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The Changing Occupational Structure and Economic Profile of Textile Industry of Banaras, Uttar Pradesh

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ABSTRACT In recent years, debates on modern economic development have become a central issue, not only in politics but also in the academic field. Bookstores all over the globe count numerous works on this theme, new ones appearing regularly, and newspapers are filled with articles and discussions on the subject. Within academia, not only economists but also historians have become increasingly involved in debates on the origination of the divide between richer and poorer countries. One of the central questions is what lies at the basis of a country's economic success. A 'modern' structure of the labour market, with a relatively low share of the population in the primary sector, a high degree of specialization and high levels of wage labour, is often considered to be one of the driving forces behind economic achievement. This paper attempts to investigate the changing occupational structure and economic profile of the Textile Industry of Banaras, Uttar Pradesh. A total number of 300 adult workers working in different sectors in seventeen different factories and 300 Non Textile Workers were interviewed. The analysis of the present study suggests that the, the industry started with the independent weaver as the nodal point, gradually changed into family based corporate business enterprise, and also the rise of intermediaries (Ordinary Weaver, Master Weaver and *Kothidar*/*Gaddidar*) within the occupation are the most important phenomena, thus reflecting the changing occupational structure and economic profile of Textile workers of Uttar Pradesh.

INTRODUCTION

In general, India is regarded as an economically very successful country (Vries and Woude 1997). Supposedly, Northern India seems to have had a very 'modern' occupational structure already around 1900 with a relatively high percentage of the population working in primary sector. For Uttar Pradesh, Kumar (1988) has concluded that already in 1980, 76 percent of the population worked in the primary sector. Another 24 percent worked in industry and the rest was active in trade, transport and other services. These figures are striking, even compared to other states, where about less half of the population was working in the agricultural sector around 1900, a quite modern occupational structure compared to other developing countries at that time (Zanden 2002; Weathers 2004).

Furthermore, the Indian economy was characterized by a highly specialized and commercialized primary sector and a relatively large share of the population performing wage labour (Zanden 2002). Therefore, in order to tell more about economic growth in relation to the occupational structure, it is important not only to investigate changes between the different sectors, but also look into more qualitative developments within sectors, such as the rise of wage labour and specialization.

The sacred city of Banaras, also known as Kashi because it was the capital of the kingdom of the Kasis in ancient times, was famous even in the pre-Buddhist and Buddhist period for its arts and crafts (Singh 1974). The distinctive varieties of cloth produced in Banaras were particularly known far and wide (Barani 1992; Jabber 1998). But exactly when and how silk fabrics began to be produced in Banaras is not known definitely (Pandey 1981).

By the end of the nineteenth century, two kinds of cloth got produced in Banaras- the one resembling the silk stuffs (sometimes mixed with cotton or other yarns) with fine floral designs using zari and silver threads for which Banaras silk was famous. It was famous as *kamkhwab (kincob)* or brocade, most picturesquely described as "cloth of gold". This cloth was woven with three to seven layers of warp threads with silk base holding intricate gold or silver designs (Kumar 1988). The other main product was plain silk, which was mainly used during religious and auspicious occasions. Such plain cloth never had any designs on it. The plain silk woven in Banaras was extensively used by the Europeans living in India and particularly by the office-goers (Ali 1900; Barani 1992; Mitra and Yuko 2007).

Nineteen forty- seven, the year of India's Independence, was a watershed in the growth of Banarasi silk industry. The decade immediately

after Independence was remembered by the weavers as the most difficult time when a majority of weavers were forced to leave weaving, to pull rickshaw and work as manual labour (Kumar 1988).

Gradually, the situation changed. The business gradually began to flourish and the fabric print boom arrived in the early nineteen seventies. Moreover, new business opportunities and markets gradually opened for weavers. Thus, after the slump of first two decades after independence, the Banaras silk industry began to look up and since 1970 the weavers never looked back. Although there were lean season in every year, yet the quantum of business was expanding at a galloping speed. In the 1990s, the business had reached its peak point. Thus, five decades of independence, for textile weavers were characterised by uncertainty and despair in the initial phases and increasing buoyancy and maturity in the later phase. The weavers' community, to begin with, was a poor and backward community but later it become an affluent community with increasing great control over production, sale and marketing of the Banarasi silk products (Barani 1992; Chen et al. 2005).

This transformation was marked by increasing diversification within the occupation and maneuverability in the business operations. This period was also characterised by transference of hegemony of Hindu *Mahajan* over Banaras silk business to the traditional Muslim weavers who have now become *Gaddidars*/*Kothidars* or neo-rich (wholesale purchase centers) class in the *biradari*. As the scenario changed, the Hindu *mahajans* were compelled to come to the Muslim localities and purchase whatever they wanted on cash payment. This proved a big change to Muslim master weavers who were always in dire need of hard cash.

An analysis of the changing occupational structure is not new. Lucassen (1980) did pioneering work by reconstructing large parts of the Dutch labour force (for example, seasonal workers and sailors). Moreover, his model of labour mobilisation shows the profound flexibility of labour at that time. Other labour market historians rather focused on the sedentary working population, but they usually restricted themselves to one single sector, town or region (Hayami et al. 2007; Rajbongshi and Das 2009). To complement our existing knowledge, it is desirable to come to an overall picture of the occupational structure of the Dutch Republic. In our opinion, an aggregate analysis of various regional population registers and censuses over a long period can be a very useful contribution. Several studies were done by number of research scholars on changing occupational structure and economic profile like on textile industry (Mark 1990; Philip 1997; Anderson and Raanaas 2000; Chen et al. 2005; Goel et al. 2008); village workers and corporate workers (Nishikitani et al. 2005; Guerrini et al. 2006; Yokota and Yamamura 2007); small scale industry (Turner 1965; Newhouse et al. 1985); cement industry (Gardner et al.1986; Hughes et al. 1987; Raffn et al. 1989); job stress and health status among industrial workers (Hurrell and Maclancy 1988; Kawakami and Haratani 1999; Tennant 2001; Fujino et al. 2006); socio-economic position of workers (Conti and Burton 1994; Spurgeon et al.1997; Amagasa et al. 2005; Tsutsumi et al. 2007; Suda et al. 2007). This paper is a first attempt to make such an analysis based on a large set of occupational data. This paper raises the following questions. How did the structure of the workers change over time, and what caused these changes? To what extent did this vary throughout space and time? By answering these questions, this study contributes to a more profound insight into the influence of changes in occupational structure on general economic developments. Furthermore, this paper will not only focus on the urban labour economic profile, but also provide information about rural labour economic profile.

METHODOLOGY

The textile mills selected for study have all departments with broad sections, using both coarse and synthetic yarns. The present study was conducted from August 2006 to September 2007. After preparation, the research schedules were standardized on a set of 25 subjects, interviewed on two consecutive days. After the test-retest study, minor modifications were made in the proforma and a study was conducted in district Banaras, Uttar Pradesh. A total number of 300 adult Textile Workers (TW) (cotton, wool/synthetic, silk) from 17 different factories were interviewed; this group has been treated as test group. 300 persons residing in the same area but not working in the textile industries but working in an either textile showroom or textile gaddi

were taken as Non Textile Workers (NTW) and have been referred to as control group. These two groups (TW and NTW) were divided into three age groups (20-29, 30-39, 40-49 years).

The distribution of textile workers was quite remarkable as certain section of the work is dominated by Muslims and some other sector by Hindus. Majority of textile workers belonged to Hindu and Muslim religious categories almost in equal proportion. Among Hindus and Muslims, both male and female were studied. The worker out of station and in night shift could not be examined and were not included in the study.

RESULTS

This section of the paper will reflect the distribution of the subjects based on different parameters like age group, sex, religion, rural urban community, sector of industry, sector of work, literacy rate, work participation ratio and socio- economic status.

Table 1: Distribution of Textile Workers (TW) and Non Textile Workers (NTW) according to demographic features, sector of industry/ work and socio-economic status.

Textile Workers	*Hindu*		*Muslim*	
	Males	*Females*	*Males*	*Females*
Age (years)				
20-29	25 (8.33)	23(33.85)	36 (12.0)	20(33.33)
30-39	38 (12.6)	25 (8.33)	38 (12.66)	22 (7.33)
40-49	22 (7.33)	18 (6.00)	16 (5.33)	18 (6.0)
Total	85 (28.34)	65(21.66)	90 (30.00)	60(20.0)
Mean ±SD	32.95 ± 11.00	29.60 ± 7.90	31.50 ± 12.46	29.00 ± 10.48
Non Textile Workers				
20-29	31 (10.33)	29 (9.67)	56 (18.66)	13 (4.33)
30-39	43 (14.33)	13 (4.33)	49 (16.33)	15 (5.00)
40-49	23 (7.67)	11 (3.66)	14 (4.67)	3 (1.00)
Total	97 (32.33)	53(17.66)	119(39.67)	31(10.33)
Mean ±SD	33.62 ± 10.79	30.54 ± 6.89	31.95 ± 11.84	29.85 ± 8.55
Community				
Rural	52.6%	47.4%	51.9%	48.1%
Urban	53.6%	46.4%	52.6%	47.4%
Sex Ratio	648		435	
	Total sex ratio: 534			
Literacy Rate	41.2%	33.1%	37.3%	27.4%
*WPR**	47.3%	17.5%	44.6%	12.4%
Family Type	*Textile Workers*	*Non Textile Workers*		
Nuclear	109(36.33)	136(45.33)		
Joint	191(63.67)	164(54.67)		

Sector of Industry/ Work	*Textile Workers*		
	Male	*Female*	*Total*
Cotton	88(29.33)	65(21.67)	153 (51.0)
Wool/synthetic	38(12.67)	19 (6.33)	57 (19.0)
Silk	49(16.33)	41(13.67)	90 (30.0)
Total	175(58.33)	125(41.67)	300(100)
		Non Textile Workers	
Salesman	101(33.67)	39(13.0)	140 (46.67)
Head of shops	50(16.67)	18 (6.0)	68 (22.67)
Kothidar/Gaddidar	65(21.66)	27 (9.0)	74 (24.66)
Total	216(72.0)	84(28.0)	300(100)

Per Capita Income (Rs/ month)	*Textile Workers*	*Non Textile Workers*
1000-1999	167 (55.67)	29 (9.67)
2000-2999	78 (26.00)	30 (10.0)
3000-4999	32 (10.67)	85 (28.33)
5000 and above	23 (7.67)	156 (52.00)
Total	300(100.0)	300(100.0)

* Work Participation Rate

Table 1 displays mean age of the Hindu male textile workers was 32.95 ± 11.00 years and mean age of the Hindu female textile workers was 29.60 ± 7.90 years. However, the mean age of the Muslim male and female textile workers were 31.50 ± 12.46 years and 29.00 ± 10.48 years respectively. Whereas in the case of non textile workers, the mean age of the Hindu males and females were 33.62 ± 10.79 and 30.54 ± 6.89 years respectively.

However, 54.9 percent of the both Hindu male textile workers and non textile workers, and 45.1 percent both Hindu female textile workers and non textile workers, were living in rural community. While 56.8 percent of the Muslim males group and 44.2 percent Muslim female group were living in urban community.

The overall sex ratio of the present subjects, that is, 534 females per 1,000 males. However, among Muslims the sex ratio was 435 and among the Hindus the sex ratio was 648. Literacy rate of Hindu male and female textile workers were 41.2 percent and 33.1 percent respectively whereas 37.3 percent of the Muslim male textile workers and 27.4 percent Muslim female textile workers were literate.

However, the work participation rate of Hindu male textile workers was 47.3 percent and of the Muslim male textile workers were 44.6 percent. However, 63.67 percent textile workers were living in joint family system and 36.33 percent were living in nuclear family system but in non textile workers 54.67 percent were living in joint family system and 45.33 percent were living in nuclear family system.

Whereas, as per the sector of industry concern in case of male textile workers, maximum (29.33 percent) belonged to cotton sector, 16.33 percent to silk sector while minimum (12.67 percent) belonged to wool/synthetic sector of the textile industry. A similar distribution was also found in case of female textile workers. However, in case of male non textile workers, maximum (33.67 percent) were working as a salesman in the textile shop, 21.66 percent as a *Kothidar*/*gaddidar* (stockiest or wholesalers) while minimum (16.67 percent) were owners/ head of the textile shop owner. Similar distribution was also found in the case of female non textile workers, but their numbers were less.

However, in the case of the per capita income (Rs/month), the maximum number of workers 167 (55.67 percent) were of low socio-economic status, i.e. having per capita income of 1000-1999 Rs/month. Non textile workers group followed the totally different pattern as only 29 (9.67 percent) persons in this group were of low socio-economic status but maximum number of non textile workers 156 (52.00 percent) were of high socio-economic status, i.e. having per capita income of more than 5000 Rs/month.

DISCUSSION

The study brings into limelight the stark realities of India's social structure. The data compiled and analysed allowed a thorough comparison between the textile workers and non textile workers with respect to above mentioned tables.

Mean age of textile workers and non textile workers, of both the sexes and religion were more or less same, their rural- urban distribution was also same but the socio-economic status of non textile workers were better than textile workers as most of them working, either as a salesman or wholesaler or as *Kothidar/gaddidar* (stockiest), a similar response was also found by Zuskin et al. (1997), Anderson and Raanaas (2000), Argonte and Ingram (2000), Chen et al. (2005), Nishikitani et al. (2005), Guerrini et al. (2006), Yokota and Yamamura (2007).

From the data gathered through interview of the subjects, it has been ascertained that the Banaras silk industry is characterised by considerable internal differentiation and grading of ancillary occupations. This change has been slow and governed by many internal and external forces. The industry started with the independent weaver as the nodal point in the whole process of production of the cloth and the independent weaver used to be the main producer of the fabric. It gradually changed into family based corporate business enterprise of modern times where the individual weaver is a small cog in the machine. This change is accompanied by many internal differentiation and specialisation of work within the silk industry.

The typical image of the weaving occupation was that of a person on the pit loom as the main weaver of the cloth. It was he who performed the actual weaving and he was also instrumental in organising all the pre-production work which was necessary before the actual weaving could begin. Dying, bleaching, beaming and sizing of the yam and joining of the threads on the loom were done by the weaver himself. In all these

activities he was supported by all the members of his family. The children in addition to helping him in the preparatory work also sat on the loom and participated in weaving. Weaving floral design was another difficult work which involved investment of considerable amount of labour and was a necessary step during the production process which gave character to the weaving one in Banaras.

The women in the family mainly helped in preparing the yarn and zari (gold thread used with silk in weaving floral designs) for actual weaving. Their work was called as *nare-bana* (preparation of yarn with *zari*) work. For the independent or individual weaver, the labour of the children and women in the family was and is indispensable. In fact, family was the production unit, though the individual weaver had a pivotal role in the production process.

In modern times, the introduction of low quality machine made synthetic textile products change the ideal image of the individual weaver, as most of the pre-production jobs are now being performed by specialized groups of people. Instead of children of the family, the child labour from outside is being engaged and the assistance of women members of the family is also decreasing. The numerical strength of the independent weavers is slowly becoming thin; as a consequence independent weavers have been degraded to a status of wage-earner who works on behalf of the master weaver or else the *gaddidar* and the *mahajans.* The raw material, the design, the colour and even the quality of the fabric to be produced are decided by the master weaver or the *gaddidar* and the ordinary weaver has no say in these matters.

This change in the status of the individual weaver and the rise of different ancillary and supportive occupations and also the rise of intermediaries within the occupation are the most important phenomena which have occurred in recent times. For a proper understanding of the occupational characteristics of the Banarasi silk weaving work, a detailed analysis of its internal hierarchy is presented in the present study.

1. Ordinary Weaver: In the occupational setup that prevails today in Banarasi silk industry, the ordinary weaver is, though a fine craftsman, only a wage earner. In most of the cases he undertakes the weaving either in his own house or in the house of master weaver or in some rented place. He gets raw material, design and all other necessary instructions from his master weaver or *gaddidar*. In some cases, the ordinary weaver, who is capable enough to install his own loom and invest some money in raw material, designing etc., has fair chances of freeing himself from the clutches of the *gaddidar* / *kothidar* and to sell his goods to whosoever offers a good price.

Otherwise, he is governed by the demands and dictates of the *gaddidar* or *mahajans* who ultimately purchases his fabrics. The profits in such cases fluctuate with market demand and variations in season. However, the number of such independent weavers is rather very limited as they have very limited capacity to survive during the lean season and their dependence upon the *gaddidar* for funds to run the family and other responsibilities binds him to such businessmen. In any case, most of the weavers are now wage earners attached to some master weaver or *gaddidar* who generally have better capacity to survive through difficult and lean times.

In most of the cases the individual weaver gets wages on piece rate which vary, depending upon the type of the fabric produced, labour involved and ancillary support needed. In Banaras silk industry, mainly pit looms were used since the very beginning. Earlier, at least three persons were required to perform the weaving operation. The main weaver was assisted by one person who operated *gathuwa* (heddle). This man used to sit on a wooden bench facing the main weaver. His main function was to operate the heddle which was used for weaving floral designs. Both on right and left hand side of the main weaver, children used to sit to help to weave designs on the border or the floor of the fabric.

With the introduction of jacquards machine, sometimes before the World War II, the person sitting before the main weaver was dispensed with. Only one person is now required to assist the main weaver even when the designs were very intricate.

At present, most of the looms are being operated by single person if there is no intricate work involved. It is estimated that nearly 75,000 looms are operating and 1, 50,000 weavers and about 5, 00,000 people are directly or indirectly engaged in the Banaras silk industry at the district level (Pandey 1981). Unfortunately, there is no Census which could give us an idea of the approximate number of weavers and their supporters engaged in the industry in the city of Banaras (Barani 1992; Hayami 2007).

One of the important features of the Banaras silk industry is that the weavers' population is expanding numerically as well as spatially. Another feature noted in the field is that of migration of a large number of Madanpura weavers settling in Bajardiha and Lohta areas (name of a place in Banaras) even at the resentment of original inhabitants of the areas.

Weaving is not the monopoly of Muslim weavers living in the urban areas. The peasants and weavers living in the villages surrounding the city of Banaras also engage in weaving either as full time occupation or subsidiary occupation depending upon caste and main occupation. More and more weavers from the rural areas are getting involved in the industry. Most of the rural weavers are Hindus who in fact pursue weaving more as a part- time activity or subsidiary occupation. The types of weaving performed also differ from locality to locality. In Alaipura and Jaitpura area, more intricate works which involve heavy labour, more time and greater craftsmanship, are being performed.

Such works are also being performed in rural areas surrounding the city of Banaras. In such cases the type of weaver is different from those who work for plain fabrics or simple designs (Jabber 1998). In District Varanasi, the population of ordinary weaver is shrinking. Fairly large numbers of former independent weavers have become master weavers or *kothidars.* Not only the size of independent or ordinary weaver's population is shrinking but the types of work performed by the surviving weavers have also changed. Barring a few looms where exquisite and intricate weaving works are performed, on most of the looms plain sarees with simple borders are being produced.

However, the materials used are of fine quality and the quality of weaving is very good. Most of the sarees produced on these looms are not for mass consumption but for discriminating consumers. As such, Varanasi weaving work has got a distinctive place in Banaras silk industry and the weavers involved in such work also have a distinct identity. The cheaper quality works are being produced in Bajardiha and Lohta area though the wholesale buyer may be Madanpuria master weaver or *gaddidar*. In fact, most of the gaddis in Madanpura keep a stock of fabrics woven in Bajardiha or Lohta for the facility of the wholesale buyers in order to show that their gaddis have material of all kinds which can cater to the needs of buyers (Argonte and Ingram 2000; Nishikitani et al. 2005; Guerrini et al. 2006; Yokota and Yamamura 2007; Rajbongshi and Das 2009).

The present study thus reflects that the character of weavers' population in Varanasi area has changed.

The rise of the new entrepreneurial class among them as well as rapid upward economic mobility is anchored in the fine craftsmanship and hard labour of the ordinary weaver and the judicious management of resources on the part of the new entrepreneurial class. There are a number of instances where a man who started as ordinary weaver became master weaver with hard work and ultimately *kothidar*. The success stories of these weavers of past days indicate the avenues which the silk industry in Banaras has provided to the weaver within one's own life span to achieve higher status in the silk industry. One can cite many instances to show that the erstwhile independent weavers with intelligent management of financial resources and other non-economic ties, fairness in their dealings, creating an image of trustworthiness in the locality, have become master weavers and then small *gaddidar* or *kothidar*. Jabber (1998), Chen et al. (2005), Atoda and Tachibanaki (2009) also gave similar view about the characters of weaver's population.

2. Master Weaver: Master Weaver is a new and emergent class which behaves like a small entrepreneurial class and acts as a link between the ordinary weaver and the *gaddidar*. This class of people has emerged in the post independence India with the gradual expansion of Banaras silk industry. Earlier, there was direct link between the *mahajans* and the weaver. The *mahajan* was the investor and the weaver simply wove the fabric. The weaver had to depend upon the mercy and financial assistance of the *mahajans.* With the increase in the demand of Banarsi silk fabric, it was becoming difficult for the *mahajans* to make huge investment and also control the production activities at the weaver's loom. Gradually, a new class of people emerged who acted as intermediary between the *mahajans* and the weaver (Jabber 1998; Rajbongshi and Das 2009).

This class of people is known as *garhasta* in the Alaipura and Jaitpura area and *vyapari* in the Madanpura area (Jabber 1998; Argonte and Ingram 2000). Depending upon the investment potentiality, these master weavers who were earlier weavers themselves began to control a num-

ber of looms themselves either at their own residential place or in different parts of the localities. Sometimes more than 100 looms were controlled by the master weavers. The main task of the master weaver was to procure order from the *mahajans*, provide financial assistance in setting up loom, supply raw material to the weavers as well as give all necessary instructions for designing, colouring and the quality of the fabric to be produced.

He was only controlling the production activities at a slightly larger scale and in no case he was selling the cloth produced independently. Most of the time, he was a supplier to his principal *mahajans* or *gaddidar*. When the master weaver decided to sell the production himself, he became a *kothidar*/*gaddidar* (Jabber 1998; Atoda and Tachibanaki 2009).

The place of master weaver in the Banaras silk industry and especially the rise of new entrepreneurial class among the weavers are very important. The master weaver, being well-versed in the craftsmanship and the production process of the silk fabric, gradually learned the art of running business enterprise and with capacity to take risk, imagination and high aspirations; he gradually turned into a *gaddidar* (Jabber 1998; Atoda and Tachibanaki 2009; Rajbongshi and Das 2009).

3. Kothidar/Gaddidar: The most important change that has occurred in the Banaras silk industry within the last three or four decades is the emergence of a new entrepreneurial class among the Momin-Ansar community which is known as *Kothidar/ gaddidar*. Since late Mughal period to the first decade of independent India, the Banaras silk industry was dominated by the Hindu *mahajans.* They were Khatris, Agarwals and Marwaris (Jabber 1998; Banerjee 2008). They had capital, controlled the production and supplied the finished products to outside world. They were the main profit earners. Having sufficient capital at their disposal, they were able to supply Banarasi silk fabrics to distant places in India on long term credit and thereby earned huge profits.

The ordinary weaver who put his labour and skill in the production could only get simple wages sufficient enough to sustain his living and to produce still more. As mentioned earlier, with the increase in the demand of the Banarasi silk and the expansion of market both inside and outside the country, it was not possible for the *mahajans* to become a huge investor in the business. Moreover, the *mahajans* s of yesterday tried to capture more profitable new business ventures in the fifties and sixties. On the other hand, gradually the master weaver class in the weaver community was emerging with small capital (Banerjee and Kumar 2009; Argonte and Ingram 2000).

This group of people began to control the production process. More enterprising among them entered into the sale and marketing field also. Soon they found that direct contact with the retailers is more profitable than the sale through *mahajans*. They also started visiting distant places all over India with the Banarasi silk accompanying them. These new contacts provided them new ideas about the demands of the consumers, market forces, sale network, payment procedure etc.

In the beginning, the master weavers were moving around in the country, where they came to be known as *deshavar.* The distant retailer got several benefits from the moving merchants. For him, the cost of the fabric with the elimination of the *mahajans* got reduced and his margin of profit increased. In addition to this, he got fresh stock and could also exercise his individual choice in selection. These factors contributed to increasing contact between the weaver and the retailers. In all the major localities of weaver's new *gaddidar* and *Kothidar* emerged. By 1990s, the retail customers started directly coming to Banaras to make purchases.

The earlier phenomenon of *deshavar* is no longer encouraged. The *Kothidar* or their inheritors or partners do go on *deshavar* but the purpose now is to get money from the erring parties (Banerjee and Kumar 2009; Jabber 1998).

The most important feature of *kothidar/ gaddidar* class worth noting is that almost all of them are Muslims. They started either as weavers or as master weavers and become *kothidar/ gaddidar*. Weaving is their ancestral occupation and they carry the heritage of great craftsmanship behind them, though they are no more at the looms performing actual weaving operations. They are, however, well-versed in every intricate details of weaving which is a cumulative heritage of their forefathers handed down to them. This has helped them to control the production process.

Kothidar/gaddidar, being in direct contact with retailers spread in different parts of the country, is in a better position to understand the consumer demands which ultimately lead to formulation of new production strategies and better

supply procedures. *Kothidar/ gaddidar* are not a middle man. He is an individual operator who controls and directs the production activities on the one side and sale and marketing on the other. He is an independent entrepreneur who operated his business enterprise as he wishes to do. In most of the cases, the new entrepreneurial class is semi-literate or educated up to secondary level yet he has the acumen to run the business in the most pragmatic and profitable way. In majority of the cases, he may employ *munim* (accountant) and other staff to assist in the business operation. The real power and control, however, lies in him or shared by his family members either brothers or sons and in very few cases by close relatives.

Weaving, which in olden days was a family enterprise where the actual weaver was assisted by children and women in the production process, is still a family enterprise in the hands of the *gaddidar/kothidar*. It is difficult to control the business by a single person. All the male members of the family, in one way or another, are involved in the business. The real power and control of the capital rests with the *kothidar*. Other members act as partners and are involved in different aspects of business operation. Banerjee and Kumar (2009), Argonte and Ingram (2000), Jabber (1998) also gave a comparative similar explanation about the *kothidar/gaddidar*.

The Banaras silk fabric business as operated by individual *Gaddidar*/*Kothidar* is yet to enter into the corporate business enterprise, though to save income tax, multiple firms have been created but the partners in the firm are family members. Rarely a partnership firm with one or more individual *Gaddidar* could be found. Lack of corporate status has resulted into reducing the wholesale business of Banarasi silk in the individual or family enterprise. Under these circumstances, the business could not experience the kind of expansion for which it has potential. Individual and family enterprise has its limitations and saturation points. As soon as the brothers decided to have separate business, the firm dissolves. Similarly, when the sons become mature enough, new firms and new business enterprises are created. One of the reasons for the multiplicity of business houses are lack of corporate business enterprises and too much emphasis on family enterprise, a similar response were also found in the study by Jabber (1998), Argonte and Ingram (2000).

The present data reflects that workers of both the religious groups were mostly illiterate. When both the groups were compared with each other, it was found that both male and female Hindus textile workers had better literacy and work participation rate than Muslim textile workers. Similarly male Hindus textile workers had better literacy and work participation rate than the females, a more or less very related report was also given by a Committee on Plan Projects (Mehta Committee on Literacy) set up by the Government of India reported in 1964 that in five sectors of organized industry (tea plantations, coal mining, jute, cotton and iron and steel) more than 71% of the workers were illiterate and there have been variation from region to region and state to state in the same industry (Manoria and Manoria 1984; Hurrell and Maclancy 1988; Kawakami and Haratani 1999 ; Tennant 2001; Fujino et al. 2006).

However the sex ratios among the Hindus were better than the Muslim working in different sector of the textile industry (Amagasa et al. 2005;Tsutsumi et al. 2007; Suda et al. 2007) but Kurilova (1977) and Zuskin et al. (1997) found that the sex ratio among the Muslim were better than the Hindus.

Manoria and Manoria (1984), Banerjee (2008) in their studies on occupational migration and the urban labour market also found a parallel result like the present study as most the workers were living in joint family system and are migratory, which is a notable characteristic feature of the textile workers in India, indicating that majority of the workers are immigrants from the adjoining rural areas and they even now maintain connec-tions with their rural homes.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of changing occupational structure and economic profile of textile industry of Banaras, Uttar Pradesh reflects that in the course of time, the occupational structure of textile industry undergoes a series of economic changes, the industry started with the independent weaver as the nodal point gradually changed into family based corporate business enterprise. The numerical strength of the independent weaver is slowly becoming thin and he is getting reduced to wage-earner who works on behalf of the master weaver or else the *gaddidar* and the *mahajans* so this paper appeals for the proper regulation of textile industry, in order to save our traditional textile

industry and to protect the traditionally engaged textile workers.

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