CHAPTER III

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING
The previous chapter was devoted to the study of the production system of carpet industry. It was pointed out, that labour constitutes a dynamic and an important input into the production system of any industry. In fact the very survival of the industry depends upon the efficiency of its human resources. Against this background it was thought desirable to make an analytical study of the management of human resources in the carpet industry. The present chapter, therefore, has been devoted to the discussion of this vital aspect as follows:

EMPLOYMENT POTENTIAL

Carpet industry is relatively a low capital intensive industry, compared to many other small scale industries. Human input constitutes about 50 to 60 percent of the total cost of the product. Naturally, therefore, it exerts tremendous pressure on the cost of production. Thus the industry being labour intensive

1. IDS, "Contribution of Handicrafts and Handlooms to Indian Development" Product Review Paper 2, Industrial Development Services, New Delhi 1982) P. 1-13; See also Chapter II for detailed discussion.
plays a significant role in the development of economy as more people are absorbed in this industry. Output and employment co-efficients are high comparing very favourably with the organised sector. Employment is maximised with a minimum of capital and other scarce resource like energy. These potent advantages need to be fully exploited by providing all incentives for the growth of carpet industry in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, where chances for large scale industrialisation are bleak if not impossible in the near future.

It has been stated that carpet industry is labour intensive. In this context, it is interesting to note that the employment in the industry is estimated to have risen from 30,000 to nearly 3,50,000 during the period 1960-61 to 1981-82, at the national level. Roughly in two decades there has been 8 times increase in the employment figure. The number of persons employed in the industry in J&K State was about 50,000, as on 1983-84. This is an impressive number compared to the earlier estimate made in 1973, when the total number of persons employed in the industry was only 3443. Thus

there has been fourteen times increase in the number of workers during the last decade. Table given below demonstrates the increasing trend of the employment in the carpet industry vis-a-vis its share in the overall employment in the handicrafts sector of the State.

Table 3.1.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Employment in Handicrafts (Persons in lakhs)</th>
<th>Employment in Carpets (Persons in lakhs)</th>
<th>% share of carpets in handicrafts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1974-75</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-76</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-77</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by the scholar on the basis of the data obtained from the Directorate of Handicrafts, J&K Srinagar.
The foregoing Table reveals that the share of carpets in the total employment offered by the handicrafts sector was 29 percent in 1983-84, as against only 5 percent in 1974-75. Thus the rate of growth on the employment generation side is much higher in case of carpet industry as compared to other handicrafts. Therefore, it can safely be concluded that the carpet industry offers very good prospects of development as a tiny sector in the rural areas of the State. Being a labour intensive industry, it can absorb a large number of rural artisans by providing them gainful employment at their own place. What is necessary therefore, is to develop this industry on scientific lines so that it emerges as a catalyst for minimising if not eliminating the migration of labour from rural to urban areas or even outside the State.

AREA-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF WORKERS

Of late an encouraging trend is discernable. Locational pattern is undergoing a shift. About a decade back, 99 percent of the weavers belonged to the city of Srinagar and its sub-urbs. This trend is fading away as the proportion of rural artisans to the total employment is now increasing at a fast rate. Obviously this is a healthy trend, particularly, because the carpet

weaving is relatively better suited to the rural areas. Table given below indicates the changes in the area-wise distribution of workers in carpet industry during the period 1973 to 1978-79 and 1983-84, for which the data is available.

Table 3.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>1973</th>
<th>1978-79</th>
<th>1983-84</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% share of Employment</td>
<td>% share of Employment</td>
<td>% share of Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in total</td>
<td>in total</td>
<td>in total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Srinagar</td>
<td>99.12</td>
<td>57.57</td>
<td>24,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baramulla</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>25.92</td>
<td>14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anantnag</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>16.49</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The above table makes striking revelations, it shows that in 1973, 99.12 percent of the total number of workers in the carpet industry belonged to District Srinagar, whereas only 0.38 percent and 0.50 percent belonged to Baramulla and Anantnag Districts respectively. Against this the percentage share of

6. This classification of districts in Kashmir valley pertains to 1978-79, when there were only three districts in the valley viz. Srinagar, Anantnag and Baramulla.
workers from district Srinagar had been reduced to 57.59 whereas the percentage share of Baramulla and Anantnag districts had gone up to 25.92 and 16.49 respectively as per the Handicrafts Census of 1978-79. The position has further improved in 1983-84, when the percentage share of workers concentrated in Srinagar district came down to 48 percent, whereas the share of Baramulla and Anantnag districts was 28 percent and 24 percent respectively. The field survey and the personal discussions have convinced the scholar that the dispersal of artisans has definitely accelerated, following the introduction of Massive Carpet Weaving Training Programme.

**WOMEN IN CARPET INDUSTRY**

Dominance of male workers has been a peculiar feature of the employment structure of the carpet industry. In spite of the fact that carpet weaving could be taken up by the female weavers in their households, their share in the total employment of the industry has remained negligible. In 1973 the percentage of women workers employed in the industry stood at a dismal figure of 3 in the valley. It is, however, reported that the industry is dominated by women workers in Ladakh.

Carpet weaving is not very much strenuous that needs more of masculine power. In fact it is being done
by workers of tender age. Women workers can and do well in this craft. This realization is now growing as a consequence of this, their share in the total employment is showing an upward trend as is revealed by the following table.

Table 3.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>1973</th>
<th>1978-79</th>
<th>1983-84</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of workers</td>
<td>% share in total</td>
<td>No. of workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3,344</td>
<td>99.42</td>
<td>28,021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>2,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3,443</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>30,551</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The above table brings to light that the share of female workers has remarkably increased from 1973 to 1983-84. It is a healthy trend because even in Iran—considered to be the homeland of oriental carpets the weaving activity is mainly performed by female workers in their households. Hence careful and effective efforts...
are needed for absorbing more female workers in this industry. Women should be encouraged to work on the looms within their houses and hutments. Dragging them into the factories may give rise to numerous problems.

**WAGE STRUCTURE**

Wages constitute about 60 percent of the total cost of production of a hand-knotted carpet in Kashmir. The actual wages vary from weaver to weaver depending on their degrees of skill, age and performance. Besides, the quality of carpet to be woven is also an important determinant of wage rates. The average daily wages earned by different categories of carpet weavers have shown an increasing trend over the last two decades as shown by the following table:

**Table 3.4**

Year-wise Distribution of Average Daily Wages Earned by different categories of Carpet Weavers (1965-66 to 1983-84)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male Weaver Rs.</th>
<th>Female Rs.</th>
<th>Child Rs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1965-66*</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-76*</td>
<td>8.03</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>3.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80**</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84***</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>7.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Kashmir Handicrafts: A Development Plan, 1976, IDS
**Carpet Weaving in Jammu and Kashmir, 1979 ITCO
***Field investigation
The average daily wages of a skilled male weaver are about Rs. 15 at present as against Rs. 2.80 only in 1965-66. However, the above table reveals that children and women are paid very low wages compared to male adult weavers for performing similar type of work. This is in spite of the fact that carpet making is one of the scheduled employments covered by the Minimum Wages Act, 1948. State Governments have from time to time notified minimum wages to be paid under this Act. According to the latest notification issued in 1979, the minimum wage rate for workers in the carpet industry is Rs. 245 monthly or Rs. 9.42 per day.

MODE OF PAYMENT

Wages are generally paid on the piece-rate basis, that is according to the area of carpet woven by the weaver. However, child weavers are paid on daily wage basis by the master weavers. Similarly, the designers, taleem writers etc. are paid on time rate basis. Payment is generally made in cash after the completion of work, though most weavers now receive some advance money as well. The advance system of wage payments has


given rise to some malpractices and has virtually reduced the beneficiaries into bonded labourers. In the case of child labour this system is much in vogue due to economic compulsions. The system though appears beneficial at the time of getting the advance in lump sum has its own evil effects, which need to be curbed by devising suitable alternatives.

Earnings are subject to arbitrary deductions. Reasons advanced for such deductions are bad craftsmanship, late delivery of goods and so on. It has been observed that 8 to 10 percent of the wages are deducted on this pretext. Under such circumstances, it appears that even the provisions of Minimum Wages Act will not prove useful, unless a ban on arbitrary cuts of wages is imposed.

WAGE RATE STRUCTURE

The weaver receives different wage rates for different qualities of raw materials used. These rates are approved by the Executive Committee of the Kashmir Carpet Manufacturers Association, Srinagar and are revised from time to time. The latest agreed rates effective from 1st of March, 1980 are given in table no. 3.5.
Table 3.5
Wage Rate Structure for Carpet Weaving in Kashmir
w.e.f. 1.3.1980 (for sq. ft.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Silk Carpets</th>
<th></th>
<th>Woollen Carpets</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knot count</td>
<td>Single knot</td>
<td>Double knot</td>
<td>Single knot</td>
<td>Double knot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>per sq. inch</td>
<td>Rs.</td>
<td>Rs.</td>
<td>Rs.</td>
<td>Rs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 x 16</td>
<td>118.70</td>
<td>89.00</td>
<td>85.35</td>
<td>64.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 x 18</td>
<td>133.50</td>
<td>100.10</td>
<td>96.00</td>
<td>72.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 x 18</td>
<td>150.20</td>
<td>112.65</td>
<td>108.00</td>
<td>81.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 x 20</td>
<td>166.90</td>
<td>125.20</td>
<td>120.00</td>
<td>90.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 x 20</td>
<td>185.45</td>
<td>134.10</td>
<td>133.40</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 x 22</td>
<td>224.00</td>
<td>N.M</td>
<td>N.M</td>
<td>N.A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 x 24</td>
<td>267.00</td>
<td>N.M</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kashmir Carpet Manufacturers Association
Karan Nagar, Srinagar.

It can be observed from the above table that a master weaver working on contract receives Rs. 118.70 per sq. ft. for silk carpet in single knot but Rs. 89/- only for similar carpet in double knot. The same weaver when produces a woollen or a silk based carpet receives wage at the rate of Rs. 85.35 per sq. ft. for single knot carpet and Rs. 64/- only per square foot, for woollen double knot carpet, but Rs. 80/- for silk based double knot carpet of 16 x 16 quality.
The average wage rates in Kashmir have been constantly rising since 1970 as is evident from the following table.

**Table 3.6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Wages for '000' knots Rs.</th>
<th>Index (1970=100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>690</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by the scholar on the basis of data obtained from i) Survey Report on Carpet Industry at selected Centres, ii) Field investigation.

It can be observed from the above table that average wage rates have increased from Rs. 0.40 per thousand knot in 1970 to Rs. 2.76 per thousand knot in 1980, indicating about 7 fold increase. However, the average wage rates have remained unchanged since 1980 to 1984, reflecting the adverse impact of market depression in carpet industry on weavers earnings.

A comparison of average daily wage rates of Kashmir with Mirzapur- Bhadoi belt reveals that the
increase in wages has been much sharp in Kashmir. Average daily wage rate increased from Rs. 8/- in 1975-76 to Rs. 15/- in 1980-81 in Kashmir. As against this the average daily wage rates increased from 7.00 only in 1975-76 to Rs. 11/- in 1980-81 in Mirzapur - Bhadhol belt. Thus, it suggests that the finer the quality the higher the rate of return on its manufacture and hence, the higher the rate of premium it is likely to fetch the weaver.

HEALTH STATUS/ OCCUPATIONAL HAZARDS

Personal investigation conducted by the scholar has lend support to the common belief that carpet weaving adversely affects the health of the weavers. The weavers have to work for long hours by remaining in a squatting posture. Besides the dust and small particles of wool and silk generated in the process of weaving the pile thread, is also responsible for some diseases. The poor living conditions add fuel to the fire. Workers become prone to diseases. The ventilating, lighting and other sanitary conditions prevailing in and


around the carpet looms are generally very poor and impair the health of the workforce. It also affects their eyesight.

According to a recent study conducted by IDS (1982), following are the occupational hazards of carpet industry. 11

i) Allergic asthma, caused by wool and cotton dust. Between 4 to 5 percent of the workers performing the weaving task for several years are prone to this disease.

ii) Rhinosporaditis — Fungal infection of the nose caused by wool dust.

iii) Tuberculosis — It is widely prevalent disease amongst those who have been weaving for fifteen or more years. The 25-45 age group of weavers in particular contact T.B. It is caused basically because weavers live and work in small, poorly ventilated spaces, usually at such close quarters that infection spreads rapidly.

11. IDS, "Contribution of Handicrafts and Handlooms to Indian Development" Volume 2, P. 5-12.
iv) **Dermatitis and eczema** — This disease affects dyers and washermen.

Besides, vision problems related to vitamin A deficiency and debilitation related to general malnutrition also occur widely. As a result of all these diseases, the health status of most of the carpet workers is not satisfactory. Consequently it not only affects their health but also their productivity in the industry. Hence, concrete steps should be taken to improve the health status of carpet weavers. Following measures are suggested in this behalf.

a) Special medical research should be undertaken to find out the ways and means of safeguarding the health of carpet workers from occupational hazards,

b) The working conditions of weavers should be improved by providing them better lighting, ventilation and sanitary facilities,

c) The present sitting posture of the weavers working on the looms should be changed by providing wooden planks to the weavers, which can be adjusted in height as weaving progresses as is the practice in other countries/ places, and
d) It should be made compulsory for manufacturers to arrange periodic medical check up of weavers and providing medical aid and cure to them accordingly.

CHILD LABOUR IN CARPET INDUSTRY

The employment pattern of the industry reveals that the incidence of child and adolescent weavers in this industry is quite high. An indication of change in the age composition of artisans in the industry is available for the decade 1965-66 to 1975-76 and 1982-83 as depicted by the following table:

Table 3.7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Composites</th>
<th>1965-66 (%)</th>
<th>1975-76 (%)</th>
<th>1982-83 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below 14</td>
<td></td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>Below 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 - 34</td>
<td>52.00</td>
<td>48.00</td>
<td>Below 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 - 54</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>25.70</td>
<td>Above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 - 64</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>5.70</td>
<td>19 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 65</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>-- 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table shows a substantial increase in the number of child workers from 1965-66 to 1975-76. Thus in 1965-66, the number of workers below the age of 14 years was nil, whereas in 1975-76 the percentage share of such workers had gone upto 20. It can further be observed that majority of workers i.e. 48.60 percent were falling in the age group of 15 to 34 years.

The age composition has undergone a further change in favour of the lower age groups in recent years. This is because, the increase in the returns to labour have provided a greater incentive to weavers to train their sons and other children at an early age (usually 6-8 years). This incentive has been reinforced by the provisions of official training programme which are restricted to the persons in the 8-15 age group.

Thus in 1982, out of the total number of carpet weavers of about 49,000, 50 percent were below the age of 18 years. The above estimate is further confirmed by the Handicraft Census of 1978-79 which shows incidence of child labour in the handicrafts industry of J&K State as a whole. The census reveals

that 27 percent of the total number of workers in the handicraft sector, constitute the children below the age group of 15 years. Thus, out of 97,900 workers in the handicraft sector, nearly 27,221 workers were below the age of 15 years in 1978-79. Although the census does not provide craft-wise break up of child labour in handicrafts, but since carpet is the single most important industry which absorbs substantial number of child weavers, a fair idea about the extent of child labour in carpet industry can thus be formed. Estimating that about 75 percent of the total child labour in handicrafts sector belongs to carpet industry, the actual number of child workers in the industry works to be about 20,415 in 1978-79. This figure favourably compares with the IDS estimate of about 24,500 child weavers in 1982.

PROBLEMS OF CHILD LABOUR

Extensive use of child labour in the carpet industry has given rise to a number of socio-economic problems in the State. It has been observed that the impact of carpet weaving activity on the moral, educational, physical and social life of child weavers has

been highly adverse. A brief description of this adverse impact has been made in the following lines.

I) Educational Backwardness

Employment of child labour in the carpet industry has adversely affected the educational status of the new generations in the state, especially in the rural areas. As a result of Massive Carpet Training Programme, thousands of school going children were diverted towards carpet weaving activity from their studies. The early age at which children are taught to weave results in cutting them off from the educational system, after just one or two years of schooling or even without that. In this way a large number of future generation is deliberately pushed into darkness and illiteracy in utter disregard of the cannons of law. Obviously therefore, this policy runs counter to the basic directive principles of the Indian Constitution which enshrines the right of basic education to all citizens of India. Hence the policy is the negation of what has been promised to the young people - the future hope of the country.

II) Economic Exploitation

Child labour is not only abused but also exploited by the manufacturers/exporters and master-weavers. Both boys and girls in their early teens or even less than that are cheated and deprived of their due by paying meagre wages which varies
from Rs. 1/- to Rs. 5/- per day for the same amount of work being performed by the adult weavers. It has been estimated that about 12.63 percent child weavers work without any compensation. Another 12.54 percent of total child weavers receive less than 1 Rupee as the average daily wage. The percentage share of child workers who receive wages between Rs. 1/- and Rs. 2/- per day is 16.92. The bulk of the child weavers (37.47 percent) earn wages between Rs. 2/- and Rs. 2.50 per day and only 20.44 percent of the children earn wages upto Rs. 5/- per day.

The master-weaver generally receives full wages against the work done by his apprentice child weaver, but pays only a meagre amount as daily wage to the child artisans, which is a clear case of exploitation.

III) Moral deterioration

In addition to the deterioration in health the use of child labour is also responsible for the moral degeneration of the children. Due to extremely poor working conditions, monotonous job, low pay, illiteracy and the general ill treatment at the hands of master-craftsmen, the child weavers generally develop bad habits and breed moral corruption, like cigarette smoking, drinking, gambling, theft etc. This is an unfortunate
situation and needs suitable checks before it takes epidemic form.

Conclusion

From the foregoing analysis, it becomes clear, that child labour is a curse created by carpet industry. Manufacturers, and middlemen generally have entered into an unholy alliance and try to defend the employment of child labour. To support their contention they give the following reasons:

- Child labour is necessary because only children easily pick up the intricate art of carpet weaving with their delicate and flexible fingers;

- It provides a source of livelihood to a large number of such poor families, as would otherwise starve to death;

- It exerts a downward pressure on the wage rates for carpet weaving which would otherwise become prohibitive.

Problem of child labour in carpet industry thus is a dilemma between the economic considerations and the social costs, before the policy makers of the Government. The scholar, however, recommends that Government should
consider a gradual ban on the employment of child labour in carpet industry as a long term measure. The possible adverse impact of such a drastic step on the industry and the families of the children should be thoroughly examined beforehand so that alternatives are developed. As a short term measure, few suggestions are made below for improving the lot of child labour:

i) Special arrangements be made for imparting non-formal education to the child weavers by the employer with the help of the State Education Department or Social Welfare Department,

ii) Periodical medical check ups and free medical aid should be provided to the child weavers so that their health is protected,

iii) The Minimum Wages Act be strictly enforced and efforts be made to ensure payment of equal wages for equal work to child weavers.

In the preceding pages, a brief review of the socio-economic conditions of the carpet weavers in Kashmir was attempted. The scholar feels that this discussion will remain incomplete without examining the training and development aspects of the workers.
in this industry. Since training is an essential ingredient for the development of human resources, it is therefore worthwhile to devote the following pages for its discussion, so as to bring to light the existing weaknesses in the system as also to suggest new methods for future strategy.

**TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

The training of carpet weavers assumed tremendous importance after 1970, due to the abrupt increase in the world demand for Indian carpets. Government sponsored training of skilled artisans for the carpet industry was started in 1975, in response to the substantial spurt in overseas demand for Indian carpets in mid 1970's. The official agencies intervened on the presumption that the market response to increasing demand for skilled labour was too slow to meet the needs of a fast expanding industry. A secondary objective of the programme was to disperse employment spatially and to under-privileged groups such as landless labour, tribals and women generally to the extent possible.

Consequently, an "All India Scheme for Massive Training of Carpet Weavers" was formulated in 1975-76 for the training of 30,000 carpet weavers over a period of 3 years ending 1978-79. Of these 18,000 persons
were to be trained in U.P., 10,000 in Kashmir and 2,000 in other States.

Salient Features of the Scheme

The salient features of the Massive Carpet Training Scheme are:

i) training to be imparted to boys and girls in the age group of 10-14 in the crafts of carpet weaving,

ii) the duration of training was to be one year in all states, excepting in Jammu and Kashmir, where the duration was 1½ years,

iii) a stipend of Rs. 60/- p.m. were to be paid to each trainee during the training period. However, only an amount of Rs. 30/- was directly paid to the trainee. The remaining portion was treated by the training centre as a sort of recurring saving of the trainee and kept with it till the end of the training. 16


Implementing Agencies

The task of implementing the Massive Carpet Training Scheme within the State of Jammu and Kashmir was assigned to the following organizations.

- All India Handicrafts Board (AIHB)
- Handicrafts and Handloom Export Corporation of India (HHEC)
- Jammu and Kashmir, Handicrafts Corporation (JKHC)
- Directorate of Handicrafts, J&K Government.

These organizations were required to operate the training centres within the different administrative units of the State as follows:

a) AIHB - District Anantnag
b) HHEC - District Baramulla
c) JKHC - District Srinagar
d) DH - Jammu Region

A brief review of the training activities of these four organizations is presented below.

a) **Role of AIHB in Training the Weavers**

The All India Handicrafts Board (AIHB) is the premier organization in the country looking after
the development of the Handicrafts sector, in all its aspects, including hand-knotted woollen carpets.

With regard to the development of hand-knotted carpet industry in Jammu and Kashmir, the AIHB occupies an important position. Specifically, the developmental programmes of AIHB aim at strengthening the production base, updating the weaving skills and dispersal of the industry into the small and far flung villages of the State. AIHB acted as the main coordinating agency in the implementation of the Massive Carpet Training Scheme in the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

As part of the Massive Carpet Weaving Training Scheme for the entire State, the AIHB took up the task of training carpet weavers in the district of Anantnag. While other two organizations viz. Handicrafts and Handlooms Export Corporation (HHBC) and J and K Handicrafts Corporation (JKHC) took up this task in Baramulla and Srinagar districts. However, AIHB had later taken over the Baramulla district also as HHBC discontinued its training activity in that district. Table no. 3.8 indicates the progress of training programme done by AIHB for the last several years.

From the table 3.8 it will be seen that AIHB started its training programme in 1976-77 with
### Table 3.8

Year-wise position of Carpet Training Centres run by AIHB J&K state

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of training centres set up in the year</th>
<th>No. of trainees per centre</th>
<th>Total cumulative no. of trainees trained</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Nature of centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976-77</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Anantnag</td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Anantnag</td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12,990</td>
<td>Budgam &amp; Leh</td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Baramulla &amp; Primary Kupwara</td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29,450</td>
<td>Pulwama &amp; Budgam &amp; Leh</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by scholar on the basis of data personally obtained from AIHB, Srinagar.

The establishment of 32 Primary Training Centres in district Anantnag, each centre admitting 50 trainees.

Thus by the end of 1978-79, AIHB was running 139 training centres and imparted training to a total of 12,990 weavers.

The above table also reveals that up to 1981-82 the main thrust of the training programme was on the imparting of the elementary skills of carpet weaving. However, from the year 1982-83, the emphasis shifted from elementary training to the advanced training in weaving skills.
Thus by the end of 1982-83, the AIHB had trained 29,450 weavers in the art of carpet weaving in the State, which represents about three fourth of the total number of artisans trained upto that time by all the agencies put together.

**ROLE OF HHEC**

HHEC's support to the carpet weaving industry in Jammu and Kashmir comes primarily in the fields of production and marketing of superior quality hand-knotted carpets.

In the field of production, HHEC had taken up the task of imparting training to carpet weavers (i.e. as a part of Massive Training Scheme of All India Handicrafts Board) in the district of Baramulla. During the year 1976-77 and 1977-78 HHEC had set up 63 training centres and imparted training in carpet weaving to 3,150 weavers.

However, HHEC has discontinued its role as an organization for imparting training to weavers from early 1979. The basic reason for the discontinuance of training by HHEC was reported to be the feeling of

HHEC that the training period of 18 months is too inadequate to train a weaver.

TRAINING ACTIVITIES OF JKHC

Among the State level organizations catering to the development needs of the carpet industry in Jammu and Kashmir, the J&K Handicrafts (Sales and Export) Corporation (JKHC) under the Massive Training Scheme, took up the task of imparting training to prospective weavers in carpet weaving in Srinagar district since 1976-77. The table given below shows the yearwise position of training centres run by the Corporation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of centres</th>
<th>No. of trainees per centre</th>
<th>Total number of trainees</th>
<th>Types of Centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976-77</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>Normal training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>Normal training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>Normal training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>Normal training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>Normal training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total number of centres set up by JKHC in Srinagar district stood at 61 at the end of 1978-79 and a total number of 5,200 weavers were trained in these centres by the end of that year. In 1978-79 JKHC extended its training facilities to Jammu region also by setting up 20 centres.

**Directorate of Handicrafts, J&K**

The Directorate of Handicrafts is the Government Organization in the State of J&K which formulates and implements various developmental plans for the handicrafts sector, including carpet weaving industry on behalf of the State Government.

The performance of the directorate in the field of carpet training can be observed from the following table:

**Table 3.10**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Trainees trained</th>
<th>Cumulative no.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976-77</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>1120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>945</td>
<td>2065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>2546</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Office records, Directorate of Handicrafts, J&K Srinagar.*
The above table reveals that a total number of 2546 weavers have been trained by the Directorate in the art of carpet weaving, by the end of 1983-84. Thus it seems that the Directorate has comparatively trained a smaller number of carpet weavers.

**Progress of Training Programme under the Plans**

The Massive Carpet Training Programme was launched during the 5th five year plan beginning from 1976-77. More than 50,000 weavers were trained by the end of 1984-85. Thus the major break through in the training programme was achieved during the fifth and sixth five year plans. It is interesting to note that prior to 1975, only 151 weavers had been trained in J&K State during the 4th five year Plan.

In view of the growing need for the diversification and broadening the base of the carpet industry, the Government of India has decided to continue the Massive Carpet Weaving Training Scheme even during the 7th five year plan. However, the emphasis of the


scheme will be on the upgrading of existing weavers skills. This is a step in the right direction.

Evaluation of the Training Scheme

The Massive Carpet Weaving Training Scheme has gone a long way in developing and promoting the carpet industry in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. It can be judged from the fact that prior to the beginning of this scheme the total number of carpet weavers available in the State was about 4,000 and the total value of carpet exports was Rs. 2.47 crores during the year 1974-75. On the other hand, as a result of the Training Scheme, the total number of weavers has reached about 50,000 and the export figures have shot up to Rs. 22.20 crores in the year 1983-84, reflecting 1250 and 1000 percent increase respectively over a period of 9 years only.

Recently, on the advice of the Planning Commission an evaluation study of the Massive Carpet Weaving Training Scheme was undertaken by the Government of India. A summary of the main findings


22. Ibid.
of that study is presented below in the tabulated form.

**Table 3.11**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>J&amp;K</th>
<th>U.P</th>
<th>Bihar</th>
<th>Punjab</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. Average drop out rate during training</td>
<td>8.00%</td>
<td>23.00%</td>
<td>36.00%</td>
<td>17.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Average absorption rate of ex-trainees in the craft</td>
<td>85.50%</td>
<td>57.70%</td>
<td>23.00%</td>
<td>63.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Average wage rate per month of ex-trainee</td>
<td>Rs.275</td>
<td>Rs.195</td>
<td>Rs.212</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. Social Group/ Economically Backward</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


It is heartening to note from the above table that the performance of the Massive Carpet Weaving Training Scheme in the J and K State has been far better than the other three States viz. U.P., Bihar and the Punjab. The average drop out rate of trainees during the training period has been recorded lowest in J&K (only 8 percent) as against 27 percent in U.P.,
36 percent in Bihar and 17 percent in the Punjab. Similarly the average absorption rate of ex-trainees in the industry is very high in J&K (85.50 percent) as against 57.70 percent in U.P., only 23 percent in Bihar and 63 percent in the Punjab. The average monthly wage earnings of the ex-trainees are again highest in J&K i.e. Rs. 275 per month, as against Rs. 155 in U.P. and Rs. 212 in Bihar. On comparison it is reflected that the position in our State is better than many other states mentioned above.

Problems and Shortcomings

In spite of the positive impact of the training scheme on the carpet industry in J and K State, a number of problems have also arisen as a result of these schemes, which are briefly examined in the following lines.

i) Inadequacy of Primary Training

It has been reported that from 1976 to 1982, the training was imparted to prospective weavers for a duration of one and half years in which the trainees were taught mostly the technique of carpet knotting. Thus the weavers do not have sufficient knowledge about designs, 'talim' interpretation, etc. by the time they complete their training. Thus the training
period of one and a half years was too short a period for a trainee to achieve perfection in the weaving of carpets. He could not, on his own manufacture a quality carpet which could compete with others in the market. It has been estimated that a weaver needs at least 5-6 years of experience to achieve perfection in the weaving of superior quality Kashmir carpets.

Although this lacuna in the Training Programme has been done away with to some extent by the establishment of Advanced carpet weaving training centres, but much damage has been already done to the industry during the initial stage. The absorption of semi-skilled weavers trained by the Training centres, adversely affected the quality of the production during the boom period.

ii) Immature Trainees

Besides, the concept of formation of production cooperatives by the weavers, after receiving the training was also not a practical one, as most of the trainees were within the age group of 10-14 years and they had obtained training only in the art of carpet weaving. 23

Apart from this, the trainees were too young and inexperienced to possess an adequate knowledge in the fields of production, finance and marketing, which is an essential pre-requisite for the proper functioning of either self owned individual units or the cooperatives. In view of the above difficulties, many of the weavers after obtaining the training seek employment with the existing leading carpet producing units in the State.

iii. Generation of Child Labour

According to a study conducted by the Directorate of Handicrafts, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, regarding the evaluation of Massive Carpet Training programme in the State, nearly 20 percent of the trainees fall in the age group of below 10 years, while the rest 80 percent fall in the age group of over 10 years. 24 Thus it becomes clear that the Training Scheme has become an institutional machinery for generating thousands of child weavers in the State.

A recent field investigation by the IDS (1982) shows that a large proportion nearly 40 percent of the trainees continue to be completely uneducated, when they join the training centres. Others had only 1-3 years

schooling and had usually left school in order to come to the training centre.25

In terms of social development, the picture is not quite so favourable. The programme has done little in imparting formal or informal education to the children. Children who are totally illiterate have, willy nilly to be taught to count warp threads and are usually taught to write a little by the master weavers on their own initiative. Leaving general education aside, there is no provision in the programme for creating greater awareness of the local and social environment. The apparently obvious function of creating greater awareness of prevailing conditions in the industry has been omitted. Thus, there is no attempt to create a feeling of independence and enhance the possibility of social mobility amongst the future citizens.

In terms of health and hygiene, IDS (1982) found that the programme as a whole showed no awareness of the need for a medical check up of trainees; for measures - medically advised - to prevent

diseases caused by the wool dust, or for the provision of drinking water and bare-hole latrines. Thus very little attention was paid to issues pertaining to health. This situation continues even now. Some discussion is going on in the Government circles about the need to provide for periodic health check ups of trainees but no concrete action seems to have been taken so far. Sooner it is done, better it would be. Any delay in this will jeopardise the health of the future adult workers.

iv) **Imbalanced Training**

Presently no training is offered to augment the auxiliary skills in the field of designing, dyeing, washing and clipping etc. related to carpet manufacture. Developing and upgrading auxiliary skills is as important as that of training weavers. Neglecting this vital aspect of training would lead to a sort of imbalance in the availability of manpower resources in near future. It is, therefore, recommended that the Government should initiate measures immediately to train adequate number of designers-cum-talim writers, dyers, washers and clippers to maintain a balance between the increasing number of weavers on one hand and persons providing auxiliary skills on the other.

SUGGESTED MEASURES

On the basis of what has been analysed and discussed in the foregoing pages the scholar feels that the problems can be set right to a large extent by taking the following steps:

i) Provision for informal education should be built-into the training programme and integrated with the State-sponsored education system,

ii) Standards of cleanliness, ventilation and lighting should be rigorously imposed in all the training centres. Effective provision for a medical check up of the trainees should be obligatory,

iii) The minimum age limit for admission to the training programme should be enhanced from 8 to 15 years,

iv) Provision of looms on subsidised rates should be made an integral part of the programme to enable newly trained weavers to set up looms in their own homes.
v) The emphasis of the training programme should be on the improvement and upgrading of weavers' skills, like weaving of single knot carpets, silk carpets and high knottage carpets etc.

vi) Whilst continuing to disperse employment over a wide area, it is essential that the cluster principle be adhered to in the setting of new training centres. In this way, new weavers will not be thinly spread and links with the industry will be more easily maintained.

CONCLUSION

In the present Chapter an attempt was made to study the employment pattern and training aspect of the carpet industry in Kashmir. The study reveals that the socio-economic and working conditions of the carpet weavers are far from satisfactory. The weavers generally face problems on account of the occupational hazards, educational backwardness, economic exploitation and job-dis-satisfaction etc. Although Massive Carpet Weaving Training Programme has done a commendable job in expanding the production base of the industry
but still there are several important lacunas in the programme. Accordingly suitable remedial measures have been suggested.

The scholar feels that after discussing the problems faced by the industry in the spheres of production and employment, the next important functional area, which deserves special attention, is marketing. The next chapter is, therefore, devoted to the study of the Marketing Mechanism of the carpet industry in Kashmir.

*****
***
*
