

Original Research Article

Socio-Economic Status and Associate Health Problems of Guledgudda *Khana* Weavers

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ABSTRACT

Many clusters of Karnataka state use traditional designs and intricate weaving methods. The more traditional sarees of Karnataka are the Molkalmuru sarees of Chitradurga and the Ilkal sarees of Bagalkot. The traditional Guledgudda *Khana* (Choli or Blouse, elsewhere called *Khana*), which is only one traditional cluster making blouse fabric in India. *Khana* are the choli or blouse material with extra warp dobby figures, which are the traditional products of northern Karnataka. Earlier it was woven on pit loom having no warp beam using silk warp and cotton weft. Now a days due the existence of power loom most of the weavers are using extra warp beam but dimension of the material remains same. The body is fully covered with extra warp figuring with dobby shedding mechanism and each *Khana* piece is about 80cm width and 50cm length. India's textile is presenting the most intricate and variegated traditional designs to its end users in the world which constitute one of the costly source of textile designs also but this sector is beset with various problems, such as lack of skill, obsolete technology, haphazard production system, inadequate working capital, weak marketing links and health problems like eye sight weakness, joint pain and dust allergy. The study was conducted to know the socio-economic status and associated health problems of Guledgudda *Khana* weavers of north Karnataka. The information was collected through personal interview method from the weavers. The study revealed that situation of the weavers was worrying due to illiteracy, financial constraints and health problems.

Keywords

Guledgudda,
Khana weavers,
Socio-economic
status, Health
problems

Introduction

Many clusters of Karnataka state use traditional designs and intricate weaving methods. A large number of villages in Karnataka even today produce sarees and blouse piece from light weight printed silks of Bangalore, mulberry silk sarees of Mysore, Patti pallav of Hubli and Betageri, polycotton sarees of Lakkundi and Shigli and silk sarees with contrast borders of Molakalmuru. Prominently notable among them are Ilkal sarees with tope teni pallav and *Khana* the choli material of Ilkal,

Gajendragad and Guledgudda. *Khana* are the blouse materials with extra warp figuring with dobby shedding mechanism, which are traditional product of northern Karnataka (Namrata and Naik, 2007). It is woven on pit loom having no warp beam.

The woven material has border on both sides ranging from 15 to 23 cm in width; with two strips of extra warp figuring all along the length and each *Khana* piece will be about 80cm width and 50cm length.

In India the handloom sector occupies a second place next to agriculture in terms of employment. Power loom sector comes second to it, it is easier and drudgery reducing machine used widely across the country.

Despite of its widespread across the country this sector is confronted with various problems, such as irregular and inadequate supply of raw materials, financial constraints, health problems and poor government support etc. Age, Illiteracy, having low education level, their working hour and economic status also affect the health condition of the weavers.

Thus, the present study is conducted to know the socio-economic status and health problems faced by the Guledgudda *Khana* weavers and to know the factors that affect their health condition.

Materials and Methods

The information on the demographic characteristics and the health problems faced by the *Khana* weavers of Guledgudda were collected by personally interviewing thirty randomly selected *Khana* weavers of Guledgudda using self-structured interview schedule. The data was statistically analysed using frequencies, percentages and chi-square test of significance.

Results and Discussion

It is found from Table 1 that, majority of the weavers belonged to middle age group (63.33%), followed by old age group (26.67%), had an education upto secondary level (40%) followed by primary school education (36.67%). It is found that, most of the weavers belonged to joint family system (70%), followed by nuclear family type (30%), and low income group (53.33%) with

rupees less than 20000/- per annum. It was also found that 50 per cent of weavers were working more than 12 hours per day. Since maximum percent of the weavers continued their ancestor's profession of weaving, belonged to middle age and old age group, they worked upto 8 hours/day, had an education upto secondary level and have joint family type system with medium family size. Hence may be to continue the weaving profession they did not try for government jobs. So, the income was through weaving and weaving became their main source of livelihood.

Many health problems are faced by the Guledgudda *Khana* weavers but only most occurring health problems were considered here i.e., Eyesight weakness, Joint pain, Dust allergy and back pain. It is observed from Table 2 that, the majority of the weavers had the problem of back pain (86.67%) while weaving, followed by eyesight problem (70%), dust allergy (40%) and joint pain (26.67%). These health problems may be because of regular bending, treadling, beating process, continuous observation for picking and cutting of threads and also due to the dusts from the yarns which enter their eyes, nose and mouth which might be the main cause for eye irritation and dust allergy.

Besides the other factors, only age and working hour is discussed here. To check the association between weaver's health condition with age and working hours, chi-square test of significance is used. The chi-square values for age with eyesight weakness and joint pain are significant whereas, for back pain it is highly significant, meanwhile it was non-significant for dust allergy. Age only contributed in back and joint pain due to decalcification of bone calcium and have no relation with dust allergy.

Table.1 Demographic characteristics of the Weavers

N=30

Sl. No.	Variables	No. of respondents (%)
a. Age		
1.	Young (< 30years)	03 (10.00)
2.	Middle (30-55 years)	19 (63.33)
3.	Old (> 45 years)	08 (26.67)
b. Education		
1.	Illiterate	02 (06.67)
2.	Primary (1 -7 standard)	11 (36.67)
3.	Secondary (8 -10 standard)	12 (40.00)
4.	Higher secondary (PUC standard)	04 (13.33)
5.	Degree and above (UG and PG standard)	01 (03.33)
c. Type of family		
1.	Nuclear	09 (30.00)
2.	Joint	21 (70.00)
d. Family size		
1	Small (\leq 4 members)	07 (23.33)
2	Medium (5 -9 members)	19 (63.33)
3	Large (> 9 members)	04 (13.33)
e. Annual Income (in Rs)		
1.	Low Income (Rs. < 20,000)	16 (53.33)
2.	Middle income (Rs. 20,001-Rs. 40,000)	12 (40.00)
3.	High income (Rs. > 40,001)	02 (06.67)
f. Working hour/day		
1	4 hours	05 (16.67)
2	6 hours	10 (33.33)
3	8 hours	15 (50.00)

Table.2 Health problems faced by the Guledgudda *Khana* weavers

N=30

Sl. No.	Name of ailments	No. of respondents (Percentage)
1	Eyesight weakness	21 (70.00)
2	Joint pain	08 (26.67)
3	Dust allergy	12 (40.00)
4	Back pain	26 (86.67)

Table.3 Association between weaver's health condition with age and working hours

N=30

Health ailments	Age			Total	X ² values	Working hours			Total	X ² values
	< 30 years	30-55 years	> 55 years			4-7	8-11	12 and more		
Eye sight weakness	-	15 (50.00)	06 (20.00)	21 (70.00)	13.50*	03 (10.00)	18 (60.00)	-	21 (70.00)	12.5*
Joint pain	-	07 (23.33)	01 (03.33)	08 (26.67)	9.53*	01 (03.33)	07 (23.33)	-	08 (26.67)	15.14**
Dust allergy	02 (06.67)	06 (20.00)	04 (13.33)	12 (40.00)	4.44 ^{NS}	01 (03.33)	11 (36.67)	-	12 (40.00)	9.49*
Back pain	01 (03.33)	17 (56.67)	08 (26.67)	26 (86.67)	16.20**	03 (10.00)	23 (76.67)	-	26 (86.67)	17.39**

However, eyesight weakness and dust allergy are significantly related to working hours because of exposure to the weaving process which releases tiny particles of fibres that cause dust allergy while long time watching to the picking process caused eyesight weakness. Whereas chi-square values for joint pain and back pain are highly significant due to their working postures like bending, stretching, and moving front to back and so on (Table 3). Most of the weavers belonged to joint family system, medium family size, middle age, secondary school education level and lower income group. Maximum of the weavers are from middle age group and their working capacity is less than 12 hours per day. Majority of the weavers had back pain, eyesight weakness, dust allergy and joint pain. These problems occurred due to their age and working hours. However, increase in age causes the problems like back pain, eyesight weakness and joint pain increasing but not dust allergy. However, long duration working hours which affects all the above problems. Thus for uplifting the socio economic status of the *Khana* weaver's they must make use of the government subsidies and policies. There is a necessity to publicize *Khana* materials through advertisements, exhibition, fairs and showcasing the variegated *Khana* materials and to minimise the health problems the weavers need to take measures while weaving and during processing, by wearing a protective cover on the face, regular health checkups, include a balanced diet daily and also go for savings.

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