

Author



Bhrat Breja

The author is a practicing Chartered Accountant.

Cotton Textile Industry Workers

A Case Study of Their Problems and Prospects

KEY-NOTES

- ✕ Cotton yarn/cloth industry is one of the core sector industries in India.
- ✕ Meerut region including 9 important places constitute a golden spot on Textile map of India.
- ✕ The present study surveys 300 workers from 30 units about their socio-economic-industrial life.
- ✕ Of 300 workers, 150 are taken from organized sector and rest from unorganised sector.
- ✕ All the textile workers are divided into 14 different jobs.
- ✕ The findings of the author contains the main problem of textile workers i.e., of finance. Most of workers interviewed are worried about money.

1. INTRODUCTION

Cotton yarn and cotton cloth is very popular in India, as well as outside India. Cotton yarn / Cloth industry is one of the core sector industries as far as India is concerned, through, it is also very true, that the required government support is still not available to this industry in India.

There are some very famous centers of cotton yarn / cloth production in India, like Bombay, Ahamdabad, Coimbatore, Madras and Surat. However, Meerut region including the district (in Uttar Pradesh) has its own significance in the 'textile map' of India. A huge *mandi* is well - established here from the last four decades, as it is the main industry here in Meerut and the nearby areas.

The purpose of this study is to find out the opportunities, in this industry in the areas of Management, Labour, Production, Finance and Marketing and

also to put forward the limitations that exeunt currently in the aforesaid areas. The conclusion and suggestion drawn in the end will definitely help this industry to make further progress, in India and especially in Meerut District.

In the present study, the problems and prospects of 30 units from Meerut Region have been surveyed covering Meerut, Muzaffarnagar, Mawana, Hapur, Pilakhwa, Baghpat, Baraut and Khekra. Out of the 30 units studied, 3 were limited companies, 8 were private limited companies, 9 were registered partnership firms, 2 were Hidu-undivided families and 8 were proprietorship concern.

As far as the workers in these units are concerned, 300 workers have been interogated. Out of these 300 workers, 150 were form organized sector (limited companies and private limited companies) and 150 were from unorganized sector (other concerns). The categories of workers are –

Printers, Weavers, Washmen, Folder & Bale maker, Dyeing master, Pressmen and others.

The different aspects covered, while interviewing the textile workers are–

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Different occupations of textile workers. 2. Level of education of textile workers. 3. Age of textile workers. 4. Monthly remittance of money by them to their villages. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Amount spent on different heads by textile workers. 6. Number of workers sharing a rented room. 7. Number of dependent upon per textile worker. 8. Number of year experience of textile workers. 9. Alternative employment by textile workers. 10. Major problems experienced by textile workers. |
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A huge mandi of textile products is well-established in Meerut from the last four decades.

TABLE 1 : SAMPLE SIZE OF TEXTILE UNITS SURVEYED

S. No.	Name of Place	Limited Company	Private Limited Company	Hindu-Undivided Families	Registered Firm	Proprietor-ship Concern	Total
1.	Meerut	03	01	02	01	01	08
2.	Pilakhwa	-	01	0	01	01	03
3.	Sardhna	-	01	-	01	01	03
4.	Khekra	-	01	-	01	01	03
5.	Muzaffarnagar	-	01	-	01	01	03
6.	Baghpat	-	01	-	01	01	03
7.	Mawana	-	01	-	01	01	03
8.	Hapur	-	01	-	01	-	02
9.	Baraut	-	-	-	01	01	02
	TOTAL	03	08	02	09	08	30

TABLE 2 : SAMPLE SIZE OF TEXTILE WORKERS SURVEYED

S. No.	Nature of Work	Organized Sector	Unorganized Sector	Total
1.	Printers	35	33	68
2.	Weaves	35	30	65
3.	Wash Men	30	25	55
4.	Folder and Bale Maker	12	10	22
5.	Dyeing Masters	06	06	12
6.	Press Men	06	05	11
7.	Others	26	41	67
	TOTAL	150	150	300

There being no provision for provident fund or Employees State Insurance fund etc. in the small textile units in Meerut & nearby areas. Most of the workers have left their jobs on reaching the age of 50 years.

2. THE CASE STUDY

The first point in the study is to check the level of education of textile (cotton yarn and cotton cloth) workers in the regions. Out of interviewed 300 workers, 100 workers were involved in Weaving process, another 100 were involved in Printing process and the

unemployment, disputes, strikes, crime may be reduced.

The second thing which is studied about textile workers is the age of such workers. Out of total workers, 24% were between the age group of 10-20 years, about 23% were between 21-30 years, about 23% were between 31-40 years, 22% were between 41-50 years,

TABLE 3 : OCCUPATION OF TEXTILE WORKERS					
S. No.	Occupation	Weaving	Printing	Other*	Total
1.	Weaver	60	-	-	60
2.	Back Seizer	06	-	-	06
3.	Drawer	11	-	-	11
4.	Filter	04	-	-	04
5.	Oilier	04	-	-	04
6.	Helper	15	-	-	15
7.	Printer	-	71	-	71
8.	Fram Holder	-	06	-	06
9.	Dyeing Master	-	15	-	15
10.	Color Mixer	-	08	-	08
11.	Wash Man	-	-	50	50
12.	Dryer	-	-	10	10
13.	Press Man	-	-	15	15
14.	Folder & Bale Maker	-	-	25	25
	TOTAL	100	100	100	300

* Other includes - Washing, drying, Pressing & Packing.

balance were involved in Washing, Drying, Pressing and Packing process. Out of these 300 workers about 42 per cent were illiterate, about 22 per cent were having their education between 1st - 5th standard, about 17 per cent between 6th - 8th standard, about 14 per cent had passed 9th - 12th class, only 5 per cent were graduate and a very negligible 0.66 per cent were postgraduate. If the level of education can be increased in the textile workers, it is sure that a lot of problems like

about 6% were between 51-60 years and balance 2% were from the age group of 61 years and above. It is very interesting to note that textile printing, weaving, washing, packing etc. being very hard work which require a sound health therefore most of the textile workers are between 10-50 years of age group.

There being no provision for provident fund or Employees State Insurance Fund etc in the small textile units in Meerut and nearby areas, most

TABLE 4 : MONTHLY REMITTANCE OF MONEY TO VILLAGE BY TEXTILE WORKERS

S. No.	Rupees	Weaving	Printing	Other*	Total	Percentage
1.	100-250	22	32	09	63	21.00%
2.	251-500	17	08	13	38	12.67%
3.	501-750	10	41	13	64	21.33%
4.	751-1000	03	05	12	20	06.67%
5.	Irregularly	48	14	53	115	38.33%
	TOTAL	100	100	100	300	100%

* Other includes - Washing, drying, Pressing & Packing.

of the workers have left their jobs on reaching the age of 50 years. Another conclusion can be drawn is that, as they have become inefficient, on reaching the age of 50 years, the employers have terminated their services. This situation attracts our attention towards the urgency that the provisions of P. F. Act are to be applied rigidly by the P.F. commissioner of the area and the unorganized sector of textile industry may be discouraged, so that the old age of workers may be made comfortable.

As most the workers engaged in cotton yarn and cotton cloth industry belongs to villages. As per the data of the survey results, about 38% workers are very irregular in remitting money

(out of their salary / wages) to their village, about 21% were regularly sending Rs.501 to Rs.750 to their village, another 21% workers were remitting regularly Rs.100 to Rs.250 to their village, about 13% were sending Rs.251 to Rs.500 and about 7% were sending monthly Rs.751 to Rs.1000 to their home towns.

The conclusion of this finding is that maximum number of workers is irregular in remitting money to their place of birth (village to which they belong). The reasons of this attitude may be many - they may not have any relatives in their village, they may not be earning enough to bear the burden of their parents, they may be saving a

TABLE 5 : AMOUNT SPENT ON DIFFERENT HEADS BY TEXTILE WORKERS

S. No.	Amount (In Rs.) Per Month	Weaving	Printing	Other*	Total	Percentage
1.	Rent	36	22	31	89	29.67%
2.	Clothing	10	05	05	20	6.66%
3.	Medical	07	05	05	17	5.67%
4.	Foodings	32	59	57	148	49.33%
5.	Miscellaneous	15	09	02	26	8.67%
	TOTAL	100	100	100	300	100%

* Other includes - Washing, drying, Pressing & Packing.

sum every month for their future needs etc. However most of them have admitted that though they feel that they should remit a sum monthly to their villages yet due to their low earnings they are not in a position to remit that sum.

It is further tried to find out the various heads of expenditure by textile workers out of their income, it is studied the allocation of expenditure under the heads viz. Food, Rent, Medical, Clothing, Education etc. As a result of survey it was found out that about 49% of the textile workers major portion of their salary income is being expended on food, about 29% workers major expanding is on rent of premises, about 7% workers major expanding is on clothing, about 6% workers major expanding is on Medical and about 9% workers major expanding is on miscellaneous expenses.

It is a note worthy fact that even though 49% workers, major area of expanding is food yet their health is not as fit as it should be, the reason is quite simple – the food quality is not proper. Apparently, the quality of protein, carbohydrates, vitamins *etc* is not

adequate in the food taken by low paid employees. Another notable reason is the large family size of textile workers - the number of earners is less but the numbers of consumers is more. About 29% workers, major area of expanding is rent, which also tells us about the rented premises of textile workers who belong to nearby area (and from distant areas also, like Bihar) and have come to Meerut in search of jobs. About 6% workers, major areas of expenditure is medical, which is also quite normal because it shows the major health problems of textile workers.

Out of the total number of cotton textile workers interviewed, about 54% workers having 1 to 3 dependant family members on them, about 33% workers were having 4 to 6 dependents on them, about 8% were having 7 to 10 dependents on them, about 5 % were having no dependant and about 1% having more than 11 dependant family members on them.

The data given above shows the level of poverty and the cause of poverty in Meerut and nearby areas, as far as the cotton textile workers are concerned. When the number of dependent are more, the income of the

TABLE 6 : NUMBER OF YEARS EXPERIENCE OF TEXTILE WORKERS

S . No.	Number	Weaving	Printing	Other*	Total	Percentage
1.	1 or less	09	01	15	25	09.33%
2.	2 - 5	11	05	33	49	16.33%
3.	6 - 9	07	31	26	64	21.33%
4.	10 - 15	20	48	21	89	29.67%
5.	15 or more	53	15	05	73	24.33%
	TOTAL	100	100	100	300	100%

* Other includes - Washing, drying, Pressing & Packing.

earning member will get distributed over more number of family members and the standard of living may not be improved. However, efforts are required on the part of State Government to educate the workers and apply the employee welfare schemes and Minimum wages Act so that a bare minimum wages may be assured to workers and in turn the condition of the dependent relatives may be improved.

By studying the experience number of years of textile workers, It was tried

to 15 years. Indirectly it shows that the textile workers are very stable in their jobs, their turnover is very less and they may be very satisfied with their jobs. But the reality is just opposite to it. The workers who are in this industry from the last 10 to 15 years is due to the fact that they have got no other opportunity in Meerut and nearby areas as the other large industry in Meerut is sports goods industry. Therefore these workers are working with their existing employer as a compromise only. They are willing to switchover to other jobs,

TABLE 7 : ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYMENT AVAILABLE TO TEXTILE WORKERS

S. No.	Nature of Employment	Permanent	Badli	Total	Percentage
1.	Agriculture Labourer	67	39	106	35.33%
2.	Farming	24	15	39	13.00%
3.	Factory Work	42	11	53	17.67%
4.	Helper	09	08	17	05.67%
5.	Mazdoor	12	04	16	05.33%
6.	Selling on Roads	22	06	28	09.33%
7.	Others	14	07	21	07.00%
8.	Unemployed	10	10	20	06.67%
	TOTAL	200	100	300	100%

to know whether this industry requires experienced workers or not. As per the results of first hand information, about 30% workers were having a work experience between 10 to 15 years, about 24% were having 15 and more years experience, about 21% were having between 6 to 9 years, about 16% were between 2 to 5 years and the balance about 9% were having 1 or less than 1 year experience.

Analysis of the data reveals that about 30% of workers in this industry were having an experience between 10

where remuneration is more but physical work is less in comparison to textile industry, but such opportunity is available to them in Meerut.

It has been tried to find out the possibilities of alternative employment that may be available to the textile workers, in Meerut and nearby areas. Out of the total sample of workers about 35% were in a position to work as agriculture labourer, about 18% could have been involved in other factory work, 13% were open to accept farming (as they may have their own

agriculture land in their villages), about 9% were ready to sell products on roads, 7% were ready to accept any other type of work, about 7% were have no option at all, about 6% can work as helper and about 5% can work as *Mazdoor*.

finance, about 18% of workers are not satisfied with the behavior of their employers about 13% of workers were having tension at their homes, 10% of worker's problem was that they were not accustomed to such a hard work, 1% of workers problem relates to their

TABLE 8 : MAJOR PROBLEMS FACED BY THE TEXTILE WORKERS

S. No.	Category	Organised Sector	Unorganised Sector	Total	Percentage
1.	Finance	79	92	171	57.00%
2.	Boredom of Work	03	--	03	01.00%
3.	Tension at Home	17	21	38	12.67%
4.	Unaccustomed hard work	21	09	30	10.00%
5.	Misbehavior of Employer	28	27	55	18.33%
6.	No Problems	02	01	03	01.00%
	TOTAL	150	150	300	100%

It is very sensitive issue to be discussed at length. One should not only think of providing alternative jobs to textile workers, but it should tried to avoid a situation in which textile workers should look for an alternative job. In other words, the existing textile units must be supported by the Govtenment in such a manner that their profitability may be ensured and in turn, the textile workers will not have to leave their existing job.

3. CONCLUSION

As far as, the major problems faced by the cotton textile workers in Meerut and nearby areas are concerned, it can be concluded from the survey of 300 textile workers, that 57% of the textile workers are facing problems relating to

boredom at work and only 1% workers had no problems at all.

The focus (while discussing the major problems of textile workers) is to find out the areas of concern of textile workers *i.e.*, FINANCE. The percentage of workers worried about finance shows that more than half of the workers interviewed, was very much worried about money. The need for money may be for their house building, son's education, daughter's marriage, and wife's sickness or aged parent's sickness. And it is clear that if a worker is worried about his earnings and if his earnings are shorter than his financial need, than he can not work with devotion and can not utilize his full potential.