



Problems Faced by Handmade Carpet Industry and Suggestions for their Solution

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ABSTRACT

The carpet industry is one of the oldest industries in India. In India mainly four kinds of handmade carpet manufacturing take place. These handmade carpets are known as tufted, knotted, woven and embroidered. The major portions of carpets that are produced in India are exported to different parts of the world and the domestic markets for these are very less in India. India ranks first in the world for the production of handmade carpets both in terms of quality and quantity. This shows its significant contribution to the handmade carpets industry. Besides its significant contribution to handicrafts, the handmade carpet industry is facing problems related to raw materials, production, finishing, marketing and environment which are hindering its growth. So this paper mainly deals with different type of problems faced by handmade carpet industry and their possible solution. In this regard, to overcome these problems, regular research and development in designing, processing and marketing the product as well as proper training for artisans are required.

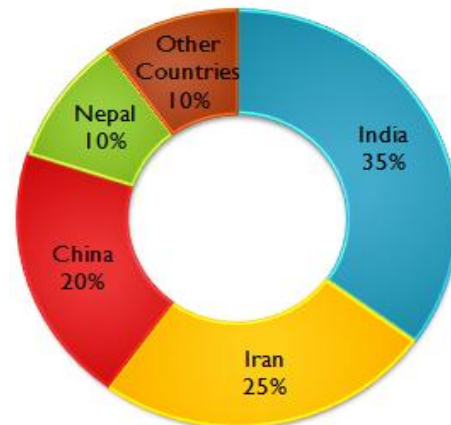
Keywords: Handmade carpets, Carpet industry problem, Carpet export, Carpet handicrafts, Floor covering.

I. INTRODUCTION

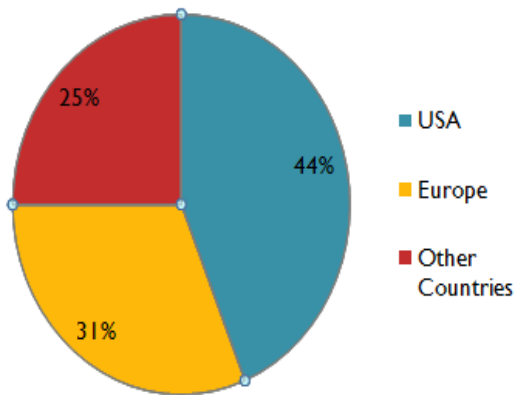
Carpet is a heavy fabric, commonly made of wool or nylon for covering the floor. Carpets are used in households, offices and other places to provide warmth, comfort, adding beauty, style for maintaining appearance. In India, four different types of carpets are produced and terms as knotted, tufted, woven and embroidered carpets. It is a labour-intensive industry and more than 3 million workers/ craftsmen are engaged in this industry.

More than 90% of carpets produced in India are exported to other countries. The carpet industry has significant contribution to handicrafts in India. But, this handmade carpet industry is facing problems related to raw materials, production, finishing, marketing and environment which are hindering its growth. So this paper mainly deals with different types of problem faced by the handmade carpet industry with suggestion of possible solution.

STATUS OF INDIAN HANDMADE CARPET



India ranks number one position in terms of value as well as in volume of exports of handmade carpets with 35 % share in the world market. Iran accounts for about 20-25 % share of the world market. China contributes about 20% (Machine market) and Nepal nearly 10%. Other significant exporters are including Turkey, Afghanistan, and Pakistan and their share in the world market is 10%.



India export carpets to over 70 countries, including the USA about 44%, Europe (Germany France, Italy, Belgium, Spain, Denmark) 31% and remaining 25% exported to other countries which include U. K., Canada, Australia, South Africa, Brazil, Netherland, Japan, Turkey, Mexico, Holland, New Zealand and many other countries.

PROBLEMS FACED BY HANDMADE CARPET INDUSTRY

i. PROBLEMS RELATED TO RAW-MATERIALS

The main raw material for the carpet industry is natural fibres. These fibres are wool, silk, cotton and jute etc. Mainly problems occur only with wool fibres. These problems are-

a). Less availability

India has the 3rd largest sheep population country in the world having 65.06 million producing, 48 million kg of raw wool in 2014-15. The average annual yield/ sheep in India are 0.9 kg against the world average of 2.4 kg. Out of this, about 85% is carpet-grade wool. Carpet wool-producing states are Rajasthan, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, and Maharashtra. The total wool production in India is not enough to meet the total requirement of the raw wool carpet industry. It only fulfils 8-9 % needs of handmade carpet industry. So, the quantity of wool produced in India is very-very less in comparison to the requirement of handmade carpet industries.

b). High cost of quality material

The wool produced in India is coarse and considered to be of inferior quality due to India's agro-climate condition that does not conform to international standards. In this situation, wool has to be imported from other countries like New Zealand

for the production of handmade carpets. The imported wool fibres are blended with local wool to produce carpets. The cost of wool increases as it is imported and other intermediate costs are added.

c). Delay and discontinuity in supply

As importing wool fibres involves multiter systems, the supplier will be delayed in supply of raw materials. Discontinuity of wool supply takes place due to the reason that the carpet industry involves small manufacturers, who required small quantities of wool fibres and other raw materials. But it is not economical for the supplier to send a small quantity of wool fibres.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING RAW MATERIAL AVAILABILITY

- Identifying the small-scale wool producers and setting the centre for the collection of wool.
- Cross-breeding of sheep to improve the quality of wool.
- Creation of direct raw material distribution facility between carpet manufacturers and wool suppliers.

II. PROBLEMS RELATED TO PRODUCTION

a). Non – availability of skilled and unskilled labour

The carpet industry has been suffering due to lack of artisans and unskilled labour. Due to low wages in the carpet industry, skilled and unskilled labour is scarce. Many health problems are found in workers of the handmade carpet industry such as pain in hand, figure, wrist, back, awkward posture and problems related to the lungs and respiratory system. Due to this youth are not attracted to this profession. These are major causes for non-availability of skilled and unskilled labour in handmade carpet industries. So, manufacturers are unable to meet the demand and orders are cancelled due to delays in manufacturing.

b). Lack of electricity

In the handmade carpet industry, carpet weaving operation is considered precision work because knots made in the carpet are very fine and placed close together. Color identification is very important for such operations, adequate lighting both qualitatively and quantitatively is required. The carpet industry is situated in rural areas and the electricity supply is very poor in these areas due to which weavers faced problems like strain on the eyes, insufficient lighting resulting in awkward posture as they inclined their heads, neck and back



to able to look clear at their work. So, due to the poor supply of electricity, reduced production capacity of the worker.

c). Lack of managerial skill

Carpet industries are mostly run by small businessmen having no training in management. They run their industry as their fore father ran that industry. They don't know how to manage and fully utilization of resources. In the large-scale industries, businesses are managed by specialists. So, these manufacturers are not able to compete with large-scale manufacturers.

d). Lack of technology intervention

As manufacturers have less education they do not go for technology up-gradation, even though new tools and equipments are developed by various institutes. But due to the lack of intervention, manufacturers do not know about it.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SOLVING PRODUCTION PROBLEMS

- Providing information to handmade carpet manufacturers about alternative sources of energy.
- Imparting managerial training to carpet manufacturers.
- Providing awareness about different financing schemes provided by the government or banks to manufacturers.

III. PROBLEMS DURING FINISHING

a). Colour bleeding

Dye bleeding occurs when a coloured fiber loses dye while wet. Uncoloured or light-coloured fiber or yarn may readily soak up fugitive (runaway) dyes from the darker fiber or yarn and become stained. This is most often seen in carpet where deeply dyed shades (for example, reds, blues, blacks) become fugitive and bleed into white or light-coloured areas. This problem occurs due to the use of defective dye and dyeing methods. Manufacturers do not have or do not follow optimized condition for dyeing.

b). Change in colour of fringes

The change in the colour of the fringes occurs during cleaning. This form of colour change often occurs as fugitive dyes from the wet carpet are absorbed by the fringes.

c). Bleeding of weaver markings

Some carpets may have pattern markings placed on the warp by the weaver. These are usually marked with colored chalk or ink (red, blue or

black) to aid in the weaving. The markings are completely hidden as the carpet is woven, but since the markings are seldom colorfast, they can bleed during cleaning.

d). Felting and low luster

Due to pressure applied by squeezer and soap solution used for washing felting on the woolen scale occur, moreover due to damage of wool fiber scale. The light that strikes on the surface of distorted wool fibers is not reflected back in one direction, so it gives low luster.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SOLVING PROBLEMS DURING FINISHING

- Training on dyeing.
- Placement of designed paper underneath of warp yarns.

IV. MARKETING PROBLEMS

a). The high price of the product

Due to the multitier supply system for the supply of raw materials, manufacturers and artisans depend upon the middlemen for the sale of their carpets manufactured by them. As carpet manufacturing is a multitier system in which many people are involved at each stage and these people earn their part of the profit at the different stages which increases the cost of the produced products.

b). Promotion and advertising

General practice that is followed for promotion is through exhibitions and fairs, the impact of these events remain for very less time on customers' mind and again they start purchasing the carpet available in the market. On other hand, small manufacturers are involved in the manufacturing of carpets. They are unable to afford the cost of advertising required for the promotion of their product.

c). Lack of information and innovation

Manufacturers are using traditional designs as they do not have information regarding what consumer requirements are due to lack of market research. The handmade carpet industry has different stages till the carpet reaches a customer and every stage has its limitations or knowledge constraints. While starting from artisans to manufacturers, carpets reach the middleman and finally end up in showrooms and export markets. These multi-tier market systems and lack of market research which ultimately results in less innovation.



SUGGESTIONS FOR SOLVING MARKETING PROBLEMS

- Market research should be done to know the consumer satisfaction level and their requirement.
- Promotion through social media, small banners and radio.
- Establishment of more handmade carpet outlets in city for easy accessibility to the consumers.
- Creation of brand.

V. PROBLEMS RELATED TO ENVIRONMENT

Due to lack of knowledge regarding the waste treatments process the carpet industry is creating environmental problems like-

- Disposal of effluent
- Solid wastes
- Odour

a). Discharge of effluent

During the dying and washing processes, liquid waste is generated. Effluents are generated due to the use of different dyes, chemicals and soaps. These effluents are discharged into the environment without any treatment.

b). Solid wastes

Solid waste is generated while finishing the carpet by trimming of carpet, cutting off fringes in the finishing process. These wastes are discarded in open areas that make working and surrounding polluted.

c). Odour

The use of dyes and chemicals brings about odour. This odour is only limited to the carpet manufacturing unit's internal atmosphere and does not cause a nuisance to the surrounding communities.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SOLVING ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

- Improvement of the workplace.
- Effluent will be treated by screening and sedimentation before being discharged into sewer.
- Solid waste burning at government-approved burning pit.
- Selling of solid waste to contractors for further use.

VI. CONCLUSION

The handmade carpet industry is a labour-intensive industry. It has the potential to provide large-scale employment to rural and unemployed youth. It is an important source of foreign exchange earnings as it strengthens the country's economy. The ever-increasing growth in terms of the value of export indicates the high potential for the sustenance of this industry in the future. In this regard, there is need to overcome the problems faced by the handmade carpet industry by providing regular research and development facilities, proper training to artisans, adequate marketing and promotion techniques, and by running workers' welfare schemes and improvements in wages.

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