

Weaving Co-operative Societies & Handloom Products in Rajnandgaon District of Chhattisgarh State

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Abstract: *Rajnandgaon located in the central region of Chhattisgarh, known for their richness, exquisiteness, variety and fine quality of handlooms. They constitute an integral part of Chhattisgarh handlooms. As an economic activity, Rajnandgaon handlooms are employing large number of workers. The study is descriptive comprising observation and survey method. It is revealed that various weaving co-operative societies have been set up for the progress of handloom industry and for the upliftment of weavers. There is a huge demand of artistic handloom products made by the weavers of Rajnandgaon in country as well as abroad. The study depicts that there are 10 main weaving co-operative societies, out of which Chhuikhadan Bunkar Sahkari Samiti is much developed including 450 members and 500 employees. These co-operative societies itself produce different handloom products like single and double bed sheet with pillow cover, shirting/kurta dress material, towel, curtain/furnishing, carpet, dhoti/lungi, suti gamcha, etc. with different price range. Among these, carpet is found to be more expensive while suti gamcha are found to be of low price range as compared to other product.*

Keywords: Economic Activity, Handlooms, Weaving Co-operative Societies, Weavers, Price Range

1. Introduction

Weaving is the ancient art and traditional heritage of Chhattisgarh. Handloom weavers of Chhattisgarh have not only preserved the ancient art and traditional heritage of Chhattisgarh but have also glorified rich art and culture of the state at national and international level. Rajnandgaon is one of the district of Chhattisgarh state in which handlooms are flourishing at a rapid pace comprising various weaving co-operative societies and handloom products. It generated Rs.120 lakh of revenue in the year 1999-2000. Weaving co-operative societies in the district are engaged in the production of bed sheet, carpet, towel, sari and dress material. Presently there are 34 weaving cooperative societies in Rajnandgaon district of Chhattisgarh state while 6264 weavers working in 2088 looms. Rajnandgaon acquires third place with respect to the number of weaving cooperative societies, number of active looms and number of weavers employed in Chhattisgarh state.

2. General Characteristics of Rajnandgaon District

It was formed on 26th January 1973, by separating from the Durg district. It was originally called Nandgram, but was again divided on 1st July 1998 and the new district of Kawardha was formed. Rajnandgaon was originally named as Nandgram. Rajnandgaon district is situated in the western part of newly created Chhattisgarh state which lies between latitude 20°70' - 22°29' North latitude and 80°23' to 81°29' East longitude covering an area of 8222 sq.kms. It is surrounded by Kawardha district in north, Durg district in the east; Bastar district is the south and Garchiroli, Bhandara (Maharashtra) and Balaghat (Madhya Pradesh) in the west.

3. District Map of Rajnandgaon District

Strategically positioned in the heart of Chhattisgarh state, Rajnandgaon district is located in the centre of the Chhattisgarh state covering an area of 6396.28 sq. km. The three blocks of Rajnandgaon District are Mohla, Manpur and Chowki. Cotton cloth is produced by the handlooms of Rajnandgaon district.

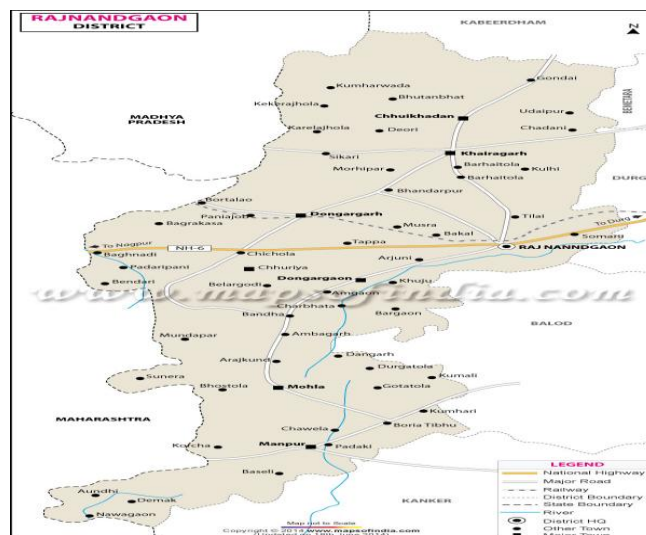


Figure 1: Map showing the National Highway, Major roads, other Roads, District Headquarter, Town, etc in the Rajnandgaon District, Chhattisgarh

4. Weaving Cooperative Societies

Weaving cooperative societies is an autonomous association of persons who voluntarily cooperate for mutual social, economic, and cultural benefit of handlooms.

Functions of Weaving Co-operative Societies

Weaving cooperative societies provide financial as well as technical assistance to weavers for enhancing and maintaining the quality in texture, dyeing and production of standard goods, which finally contributes to rural development.

Weaving cooperative societies improve economic conditions of weavers by providing infrastructural support and promote the working of handloom industry.

Weaving cooperative societies not only supply raw materials, equipments and other facilities to the members according to their capability of production but also safeguard the interests of weavers from exploitation of and clutches of the middlemen

Weaving cooperative societies timely provide training to weavers in new and sophisticated designs which have high demand and thus organize production according to the needs and taste of market.

Rajnandgaon district set up various weaving cooperative societies in different places:

Chhuikhadan is a town and a nagar panchayat in Rajnandgaon district of Chhattisgarh state. The cooperative society of Chhuikhadan Bunkar Sahkari Samiti popularly known for its designed products of dress material, towels, saris and furnishings like bedsheets and carpets. The society includes 500 working people. Kabir Bunkar Sahkari Samiti, Pundariya, also placed in chhuikhadan for providing financial and technical assistance to weavers.

Khairagarh is a town and a nagar palika in Rajnandgaon District of Chhattisgarh state. Khairagarh city, a sub-division of Rajnandgaon district, found as the most attractive place brimming with enough positive possibilities. The cooperative society of Mahaveer Bunkar Sahkari Samiti, Sonbhatta in Khairagarh helps in promoting weavers of Rajnandgaon district.

Dongargarh is a city and a municipality in Rajnandgaon district of Chhattisgarh state which is about 35 kms. from Rajnandgaon and 67 kms. from Durg. Dongargarh has been derived from two words: 'Dongarh' meaning 'mountains' and 'garh' meaning 'fort'. Dongargarh is famous for Maa Bamleshwari Devi Temple on a hilltop and known as one of the prominent pilgrim places in Rajnandgaon. It comprises of following weaving cooperative societies:

Lakshmi Bunkar Sahkari Samiti, Medha, Tehsil-Dongargarh
Bamleshwari Bunkar Sahkari Samiti, Ramatola, Tehsil-Dongargarh

Parmeshwari Mahila Bunkar Sahkari Samiti, Tehsil-Dongargarh

Dongargaon is a town and a nagarpanchayat in Rajnandgaon district of Chhattisgarh state. Dongargaon is endowed with natural scenic beauty and it is found to be one

of the prominent places in Rajnandgaon district which attract several tourists from other towns and cities during special festive occasions. It also includes several weaving cooperative societies:

Buneshwari Bunkar Sahkari Samiti, Dongargaon, Tehsil-Dongargaon
Adarsh Bunkar Sahkari Samiti, Somajhitiya, Tehsil-Dongargaon

Rajnandgaon itself set up weaving cooperative societies designing various handloom products like bed sheet, carpet, towel, sari and other dress material. These are: Ashanagar Bunkar Sahkari Samiti, Rajnandgaon Do Laghu Hathkargha Ekayi, Mamta Nagar, Rajnandgaon

5. Handloom Products

Weaving co-operative societies of Rajnandgaon district design and produce various handloom products according to need, taste and demand of customers.

Handloom Products of Rajnandgaon include:

Dhoti: Dhoti is basically an unstitched lightweight cotton fabric worn by male. It is often usually white and sometimes bordered in colorful stripes.

Lungi: Lungi is also an unstitched colourful fabric usually designed in checks/patterns which is simply draped around the thighs with a big pleat in the front.

Suti Gamcha: Gamcha is primarily produced as a handloom product by traditional weavers. Gamcha can be used as a headscarf or a thin, coarse, traditional cotton towel that is used to dry the body after bathing or wiping sweat. Gamcha is often just worn on one side of the shoulder.

Bed Sheet: A bed sheet is a rectangular cloth used to cover a mattress. Fine qualities of bed sheets are determined by its thread count (the number of threads per square inch of material) and its yarn quality. Bedsheet with lower thread count are softer than bedsheet with a higher thread count while fine yarn results in finer bedsheet.

Pillow Cover: Pillow cover is a fabric envelope or removable decorative covering for a pillow which provides cushioned support to head or other parts of the body. It is usually used while sleeping on a bed, or for the body as used on a couch or chair.

Shirting/Kurta Dress Material: It is an unstitched piece of cloth used for making shirts/ kurta which can be of varied colours and print.

Towel: A towel is a piece of absorbent fabric used for drying or wiping which draws moisture through direct contact, often using a blotting or a rubbing motion.

Furnishing: Floor coverings such as 'galichas', 'durries', druggets, prayer rugs, hooked rugs, 'gabbas' and 'namdas' were made from textile fibers. Durrie is most commonly

used floor covering which is used for ceremonial occasions such as feasts and prayers. These floor coverings are decorated with complex geometrical, floral, figurative patterns as well as traditional designs combined with ethnic motifs.

Curtain: Curtain is a cloth draped or hanged or arranged gracefully in loose elegant or decorative folds.

Carpet: Carpet weaving is also popular which is attractive and comparatively cheap.

All these handloom products produced in handloom industries are much popular in Rajnandgaon district of Chhattisgarh state and are most commonly used by the people. Handloom industries provide livelihood to large number of rural people. Handloom Products are eco-friendly as its production does not have any hazardous impact on environment and it does not create pollution.

6. Materials and Methodology

Selection of Area – The study is conducted in Rajnandgaon district of Chhattisgarh state because it is one of a prominent district showing growth of handloom at a rapid pace. Moreover proximity and convenience of the location of the units was another compelling reason for the selection of the area for observation and field survey.

Data Collection – For determining weaving co-operative societies and handloom products in Rajnandgaon district, observation and survey method has been adopted.

In Observation & Survey method, we observe the number of weaving co-operative societies with respect to the number of members and number of employees. At the same time, various handloom products produced by weaving co-operative societies are also determined. Price range of different handloom products is also estimated

7. Results & Discussions

As we discussed about weaving cooperative societies and handloom products produced in the handloom industries of Rajnandgaon district in Chhattisgarh state. Let see its details with respect to the working of handloom industries. Chhuikhadan is much famous as handloom cluster in Rajnandgaon district. Raw material used in handloom industries is mostly 100% cotton.

From table 1 and figure 2, it is clear that there are 10 main weaving cooperative societies, out of which Chhuikhadan Bunkar Sahkari Samiti is much developed consisting of maximum members and employees. This weaving co-operative society is much popular among all societies and several handloom products are procured from this society. Do Laghu Hathkargha Ekayi is less developed with least members and number of employees. All these weaving cooperative societies work for the welfare and development of handloom industries.

Table 1: Weaving Co-Operative Societies In Rajnandgaon

<i>Name & Address Of Co-Op Society</i>	<i>Members</i>	<i>No. of Employees</i>
Chhuikhadan Bunkar Sahkari Samiti, Chhuikhadan	450	500
Mahaveer Bunkar Sahkari Samiti, Sonbhatta, Tehsil-Khairagarh	87	50
Lakshmi Bunkar Sahkari Samiti, Medha, Tehsil-Dongargarh	110	70
Buneshwari Bunkar Sahkari Samiti, Dongargaon, Tehsil-Dongargaon	250	38
Adarsh Bunkar Sahkari Samiti, Somajhitiya, Tehsil-Dongargaon	100	80
Bamleshwari Bunkar Sahkari Samiti, Ramatola, Tehsil-Dongargarh	147	62
Ashanagar Bunkar Sahkari Samiti, Rajnandgaon	52	12
Parmeshwari Mahila Bunkar Sahkari Samiti, Tehsil-Dongargarh	24	10
Kabir Bunkar Sahkari Samiti, Pundariya, Tehsil-Chhuikhadan	35	4
Do Laghu Hathkargha Ekayi, Mamta Nagar, Rajnandgaon	10	36

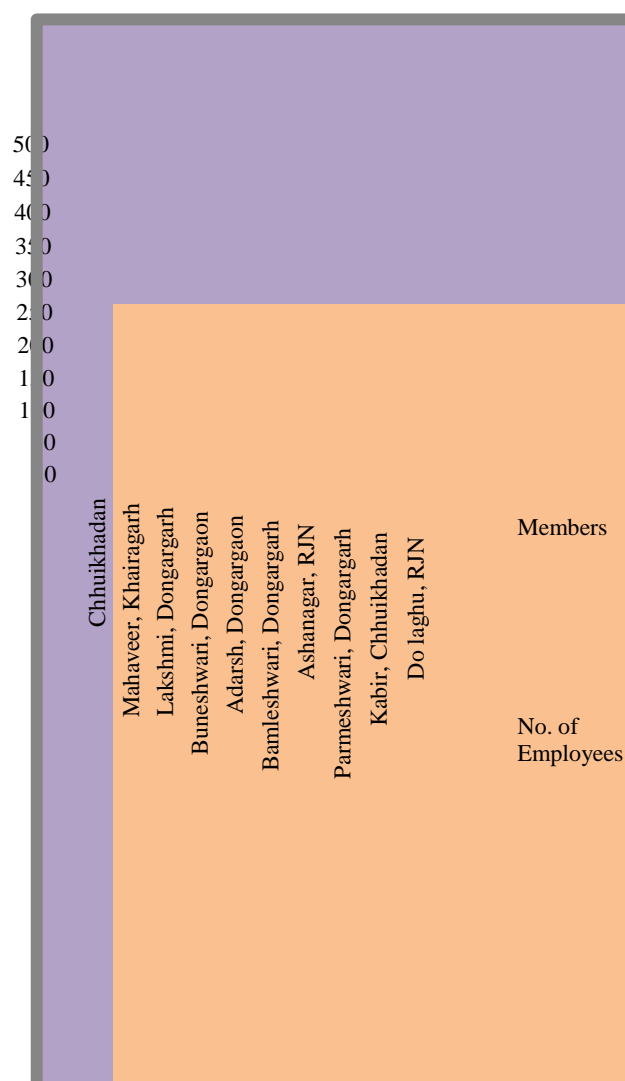






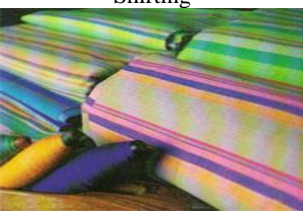


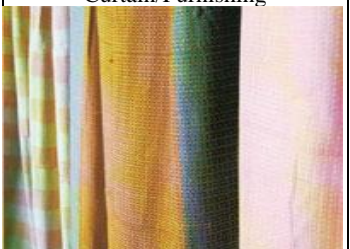


Figure 2: Graph showing weaving co-operative societies in Rajnandgaon district with number of members present and number of weavers employed

Table2: Handloom Products in Rajnandgaon District

S.No.	Product	Description
1.	Double Bedsheet With Pillow 	Soothing effect. Available in multicolor check/stripe/printed with following codes: C/B/S/01, C/B/S/02, C/B/S/03, C/B/S/04, C/B/S/07
2.	Staple Chaddar 	Texturized visual appeal. Buttis and Slub yarns are used. Available in multicolor stripes with code: C/B/S/05
3.	Spidle Bedsheet 	Woven in treadle looms. Available in multicolor geometrical tessellated designs with code: C/B/S/06
4.	Single Bedsheet With Pillow Covers 	Available in multicolor checks and stripes with following codes: C/B/S/08, C/B/S/09
5.	Batik Bedsheet With Pillow Covers 	Batik art available in traditional and contemporary designs with following code: C/B/S/10
6.	Kurta 	Hand spun cotton are used. Available in multicolor checks and stripes with following codes: C/S/01, C/S/03
7.	Shirting 	Hand spun cotton are used. Available in multicolor checks and stripes with following codes: C/S/02, C/S/04

S.No.	Product	Description
8	Design Towel 	Excellent Absorbency. Available in multicolor checks and stripes with code: C/T/01
9	Honeycomb Towel 	Excellent Absorbency. Available in multicolor checks and stripes with code: C/T/02
10	Curtain/Furnishing 	Twisted cotton is used. Treadle looms are used for designing. Code: C/F/01

In table 2, we can find various handloom products available in Rajnandgaon district of Chhattisgarh state. All handloom products are made of cotton cloth. They are available at different price range with varied design and print as given below.

Table 3: Price Range of Handloom Products In Rajnandgaon District

Product	Price range
Bed sheet(printed, design & plain)	Rs.105 to Rs.300
Towel	Rs.50 to Rs.70
Curtain cloth	Rs.60 to Rs.100
Shirting cloth	Rs.35 to Rs.70
Carpet(various sizes)	Rs.320 to Rs.1460
Dhoti & Lungi	Rs.45 to Rs.90
Suti Gamcha	Rs.12 to Rs.40

Thus, different handloom products are available with different price range in Rajnandgaon district. Carpet available in different sizes estimated to be of high cost and it even reach to Rs. 1460. Cost of Suti gamcha is relatively low and their highly estimated cost is Rs. 40. Product of high cost is found to be of good quality and durability as compared to low cost product.

8. Conclusion

It is concluded that Chhuikhadan Bunkar Sahkari Samiti as weaving co-operative society is most popular in Rajnandgaon district procuring maximum handloom

products comprising maximum members and employees. Various handloom products are available in Rajnandgaon district which are purely made of cotton. These products are available in varied design, colour and print. Different price range is determined for different type of handloom products. High quality products are expensive, out of which carpet is found to be of high price range. Price range of different handloom products varies from Rs. 12 to Rs. 1460. Suti gamcha is cheap as compared to other products. Bedsheet, Dhoti/Lungi, suti gamcha, towel, kurta/shirting cloth, curtain and carpet are regarded as the main handloom products of Rajnandgaon district.

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