshed-cum-Housing Scheme	"
	2. Thrift Fund Scheme for Handloom Weavers	"
	3. Group Insurance Scheme for Handloom Weavers	"
	4. New Insurance Scheme for Handloom Weavers	"
	5. Health Package Scheme for Handloom Weavers	"
4	Marketing Schemes	
	1. Scheme for Marketing of Handloom Products through Exhibitions and Fairs	"
	2. Scheme for Setting up of Urban Haats	"
	3. Development of Exportable Products and Marketing Scheme (DEPM)	"
5	Training	
	Decentralised Training Programme for Handloom Weavers (DTP)	WSC

Source: Compendium of Handloom, Development Commissioner (Handloom), New Delhi

reducing the weavers to poverty. The present status of handlooms weavers, and the existing societies (as on March 2004) is given in Table 9.4.

Unfortunately, the cooperative system has suffered because of the intense competition from power loom and mill sector, except for specialised or value-added products like the Paithani, top padar sarees, tussar sarees and dress materials, wall hangings and durries, which are uneconomical to produce by power looms. This is because the

markets for the products in the handloom sector by private producers, powerloom producers and foreign producers are distinctively different in terms of quality and customer preferences.

According to the Director Handloom, Powerloom and Textiles, Government of Maharashtra, Nagpur cloth produced by powerlooms is 25-40 per cent cheaper compared to handloom products. However, in spite of such competition, handlooms will survive because of the following advantages:

Table 9.4: District-wise Weavers and Handloom Co-operative Societies in Maharashtra in 2000 and 2004

No.	Districts	Number of Handloom Weavers as on March 2000	Number of Handloom Weavers as on March 2004	Percentage of Handloom Weavers in each district in Year 2000	Percentage of Handloom Weavers in each District in Year 2004	Number of Co-Op Societies as on March 2000	Number of Co-Op Societies as on March 2004	Percentage of Societies	
								In 2000	In 2004
1	Mumbai	451	2303	0.58	1.81	5	8	0.64	1.16
2	Thane	0	-	0	-	-	-	-	-
3	Raigadh	0	-	0	-	-	-	-	-
4	Sindhudurg	65	-	.08	-	-	-	-	-
5	Ratnagiri	0	-	0	-	-	-	-	-
6	Nashik	1,522	4199	1.96	3.30	7	6	0.90	0.87
7	Dhule	1,010	277	1.30	0.22	5	3	0.64	0.43
8	Jalgaon	194	634	0.25	0.50	4	4	0.51	0.58
9	Ahmednagar	89	1490	0.11	1.15	10	13	1.28	1.89
10	Pune	733	86	0.94	0.60	6	1	0.76	0.15
11	Satara	474	340	0.61	0.27	1	2	0.12	0.29
12	Sangli	848	501	1.09	0.39	4	3	0.51	0.43
13	Solapur	15,241	13443	19.67	10.55	175	173	22.40	25.10
14	Kolhapur	258	1986	0.33	1.56	70	14	8.96	2.03
15	Aurangabad	707	752	0.91	0.55	2	4	2.25	0.58
16	Jalna	20	1348	0.03	1.06	-	1	-	0.15
17	Parbhani	142	376	0.18	0.29	1	1	0.12	0.15
18	Beed	388	563	0.50	0.44	18	15	2.30	2.17
19	Nanded	1,309	54725	1.69	43.06	24	23	3.07	3.33
20	Osmanabad	585	188	0.76	0.14	1	1	0.12	0.15
21	Latur	719	380	0.92	0.30	2	1	0.25	0.15
22	Buldhana	48	72	0.06	0.05	1	1	0.12	0.43
23	Akola	908	215	1.17	0.17	3	3	0.38	0.72
24	Amravati	2,228	1054	2.88	0.82	6	5	0.76	-
25	Yavatmal	78	-	0.20	-	-	-	-	-
26	Wardha	332	544	0.43	0.43	7	4	0.90	-
27	Nagpur	40,598	38,935	52.40	30.63	392	386	50.90	56.02
28	Bhandara	5,400	1813	7.0	1.42	29	12	3.81	1.74
29	Chandrapur	1,124	870	1.45	0.65	5	5	0.64	0.75
30	Gadchiroli	2,004	-	2.60	-	3	-	0.38	-
	Total	77,475	12,7094	100	100	781	689	100	100

Source: Weavers' Service Centre, Mumbai, 2004

- Handloom cloth is eco-friendly.
- Handloom has great employment potential.
- It has immense foreign exchange potential.
- It has local demand.

Product Range

- Paithani Saree
- Nagpur Saree
- Solapur Top Padar Saree
- Pune Saree
- Vidarbha Tussar Saree and Dress Material
- Solapur Chadar
- Bed Covers and Towels
- Furnishings
- Durries and Carpets
- Wall Hangings

Table 9.4 indicates that the total number of Handloom Co-operative Societies in Maharashtra in 2000 was 781 which declined to 689 in 2004 .

Nanded registered an increase in total number of weavers in 2004 to 54,725 against 1309 total number of weaver in 2000. Nanded has 23 Co-operative Handloom Societies in 2004 as against 24 in the year 2000 and percentage in 2000 was 3.07 per cent and 3.33 per cent in 2004 in Maharashtra.

Nagpur is the highest in terms of number of handloom weavers, which was 40,598 in the year 2000 and declined to 38,935 in the year 2004. The percentage of weavers was 52.40 per cent in the year 2000 which declined to 30.63 per cent in the year 2004. Nagpur is the first in Maharashtra State with highest number of Co-operative Handloom Societies, 392 Co-operative Societies in the year 2000 against 386 Co-operative Societies in the year 2004 and in terms of concentration of Societies, Nagpur is the first in Maharashtra State registering 50.90 per cent Co-operative Handloom Societies in the year 2000 and 56.02 per cent in the year 2004.

Solapur is having second largest concentration of handloom weavers with 15,241 weavers in 2000 against 13,443 weavers in 2004 and percentage of handloom weavers was 19.67 per cent in 2000 against 10.55 per cent in 2004. Solapur also represents second highest number of Co-operative Societies in Maharashtra State which was 175 in 2000 which declined to 173 in 2004 and the

percentage of Societies is 22.40 per cent in 2000 against 25.10 per cent in 2004.

Following reasons are identified for concentration of handloom weavers and handloom Co-operatives in Nagpur and Solapur:

- Historical – since time immemorial,
- Market is well developed at Nagpur & Solapur since time immemorial,
- Availability of raw materials and prevalence of Master Weavers at Nagpur and Solapur is since time immemorial,
- Capacity of Master Weavers to hold on in profession at Nagpur and Solapur is extremely high,
- Absence of above reasons at other districts in Maharashtra might explain the scanty distribution of handloom weavers in other districts of Maharashtra.

Problems Faced by Handloom Cooperative Sector

- Handloom cooperatives are primary cooperatives affiliated with the Assistant Registrar of Cooperative Societies and Deputy Registrar of Cooperative Societies, which function under several constraints and officials, find little time to devote to the development of the handloom sector.
- Members of handloom cooperatives are illiterate and unable to comprehend the schemes and the projects and its benefits; therefore they are not able to implement them in letter and spirit in the cooperative sector. There is a need to train members of co-operative societies in managing them effectively.
- Powerloom cloth is much more in demand in the market and is cheaper resulting in accumulated stocks leading to high inventories (Ref: Write up from MAHATEX, Mumbai and Handloom Development Corporation, Nagpur).
- Turnover in handloom is less compared to powerloom fabric.

Due to heavy inventories and no sales, cooperative handloom societies are economically crippled with no resources to buy raw materials and are consequently unable to offer work to weavers. Even Handloom Co-operatives are facing problems due to heavy losses. The losses are for the following reasons.

- Slump in the textile industry, leading to low demand for products of the corporation.
- Corporation has huge inventories.
- High rate of interest on the borrowed funds and quality of goods is poor.
- High cost of production and high establishment cost.
- Lack of professionalism in day-to-day functioning.

Current Issues and Concerns of Handloom Weavers

- Lack of consistent work and satisfactory wages. Children of handloom weavers do not opt for the weaving profession.
- Languishing traditional art, migration of weavers to non-craft activities.
- Lack of trust building, planned training with follow-up development, monitoring and support continuity.
- Poor infrastructure and support in design, technology and marketing.
- Low productivity and inconsistent quality.

Section II

Handicrafts in Maharashtra

Handicrafts are perhaps the oldest craft practised from the times of ancient civilisation since human beings started making utility tools. This sector is embedded in the socio-economic and cultural milieu of India. Handicrafts are “skill-specific” and “master craftsmen-specific”. Production of handicrafts is based on hereditary skills with its roots in caste-based occupations and is invariably economically and socially vulnerable. Irrespective of raw material used in the making of an article, these can be classified into two groups:

- Utility articles like utensils, furniture, bags, etc. which are an essential part of our daily life.
- Artifacts or decorative articles, which are used by practically every household for decoration.

Handicraft products are made by using the skill of the artisans varying with their ability of material-handling capacity without much use of technology and is reflected in each piece they create. The quality and quantity of the product also depend on the craftsmen's ability and acumen. Artisans work mostly in their homes and at times in small

workshops of master craftsmen. The distribution of handicrafts in Maharashtra is given in Table 9.5.

Production in this sector is un-organised, resulting in the absence of an institutional framework for marketing and support activities.

Handicrafts in Private or Cooperative Sectors

Handicrafts are “skill-specific” and “master craftsman-specific”; training is imparted only through master craftsmen and centres run by State and Central Government Agencies under various schemes. The key input is a “master-trainer” who is identified as a “master-craftsman,” who is not required to be qualified in terms of school and college degrees but possesses hereditary skills in the production of handicraft goods. Master-craftsmen train artisans. These handicrafts have local and international markets and export potential.

Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)

In the absence of a corporation for the development of handicrafts, schemes and subsidies are offered by the Government, and NGOs are free to take initiatives in the sector. According to the Planning Commission, Government of India, there were 3000 NGOs in India in 1999. These are charity organisations registered under the Charities Act, Trust Act and Societies Act. The wealthy contribute to charity via NGOs as tax concessions are available to those donating to NGOs. The Government of India and especially the finance department and some activists demand accountability and transparency in affairs of NGOs. NGOs have created a “Credibility Alliance Rating Agency” since NGOs receive tax benefits along with donors to avoid collusion between NGOs and donors. Their assessment is expected to be on the basis of benefits offered to artisans / beneficiaries. There are several private agencies and IIM management professionals who have entered into NGO activities as foreign funds are also available for their initiatives. The lifestyle difference between NGO professionals and artisans are glaring one and most of them are engaged in social work / welfare work / charity work with organisational back up in the form of NGOs. The NGO's are supposed to create and set up Self Help Groups (SHG) of artisans but this objective has not been met by the NGO's

adequately. Hence, the primary data collected for this project indicated that the formation of Self Help Groups must be left with the artisans themselves. The data revealed that NGO's were

assigned funds to build "Facilitation Centres", where artisans could interact with "Master Craftsmen" and provide training to new artisans but the NGO's have failed in this task.

Table 9.5: District-wise Distribution of Handicrafts in Maharashtra

Name of Craft	Craft Pockets
Kolhapuri Chappals	Kolhapur, Rashiwade, Sangrul, Jath, Malegaon, Bahireswar, Miraj, Mandre, Maharashtra, Bazar, Bhogaon, Phanhala, Mumbai.
Hand Block Printed Textiles	Saoner, Sukhlibai, Pune, Aurangabad, Savergaon, Katol, Wardha, Mumbai, Kolhapur, Amalner.
Artistic Textiles/ Paithani /sari weaving	Paithan, Yeola, Pune, Ahmednagar, Nagpur; Umerd, Bhivapur, Panani, Solapur, Sangli, Aurangabad, Maindargi.
Handmade Chindi Durry / Cotton Durries / Punja Achalpur Akot, Amravati, Peth, Durry.	Nagpur, Kamptee, Pratapgaon, Nandgaon, Chakur, Mumbai, Belapur, Khapa, Kandhar, Pilkhod, Kasoda, Parlhi, Dharangaon, Dhule, Nimgul, Mhasadi, Varesh, Mahergaon.
Silver Jewellery	Kolhapur, Hupari, Sangli, Nashik, Rendal, Pattankodoli, Pune, Mumbai, Thane.
Imitation Jewellery / Bead	Kolhapur, Hupari, Mumbai, Jewellery, Akola, Nagpur, Khamgaon, Amravati, Chandrapur, Buldhana, Chalisgaon, Kaij Aurangabad, Nanded, Thane, Saoner.
Silver Artware	Kolhapur, Nashik, Pune.
Terracotta / Pottery/ Ceramics	Nagpur, Bhadravati, Kolhapur, Ajara, Sawantwadi, Pen, Khupire, Raigadh, Pune, Mumbai, Thane, Perth, Chikhali, Mehkar, Shegaon, Khamgaon, Darawah, Kalamb, Yavatmal, Anjangaon, Piroda, Mohadi, Jalna, Aurangabad, Hingoli.
Wood Carving & lacquere ware Toy	Kolhapur, Sawantwadi, Khed, Pune, Pen, Akhot, Ratnagiri, Gadchiroli, Umerd, Nagpur, Vanvas, Bhandara, Jalna, Solapur, Aurangabad, Hingoli, Daulatabad, Resigaon, Tanda, Ahmednagar, Badanpur, Paithani, Parbhani, Patoda, Pathari, Waithan.
Brass sheet Work	Pune, Kolhapur, Tarapur, Nashik, Mumbai.
Copper Artware / Metal ware	Pune, Thane, Murbad, Ambarnath, Mumbai, Buldhana Chitaroli, Warora, Chandrapur, Bhamargarh, Kurkheda, Jalgaon, Loni, Mardi, Parali, Tuljapur.
Oxidised Silver Artware	Kolhapur, Hupari.
Bidriware	Aurangabad.
Lace / Embroidery / Patch	Nagpur, Amravati, Kondhali, Hinganghat, Kolhapur, Pune, Satara, Ratnagiri, Sangli, Mumbai, Nashik, Jalgaon, Bead, Kamptee, Ichalkaranji, Aurangabad, Umred, Yerkheda, Andhalgaon, Chandrapur, Pusa-Gondi, Warora, Nandugra, Kerwadi, Chalisgaon, Rohini, Longe, Patna, Bhatpur, Parbhani, Paithan, Dharangaon.
Cane & Bamboo	Mul Ballarpur, Bhadrava, Nagpur, Karjat, Hinganghat, Wardha, Gadchiroli, Chandrapur, Sangli, Garghoti, Solapur, Ghoti, Jalna, Aurangabad, Hingoli, Nanded, Vaijapur, Kolhapur.
Dolls and soft toys	Nagpur, Akot, Chandrapur, Amravati, Akola, Kolhapur, Pune, Mumbai, Nashik, Ratnagiri, Aurangabad, Ahmednagar, Parbhani, Yavatmal.
Leather Artware	Nagpur, Miraj, Mumbai.
Paper Mache & Plaster of Paris	Nagpur, Akot, Chandrapur, Yavatmal, Amravati, Kolhapur, Pen, Nashik, Ratnagiri, Koregaon, Mumbai, Sawantwadi, Kolegaon, Aurangabad, Kannad, Sillod, Nasirabad, Raver, Wasmat, Nagar, Jalna.
Warli Painting / Chitrakathai	Ganjad, Pinguli, Aurangabad Paintings / Ajantha Paintings.
Lac Bangles	Achalpur, Khamgaon, Akola, Aurangabad, Latur, Jalna, Dhule, Pachora.
Musical Instruments	Miraj, Mumbai, Nashik, Udgir, Sangamaeshwar, Pandharpur, Parbhani, Ahmednagar, Aurangabad, Ranisawargaon, Bhodne.
Carpet /Durries	Nagpur, Pratapgarh.
Cotton Wall Hangings	Maindagi, Solapur.
Sisal Fiber	Ahmednagar, Aurangabad.

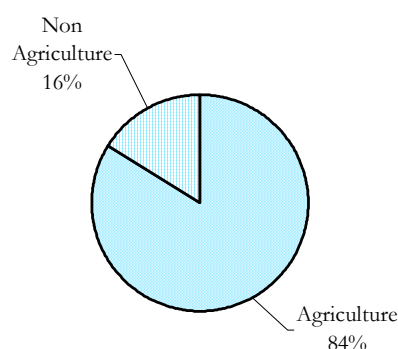
Source: State Folder (Maharashtra) office of the Development Commissioner, Handicrafts, Mumbai

Micro-Credit Financing for Handicrafts Sector

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)

NABARD is a national level financial bank with its headquarters at Mumbai, designed to regulate credit/financial facilities/subsidies, etc., for the promotion and development of agriculture, SSI, cottage and village industries, handicrafts and other allied activities in rural areas. It supervises national level cooperative structures in terms of credit and arranges for refinance to cooperative institutes, khadi and village industries and regional rural banks. The chief beneficiaries are the agriculture and non-agriculture sectors. Figure 9.1 presents micro-credit percentages for two sectors. NABARD also provides refinance to institutions for their lending activities in rural areas as well as loans to the State Government for the creation of rural infrastructure.

Figure 9.1: Micro-credit percentage for agriculture and non-agriculture sectors



Source: Economic Research Publications 2001-2002, NABARD

Handlooms and Handicrafts sectors come under the non- agriculture sector. Budget allocated to the handicrafts sector is 2 per cent, and Khadi and village industries have an allocation of 10 per cent.

Handicrafts artisans are scattered all over the State and Government of India branch offices at Aurangabad, Kolhapur, Nagpur assist in the development of handicraft sector in Maharashtra. MSSIDC is not exclusively into handicraft sector.

Section III

Development Plan

With the changing times, the consumer's lifestyle and tastes are undergoing rapid changes. Need-base and secondary needs like buying an additional

beautiful saree or dress, an extra bed cover, an additional set of linen or a few more pieces of handcrafted artefacts to be proudly displayed are emerging trends. Today, with extensive media exposure, the discerning customer is conscious about quality, value for the money spent and buys the best affordable product. Unfortunately, in the handlooms and handicrafts sector, this change has not kept pace with changing times. However, there are certain traditionally crafted articles, which still enjoy public demand having survived the vagaries of time because of the beauty and richness fashioned by exclusive craftsmanship. While working on these products, unique selling proposition is that the intrinsic aesthetic value is not diluted by it a handloom or a handicraft product. All this would require a carefully worked out Development Plan, promotional activities and a regulated marketing environment for buying.

Product Diversification and Development

This is a major thrust area because survival of handlooms is based on its inherent qualities, aesthetics and it cannot be produced on power-operated machines. The specific requirement of a quality and fabric can only be delivered by handlooms. The areas of development are specified below:

- Developing value-added products as per consumer demand based on continuous market surveys conducted periodically. Consumer demand for handloom and handicraft products must be separately assessed every year before the beginning of the year by Government Departments concerned and accordingly artisans plan production. It is necessary to involve professional management institutes in market survey and marketing exercises.
- Production of fashion fabrics by converting them into high-value garments. The Government agencies have to seek coordination between artisans and fashion designers on continuous basis.
- Diversification of present production of household linens, furnishings into quality household linen and furnishings. The Government agencies have to seek coordination between artisans and fashion designers on continuous basis.

- By bringing continuous change in design and colour. The Government agencies have to seek coordination between artisans and fashion designers on continuous basis.
- Improved colour fastness is needed. The Government agencies have to seek coordination between artisans and fashion designers on continuous basis.
- Revival of traditional sarees, maintaining its richness of workmanship and design. The Government agencies have to seek coordination between artisans and fashion designers on a continuous basis.

Upgrading Entrepreneurial Skills of Artisans

- A massive Training Programme has to be undertaken to develop entrepreneurial skills of the artisans so that they are self sufficient in the profession.
- This is one of the oldest industries in the country and has remained significant in the 21st century. 21st century development plan is incomplete without the application of latest entrepreneurial and marketing skills. The handloom sector be given "production priority" and assured market as in the past.
- Artisans, government agencies and private initiatives have to pay more attention to the changes to be brought about in the process of production and marketing. Research & Development input should be given top priority. Marketing is managed by managing quality of production and price is an important factor in consumers' decision to buy goods. The traditional philosophy that brand name, aesthetics and local specialisation would bring consumers to them is not valid in 21st century as the tastes and preferences of consumers have undergone radical changes due to global competition.
- Global competitive environment is based on the "marketing concept", which not only begins and ends with the consumer but marketing thrust is totally "consumer-oriented" based on four pillars viz.
- Understanding the needs of the target market.
- Translating needs into meaningful products and services that fulfil them.

- Deliver the same to the consumer.
- Making a profit for survival and future growth at the level of break-even point.
- Entrepreneurship training programme for artisans are encouraged by the Development Commissioner for Handicrafts, Government of India, similar initiative by Maharashtra Government is necessary component of Maharashtra Development Plan.

Development of Showrooms

The showroom need not be like departmental stores but it should be a show case where the beauty, value and aesthetics of each unique piece is available under one roof for consumer selection. Setting up few showrooms with the right assortment of products, ambience and environment at convenient location is appropriate for a city of Mumbai as it serves domestics and international clients.

Purchasing power of consumer at a place like Mumbai is extremely good, this opportunity could be exploited by offering the best of handlooms and handicrafts of Maharashtra in the right ambience.

Revamping of Corporations into Business Organisations

Most Corporations under the State Government are running into losses, it is essential to strengthen and revamp them into business organisations manned by professionals with a clear vision of what to produce, where to produce and where to market the products. This requires a strategic planning and developmental thrust.

The Government Officials from the State Cadres, who are in direct contact with artisans, must be well versed to develop awareness and utilisation of various schemes available for the artisans in the Handlooms and Handicrafts sector. They must have detailed knowledge about nitty-gritty's of the scheme. Empowering the artisans is going to happen only when the officials are knowledge-based and well-informed.

One window clearance of the projects submitted by the artisans

The problems faced by artisans relate to delays in sanction of assistance for their projects under the various schemes, and therefore, one window clearance should be setup to overcome such problems.

Coordination between various Government Departments

The State Departments involved in the development of artisans are listed below :

- Maharashtra State Handloom Corporation (MSHC), Nagpur,
- Maharashtra State Handloom Cooperative Federation Ltd. (MAHATEX),
- Development Commissioner for Handicrafts, Government of India, Regional Director, Handicrafts, Western Region,
- Maharashtra Small-Scale Industries Development Corporation (MSSIDC),
- District Project Officers / Project Officers for Tribal Development,
- Financial Institutions like Banks, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD),
- The Corporations designed for the development of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, other Backward Classes,
- Ministry of Textiles, Government of India,
- Department of Textiles, Government of Maharashtra,
- Khadi and Village Industries Commissions.

All the above functionaries have same objective to develop Handlooms and Handicrafts Sector, but there is a lack of coordination between them as they function as individual entities. They must draw a comprehensive plan together and implement it so that results in terms of developments are visible. It is essential that the officials of various departments meet together and work hand-in-hand at village-level, block-level, district-level, divisional-level, state-level and at the level of Government of India

Tapping the Export Market

The private initiatives in the handlooms and handicrafts sector are highly successful in tapping the export potentials, but the government departments have not been successful in tapping the export market. It is evident that a beginning is made to showcase for the first time handloom and handicrafts products in Dubai Exhibition in 2004. Similar exercises are required to tap export market for the products and artisans. There are some

Foreign Universities, such as Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston, devoted to Research and Development of Technology in Handlooms and Handicrafts Sector. Coordination with such organisations is necessary. Government of Maharashtra may set up a corpus for undertaking the work of coordination with foreign universities and artisans as UNDP definition of handlooms and handicrafts accepts technological upgradation. A study should be conducted on the state-of-art on these sectors in foreign countries and to have buy-back arrangement for goods produced by Maharashtra artisans. The benefits of export promotion council for handicrafts are confined to private sector agencies and steps should be taken to tap this export potential by the Government functionaries. Maharashtra Government should take steps in modifying the pattern of “Kolhapuri Chappal” for export market. “Kolhapuri Chappals” need to be more soft and fashionable for export market. A State-level Export Council should be set up for handicraft exports e.g. Sawantwadi and other artisans from Maharashtra.

Utilisation of the Services of Weavers’ Service Centers, Handicrafts Marketing and Service Extension Centers

There are two Weavers’ Service Centers under Development Commissioner for Handlooms, Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, in Maharashtra, one at Mumbai and the other at Nagpur, which are equipped to meet the requirements of training, product development and designs for developing handloom textiles in a more need-based manner. Similarly, the Office of the Development Commissioner for Handicrafts, Ministry of Textiles, Government of India with its regional office at Mumbai has its marketing and services extension centers at Aurangabad, Nagpur and Kolhapur. Their services can be utilised for the development of handicrafts sector in the State as it is exclusively for that activity.

The various schemes for development of handlooms and handicrafts sectors meant for improving the living conditions of the artisans, must be tapped in right earnest to make both these industries sustainable and subsidy-free.

Organising Exhibitions and Festivals and Promoting Advertising

The Corporations, Departments and Commissions together must organise exhibitions, festivals etc., preferably at local, National and International levels so that the market is available to the products produced by the artisans of the handlooms and handicrafts in the State.

Organising Exhibitions in Foreign Countries

Frequent exhibitions for handlooms and handicrafts products by the State must be held in foreign countries to tap export market. A beginning is made in this direction by organising a festival in Dubai, similar initiatives go a long way to tap international market.

Awareness of brands like MAHATEX and Indrayani be enhanced and new brands be introduced for State of Maharashtra by the Government Agencies.

Advertising Campaigns through Net

Since the professional channels are expensive, the cheapest is net advertising. Net Advertising can reach global market, which must be utilised for the benefit of the sector. A comprehensive web site development is necessary for this sector.

Apex Body and Self-help groups

There is need for formation of an apex body and Self-help Groups formed by Artisans. Apex Bodies like co-optex in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are necessary for the State of Maharashtra.

Provision of common facility centres at district level or convenient places is required as they provide interaction and training between Master Craftsmen and new artisans.

Audit and accounts are not maintained by the artisans and the same training be provided by Government functionaries to them.

Design Specialists are available with the Development Commissioner of Handicrafts. Specialists from Indian Institutes of Technology, Foreign Universities are also available. Government bodies must provide for collaboration between artisans and technologists to give boost to this sector.

Post Liberalisation Effects

Private operators in handicrafts are able to export through Export Promotion Council. Artisans from Maharashtra should be organised by Government Agencies for export purpose.

Organised Production

Handicrafts sector is totally unorganised in Maharashtra and Government agencies should to take care of this sector to convert it into well-organised sector or assign this task to some interested management institutes.

Statistical data and economics related to handlooms and handicrafts are not available for the State, and therefore, policy and strategy forecast for the sector are not possible. Continuous, reliable and authentic data generation is required for development of this sector.

Handicraft Sector

- This is a need for setting up of a Board for handicrafts Development for Maharashtra.
- Artisans cannot handle big orders due to their limitations like illiteracy, small size. Hence, Management Training Programmes for artisans to equip them with basic skills need to be organised by the State.
- Co-operative Societies, Self-help Groups in Handicrafts should be setup with the help of Government agencies.
- Enhancement of micro-credit facility and budget for the development of this sector is required.
- Inadequacy of training inputs and design specialists in handicrafts sector has restricted its growth, hence, it is to be rectified.
- Common facility Centers are very few and not effective and they have to be geared up to meet the need of employment generation.
- Ambedkar Hastkala Vikas Scheme 2003 is a comprehensive scheme and artisans can benefit from this, provided awareness and utilisation of schemes by artisans is ensured by Government agencies.

Field Visits Observations

- The relationship between artisans and officials of Government agencies is strained and inter- personal

relations among officials are not smooth. This is leading to “gaps” and “barriers” in the implementation of the schemes and procedures.

- Training provided to artisans is restricted to few artisans and mass training for employment generation is necessary to justify need for development of this sector.

Brands

- MAHATEX, Indrayani, paithani brands exist in handloom sector in Maharashtra State, similarly brands like “Kolhapuri Chappals” are well received in export market besides existing brand enhancement and there is scope for creation of new brands in handicraft sector. Undertaking campaigns, exhibitions, festivals fairs etc. have to be ensured for development of this sector.
- Formation of atleast 150 retail outlets in Mumbai to sell all products at one place viz, handlooms and handicrafts produced in Maharashtra State is needed.
- Handloom Textile Zones, at Nagpur, Solapur and Wardha, and Handicraft Zones at Districts/divisions, having concentration of handicrafts, should be given priority.
- Government Agencies, Cooperatives, NGO’s and artisans operating in this sector lack professionalism and training in communication and managerial skills etc. and the same be introduced to them with the help of interested prestigious Management Institutions.
- Entrepreneurial skills of the artisans should be developed through specially designed programmes, on priority basis, involving Management Institutions.
- Handlooms and handicrafts products should be moved from lower-end to upper-end market through niche marketing.

- Intellectual property rights should be protected for artisans viz., Paithani and other products and handicrafts artisans where skills are on the verge of extinction.
- Minority Commission’s Report about minorities’ earnings indicates that compared to general population in similar activities, Muslims earn less than Christians and Jains. The F.A.O. report states that SC and ST face worst fate and their participation in common facility centres is not ensured. Therefore, efforts should be made to have common facility centres for SC/ST artisans and minority artisans.

Section IV

Conclusion

Maharashtra, a highly industrialised state in India, with its rich cultural heritage and natural beauty, boasts traditional age-old handwoven and handcrafted articles along with the availability of most advanced technology. Handlooms and handicrafts have the potential to provide gainful employment to thousands of weavers and craftsmen with a minimum financial investment. Developing and exploiting these inherent skills in producing consumer-oriented merchandise, with design and quality intervention, and marketing in the right environment, would better sustain this industry. The tradition and richness of the handmade textiles and handicrafts must survive along with technological advancements in order to bring an economic balance and maintain job opportunities in rural areas. Mumbai, with about twelve million people, is itself a big market. It is, therefore, imperative to sustain this industry with careful nurturing and create an awareness for appreciation of the value of our traditions in future generations.