

# Impact of Covid 19 on the Uttar Pradesh Handloom Industry

A case study by Brickworks Analytics



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## 1. Executive Summary

This report “The Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on the Handloom Industry of Uttar Pradesh” is prepared keeping in view the special role of the handloom industry through its contribution to employment generation and foreign exchange earnings in the state’s economy. The report examines the effect of COVID not only in the domestic but export market of UP; different challenges faced by the artisans and weavers; and the revival initiatives taken to improve the socio-economic conditions of the workers. The specific term of reference for the study are listed below:

### Terms of Reference

- To study the present status of the handloom industry in UP in general and garments in particular.
- To identify the challenges faced by the industry those are obstacles for the development of the sector and offer solutions to mitigate these problems.
- Identify ways to promote handloom products in the global market.
- To study the impact of COVID-19 in terms of the socio-economic development of the workers.
- To study various support schemes and initiatives by the central and state government in domestic as well as export market etc.

The secondary data in the form of published reports and various official documents are collected from different sources like private and government organizations to examine the status of handloom industry during coronavirus pandemic. Data analysis is used to understand the basic framework of the industry.

The textile industry has a prominent role in the economy of Uttar Pradesh. After agriculture, the textile industry is the highest provider of employment opportunities in the state. The Handloom Industry holds a significant place in Uttar Pradesh's cultural heritage. Weaving is a source of livelihood for millions of families in the state. Many homes encourage their family members to learn embroidery and stitching, while some of them have inherited it as a legacy from their ancestors. However, the handloom industry is not immune to the scourge of the COVID-19 pandemic and has caused social and economic disruption to workers associated with it. The economic slowdown, unemployment, reduced expenditure, the pandemic, and subsequent lockdown have had a destructive impact on the handloom industry.

Finally, this report presents recommendations to promote the growth and development of the handloom industry.

## 2. Introduction

The textile industry occupies a unique place in India. It accounts for 14 % of the total Industrial production, contributes to nearly 30 % of the total exports, and is the second-largest employment generator after agriculture. <sup>1</sup>The textile sector comprises four segments-

- Textile Mills
- Power looms
- Handlooms
- Garments

As an economic activity, handloom weaving is one of the largest direct and indirect employment providers to 32.23 lakh weavers and allied workers in India. This sector contributes nearly 15% of the cloth production in the country and also contributes to the export earnings of the country. 95% of the world's hand-woven fabric comes from India.<sup>2</sup> However, the textile industry is not immune to the scourge of the COVID-19 pandemic and has caused social and economic disruption to businesses across the world especially the handloom sector. The economic slowdown, unemployment, reduced expenditure, the pandemic, and subsequent lockdown have had a destructive impact on the handloom industry. Despite giving the clarion call for 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-reliant India) and 'Vocal for Local', the alarming situation in the handloom industry needs a range of vision to improve the socio-economic conditions of the weavers.

## 3. Handloom Industry of Uttar Pradesh

According to UP Nivesh Mitra Portal (2021), Uttar Pradesh's handloom industry has over 2.5L handloom weavers operating above 1L handlooms with many natural clusters developed over hundreds of years. Varanasi and Mubarakpur are world-renowned for silk sarees of the highest quality. Hand embroidery of delicate quality is the strength of several traditional clusters such as Farrukahabad, Bareilly, and Lucknow. The table below identifies the major handloom production centers in Uttar Pradesh.<sup>3</sup>

**Table 1: Production centers**

Major Handloom Production Centers in Uttar Pradesh	
Centers	Products
Amroha	Picnic Mats
Azamgarh	Silk Sarees, mixed sarees, and fabrics, KharriMats

1. S. Sudalaimuthu, 'Handloom Industry in India', *Fibre2Fashion.com*, Jul 2007, URL: <https://www.fibre2fashion.com/industry-article/2269/handloom-industry-in-india>

2. 'Annual Report 2019-20', Ministry of Textiles.,<sup>5</sup>

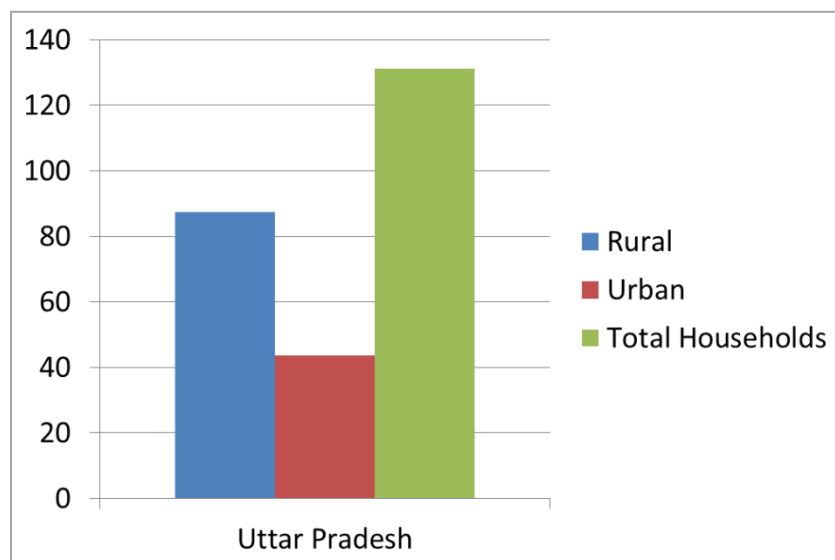
3. 'Handloom and Textile Industry Sector', *Niveshmitra.up.nic.in*, accessed on Sep2021, URL: <https://niveshmitra.up.nic.in/ImpSec.aspx?ID=hti>

Agra	Mats, bedsheets, furnishings, heavy dress materials, chenille cotton carpets.
Barabanki	Stoles, scarves, lungis.
Etawah	Bedsheets, dress materials, Mats, mixed fabrics
Farrukhabad	Cotton prints, bedsheets, dress materials, Mats, chenille cotton carpets, mixed fabrics
Fatehpur Sikri	Heavy cotton fabrics, dress materials, Mats, chenille cotton carpets, mixed fabrics.
Ghaziabad	Jacquard furnishings, bedspreads, terry towels, linen, home furnishings.
Gorakhpur	Terry towels, toweling, furnishing, dress material.
Hathras	Chenille rugs, cotton carpets, fabrics
Kanpur	Mats, Dusters, Cotton fabrics
Lucknow	Chikankari work
Sitapur	Cotton mats
Varanasi	Silk sarees, sarees, mixed fabrics, cutwork items, dress materials, furnishings, stoles, scarves, gauze and leno fabrics, brocades.

Source: Nivesh Mitra(Government of Uttar Pradesh)

With the fine artwork and great quality, the weavers have brought worldwide recognition to Uttar Pradesh. As per the Fourth All India Handloom Census 2019-20 (Ministry of Textiles), in Uttar Pradesh the total distribution of handloom worker households were 1, 31,120. In which there were 87,412 rural and 43,708 urban households (Graph 1).<sup>4</sup>

**Graph 1: Distribution of handloom worker households by type**



Source: 4th All India Handloom Census 2019-20

4. 'Fourth All India Handloom Census 2019-20', [handlooms.nic.in](http://handlooms.nic.in), Pg. 71, accessed on Sep 2021, URL [http://texmin.nic.in/sites/default/files/AR\\_MoT\\_2019-20\\_English.pdf](http://texmin.nic.in/sites/default/files/AR_MoT_2019-20_English.pdf)

Stitching is considered a respectable work in rural and urban areas for men, women, and the other gender. Many homes encourage their family members to learn embroidery and stitching skills while some of them have got it as a legacy from their ancestors. Below is a table indicating the distribution of the total workforce of handloom weavers and their gender in Uttar Pradesh (Table 2).<sup>5</sup>

**Table 2: Distribution of the total workforce of handloom weavers and gender**

	Male		Female		Transgender	
	Weavers	Allied Workers	Weavers	Allied Workers	Weavers	Allied Workers
Rural	53,174	11,077	34,517	31,590	1	1
Urban	28,570	5,079	14,515	12,432	1	0
Total	81,744	16,156	49,032	44,022	2	1

Source: 4<sup>th</sup> All India Handloom Census 2019-20

From the above mentioned data, it can be inferred that a total number of 1, 90,957 weavers and allied workers are there in rural and urban households of the handloom industry. In comparison to male and female weavers and allied workers, the number of transgender workers in the industry is extremely low.

### 3.1 Production

According to Nivesh Mitra Porta (Govt. of UP) 2021, Uttar Pradesh is the third highest fabric producing state of India producing 13.24% of national production. The major handloom production centers in Uttar Pradesh are Amroha, Azamgarh, Agra, Barabanki, Etawah, Farrukhabad, Fatehpur Sikri, Ghaziabad, Gorakhpur, Hathras, Kanpur, Lucknow, Sitapur, and Varanasi. These centers produce handloom products like silk sarees, bedsheets, cutwork items, dress materials, and furnishings to name a few. Table 3 highlights the distribution of weaver households among the type of textiles being produced.<sup>6</sup>

**Table 3: Distribution of weaver household by major production of fabrics in Uttar Pradesh**

	Saree	Dhoti, Sarong, Lungi	Dress material	Towel, Gamcha	Bedsheet s, lanket	Shawls, Muffler	Durries	Others
Rural	19,036	5,485	1,002	2,234	4,639	6,093	33,926	3,926
Urban	15,113	3,485	560	1,048	2,520	784	14,452	1,494
Total	34,149	8,970	1,562	3,282	7,159	6,877	48,378	5,420

Source: 4<sup>th</sup> All India Handloom Census 2019-20

5. Ibid.,75

6. ibid.,56

From the data above, it can be inferred that 29% of weaver households were involved in the production of Durries and 41 % of the households were involved in the production of Sarees.

### 3.2 Sales Distribution

For the majorly produced products in Uttar Pradesh, the largest source of sales is local markets followed by master weavers under whom the artisans work for their livelihoods. Sales from Cooperative society, fairs and exhibition amount to 9% of the total sales. However, exports and e-commerce accounts for only 0.05% and 0.04% of the total sales respectively (Table 4).<sup>7</sup>

**Table 4: Distribution of handloom households reporting major source of sales of their major products**

	Local Market	Master weaver	Co-operative society	Fairs/ exhibitions	Export	E-commerce	Others
Rural	47,601	37,408	5,682	1,174	43	33	938
Urban	16,136	22,567	5,992	169	30	26	460
Total	63,737	59,975	11,674	1,343	73	59	1,398

Source: 4<sup>th</sup> All India Handloom Census 2019-20

## 4. Impact of Covid-19 on Handloom Industry of Uttar Pradesh

For the handloom industry, the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with social distancing rules and lockdown restrictions meant that the weavers could no longer work in the closed spaces as they did before the outbreak of Coronavirus. This disrupted the livelihoods of lakhs of weavers who have been working in the industry.

### 4.1 Production and export of handloom products before Covid-19 pandemic

According to Invest India Outlook, “The handloom industry is labor-intensive, and its young workforce is a driver for growth. According to Invest India- National Investment Promotion & Facilitation Agency, the production of handlooms in 2018-19 was 49,476 crore.”<sup>8</sup>

In the Financial Year 2019, the export of handloom products from India was valued at \$342.69 million with the US, UK, Germany, and Italy being the major importers.<sup>9</sup>

7. *ibid* Pg.,129

8. By: Strategic Investment Research Unit, ‘Weaving India’s Future- Investment in the Handloom Sector’, *investindia.gov.in*, Mar2021, URL <https://www.investindia.gov.in/team-india-blogs/weaving-indias-future-investment-handloom-sector>

9. *Ibid*

## 4.2 Production and export of handloom products during Covid-19 pandemic

In Financial Year 2020, the export of handloom products stood at USD 319.03 million. The handloom products export from April 2020 to March 2021 was USD 223.19 million. In the Financial Year 2021, the US was the major importer of Indian handloom products, with an estimated purchase of USD 83.22 million, followed by the UK, Australia, Germany, and France.<sup>10</sup>

## 4.3 The scenario of handloom industry during COVID-19

The biggest fear of the traders now is how Covid-19 would change the way people celebrated festivals and weddings. Varanasi's textile industry relies heavily on the wedding season but many potential clients have either postponed the weddings or made them a modest affair, affecting the sales.<sup>11</sup>

In a Times of India report, "In over 100 villages dotting Nahtur area of Uttar Pradesh's Bijnor, the sound of handloom machines was heard in every lane. Most of these looms have now fallen silent. At one time, the sprawling handloom industry of Nahtaur generated an annual turnover of over Rupees 250 crore. As demand dipped, the annual turnover declined to Rupees 50 crore."<sup>12</sup>

Cash flow has stopped, with buyers unable to make payments and no sales are happening at all. Buyers are not in a position to place new orders. Normally, in the craft sector, orders are planned much in advance as the lead time required to complete a production cycle is usually 2 to 3 months.<sup>13</sup>

Unfortunately, both the All India Handloom Board and All India Handicrafts Board were abolished on July 27 and August 4, 2020, by the Central Government without giving any reason or putting any alternative in place. Both these institutions connected the artisans with the government. They existed to facilitate better understanding, coordination, and initiate actions that develop a favorable ecosystem for the local and handmade products.<sup>14</sup>

## 4.4 Challenges in the handloom industry

In the light of the above statements, it is important to highlight some of the issues and challenges faced by the handloom industry. These challenges are further aggravated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Quite briefly, these challenges could range from low consumer demand, supply chain disruptions, wage reduction, to job losses of workers. Even though the self-isolation measures are essential for the containment of the disease, their impact on the socio-economic development of the workers associated with the handloom industry is at best questionable. Therefore, it is essential to

10. 'Handloom Industry And Exports', *www.ibef.org*, July 2021, URL <https://www.ibef.org/exports/handloom-industry-india.aspx>

11. N. Pandey, 'Banarasi silk industry has a Covid fear: Indian festivals may never be the same again', *theprint.in*, May 2020, URL <https://theprint.in/india/banarasi-silk-industry-has-a-covid-fear-indian-festivals-may-never-be-the-same-again/416681/>

12. H. Dabas, 'Uttar Pradesh: Hit By Covid Pandemic, Cottage Industry Gasping For Breath In Bijnor, Amroha', *timesofindia.indiatimes.com*, Apr 2021, URL <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/meerut/hit-by-covid-pandemic-cottage-industry-gasping-for-breath-in-bijnor-amroha/articleshow/82246704.cms>

13. 'Handloom weavers staring bleak future following COVID-19, lockdown', *onmanorama.com*, Apr 2020, URL <https://www.onmanorama.com/lifestyle/news/2020/04/19/mpact-covid-19-on-indian-handloom-sector.html>

14. A. Pati, 'COVID-19 impact on handicrafts sector: A struggle that only got harder', *buisnesstoday.in*, Aug 2020, URL <https://www.buisnesstoday.in/opinion/columns/story/covid19-impact-on-handicrafts-sector-handloom-artisans-suffering-due-to-coronavirus-lockdown-270592-2020-08-20>



identify the major areas that are responsible for the alarming situation of the industry so that necessary revival initiatives can be taken for the weavers/artisans.

The challenges are divided into two parts: pre-existing challenges and challenges that occurred due to COVID-19.

#### 4.4.1 Pre-existing challenges in the handloom industry

- **Unorganized nature of the industry**  
Inconvenient working conditions, limited research, and training in the field, lack of information on the initiatives and schemes provided by the government, and unorganized nature of the sector are detrimental to the development of the industry.
- **Predictable range of products**  
The handloom industry of Uttar Pradesh has a predictable range of products such as sarees, rugs, mats, etc. The lack of innovation with the designs and creativity to meet the changing consumer priorities in the market can stagnate growth.
- **Barriers in marketing**  
Some of the concerns regarding the sales volume of finished handloom products are that the weavers lack awareness and information regarding consumer preferences. Promotional campaigns are not sustained over time to promote the handloom due to which customers are unable to distinguish between the products produced from the power loom sector versus those from the handloom sector.
- **Technological backwardness**  
The usage of old technology and looms results in low productivity and high cost. The digital transformation of the world has given rise to the e-commerce era which calls for leveraging the current technologies which will increase the competitive advantage of the handloom industry.
- **Competition from power looms and mill sector**  
The increase in usage of sophisticated technology with the modernization of the textile industry has led to competition from power looms and the mill sector. The modern textile industry is in greater demand by the consumers as compared to the expensive handloom clothing due to low prices, high quality, and diversified product range.

#### 4.4.2 Challenges occurred due to COVID-19

- Shortage of raw material due to COVID-19 adversely affected the production of handloom products.
- Cancellation of orders from the buyers, delays in payments, or the demand for discounts by the brands to suppliers.
- State-administered lockdowns were particularly harsh due to the continuously rising COVID cases. Small manufacturers faced unprecedented distress due to the suspension of supply chains.

- Migrant workers faced many challenges such as inconsistent access to enough food, basic amenities, economic downturn, absence of transportation facilities to return to their native places, lack of health care and psychological support.
- Reduced sales and slow prospects of recovery arose as cascading effects of several macroeconomic trends that affected the trade, finance, supply, and global demand of the products.

## 5. Initiatives by Government

The Government of India has been aware of the poor condition of weavers across the country due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation. Handloom being a state subject, the development of this sector is primarily the responsibility of the State Government. Through various developmental schemes and policies, the Central Government plays the role of supplementing the efforts of state government ever so often. These schemes and policies are the initiatives towards upgrading the technology, improving infrastructure, and supporting skill, training, and building capacity.

### **Revival initiatives taken by the Government of India to improve the conditions of weavers:**

For the revival of the handloom industry and the welfare of weavers, various schemes and policies are being implemented by the government.

- The lockdown restrictions made it impossible to conduct any promotional or marketing events such as fairs, exhibitions, etc. The Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC) therefore connected weavers, buyers, and exporters from different coordinates of the country with the international market through Virtual Platform.
- On 6th National Handloom Day which is observed on 7th August, a social media campaign #Vocal4handmade (Vocal for handmade) was launched in partnership with all the stakeholders with the objective to promote the handloom heritage of the country and urge people to support the weaving community. The campaign resulted in driving interest of the public in the handloom industry and reported a sales increase of handloom products on several e-commerce websites. According to The Hindu's Business Line report, "Thirty-two sellers crossed Rupees 1lakh sales during the 10 weeks while two sellers crossed Rupees 1 crore sales through Amazon. in's initiative 'Stand for Handmade.'"<sup>15</sup>
- During the August-October 2020 timeline, 534 Chaupals were organized in the country with 29 Chaupals in Uttar Pradesh. These Chaupals made weavers aware of the available welfare schemes meant for the socio-economic development of the weavers.<sup>16</sup>
- According to India Handloom Brand, 23 e-commerce websites including major players like Amazon, Flipkart, Craftsvilla have been engaged for e-marketing of the handloom products.

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15. T.Vaidehi,A.Das, 'Crisis looming in handloom sector' ,*thehindubusinessline.com*, Apr 2021, URL <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/crisis-looming-in-handloom-sector/article34304248.ece>

16. PIB Delhi, 'Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on Textile Industry' ,*pib.gov.in*, Aug 2020, URL <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1657698>

The policy framework has been introduced so that the willing e-commerce website with good user engagement and track record can participate to market handloom products online.<sup>17</sup>

- Design Resource Centres have been set up in Weavers Service Centres including Varanasi in coordination with NIFT with the objective to build and create design-oriented excellence in the Handloom Sector.<sup>18</sup>
- So far 10,781 weavers and artisans have been on-boarded on Government e-Marketplace (GeM) for marketing of handloom products of weavers to the Government Departments.<sup>19</sup>

## 6. Government Schemes

Apart from the above initiatives, Uttar Pradesh Government is also implementing the following schemes for the overall development & promotion of the handloom industry and welfare of the weavers involved.

### 1. National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP)

NHDP through its various components and schemes like Block Level Cluster; Hathkargha Samvardhan Sahayata; Weaver Mudra Scheme; Handloom Marketing Assistance; and Education of handloom weavers and their children provides financial assistance, education, skill up-gradation, and product development facilities to weavers.<sup>20</sup>

#### Handloom Marketing Assistance (HMA)

HMA is a vital segment of the National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP) which is being implemented in the state of Uttar Pradesh to provide marketing platform for weavers/agencies. The main objective of HMA is to develop and promote an integrated marketing channel through organizing events in domestic and export markets for the weavers/agencies to sell their products and connect with the customers directly.

According to the Annual Report 2019-20 (Ministry of Textiles), in the Financial Year 2018-19, seven marketing events were sanctioned in Uttar Pradesh with an amount of 73.07 lakh released including committed liabilities. Under these sanctioned marketing events, 14,000 weavers/beneficiaries were covered.

Additionally, in the financial year 2019-20, seven marketing events were sanctioned with an amount of 51.76 lakh. Around 15,000 weavers/beneficiaries were covered under the sanctioned events.

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17. E-Commerce, India Handloom Brand, [indiahandloombrand.gov.in](http://indiahandloombrand.gov.in), accessed on Sep 2021, URL <https://www.indiahandloombrand.gov.in/pages/e-commerce>

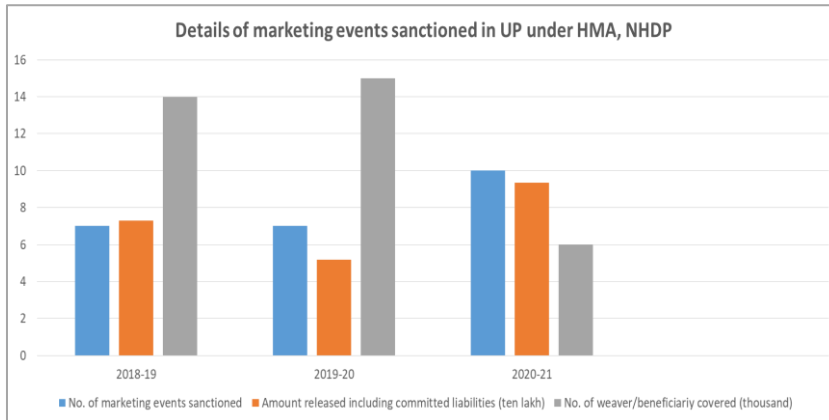
18. Fourth All India Handloom Census 2019-20, Development Commissioner Handlooms, [handlooms.nic.in](http://handlooms.nic.in) [http://handlooms.nic.in/User\\_Panel/UserView.aspx?TypeID=2618](http://handlooms.nic.in/User_Panel/UserView.aspx?TypeID=2618)

19. Ibid

20. 'Annual Report 2019-20', Ministry of Textiles.,93

In the financial year 2020-21, ten marketing events were sanctioned with an amount of 93.39 lakh but only 6,000 weavers/beneficiaries were covered under the sanctioned events (Graph 2).<sup>21</sup>

**Graph 2: Details of marketing events sanctioned in Uttar Pradesh**



Source: Annual Report 2019-20 (Ministry of Textiles)

According to the graph, it can be inferred that despite allotting higher amount in the year 2020-21 the number of weavers/beneficiaries covered are lower compared to the year 2018-19 and 2019-20. The possible reason behind this could be lockdown for a long duration of time resulting in a livelihood crisis for weavers, lack of access to raw materials required for the production of handloom products, or poor attendance by weavers.

## 2. Handloom Weavers' Comprehensive Welfare Scheme (HWCWS)

HWCWS provides insurance coverage for life, accidental death, and disabilities under Pradhan Mantri Jivan Jyoti Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), and Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana (MGBBY).

Pradhan Mantri Jivan Jyoti Yojana (PMJJBY) is a life insurance scheme backed by the Central Government of India. Under this scheme insurance coverage of Rupees 2,00,000 is provided in case of the sudden death of the insured person.

Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) is a social security scheme that offers one-year accidental death and disability cover by an accident to the insured person, that can be renewed yearly.

Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana (MGBBY) under this scheme, the Government of India provides insurance covers by associating with the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC). The insurance cover applies to all community weavers in case of natural death, accidental death as well as a partial and permanent disability by an accident.

As per the 4<sup>th</sup> All India Handloom Census 2019-20, 228 weavers have been enrolled under converged Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana (MGBBY) and 11,536 weaves have been

21. *ibid*

enrolled under Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)/ Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) in Uttar Pradesh.<sup>22</sup>

### **3. Comprehensive Handloom Cluster Development Scheme (CHCDS)**

CHCDS is aimed to target the development of the eight Mega Handloom Clusters that cover the geographical locations of at least 15,000 handloom units in India. These 8 Mega Handloom Clusters are Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), Murshidabad (West Bengal), Bhagalpur (Bihar), Trichy (Tamil Nadu), Godda & neighboring districts (Jharkhand), Sivasagar (Assam), Virudhunagar (Tamil Nadu), Prakasam& Guntur districts (Andhra Pradesh).<sup>23</sup>

### **4. Weavers' MUDRA Scheme**

Under this scheme, adequate and timely financial assistance is provided from banks to the weavers to meet their credit requirement. In Uttar Pradesh, a total number of 2,243 beneficiaries have been provided a loan worth Rs. 13.50 crore under Weavers' MUDRA Scheme. (4<sup>th</sup> All India Handloom Census 2019-20).<sup>24</sup>

## **7. Recommendations**

COVID-19 escalated numerous socio-economic crises such as unemployment, depletion of reserve funds by family members, and shrinking of the country's remittance inflow. In this socially vulnerable and economically difficult situation, there is an urgent need to provide financial security and social safety to the workers to overcome hardships during the pandemic. After studying the present status and identifying the challenges faced by the handloom industry, this report presents recommendations to promote the growth and development in this sector.

- Providing marketing intelligence and linkages to the weavers will help the handloom industry gain a sustainable income from the relevant products produced according to consumer preferences. An environment that can provide active access to raw materials, customer profiles, and reliable sales channels should be provided to the weaving community.
- Proper education and training should be provided to the weaver community about the trends in products, usage of raw materials, and how to market them. This will be helpful for the weavers in knowing and implementing modern and innovative techniques of the production. Regular market study and research should be done on the handloom industry to understand the trends and demand in the domestic as well as international market.
- E-commerce websites must be used to leverage the outreach to a newer customer base and markets. E-commerce companies should also come forward to support the weavers in areas such as marketing, logistics, and finance.

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22. Ibid., 96

23. Ibid., 98

24. Ibid., 102

- Indian handloom products are generally exported in the form of traditional attires across the world but with the changing consumer behavior and preferences, the handloom products should be tailored according to their needs. To understand the trends of the West and further guide it to the weaver community, a group of designers should be on-boarded to government departments.

## 8. Conclusion

Uttar Pradesh's handloom industry contributes to the everlasting exquisite cultural heritage of India. The richness and quality of the art and craft present in the handloom make it a progressive sector for employment and development of the textile industry. Conversely, due to pre-existing challenges such as predictable range of products, barriers in marketing link, lack of e-commerce presence, stagnant productivity, low income, slow growth in production and sales, and above all, unfair competition from power looms and mill sector the sector is surrounded with multifaceted concerns. These pre-existing challenges got worse due to the impact of COVID-19 and other major factors such as low consumer demand, supply chain disruptions, wage reduction, and job losses of workers in the sector after the worldwide lockdown was imposed.

As a result, the involvement of the government through various initiatives and schemes for financial support and welfare has been able to flow over these hindrances to some extent. But, there it is the need of the hour to look after the high sense of insecurities the lockdown effect has brought amongst the weaver community and cater it to protect the priceless heritage that the talent of weavers is giving to the nation.