

Occupational Changes among Weavers: A Sociological Study of district Ludhiana (Punjab)

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Abstract

The present study tries to understand weavers` changing occupational and socio-economic conditions. in this research study, I examined the occupational dynamics of Punjabi weavers in depth. The primary goal of this research is to shed light on the shift in weavers `traditional occupation of hand weaving khadi. Looking back, the profession of weavers was very well supported. Everyone from the smallest to the largest jagirdar used to buy their clothes from the weavers, and in exchange for their labour, they were given grains or other household necessities. People, in addition to weaving cloth for the people. The weavers passed down their craft from generation to generation. The primary goal of my research is to examine the transformation of the weaving profession. to learn about and understand the reasons for the change in the profession of weavers. It also attempts to observe social change among them through occupation diversification and the use of modern technology in traditional occupations to help them develop as small entrepreneurs. This study also examined how far development programmes and better economic opportunities provided by other occupations have increased. With these considerations in mind, the following paper is presented.

Keywords: Occupation, Weavers, Traditional, Khadi

Introduction

Change is a natural aspect of our lives, and we grow through stages of development also including childhood, adolescence, youth, and old age. As an outcome, we acquire primary, secondary, and tertiary education at multiple phases of our lives. As an outcome, our society is shifting in a variety of ways. Living person society has transformed throughout history, from prehistory to modern social structures. Human society has developed from primitive hunting and gathering stages to horticultural, agricultural, industrial, modern, and postmodern communities. There is no doubt that cultural civilizations have grown into empires and eras, but the nature of socio-cultural community and social cooperation arises in every society according to the structure of the exiting society. It adapts by changing. It is commonly accepted that changes in the natural world cause shifts in human society.in India, there are various castes and subcastes. Every culture has its castes and tribes, but when we talk about Punjab, the country of Punjab is the land touched by the feet of Sri Guru Nanak dev ji and the ten gurus. That is why there are more Sikhs in Punjab. In Punjab, the Jat Sikh caste outnumbers all others. Agriculture is their main source of income.

Apart from the Jat caste there are many other castes such as Hindus, Christians, and so on, but their number in Punjab is less than that of the jets.

In Punjab, artisan are people who have their own tools and talents for producing and manufacturing items. These people are divided into castes, such as blacksmiths, carpenters, potters, weavers, goldsmiths, and so on. The change of the third period can be observed in the many castes and subcastes of India that had ancient work such as hand weaving, woodwork, shoemaking work, and such. These caste System' work was also linked to their caste. Many castes in Punjab depended on handcrafts, such as potters making earthenware, blacksmiths making iron utensils, weavers weaving clothes with hand khadi and so on. This caste system`s work was also linked to their caste.

What is the occupation

The word occupation is an abbreviation of the word Kirat, which also means the work that individuals do with their hands in order to earn a living. Occupations are a result of a long-term structure of performance that offers workers a lifestyle as well as identifies their general status in society. When the division of Labour has been connected to a money economy but also workers and commodities markets, occupation arise. Many sociologists, such as Baker and Tomes, think that a person`s occupation needs to reflect his social and cultural position. Bogardus describes occupation as just like any kind of activity in which several people take part but are rewarded for their own attempts.

Historical Background of the Occupation

According to varnas, the occupation was based on birth whatever their caste, a person often followed the same occupation, such as iron work of a blacksmith, pottery of a potter, or shoes of a chamar. Establishing work, the weaver`s job, and so forth.

According to G.S Ghurye, the caste system was primarily based on the division of labour and occupation throughout the Vedic period. The Rigveda repeatedly mentions the three classes Brahmin, Khatri, Vaishya, and Shudra.

Jajmani System

The jajmani system referred to the rich individual who performed the sacrifice during the Vedic period. During the mediaeval period, these words came to be employed for such persons performing social and cultural functions, who were distinguished from their complete parishioners, or lagis during the functions of both joy and sorrow. Wages should be paid for work under the jajmani system, each group in the village was required to perform specified chores for the other cultivator castes and families, such as barbers cutting hair, blacksmiths working iron, potters manufacturing pottery, weavers weaving cloth, and so on. Jajmani literally means "one who makes a sacrifice from others it called jajmani system. According to this structure, the majority of services provided to other castes are provided by priests, artisans, and many other lesser castes, if the benefits of labour exchange continue to work successfully, the majority of Jajmans will benefit. Certain families are involved in the relationship.

The profession of Jajman can be found in every Indian culture, were rituals, practises, and cultural activities necessitate mutual community.

According to Oscar Lewis, the jajmani system mandated that each caste in a community do specified chores for other castes.

Who identically are the weavers?

Punjab is mostly an agricultural state. The majority of Punjabis make their living from agriculture. People of all classes and castes are bound by social order in Punjab's villages. They each have their own set of life rituals and activities. Aside from agriculture, several other occupations are practised in Punjab. Such as woodworking, goldsmithing, shoemaking, fabric weaving, and so on. Occupations that are commonly observed in Punjab. All of these jobs were largely determined by caste. In Punjab, there are numerous castes and subcastes. Weaver castes are included in these similar castes and perform the labour of weaving clothing. Weavers can be found in several castes throughout Punjab. Sikh weavers, Hindu weavers, and others.

Those who weave clothes through the khadi are called weavers. Weavers are the people who create khadi. The weaving community was always very important during ancient times because they were able to make clothes through to the khadi clothe the society. Sheets as well as other raw materials have been told to prepare. Skilled artisans were also able to produce cloth. People from this caste support their families by weaving and selling cloth.

Khadi weaving is an ancient craft, khadi is part of our cultural heritage. Handloom khadi not only shows our country's richness and diversity, but also the craftsmanship of Indian weavers. Handwoven clothing is an expression of Indian tradition and the inspiration found by weavers from various cultural backgrounds. One of the richest components of Indian culture and heritage is handloom weaving. Handloom is the oldest cottage industry in India. Its preservation for generations ensures the preservation of our cultural legacy, and the industry has matured. Handloom weaving manufacturing is a family-based activity, and the handlooms have an unbreakable connection to the families' living environments. The handloom sector is an important part of India's rich cultural heritage.

Punjab has a rich weaving and spinning culture that is well-known around the world. Spinning is an art that involves decorating cotton or silk fabrics with needles and coloured threads. pearls, little gems, beads, and other ornamentation contribute to its appealing appearance. Phulkari is a type of embroidery found in Punjab that differs from the textile spinning found in many other areas.

The basic aspects of weaving and needlework were followed in the beginning and continue to be practised now, such as chain stitch buttonhole, or blanket stitch which are the main techniques of needlework. Weaving and needlework are expressed in a variety of art forms in Punjab.

Durries weaving and Punjabi Khes – Punjab is considered to be a famous state in terms of Punjabi art and culture. different types of handicrafts can be seen here. In which different types of clothes are produced by handloom by the weavers of Punjab. Among these, Punjabi khes is presented as a special model. Punjabi khes is a thick cotton cloth, that is mostly known as men's clothing. Khes is used as a protection against harsh winds. The khes is mostly made from white thread. Sometimes black cotton thread is also used to give different designs to the khes. This gives the khes a check design. Many designs of khes are made in the form of different plants, and it is also seen that many khes also have handicrafts of different animals. Dari weaving takes many forms in Punjab. Varied designs, such as pictures of birds and animals and varied colours, are made on the durries to enhance their visual appeal. Thread strips, checks, and other plant-related designs were used to decorate.

Phulkari and Bagh weaving – Phulkari and Bagh weaving are unique Punjabi crafts that have been practised since the 15th century. Phulkari is a type of needlework done on shawls, scarves, and shirts. This process creates a deep coloured cotton cloth, which is then needle worked on.

Review of the literature

In his book “Rural Economy of Punjab” Gyan Singh (2014) examined the change in the level of income of rural artisans in Punjab. Previously, the income of artisans such as Dhaka’s muslin, Bengal’s Koliko, Banaras sarees, Ahmedabad dhoti, Kashmir, Amritsar, and Ludhiana shawls was considered famous all over handicrafts expanded rapidly during the nineteenth century. It began to decline as a result of its inability to compete with machine-made products. As a result, Indian artisans and traditional workers were driven in to despair and poverty. The skilled artisans’ products were merely a formality. As a result, it was kept which reminds us of the old times. These new agricultural development policies have also had a negative impact on the artisans’ businesses.

In his book “Urbanization of social change” Rao (1970) discussed occupational changes in the Delhi village of Yadavpur. According to Rao, the occupations of artisans such as blacksmiths, ahir, potters, weavers, carpenters, and so on have changed dramatically as a result of urbanization. They must travel to the city due to the effects of urbanization and industrialization, as well as the resulting economic loss in their trade. After moving to the city, these traders abandoned their traditional occupation in favour of non-traditional ones.

Kaur et.al (2017) in their own article, they looked into the Dalit occupation of Punjabi jutti makers in the Muktsar district of Punjab. It is popular and many Punjabis have a hobby of collecting and selling Punjabi shoes. However, due to industrialization and new technology, these artisans are now facing economic difficulties. Because of mechanisation, artisans’ manual labour has declined. The quality of artisans is declining. The artisans do not receive a fair wage for their manual labour. As a result, it is extremely difficult for them to support their family. If the government enacts appropriate policies in their favour, the declining standard of living of these artisans will be protected. Can the morale of artisans rise as the occupation of this handicraft expands. But they continue to hope for a better future.

Study area: choosing a study area is important in social research. To learn more about the main topic of my research, occupational changes among weavers: A sociological study of district Ludhiana Punjab were selected.

Objectives

1. To know about traditional Occupation of weavers’ community.
2. To pinpoint the Occupational change in weavers’ community.
3. To analyse the nature of occupational changes among weavers’ community.

Methodology

The present research aims to analyse weavers in the Ludhiana District of Punjab, India. Present study is descriptive and qualitative nature. 120 respondents were selected from the city. All respondents were related to the weaver family. Information was collected with attention from both primary and secondary sources. As a result, an interview schedule was created, and open-ended and closed-ended questions were prepared for the goal of collecting information from primary sources. All respondents have been taken as a sample size. Snow ball sampling method was used for collection of data.

Study of Ludhiana district of Punjab

Ludhiana is popular for its textile industry and is often referred to as the Manchester of India. It is the textile hub of Punjab, famous for its brilliant collection of fabrics, woollens, hosiery, and even the textile equipment that are exported to the various parts of the country. Ludhiana is one of Punjab's fastest growing districts. During the liberation struggle and the Sikh wars, Ludhiana was an important centre. The city of Ludhiana is linked with revolutionaries such as Sardar Kartar Singh Saraba, Lala Lajpat Rai, and others. Ludhiana was established in 1480 AD. It was constructed by the Lodhi dynasty. The city was originally called Lodhiana, but it eventually changed to Ludhiana. Ludhiana has a diverse range of arts and culture, including well-known tourists, museums, galleries, forts, and so on. The bazaars in Punjab city and the Ludhiana district are also well-known, with the cloth bazaar being the most well-known. There are textile mills in Ludhiana district that produce different types of cloth, clothes of cotton, wool, silk, etc. Ludhiana city is one such district in Punjab, where most different types of factories are found.

Changing Occupational status of weavers

The occupational transformation of the weaver community is addressed in this paper. The findings of this study are based on the primary data collected from 120 respondents belonging to the weaver's community. The traditional occupation of the weaver, which was weaving clothing on a handloom, was studied. During the inquiry, it was discovered that the traditional occupation of weavers has now disappeared. During the search, it was discovered that in the nineteenth century, cloth was made using handlooms, which produced khadar khes, durries, and check khes. Khaddar's white khes was used. Weavers used to take grain, jaggery, and other household necessities in exchange for making clothing out of khadi. This served as the basis for their home. Few responses revealed that the majority of people used to weave cloth for their own houses, such as cloth for a girl's dowry, which was created at home with various flowers, plants, animals, birds such as peacocks, parrots, and so on. Cloth was once made in a variety of designs. However, with the passing of time, hand weaving has nearly disappeared. Because of industrialization, machines that can prepare numerous pieces of clothing quickly have emerged. As a result, it is clear that industrialization and the vast majority of respondents lived in nuclear households. These trends are also becoming more widespread in rural areas, which were long recognised for their traditional joint family arrangements.

Discuss with the respondents that it is also known that weavers who used to do some manual khadi work quit since manual labour does not pay the same as the labour required while weaving cloth on the khadi. During the research, several respondents of the present-day generation have been told that education is also one of the causes of this transformation, as the people in the weaver's community are educated and involved in excellent jobs, so that their home is easily maintained. They also received information that it was difficult to maintain a household with physical employment, and that today's prices are increasing, making it more difficult to endure house expenses. As a result, we could argue that many changes have resulted in a totally distinct social and economic scenario. There were also numerous women who managed their own house among the respondents some worked in boutiques, others in private employment, and many worked in mgnrega. They want to educate their children so that they can stand on their own feet. As a result, we can claim that various changes have significantly changed the social and economic standing of weavers. The weavers' community now has other jobs. They are satisfied with adopting. People in the weaving community are now content with changing careers and creating their own businesses, govt. jobs, private jobs, etc. As a result of the research, it was discovered that the main reasons for the change in the traditional occupation of craftsman are industrialization, urbanisation, and education.

Conclusion

Based on the research presented, we could conclude that the current study's occupation has changed. During the research, it was discovered that industrialization and education were regarded as the most important components in the weaving community's employment change, as well as the respondents' occupations. During the research, it was discovered that more than half of respondents work as daily wage earners, with very few working in government jobs. Weavers' traditional work of weaving cloth has been abandoned. The majority of them have changed careers and created their own businesses. Furthermore, as a result of industrialization, traditional occupations such as weaving have suffered tremendously.

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