

Entrepreneurship and Sustainability in Indian Handloom Silk: A Study of Second-Generation Innovators

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Abstract—This project explores the intersection of entrepreneurship and sustainability within the traditional craft of handloom silk weaving in Arani, India. Arani has a rich heritage of silk weaving that dates back centuries, but the industry faces modern challenges such as competition from mechanized production and fluctuating market demands. Through a multi-faceted approach, this study aims to investigate how the second-generation entrepreneurs in the Arani handloom silk weaving sector are innovating to ensure the sustainability of both their craft and their communities. The research employs a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, including interviews with local weavers, entrepreneurs, and industry experts, as well as surveys and data analysis of market trends and consumer preferences. By examining the strategies employed by entrepreneurs, such as product diversification, marketing initiatives, and skill development programs, the study seeks to identify best practices for sustaining the viability of handloom silk weaving as a profitable enterprise while preserving its cultural heritage.

Index Terms—Entrepreneurs' Sustainability, Arani Silk, Handloom Silk, Weavers' challenges, and Welfare activities.

I. INTRODUCTION

Arani handloom sarees have a rich history rooted in the town of Arani, located in the Tiruvannamalai district of Tamil Nadu, India. The tradition of weaving in Arani dates back centuries, with references to its fine textile craftsmanship found in historical records. The weaving of Arani handloom sarees is believed to have originated during the region of the Vijayanagar Empire (14 century to 17 century), where skilled weavers were patronized by the royal court. Over time the craft evolved blending traditional techniques with influences from various dynasties and cultures that

ruled the region. Arani sarees are renowned for their exquisite quality and intricate designs. They are typically made from high-quality silk, although cotton and silk-cotton blends are also common. One of the distinguishing features of Arani sarees is their intricate jacquard weaving technique, which allows for the creation of elaborate patterns and motifs.

II. METHODOLOGY

Selection and preparation:

The areas including environmental stewardship, socioeconomic impacts, and cultural preservation are identified for in-depth exploration. Subsequently, the formulation of clear, unbiased, and contextually relevant questions is crucial, encompassing both closed-ended (quantitative) and open-ended (qualitative) inquiries to capture a nuanced understanding of sustainability efforts and outcomes. The questions are aimed at gaining insights mainly about the second-generation entrepreneurial importance in the Arani hand-loom silk weaving. The survey approaches towards the weavers are Generational Involvement Knowledge Transfer, Entrepreneurial Values, Passion for Hand-loom, Government support, Community Engagement, Financial Sustainability, and Entrepreneurial Satisfaction.

Data collection:

There are almost forty responses have been collected from the Hand-loom Weavers of Arani. The survey has been conducted between the age group of 18 to 55 years old entrepreneurs. The method of sampling chosen was that the purposive sampling. In this method, the research is purely based on the purpose of the study along with the understanding of target

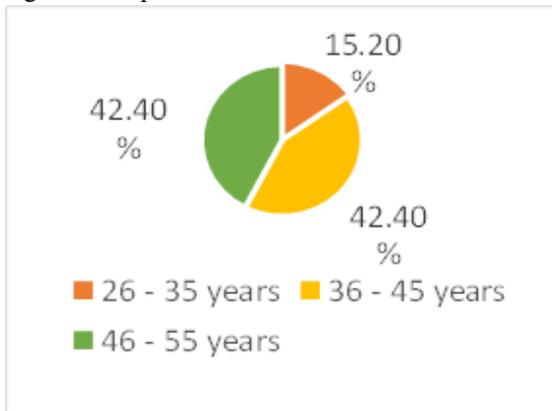
people. The framework of sampling is to understand the thought process of the target people.

The responses are collected from the weavers of various villages of Arani and the town of Arani. The areas were covered in the survey are S. V. Nagaram, Kanigilipai, Mamandur, Panayur, Katteri, Aathimalaipattu, Sevoor, Mullipattu, Vannakulam, Adayapulam, Payyur, Irumbedu, Saidapettai, Naikanpalayam, Kannamangalam and Mullandaram.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

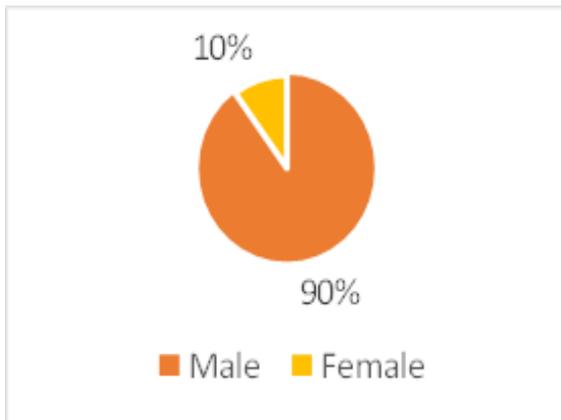
General Specifications:

Age of Entrepreneurs:



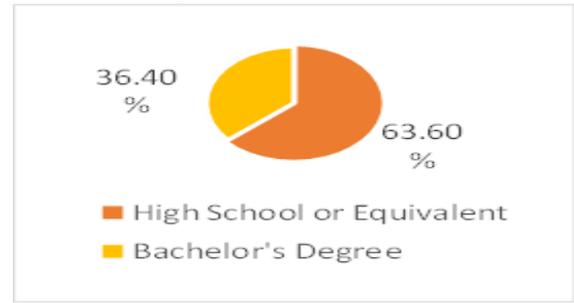
According to the pie chart, the largest percentage of second-generation entrepreneurs in Arani hand-loom fall between the ages of 36 and 45 years old, followed by 46-55 years old and then 26-35 years old.

Gender:



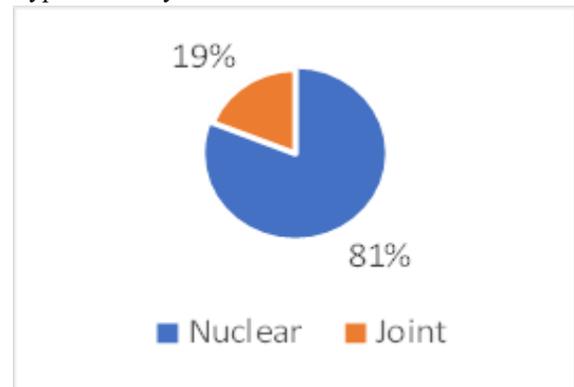
This chart represents the gender distribution of entrepreneurs in the Arani handloom silk industry. The vast majority 90% of entrepreneurs in this industry are male, with the remaining 10% being female.

Education background:



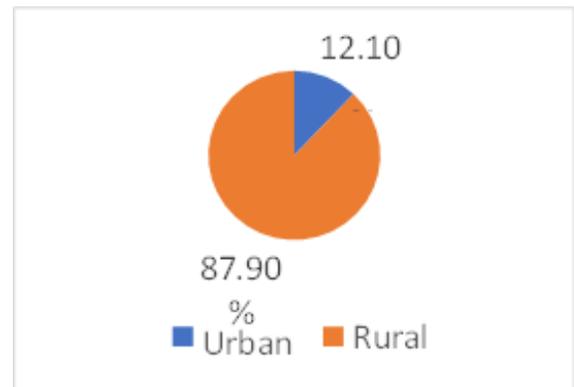
This shows the educational background of the second generational entrepreneurs in the Arani handloom silk. Mostly the entrepreneurs are completed only the high school education, so the awareness about the schemes and policies of the government among the weavers is less.

Type of Family:



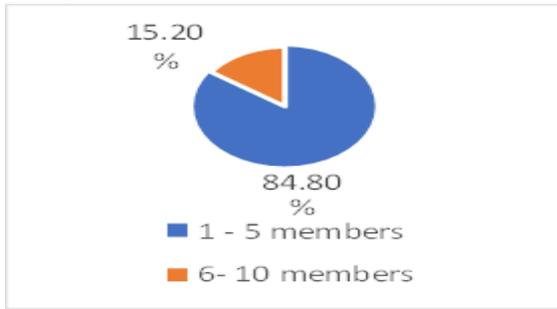
Mostly the weaving families are nuclear families about 81% and the joint families are only 19%. The social unity is going down among families in the hand-loom weaving.

Residential Status:



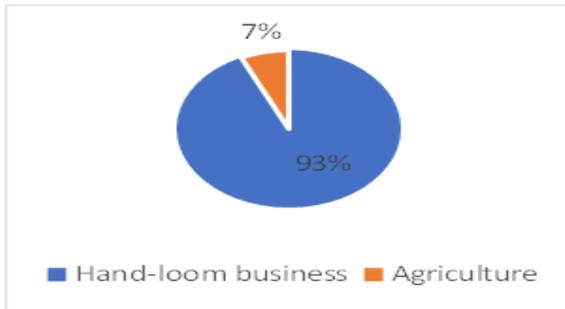
This pie chart shows the residential position of the weavers in the Arani. Most of the weavers are in the rural area around the Arani Taluk. The weavers are less in the urban area.

Family Size Involvement in Handloom:



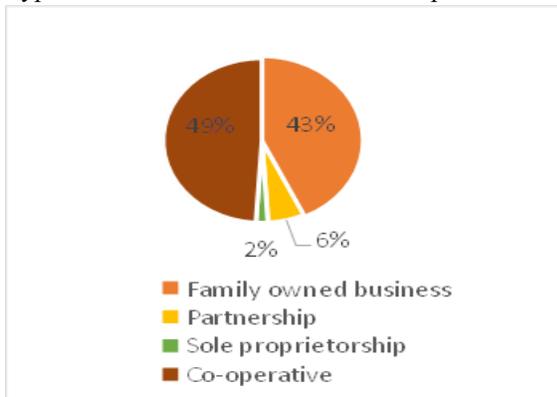
This pie chart shows the number of family members involved in hand-loom weaving. The involvement for hand-loom is less in the family members of the weavers comparatively. Mostly two or three have engaged in the hand-loom business.

Main Source of Income:



Most of the income is generated by handloom business in the Arani region. Agriculture is a primary and important source of income to some of the weavers in the Arani. Agriculture is also famous and important in Arani.

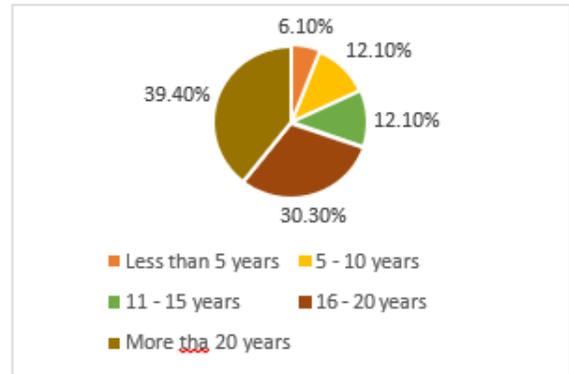
Type of Hand-Loom Business Ownership:



Mostly the competition is between the co- operative societies and the private sectors which include family-owned business. Partnership and Sole proprietorship

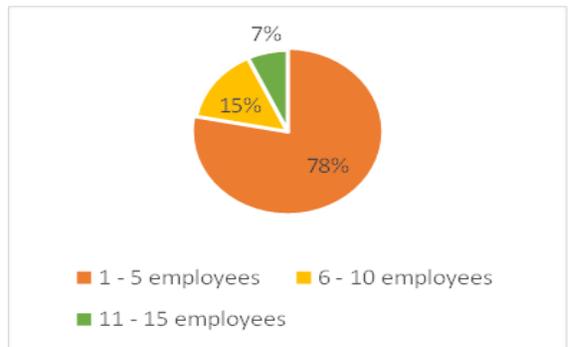
are comparatively less than the others.

Years of Experience:



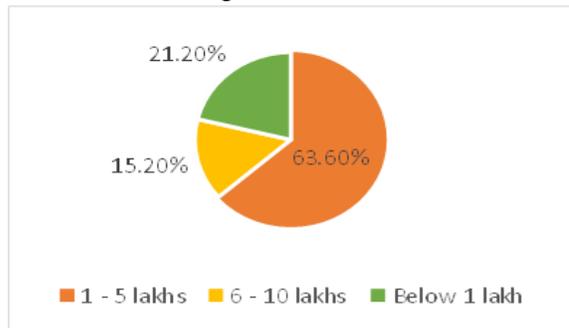
Most of the second- generation weavers have the experience of more than 20 years. They are the entrepreneurs who have started earlier in, hand-loom weaving. Some of the weavers have very low experience in weaving

Workforce Size:



Many of the silk hand-loom sectors are having 1-5 employees from within their families or from outside. Only the few weaving sectors are having many numbers of employees in their company.

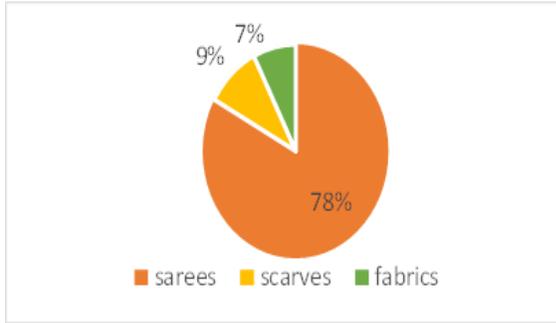
Annual Income Range of Hand-loom:



Mostly the annual income of the weavers is ranging

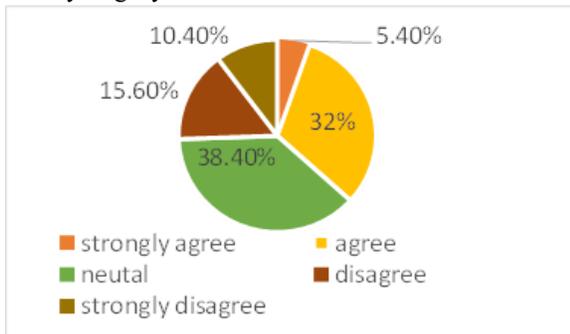
between 1 to 5 lakhs. Very lower number of entrepreneurs are generating higher income rate.

Primary Hand-Loom Products:



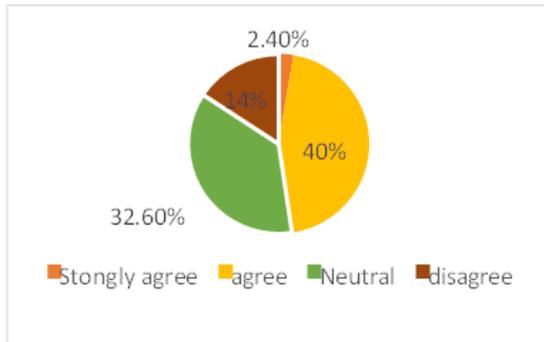
All the areas are weaving the sarees as the major product and some of the weavers' weave fabrics and scarves for consumer preference with special purposes.

Family Legacy Generational Involvement



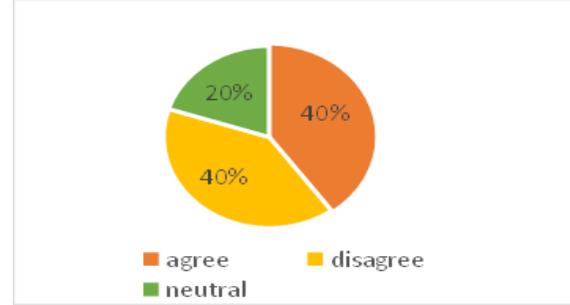
This pie chart shows the general involvement of the multiple generations of the families in the Arani hand-loom silk communities. Most of the weavers agree with the point of their involvement in the family business as hand-loom. They are doing hand-loom business through multiple generations in the Arani.

Knowledge Transfer

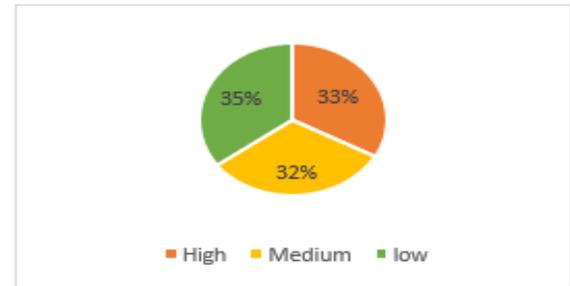


Most of the weavers agree with point of knowledge transfers from their ancestors and that helps to build up the hand-loom business towards growth.

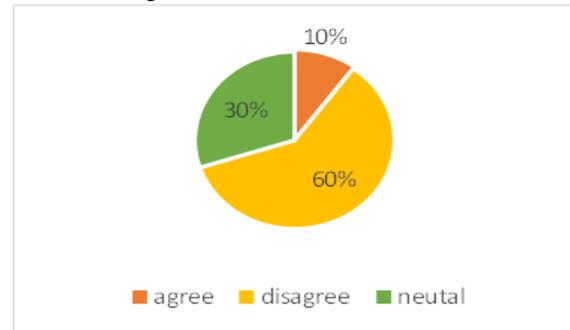
Personal traits Passion for hand-loom Government Support



The support from government is only favourable for the weavers who are in the co-operative societies and the remaining weavers who are in private sectors have either less support or no support. The weaver's welfare schemes in the co-operative societies at Arani are Saving and Security Scheme, Family Pension Scheme, Old Age Pension Scheme, Bunker Bima Yojana Scheme, Siksha Yojana Scheme, Free Electricity Scheme, Green House Scheme and Muthra Market Trends



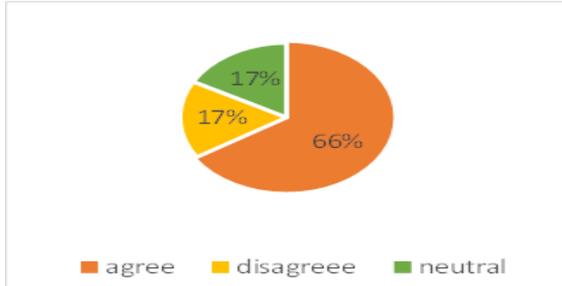
The artisans are experimenting with contemporary designs while staying true to traditional techniques. The fusion of traditional craftsmanship with modern aesthetics is gaining popularity among consumers, especially the younger demographic. The market trends discuss about the consumer preferences for the handcrafted goods



The interest and passion of entrepreneurs towards the

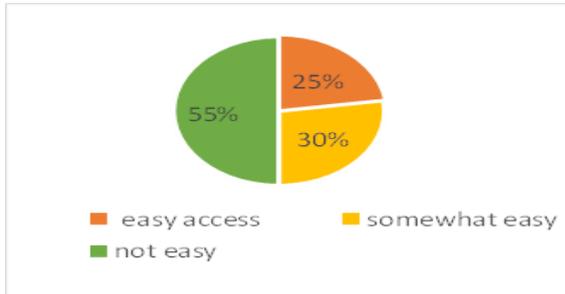
hand-loom is very high because of the culture and legacy created by their ancestors. Some entrepreneurs are having serious passion towards the hand-loom silk.

Network connections



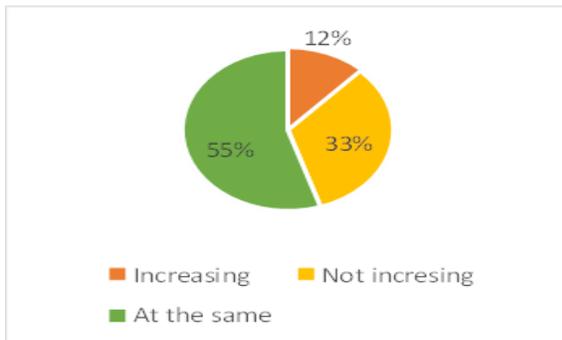
In hand-loom weaving communities, network connections play a vital role in various aspects of their craft and livelihood. Their connections significantly contribute to the overall success of the handloom business.

Access to Finance



Access to finance is crucial for handloom weavers in Arani, as it enables them to invest in raw materials, equipment, and other resources necessary for their craft. This chart shows how they are accessed to finance. Very less percent of weavers has the access of finance in the hand-loom weaving.

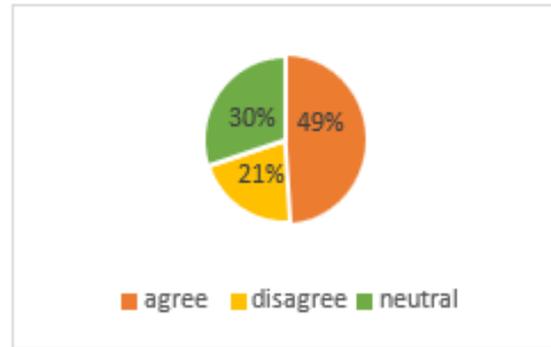
Revenue and Profit Growth



Revenue and profit growth are key indicators of a company's financial health and success. While revenue

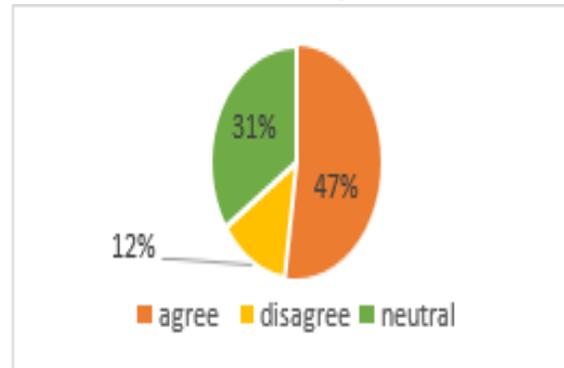
represents the total income generated from sales of goods or services, profit is the amount left over after deducting expenses from revenue. By implementing strategies and continuously monitoring performances, businesses can achieve sustainable revenue and profit growth over the long term.

Sense of Fulfilment and Achievement



The sense of fulfilment and achievement for entrepreneurs is deeply personal and multifaceted, driven by a combination of intrinsic motivations, external validations, and the impact of their work on themselves and others. Entrepreneurship is often a journey of pursuing new goals and aspirations. The entrepreneurs mostly agree with the point of fulfilment in hand-loom.

Contribution to Cultural Heritage



Cultural preservation refers to the efforts aimed at safeguarding, promoting, and transmitting the tangible and intangible aspects of a culture, heritage, or tradition to future generations.

Preserving the art of silk hand-loom weaving is essential for maintaining cultural heritage, promoting traditional craftsmanship, and sustaining local economies.

IV. CONCLUSION

The silk handloom co-operative societies which have played pivotal role in the development and growth of silk handloom industries in the state are currently passing through operational, administrative and financial crisis. In the light of growing competition caused by the modern the silk co-operatives face a tough competition from the private silk weavers, who are financially very sound and who have more control over the cost of production and design. The private master silk weavers do not have more permanent weavers and most of them are working on temporary basis. The master weavers pay them only when they have work. This factor reduces the total expenses or salaries or other allowances payable by the private master silk weavers. Since the silk co-operatives consist of permanent weavers, it has to pay them even when there is no work, thus it naturally increases the cost of production. Therefore, the silk cooperative societies face financial crisis, it is suggested that silk co-operative societies should take necessary steps to reduce the cost of production.

Considering the relevant factors, issues and problems linked to the globalisation of textile industry and its consequential impact on the socio-economic condition of members engaged in silk handloom activities, as analysed by the present study, following suggestions have been made.

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