

Identification Of The Issues With The Indian Textile Industry And Its Way Forward

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Abstract

The Indian textile industry, an eminent contributor amounting to 2% of India's GDP in FY 2019-20, has been facing significant challenges, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic which led to the sluggish growth. Building upon the prior research, this paper has identified a range of issues, including labour shortage, limited economies of scale, outdated/obsolete technology, power disruptions (load shedding), and uncompetitive policies, creating barriers to the industry's growth. Emphasising the role of government intervention in facilitating optimal development, this research paper computed the discrete Meso-level data from various authorised secondary sources to conduct a brief before-and-after analysis of the challenges, especially focusing on the post-covid era.

Hence, the paper aims to propose certain strategic recommendations, such as easing funding access for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and introducing initiatives for women's empowerment and enhanced youth participation in the textile labour market. Additionally, it emphasises the necessity of creating an environment conducive to inclusive innovation. Such proposed measures, collaboratively implemented by the Central and State Government of India (GOI), could serve as a catalyst for the textile industry in paving the way towards the goal of achieving sustainable and inclusive growth.

I. Introduction

The textile industry is one of the oldest and biggest industries in India catering to the most essential demand of the people¹. With a contribution of 4% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the textile industry covers a wide range of sectors from man-made fibre to the power loom sector. The industry also has two broad segments, namely the unorganised (handloom, handicrafts and sericulture) and organised sector (spinning, apparel and garments). These segments could also be divided on the basis of methods of economies of scale i.e., small scale through traditional tools and methods, and large scale through the application of modern machinery and techniques, respectively. With the advent of the development due to globalisation (LPG policies) in the 1990s, there has been a paradigm rise in the production level of the industry. This was the cumulative effect of the factors including huge textile production capacity, a large and cheap base of skilled workforce, large domestic markets, very low import content, entrepreneurial skills as well and flexible textile manufacturing systems. Thus, becoming one of the largest textile industries in the world and earning 27% through exports. Overall, the industry also employed 4.5 crore people directly and 6 crore in allied sectors, inclusive of women and the rural population at a high rate (2019).

¹ [Problems and Prospects](#)

With the present change in the pace of the competition, trends, technology and business environment, there is a need to monitor, improve and evaluate (through Key Performance Indicators) the industry goals/objectives in India as it has an impact on varied sectors directly or indirectly. For instance, the agriculture sector is supported by the production of agro-textiles, which helps in improving agricultural practices and enhances crop yields. Analysing the role of textiles along with their significance in bringing foreign exchange and employment opportunities, it could be seen that India basically has certain states in each region which are known for their contribution and development in the Indian textile sector. States like Gujarat, Rajasthan and Punjab (North India) are prominent contributors to the textile industry among which Gujarat is known for its strong textile infrastructure and Rajasthan is known for its traditional textile craftsmanship, particularly in areas like Jaipur and Jodhpur. Along with this, Punjab has a thriving textile industry, especially in the production of woollen textiles whereas states like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh are major players in southern India. Tamil Nadu, particularly the city of Coimbatore, is known as the "Manchester of South India" which has a well-established textile industry. Karnataka (cities like Bengaluru and Mysore) has a strong presence especially in silk and garment manufacturing and Andhra Pradesh, particularly Tirupur, is a significant hub for textile exports, especially in the production of knitwear.

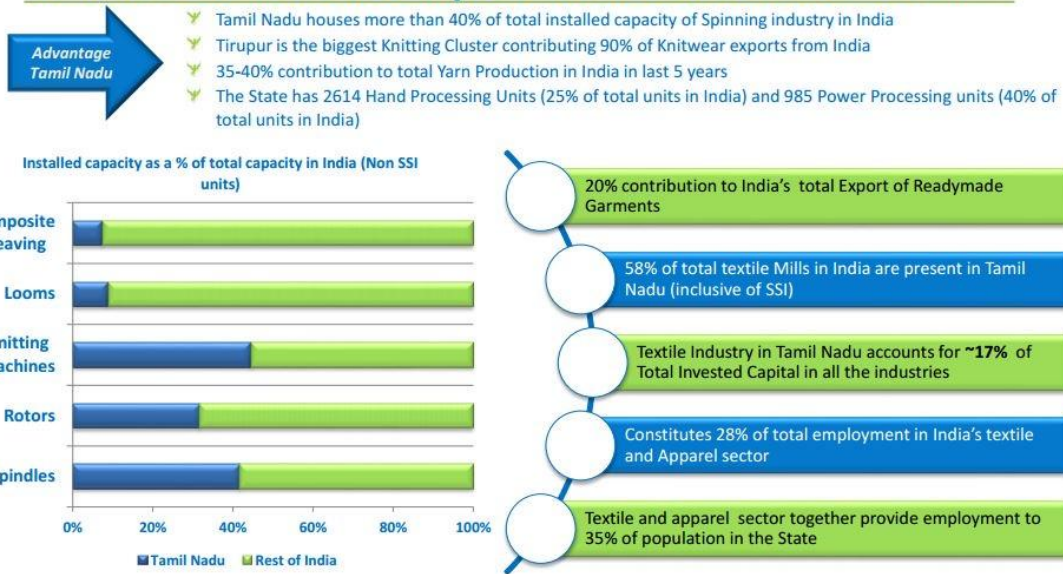
Hence, the paper tries to delve deeper into the issues and general possible recommendations of the Indian textile industry with the help of a case study- an overview of one of the hubs of Indian textiles, Tamil Nadu.

II. Case Study- Overview of Tamil Nadu's Textile Industry

Tamil Nadu is one of the strongest textile players in India, and largely contributes to the economic growth of the Indian textile industry with the presence of its sub-sectors viz., Spinning, Handloom weaving, Power loom weaving, Processing, Knitwear, Apparel and Garments. Their contribution to Tamil Nadu's socio-economic reforms in accordance with the present market dynamics and making the state one of the safest locations for the investors to project their investments with the available resources/requisites like infrastructure, policies maintaining trade terms and protecting the rights & safety of the players (2019, Annual report of Tamil Nadu Textile Industry)². Thus, making the state one of the emerging textile industrial states of India with the presence of adequate manpower, business environment and income (wages) under the varied sub-sectors. (Figure 1.)

² [Tamil Nadu's state Planning Commission](#)

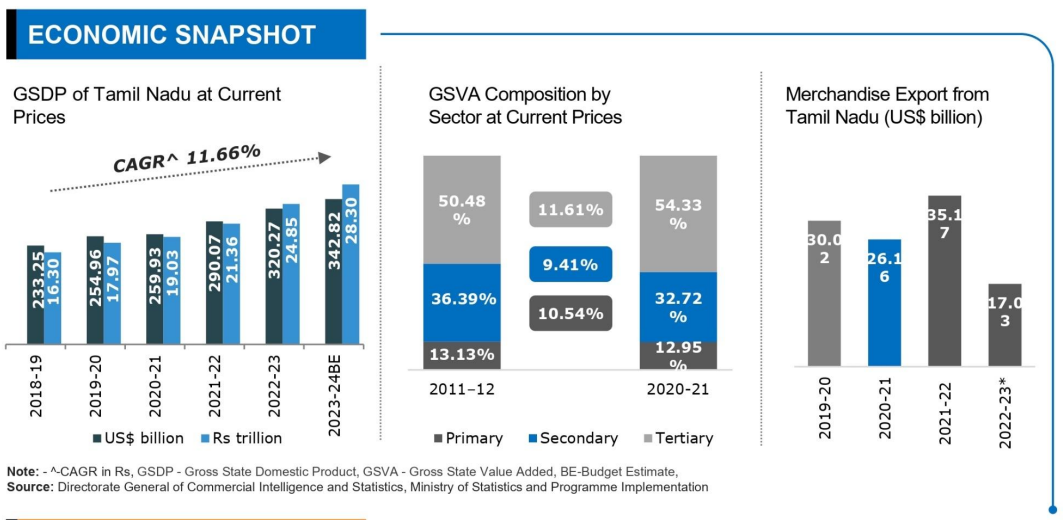
Presence of well developed clusters in Textile sector



Source- [Wikipedia](#)

Figure 1.

Moreover, Tamil Nadu is the major contributor in the area of generating employment, GDP, exchange reserves, exports and total production in the overall Indian textile sector.



Source- India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF)

Figure 2 - Tamil Nadu's Economy Textiles Trends

Amidst technological advancements, evolving consumer and trader preferences, changing market demand and a notable shift towards medical and technical textiles, the industry has seen a revolutionary shift, particularly in the post-COVID-19 era³. This shift has resulted in a decline in

³ [Textile Value Chain](#)

the industry's prosperity, ultimately prompting the state and central government to enact specific measures and initiatives in response.

Textile production has faced stagnation due to the presence of varied challenges such as increased prices, sluggish demand for raw materials (textiles and apparel), and a shortage of labour caused by fewer incentives and dropped rates of migrant labourers. This situation led the state of Tamil Nadu to implement various recommended policies levied by both the Centre and state governments, aiming to improve the conditions. Over time, while the Current Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) in Tamil Nadu has shown an increment, the slow pace of exports/terms of trade as seen in Figure 2, underscores/highlights the pressing need to address industry challenges, focusing on the well-being of mill workers, business owners including women proprietors.

In the COVID era, amid the challenges, the policies⁴ shifted the focus on achieving a sustainable and holistic balance of growth, aiming to sustain the traditional handloom sector (outlined under the Integrated Textile Policy, 2019). Moreover, this laid emphasis on enhancing the productivity of cotton (main and primary fibre) and amplifying the exports through technological advancement, ensuring higher environmental and social standards. Consequently, promoting the opportunities of employment including the sector of technical textiles. However, this dynamic shift in the state of Tamil Nadu has unveiled the condition of the Indian textile sector (as a whole). Thus, unveiling the urgency of addressing the present challenges which need to be taken care of in order to lead and reshape the Indian textile industry which is currently shrinking (F.Y 2023). Some of the set challenges in the textile industry (in general) include the soaring cost of input (at present, states are prompting to focus on stabilising rather than expanding); structural issues such as power and labour, especially the migrant labourers continue to pose challenges. Delays in quality control orders pose significant risks to the textile industry, and policies catering to financial accessibility including provisions for loans and investments from financial institutions are crucial. Furthermore, the adoption of advanced technology is vital (all over India); a lack of incentives and opportunities could also be seen as a hindrance to the involvement of youth in this sector. Resolving these challenges is essential to revitalise and reshape the textile sector.

III. Objective

- A. Identifying the issues faced by the Indian Textile Industry (through a case study of one of the largest textile hubs- Tamil Nadu)
- B. Analysis & recommended resolutions imposed by the government
- C. Recommendations — way forward

⁴ [Press Information Bureau](#)

IV. Methodology

The discrete (meso-level) data used here has been derived from varied secondary authorised sources. Along with this, the paper has used before-and-after policies analysis (pre-covid v/s post-covid) of the textile industry in Tamil Nadu.

Pre-COVID	Post-COVID
The industry was recovering from the demonetization of banknotes (November 2016), imposition of GST (July 2017), enhanced competition from Bangladesh and Vietnam & sluggish economy — led to the shift from the Tirupur cluster and shrinking domestic demand for powerloom cloth.	Medical & Technical textiles demand increased
Weeks without work (complained by the workers and the commuters of the factories in the city)	Weakening demand in the global textile value chain (2023- high inflation rates)
Very Low wages, excessive and sometimes forced overtime, lack of freedom of movement and of association, verbal and sexual abuse against women ⁵	The cotton yarn market faced a slump (falling down) in demand. Cotton prices are higher than the international market and the yarn exports have declined -by 28% -thus, prices of yarn have declined) Purchasing yarn from Punjab (by Tamil Nadu) - mills are suffering -going out of business
Sumangali Scheme – one of the few employment opportunities available for young women in these communities since the 1990s but said to not be in practice in 2018 due to its exploiting nature towards the employed women ⁶ . (one of the worst schemes)	Increase in raw materials cost — inclusive of 50-70% of production cost and electricity cost (production in mills has stopped)
	Heavy Debt of Powerloom workers (mostly) were heavily indebted to their employers— typically working under conditions resembling debt bondage (labour bondage) [even indebted to self-help groups, private micro-finance institutions, moneylenders and shops through consumer loans]
	Under Budget 2021-22

⁵ Fashion Network- [Bonded Labour](#)

⁶ The Hindu- [Sumangali Scheme](#)

Pre-COVID	Post-COVID
	Establishment of a separate department for textiles (because of its huge business size and growth)
	Establishing textile parks and SIPCOT facilities — to attract huge investment Setting up of new CETPs in Erode and Namakkal
	Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Schemes (ECLGS) –to provide credit support to MSMEs (due to economic slowdown & uncertainty)
	Free saree and dhotis scheme (2021-22), distributed free school uniforms in classes 1 to 8th.
	Establishment of a separate department for textiles (because of its huge business size and growth)

Pre-COVID	Post-COVID
	<p>Under Budget 2023</p> <p>10 mini handloom parks with upgradation of the handloom products by using the latest technologies</p> <p>Aims to double the installed power generation capacity in the state and increase the share of green energy</p> <p>Free power supply for power loom increased (750 units to 1000 units)</p> <p>Usage of Skill Development Centres — Factory Skill Schools Programme (provide on-the-job training to youth in factories)</p> <p>A Start-up Mission will be established – to address the difficulties faced by women entrepreneurs in accessing adequate, timely credit and marketing of products.</p> <p>Enhancing the productivity of ELS Cotton by a cluster-based and value chain approach through PPublic Private Partnership (PPP)-- collaboration b/w farmers, state and industry for input supplies, extensive services and market linkages.</p> <p>Increase in import duty of textile machinery (7.5%)-- impacting the new investments (aligned with the scheme- Atma Nirbhar Bharat & Make In India)</p> <p>CITI has retailed/held the import duty of 5% for the manufacturers till they establish themselves or meet the domestic demand.</p> <p>RoDTEP - Export Promotion Scheme⁷</p>

⁷ FibretoFashion- [Budget 2023-24 priorities](#)

V. Literature Review

India which has been seen as one of the largest emerging economies in the world, constitutes to see the role of the textile industry as one of the essential/pivotal in providing employment and growth in the economy. With the advent of the upgradation in society in terms of economic (market conditions, trends & technology), social (awareness) and political aspects (government policies), the role of textile industries as one of the largest sectors for employment generation as well as the contributor in GDP of India.

The paper by [Heena Dalal \(2019\)](#) has briefly analysed the macroeconomic data of the textile industries along with their contributions, in order to highlight the issues faced by the mill workers and industrialists. Moreover, the paper discusses the challenges and provides some recommendations to overcome the scenario and contribute to one of the largest government policies named 'Make In India'.

[Ms Kate and Dr Mukherjee \(2022\)](#) and [Karan Khurana \(2022\)](#) have extended their notions on the impact of Covid-19 (pandemic) on the Indian textile industry, consequently providing an overview of the generated plunge and set of challenges during the time period along with the post-pandemic period whereas the [Mishra T, Chatterjee S, Thakkar JJ.](#) has provided the dynamics of the market conditions during and after the pandemic, targeting the textile and apparel industry, majorly the handloom industries MSMEs (being the dominant holder).

Tamil Nadu which is the second largest producer of textiles in India after Gujarat has seen tremendous changes, especially during the discourse of the pandemic which could still have been impacting the socio-economic conditions of the state. Therefore the article by [Prof. Geert Nave \(2021\)](#) shared the experiences of interviewed mill workers during his field visit at one of the largest garment hubs in India, at Tirupur region of Tamil Nadu. he depicted the nature of the damage caused to the workers' life (the poorest ones) caused duly by the market (both domestic and international) as well as the state leading to distress, sort of shocks, uncertainties.

The paper by [Marimuthu, K.N and Dr. Jessica \(2014\)](#) talks about factors like management, and competitors as the risk, impacting the investment/finance in the textile companies. Furthermore, provided suggestions on boosting efficiency by adopting the measures like upgradation of new technology, changes in the textile policy by the local government and laying more emphasis on quality products with efficient cost.

[Dr Vetrivel \(2019\)](#) has prompted the growth of Tamil Nadu's economy, evidently highlighting the role of incentives like acceleration of investments (both central and state) in accelerating employment growth and performance. Thus, leading to the development of the textile industries from 2008-2016 in Karur district.

The paper by [Marimuthu KN \(2022\)](#) laid emphasis on the importance of financial performance (turnover, liquidity & solvency) of the mills/companies (selected companies like VTML, ACML-Ambika Cotton Mills Ltd.) on the investment.

Hence, after a thorough assessment of these papers, it becomes evident that the focus has been primarily on understanding the factors contributing to past growth and the challenges encountered before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. This has resulted in the implementation of various government initiatives that played a pivotal role in improving the conditions within the textile industry in India, including the state of Tamil Nadu. However, these papers have fallen short in addressing the current set of challenges and proposing effective policies to reignite the stagnant growth in the Indian textile mills, especially in the post-pandemic era.

VI. Challenges

With the commencement of the Fourth Industrial Revolution in the 2000s, it is evident that the pace of industrial growth in India has been increasing rapidly. India as an emerging economy, focuses on achieving the current goal of 'Technology and Sustainability' w.r.t the dynamics present in the market conditions and labour world. With the rapid changes and the gaps present in the industrial sectors including the textile industry, there is a zone of improvement which could be seen as a focal point in order to promote inclusive growth and development along with the remedies for the post-pandemic era to increase the standards of the textile and apparel industry. This study tries to highlight the existing challenges in the Indian textile industry in the post-pandemic era-

- A. Shortage of labour– With an increase in the rate of exploitation (like lower wages, excessive and forced overtime); bondage of labourers (lack of freedom of movement and association); lack of rules and regulations (especially for the safety of the migrant workers); less formation of Internal committees (ICs) in the workplaces in order to look for the cases of harassment and sexual abuse for women) and lack of policies regulations (focusing on the backward community women) seen in the case of 'Sumangali Scheme' (targeting the young women and their families to receive the lump-sum payment for their dowries), unemployment rate has seen a rapid acceleration. Instantly, a Case Study of the Tirupur region of Tamil Nadu has highlighted the situation of the mill workers, mostly migrant labourers (from West Bengal, Bihar & Odisha) since the arrival of the pandemic till now.

- B. The rising cost of raw materials/inputs – The demand for the global textile value chain has been declining during the post-pandemic period (even in 2023) leading to a hike in the prices of the textile fabrics and cotton (Tamil Nadu has the strongest presence and is seen as the second largest contributor in the textile industry of India) like raw materials by 50-70% along with the cost of electricity or powerhouses. This resulted in the bankruptcy of these ‘sick mills’, which are mostly smaller units i.e., discontinuation of production mills or using strategies like discount provisions on the bulk purchase of the products (to empty the stock collection) in the state. For instance, it has been reported that Tamil Nadu has been purchasing yarn from Punjab (Reasons- insolvency, debts)
- C. Shift from Cotton to other cash crops (lack of R&D, technology upgradation) - This shift stems from the low profitability, the lack of Research and Development initiatives and the lag in technological advancements within the cotton sector. The textile industry’s reliance on outdated machinery and equipment has hindered its ability to remain competitive. Consequently, India faces higher production costs compared to nations like China, which have embraced modern technology to enhance productivity⁸. Therefore, it establishes an edge over the dependence on cost-effective labour as observed in developing countries like India. Furthermore, it is visible that the sector mainly consists of migrant labourers hailing from rural areas, often facing the digital divide. Hence, the need for know-how is essential in order to lead growth.
- D. Load shedding of the power- Load shedding is a measure of temporary reduction of electrical power supply, implemented by the power authorities in order to manage the supply of electricity or power in drastic conditions. Hence, causing disruptions in the textile industry and other sectors. This measure was even seen during the pandemic in 2019 by the state mills of Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, respectively. There are varied reasons why Indian states face this problem. Some of them include power supply shortages due to insufficient power generation capacity; and grid instability due to equipment failure or imbalances b/w power generation and consumption.
- E. Inability to generate Economies of scale- Economies of scale is basically a cost advantage achieved by the producers by increasing the size of their operations. Here, as the production of one additional unit of output increases, the average cost per unit of output tends to decrease. In order to lead this, the textile industry of India needs to have a comparative advantage of upgraded technology as well as large units of firms. Currently, MSMEs lead the growth of the textile industry in India which limits the ability of industry to achieve economies of scale.
- F. Inability to meet the International standard quality- Despite the notable endeavours made by the states like Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Gujarat in order to align with the global quality standards, still India lags behind the provision of meeting the international quality norms. This could be mainly due to factors such as the present outdated technology and machinery; supply

⁸ [Recent Trends and Developments](#)

chain challenges like logistics, and transportation; and the presence of an unskilled and untrained labour force; adhering to meet the standards of small-scale mills.

- G. Foreign Competition - Despite the implementation of the scheme 'MAKE IN INDIA', India continues to face an excess amount of foreign competition which can be attributed to several factors, including the presence of outdated technology usage, lack of quality standards, evolving market dynamics influenced by high-end fashion brands like Zara, and the comparative logistical and infrastructural edge held by other nations. India has the advantage of a cheap labour force, while certain states excel in terms of efficient infrastructure. However, these individual advantages have not transformed the overall situation of the textile industry, indicating the need for a more holistic and transformative approach to enhance competitiveness on the global stage.
- H. High Dependency on labour-intensive techniques/methods- With the advent of technological upgradation, and after the introduction of the central scheme 'Technological Upgradation Scheme', the industry still lagged behind in this phase. It has been widely visible that the labourers/weavers in the industry (mainly handloom) are inclusively filled with the participation of senior citizens as compared to the youth generation. This led to the problem of innovation and adoption of new technology in the field (due to the aspects of the digital divide and lack of awareness). Consequently, no improvements in the quality of the production of the textiles and fabrics.
- I. Underutilisation of existing opportunities within the geographical boundaries - India, with its vast and diverse landscape, possesses abundant resources, such as the availability of a substantial, cost-effective labour force in regions like North India (for instance, Bihar). However, a significant portion of this labour pool remains unskilled, due to which the workers could not be a part of 'Value Addition' characterised by the adoption of innovative designs, quality enhancement and eco-friendly practices. Consequently, the available opportunities in these states remain underutilised, reflecting the need for more efficient resource allocation and skill development.
- J. Uncompetitive policies implementation- Tamil Nadu mills or workers have been suffering due to the implementation of incompetent policies or lack of focus on the targets inclusively like the rise in the loan rates (increasing debt-trap), high import duties, decelerating growth of MSMEs and their insolvencies (pushing the investments), technology (AI framework policy) upgradation awareness. Along with this, the state also lacks social schemes for the Disabled-labour and female (except handloom) communities, overwork pressure & shifts, safe spaces for migrant workers, and institutions to attract the youth in the sector. Even various reports have highlighted the indebtedness of the powerloom workers (mostly) leading to the conditions of debt bondage (towards SHGs, private micro-finance institutions, moneylenders and shops), especially in the post-pandemic era. Along with this, though the scheme of Sumangali is officially inactive, it's still used by many western state textile mills/employers (owned by private individuals) through providing incentives of giving more wages, and PF settlement (some fake promises). Hence leads

to overwhelming pressure and cases of an unsecured workplace environment for young girls, resulting in a lack of job creation for women.

- K. Vacuum in the success of the implemented schemes (due to change in government/political parties dynamics)- It is a situation where the existing policies are disrupted, modified or replaced abruptly, due to shifts in political power. The reasons for the changes could be changes in political ideology, lack of consensus and administrative changes.

For instance, the notable example of a policy vacuum in the Indian textile industry occurred in the early 2000s with the discontinuation of the Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS). The scheme was introduced by the government in 1999 to encourage textile manufacturers to modernise their machinery and technology. Under the scheme, the textile units could access subsidies and financial incentives in order to upgrade their equipment and remain in the market competition. However, later in 2006, the government changed and they decided to terminate the TUFS. This decision led to a policy vacuum as the sudden discontinuation led to uncertainty in the industry and units which had the plans to modernise their machinery were left in a lurch. Later on, a new scheme was introduced in 2015, namely the Amended Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (ATUFS) to replace TUFS. Though the objectives were similar, the gap in policy continuity had an impact on the textile industry.

Though both the central and state governments have initiated a lot of policies/schemes, keeping in mind the challenges in the textile industry. So, in order to understand/analyse the aspects (growth/failure) of the industry after COVID-19, it is essential to overview the imposed/introduced policies in the state.

VII. Outlook of Policies Implemented and Its Impact (Growth/Failure)

The table below provides a brief overview of some of the Central and State-led policies and schemes–

Policies	Reason for Implementation	Impact
SKILL INDIA CAMPAIGN (SAMARTH) Scheme for Capacity Building in Textile Sector (2017) (Centrally-schemed)	Address the skilled manpower requirement (to increase the supply of skilled labour) across the textile industry Promote skill upgradation in traditional sectors like handlooms, jute, etc	Tamil Nadu has the <u>highest number of centres</u> (training centres- 504) 2 lakh beneficiaries have been trained, out of which 1.7 lakh candidates have been provided placement.

Policies	Reason for Implementation	Impact
<p>MAKE IN INDIA CAMPAIGN (ATUFS) Amended Technology Up-gradation Fund Scheme (2016)</p>	<p>Facilitate investment (also in the manufacturing of machinery), employment opportunities, productivity, and quality and promote exports.</p>	<p>Challenges- Do not cover spinning and weaving (value chain). Tamil Nadu has been the third-highest beneficiary after Gujarat and Maharashtra.</p> <p>The state has witnessed a greater percentage of 87% of beneficiaries from the MSME sector.</p>
<p>National Technical Textile Mission (2020-21)</p>	<p>To develop the usage of Technical Textiles in various flagship missions and programmes of India (including the strategic sectors)</p>	
<p>PLI (Production Linked Incentive) Scheme (2021)</p>	<p>Promote production of Man-Made Fibre Apparel, Fabrics and technical textile products</p> <p>To attract global investments and generate employment</p>	
<p>Integrated Textile Parks Scheme</p>	<p>Support for the creation of world-class infrastructure facilities to set up textile mills</p>	
<p><u>Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUF)</u> (since 1980s)</p>	<p>Provided capital for the modernization of the Indian textile industry at an international interest rate.</p>	<p>Shutting down of mills in 2017 (around 682)</p>

Policies	Reason for Implementation	Impact
(IPDS) Integrated Processing Development Scheme	To meet the environmental standards and support the new/upgradation of (CETP) Common Effluent Treatment Plants	Nearly 24 lakh persons
PowerTex India (2017)	Loom Upgradation, infrastructure creation and access to concessional credit	
Scheme to production boost in Knitting and Knitwear (2019)	Provide employment in Tirupur	
Project 'Vision Text'	Development of the first-ever indigenous fashion forecasting process with AI tools, keeping in mind the macro-micro style & colour trends in accordance with the country's regional accents	
100% FDI Allowance without government approval	To attract foreign investors	
Deferment of hiking price of GST on textiles and raw materials (2022)	Benefit to the SMEs and MSMEs who operate in the employment-intensive sector	

Policies	Reason for Implementation	Impact
Nation's first AI policy (2020) — Tamil Nadu	Provide a framework to bring transparency & audit, accountability & legal issues, digital divide and data deficit, fairness and equity and the alignment of the valuation with democratic values.	
Signed an MOU (₹20,000 crore) to propel Tamil Nadu as an IoT and AI	Strengthening the infrastructure for the Internet of Things and AI hub	
Partnered with Coursera (by Tamil Nadu Skill Development Council)	Made 4,000 courses in AI, IoT, and Data Science available to 50,000 unemployed youths	
Introduction of New Department of Textile (2021)	Promote the growth of the handloom and power loom sectors	Challenges- Low wages, low value of products, limited varieties, lack of youth interest (involvement)
Schemes on Handloom and Powerloom actor (focus of the budget 2023)	Providing free and subsidised electricity, supply of school uniforms to children, distribution of sarees and dhotis scheme	Not Known
<u>Bill</u> on the Working Time of Factory Workers (2023) (State-led scheme)		Not Known

Policies	Reason for Implementation	Impact
New Entrepreneur Cum Enterprise Development Scheme (for 21-35 years of age)	<p>Prepare the new entrepreneurs to take up the various business opportunities in MSMEs.</p> <p>Partnered with various financial institutions – provide funds to train youth in entrepreneurship</p>	Provide subsidies
Unemployed Youth Employment Generation Programme (UYEGP) (for 18 to 35 years of age)	Provide employment opportunities for unemployed youth from socially and economically backward regions of the state	Provide subsidies to cover the project costs by providing loans for around 90%
Pacts with TANSIDCO and TAICO Bank	To boost the industrial infrastructure	TANSIDCO executes the Industrial Infrastructure Scheme whereas TAICO bank provides loan and credit facilities to different MSMEs to lead a smooth and uninterrupted business conduct
Capital Subsidy	A subsidy of 25% on the total value of the plant and machinery	Subsidies up to ₹150 lakhs to Scheduled Categories-women. Differently abled, SC/STs and transgender communities.
(PMEGP) Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme	To reduce the unemployment problems	The state has provided loans to MSMEs to set up their businesses

Policies	Reason for Implementation	Impact
Single Window Portal	Help MSMEs to set up their business in a faster way through an online portal	<p>Max limit for financial aid- 10 lakhs (service); 25 lakhs (manufacturing)</p> <p>Easy approvals, clearances and No objection Certificates (NoCs) from the departments of the government</p>
(SIDCO) Small Industries Development Corporation Initiative	Implementation of Infrastructural development and help in supplying raw materials as well as extending support for market activities	<p>118 industrial estates have developed to power MSME growth.</p> <p>For instance, Chennai, Krishnagiri, etc</p>
Textile Modernization Fund Scheme (TMFS) (7th plan)	Introduction of a soft loan scheme	Facilitated the process of modernising the textile industry significantly in order to carve a competitive edge through quality output and high-value addition, especially during globalisation.
SAATHI (Sustainable and Accelerated Adoption of Efficient Textile Technologies to Help Small Industries) -	Revising the Power Loom sector of India.	

Policies	Reason for Implementation	Impact
<p>Technology Upgradation Scheme</p> <p>Initiative of connecting village women to Charkha (spinning wheel) for 5 years</p> <p>Hastkala Sahyog Shivirs</p>	<p>To connect five crore (50 million) village women to Charkha(spinning wheel) in the next five years in order to provide them employment and promote khadi</p> <p>The textile ministry organised it in 421, handloom and handicrafts clusters across the country</p>	<p>Inaugurated 60 khadi outlets which were renovated and relaunched during the completion of KVIC's 60th anniversary.</p> <p>Benefit to over 1,20,00,00 weavers and artisans.</p>

Schemes to support Textile Industry

VIII. Findings/Analysis

Even after assessing the implications, there are certainly some strengths which certainly require certain recommendations to improve the situation of the Indian textile industry. Therefore, this paper tries to bring forward the strengths of the industry along with the policies which could possibly bring out the maximum output.

Strengths –

- A. Role of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) — MSMEs are the backbone of the economy as they help in boosting economic growth by providing employment. The textile industry is one of the most widespread and labour-intensive sectors in India and it includes a vast number of MSMEs. These MSMEs are present in various states of India including Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh where each of them specialises in different aspects of the industry, such as garments, textiles, technical textiles and handloom products. For instance, Tamil Nadu basically includes mills under MSMEs which produce over 8000 varieties of products including electrics, paper, readymade, chemicals and more.
- B. Role of MNCs – Multi-national corporations play a huge role in providing an attractive investment destination for FDI, driven by the presence of a skilled workforce in various Indian

- states; their favourable geographical positioning, and the abundance of resource opportunities. For instance, the transformative influence of MNCs in the development of Tirupur, Tamil Nadu.
- C. Cheap labour force- The textile industry has been significantly relying on a cost-effective labour force. It is estimated that around 35% to 45% of the total labour force is employed in the manufacturing sector. This indicated that textiles are one of the largest employment generators in the country which provides employment to a diverse range of workers, including skilled artisans, weavers, garment workers and others involved in various processes within the textile supply chain.
 - D. Abundant availability of raw materials- The presence of abundant raw materials not only results in reduced material expenses but also leads to less wastage and lower labour costs as compared to other nations. A recent study revealed that India's labour costs are the lowest (2.024 Euro) in the world, a sixth of even China's (13.88 Euro). For instance, Gujarat, Maharashtra- a hub for cotton textiles; West Bengal and Assam - silk production.
 - E. Manufacturing flexibility-India has the ability to produce not only large orders but also smaller and complex orders. In contrast, the textile industry in other countries like China is more industrialised, and their production lines are often tailored to accommodate simpler, easily replicable designs. The flexibility offered by India's textile industry can be a significant advantage for the fashion industry, which typically demands small lots of complex designs. Furthermore, India also offers flexibility in its ability to handle different materials such as cotton, wool, silk and jute, with equal skill.

IX. Recommendations

- A. Inclusive Adaptive Innovation- The textile industry, with its current emphasis on technical textiles, is recommended to shift its focus on addressing the challenges related to decreased consumption growth and elevated costs of production. To tackle/mitigate these issues effectively, it is essential to make substantial investments in Research and Development and embrace innovative approaches.

Reason- India's per capita consumption of technical textiles is significantly lower (1.7 kg) compared to the average of 10-12 kg in other developing countries. This is mainly due to the prevalence of low-value and low-technology textile products, such as soft luggage, jute sacks and tote bags. Consequently, India heavily relies on imported raw materials for essential products like sanitary products, seat belt webbing and airbags. To overcome these challenges and minimise production costs, focusing on Research and Development (R&D) and innovation is imperative. It is drawn from the need to enhance the consumption of textiles (technical) in India to meet global standards and reduce dependence on imports. Therefore, it is recommended that the government should allocate approximately 20% of the textile ministry budget (Vertical share of transfer) to promote the growth of technical know-how. This can be achieved through the following-

1. Establish specialised universities offering courses like Textile Engineering, Fashion Marketing and Management, Textile Technology and Textile Design. These universities could offer financial aid to attract rural youth to enrol in these programmes. Further, the universities' courses should equip the students with the necessary skills and foster an understanding of the industry's significance and the need to adopt new technology. Hence, promoting entrepreneurial skills to encourage employment generation and establish textile units leading to global standards. As a result, this will not only improve the industry's overall performance but also make a substantial impact on the government's long-term revenue, strengthening its position in GDP and bolstering foreign exchange earnings through exports.

Example- The success of this approach is evident in states like Tamil Nadu, which includes over 18% of India's technical universities and specialised institutions. These institutions (Institute of Textile Technology, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International School of Textiles & Management) offer various textile engineering courses, contributing to the abundant and skilled workforce in the state and setting a benchmark for the industry's growth.

2. Introduce a scheme mandating on-the-job training for staff in existing firms, especially SMEs. To ensure maximum yield from this scheme, the government could provide incentives for a portion of the training through monetary rewards (e.g., ₹1000 per day, higher than the average wage) or essential goods (from surplus government stocks like PDS). Moreover, these trainings could be done in collaboration with textile training centres from across India and all around the world. Even the initiative could engage with guest trainers to teach the workforce new skill sets, enabling them to handle updated machinery and equipment efficiently.

This comprehensive scheme could be seen as a catalyst for the growth of the textile industry, addressing the fundamental need/requisite for a skilled and adaptable workforce while nurturing entrepreneurial capabilities. It could efficiently utilise resources within India, fostering industry growth.

Looking for soft targets

Lazy workers aren't holding back economy; the blame lies with policies that encourage small firms with no ecosystem of innovation

What will it take for India to become an economic powerhouse? Sure, India is the fastest-growing economy in the world. Even a business-as-usual scenario, where growth continues to be in the ballpark of 6.5%, will lead to a significant increase in India's GDP in the next couple of decades. However, things can be significantly different if India manages to situate itself in a double-digit growth trajectory for even a decade. How can this be achieved?

One of India's most successful entrepreneurs, Infosys founder NR Narayana Murthy has suggested that employees working longer hours will generate significant tailwinds for the Indian economy. An analysis of India's official labour statistics by this newspaper suggests that this might not be the case. Most Indian workers do not enjoy the luxury of an eight-hour workday and weekends in any case. Younger workers, especially the educated ones, are willing to take jobs with hardship to escape high unemployment rates. Sure, a small group of privileged young workers might prefer leisure to hard work, but they cannot be taken to be representative of the Indian economy as a whole. Taking this analysis further shows that the problem might be at the end of firms rather than workers. More than three-fourths of India's non-agricultural workforce works in firms which have less than 20 workers. These are very unlikely to be enclaves of innovation or value creation. When read together, the numbers suggest that most of the Indian economy is caught in a low-level equilibrium trap where poorly paid workers are doing drudgery in the name of work in small firms.

What India really needs is a dynamic micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) sector which allows it to leverage its comparative advantage in cheap labour and become a leader in manufacture and export of labour-intensive commodities. What India needs are innovation hotspots that can redefine industries, much like the public and private sector have done in fintech. And what India needs are large companies that can compete globally. Solving this challenge requires work on ease of doing business and offering the correct policy incentives — both areas that the government has been focusing on. We need more of those — and less sermonising about the need, like Boxer in *Animal Farm*, to work harder.

- B. Using Geographical Advantages- India's diverse landscape offers unique geographical advantages to each state, providing them access to a wealth of resources. So, it is recommended that the government should leverage the full potential of each state's geographical edge to foster a more efficient and cost-effective textile industry.

Reason- It has been visible that the resources present in the states often remain under-utilised due to the challenges in infrastructure and skill development. Take the case of West India where states like Gujarat and Maharashtra are significantly major contributors to cotton textile production due to their favourable environment. However, to fully unlock the state's potential to foster cost-efficient growth, it is recommended that the government should follow the recommendations provided-

1. State-Specific Schemes- Here, the government should introduce tailored schemes which could help in harnessing each state's comparative advantages. For example, consider Gujarat and Maharashtra, which face challenges like water scarcity and quality pressures in technical textiles. In this context, Goa, though not conventionally associated with textile industries, can play a pivotal role in specific textile processes like value addition. Goa can offer better Research & Development (R&D) and Skill Development facilities, probably making it an essential geographical resource that benefits the neighbouring states' industries.
 - a) Research and Development (R&D) Centres – Goa's state government should establish specialised R&D Centres with a focus on technical textiles. These centres can work on developing innovative textiles by conducting tests and enhancing product quality. Later on, the R&D centres and research institutions in Maharashtra and Gujarat can collaborate which is crucial for creating a robust network of knowledge. For instance, these centres can

experiment with textiles tailored to market dynamics and standards, especially given Goa's expertise in tourism and beachwear products that utilise technical textiles.

- b) Skill Development Programmes– The government should initiate skill training programmes backed by the government. These programmes aim to generate a skilled workforce capable of operating effectively with sustainability goals in mind.
- c) Collaborative projects - The R&D centres in Goa can collaborate with research institutions to develop advanced textiles with applications aligned with market demands and environmental sustainability.

Similarly, such schemes could also be taken into consideration for other states under their geographical abilities. Moreover, the textile industries in the leveraged states will also flourish, aided by any of the specific schemes/initiatives implemented by the government (like subsidies for R&D and tax benefits) that provide infrastructural development. This collaborative approach allows the states to fully utilise their comparative geographical advantages.

- 2. Centre-specific Scheme- The government should create or extend schemes similar to the Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) whose goal was to offer financial support to textile industries, including technical, to upgrade their machinery and infrastructure. For Instance, states with different strengths could collaborate by analysing their respective advantages and disadvantages. They should also assess the costs involved when reaching out to other states for collaboration based on their comparative advantages. This approach benefits not only the industry but also aligns with the government's goals for economic growth and sustainability. For example, the TUF Scheme could serve as a model, shifting the emphasis towards improving infrastructure development and enhancing skills for states with textile units. By fully utilising each state's resources, India can attain greater growth and competitiveness in the textile industry.

- C. Easing of Complex Procedures/System for Credits or SMEs fundings– It is recommended that the government should contribute more to the schemes to make a steady process mode which could help in providing credits or disbursements to the textile mills.

Reason- The report highlights one of the issues with the Technological Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS), mainly involving the complicated procedural system for fund disbursement. This complexity, including the involvement of paperwork with multiple banks to get verification, filling the accessible forms to get the disbursement fund, delays in the procedure (especially in the public banks), etc, has led to challenging execution processes. Hence, leading to the need to simplify the process and improve the industry funding or financial condition of the industries. One example of a successful government initiative in India is the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY), which provides collateral-free loans to micro and small enterprises, including those in the textile industry. So, here the government could take the following actions-

1. Streamline Loan Application Processes- The government could introduce more online platforms or mobile apps for loan applications and approvals. This would reduce the paperwork, making it more simpler and accessible for textile owners or people to get initial credit facilities or the disbursement of the funds allocated. An example is the "PSB Loans in 59 Minutes" platform, offering quick approval for loans up to INR 5 crores, benefiting numerous small businesses.
2. Financial Literacy Programs- The government could conduct financial literacy and awareness programs to educate each state SME about available funding options, interest rates, and the importance of maintaining a good credit history. This could be done in collaboration with the private and public banks present in the states. By improving financial literacy, SMEs can make informed decisions about loans and financing.
3. One-Stop Information Portals: The government could create dedicated online portals or helplines, specific to each state where SMEs (state) can access information about available credit schemes, government subsidies, and financing opportunities. The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in India already has such an informative portal.

By extending and refining such schemes like PMMY and implementing the measures mentioned above, the government can significantly ease funding procedures and support the growth of SMEs in the textile sector.

- D. Promoting Inter and Intra-state Textile Events for Industry Advancement– It is recommended that the government should increase the frequency and scale of textile events, both within states and on an international scale which could facilitate knowledge exchange among the textile mills and industries.

Reason- To enhance/promote the growth and competitiveness of the Indian textile industry, it is essential to foster a culture of innovation, knowledge sharing and skill development. An example of such an event is the 'Tricot Circle' in Amritsar, which is a notable gathering in the textile industry focusing on advanced machine technology and innovations. Such events typically involve discussions, demonstrations and exhibitions related to the specific aspects of the industry (in this case, the advanced machine technology). The Amritsar event serves as an example of industrial gatherings that promote innovation and success.

In light of this, it is recommended that the state industries should organise similar events like the 'Tricot Circle' which would enable the participants to learn from experts, including those from different states and international specialists. This exchange of knowledge would cover production efficiency, reduced production and transportation costs, technological skill sets and innovative approaches to textile production. This, in turn, would help the textile industry to stay updated with international/global trends. Moreover, to ensure success and broader participation in such

events, the government could provide financial incentives to industrialists, encouraging them not only to attend but also actively engage in such gatherings. The involvement of a large number of industrialists can attract other global stakeholders to participate, potentially leading to joining ventures or innovations.

Taking the example of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Reliance Industries Limited, presided by Mukesh Ambani and attended by both the national and international industry players, it becomes evident that the inclusion of prominent industrialists like Ambani, Tata and Birla in these events can significantly enhance their success. It can foster extensive networking opportunities, leading to collaborations, shared insights, and advancements in the textile industry. Ultimately, benefiting both the sector and the nation's economy as a whole.

- E. Investing in AI Software and E-platforms (R&D) for Industry Advancement– It is recommended that the government should promote AI-related projects in the textile industry by offering grants to textile companies. This would cover the costs of developing and implementing AI solutions in textile manufacturing, enhancing industry efficiency and global competitiveness.

Reason- Investing in AI software, such as Fashinza's QaPP (supply chain software), can significantly benefit the textile industry. This software streamlines supply chain processes, reduces reworks and paperwork, and provides real-time data for analysis, production performance, inventory management, and cost control, especially beneficial for SMEs. The data accessibility and outreach become more efficient, sustainable, and automated on a global scale, making factories smarter and fostering transparency between fashion brands and manufacturers. Therefore, the government can offer grants, similar to those provided by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, covering R&D expenses for technology companies. This initiative aligns with global trends in creating smart, efficient, and sustainable manufacturing processes.

Moreover, the government could introduce Innovation Grants, encouraging the textile industry to adopt AI technologies for improved product quality, cost reduction, and enhanced processes. For instance, Incentives, such as those offered by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) in India, make technology adoption more accessible and efficient for the textile sector, fostering innovation and sustainability. Therefore, the government-backed initiatives supporting AI adoption in the textile industry through grants and incentives would pave the way for cost-effective, innovative, and sustainable textile production.

- F. Promoting Joint Ventures and Business Corporations – It is recommended that the government should encourage Joint ventures in the textile industry by providing incentives for investments, simplifying regulatory procedures, and fostering trade and investment forums with other countries (e.g., Kenya).

Reason- The India International Machinery Exhibitions Society (ITME) serves as a noteworthy example of promoting the textile machinery and technology sector, attracting investments, and supporting the growth of the textile industry. Kenya's Mission in ITME society (2023), highlights the country's focus on leading textile industry development through promoting joint ventures and business cooperation, particularly with nations like India.

India which has a comparative advantage (stated in strengths) could play an essential role in attracting more FDIs to MSMEs (Investments) in both countries. For example, joint ventures between Indian companies specialising in textile design and fashion and Kenyan design houses can result in a fusion of traditional Kenyan textiles with Indian aesthetic designs. This collaboration not only provides Indian companies with a diverse range of unique design elements but also enhances cultural exchange between the two nations.

Furthermore, India's well-established textile industry with strong technical expertise can collaborate with Kenyan institutions for mutual skill development programmes. This exchange of technical knowledge contributes to enhancing the capabilities of the local textile industry in both countries, creating a skilled labour pool. To facilitate these joint ventures, governments can provide incentives for investments (FDI) through simplified regulatory procedures and promote textile industry-related trade and investment forums. Therefore, to simplify the procedural steps for joint ventures and attract FDI, the government could implement the following measures-

1. Online application Process- Investors can submit an application online for permits, licences and approvals. This would allow quicker document submission and verification.
2. Single-Window Clearance- It will serve as a central point where investors can submit all the necessary documents and applications in one place.
3. Fast-Track Approvals- Implement a fast-track approval process for certain projects or investments to accelerate the overall process.
4. Pre-Application Consultation- The government could allot a window of consultation for the new investors or interested investors to seek guidance and clarification regarding the requirements as well as the application before applying.

Hence, the simplified procedural steps for joint ventures and FDI in the textile industry through online processes, single-window clearance, fast-track approvals, and pre-application consultations would attract more investments, strengthen international partnerships, and contribute to the growth of the textile industry in both India and partner countries.

- G. Initiatives to Empower Women– It is recommended that the government should focus on the initiatives to empower women, particularly in states facing socio-economic challenges and traditional gender roles. This includes establishing institutions and centres for elderly care;

introducing reservations for women in textile courses; implementing digital literacy and skill development programs, and fostering partnerships with NGOs.

Reason- While the government has initiated schemes like 'Mudra Yojna' (providing collateral-free loans to women entrepreneurs to start or expand their businesses) and Discoms' Abha Shakti program to empower women entrepreneurs (with livelihood skills through digital tech and knowledge of power discoms consumer-centric operation like metre reading, billing, and collection (MBC) activities), the impact is more prominent in industrial states like Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. States like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand lag due to socio-economic conditions and traditional gender roles, as highlighted by economist Indira Rajaraman, who emphasised the need for elderly care institutions. Hence, to address this, the government should-

1. Elderly Care Training- The government could establish institutions and courses aimed at training geriatric psychologists and counsellors. These professionals can provide care to the elderly, allowing women to participate more actively in the labour force. Further, helps alleviate the burden of caregiving that often falls on women. For instance, the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) could train geriatric psychologists and counsellors to provide caretakers to the elderly. (Indira Rajaraman)
2. Elderly Care Centers- Create dedicated elderly care centres that offer a safe and supportive environment for the elderly population. These centres can provide essential services, including healthcare, social interaction, and recreational activities, allowing women to balance their caregiving responsibilities with economic participation.
3. Reservation in Textile Courses- Introduce reservations for women in textile courses, reserving a percentage of seats (e.g., 20-30%) exclusively for female students. This initiative can help women acquire the necessary skills to enter the textile industry, fostering a more inclusive and diverse workforce. Along with this, it could lead to a rise in the level of women entrepreneurs.
4. Digital Literacy and Skill Development- Implement digital literacy and skill development programs tailored to the needs of women in (traditional) states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand. These programs should focus on equipping women with digital skills and knowledge, including basic digital literacy, online entrepreneurship, and digital marketing.
5. Partnerships with NGOs- Collaborate with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based groups to implement these initiatives effectively and reach women in need.

Hence, these initiatives should be region-specific, culturally sensitive, and made according to the unique challenges faced by women in different areas of the country. So, the government can make significant changes in empowering women, bridging the digital divide, and creating more inclusive opportunities for women in sectors like the textile industry.



MY VIEW | THE LAST WORD

Women in India's labour market: Address ageing for better results

The burden of unpaid care work underlying our low female labour force participation will increase as the population ages



INDIRA RAJARAMAN
is an economist

The Nobel economics prize to Claudia Goldin filled me with elation, and not just because she studied economics at Cornell University, where she was inspired by the legendary Alfred Kahn.

Her 2010 year series on women's labour force participation rates (LFP) in the US innovatively used a variety of data sources, since official labour market statistics for a long time were collected only on men. She found that the LFP graph was U-shaped, showing high initial levels in pre-industrial agriculture settings, a downward slide with the spread of industrialization, followed by a rise as the sector mix moved towards services.

She found that gender wage disparities persisted within occupation categories, not because of different skill or education, but starting with the birth of a woman's first child. She also gave a name to "greedy jobs," where promotion was contingent on people being ready to work very long hours, and travel increasingly often has gone down post- Covid, in exchange for an amount of commutation. Crazy corporate pay in turn has spurred climate- or other non-employment practices.

Claudia Goldin's work is restricted to the country she lives in, and hence the Indian women are up against even when they have earned the same skill and education, as in the US. But the U-shaped curve has been added against cross-country data sufficiently for it to have become a universal template against which to compare the historical movement of participation rates over time in any particular country.

We have estimates of the female LFP in India from the National Sample Survey (NSS), of 23% for 2004-05, falling to 26% for 2009-10. The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), which replaced the NSS employment survey, showed a further fall subsequently before a hike back to the 2004-05 level by the latest reading. Whatever the measurement questions surrounding these fluctuations, the issue is whether the Indian LFP will rise going forward, or stay where it is, like a flat-bottomed boat.

Unlike the US, India has always had paid maternity leave in the formal sector, with the rules substantially liberalised in recent years. In the informal sector, there is no paid maternity leave, but no ever-graph which penalises discontinuity.

The availability of child care in a variety of forms within and outside the home has made children less of an obstructive factor, at least as compared to the US.

It is unpaid care of the elderly even more than care of the young that keeps women out of the labour force. The sharp rise in urban India of paid care for the elderly typically substitutes for the drop in the diaspora, and does not actually release women resulting in India from unpaid elder care.



WESTERN MAHARASHTRA

India is ageing. Senior citizens, defined as those above age 60, are projected to more than double from present levels to 300 million by 2040.

Unpaid care within the home, typically by a daughter or daughter-in-law, is considered the proud hallmark of a caring Indian home, as distinct from what is seen as the execrable Western practice of outsourcing care of the elderly.

Child care has a predictable time profile, whereas elder care does not and can extend into a decade, sometimes two. Paediatrics as a medical specialisation equips doctors to impart broad-edge of child psychology to parents. By contrast, there is an acute scarcity of geriatric psychologists to advise women.

Looking after the elderly. The medical profession treats the physical diseases to which the elderly are prey, but not the mental condition consequent upon the loss of their age and disease, and the strain this imposes on care-givers.

There is very little written material on the mental states of the geriatric population in India, an exception is the brilliant Hindi novel *Rat Samudhi* by Govind Singh (translated into English as *Tomb of Sindh*). The story line is about an elderly woman who, after a life of perfectly compliant care of her children and husband, morphs into an utterly non-compliant and capricious elder. Her hapless daughter

becomes the default care-giver, complicitly shape her life to the whims of her mother. The mother wanders without a visa into Pakistan, daughter in law, searching for the remnants of her childhood before Partition, and gets killed for her transgression. Govind Singh's prose is so beautiful, but that kind of risky behaviour is all too common a feature of the geriatric state.

There are a few institutions, which train geriatric psychologists and counsellors, such as the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS). But the supply is pathetically small. India has no provision for training in geriatric psychology in its own any part of its curriculum. For low-income families, even physical exercises that could lighten the load of both elder and care-giver, such as carotid operations or hearing aids or dentures, are beyond reach.

Women caring for the elderly with physical or mental impairment are left to cope on their own. Unlike a child care break, an elder-care break can wear out the young care-giver enough to render her unfit for re-entry into the labour force. At the very least, we need specially designed help centres, able to engage adults, offering day care for the elderly.

Claudia Goldin's award forces us to think about these issues.

QUICK READ

In India, unlike the US studied by Claudia Goldin, it is unpaid care of the elderly more than care of the young that keeps women out of the labour force, and so relief on the front could spell change.

Elder care is a huge challenge in this fast-ageing country as we have few back-up systems while poor knowledge on how it best done adds to the complexity of the burden borne by women.

Women caring for the elderly with physical or mental impairment are left to cope on their own. Unlike a child care break, an elder-care break can wear out the young care-giver enough to render her unfit for re-entry into the labour force. At the very least, we need specially designed help centres, able to engage adults, offering day care for the elderly.

Claudia Goldin's award forces us to think about these issues.

H. Emphasis on Practical Textile Education (Other than Theoretical)– It is recommended that the government should focus on bridging the gap between theoretical and practical aspects of textile education. This involves ensuring an industry-ready curriculum, encouraging research and innovation, providing hands-on learning experiences, facilitating internships and apprenticeships, promoting knowledge sharing, and offering skill development programs.

Reason- With the establishment of textile-focused universities and projects like Maharashtra's policy indicates a positive trend towards innovation and research. The present void in the unskilled labour force could be filled with the knowledge and skills acquired in the process of learning in the universities, resulting in the upskilled manpower with the knowledge sharing of the upgraded technology or innovation. To address the void present, the government should do the following-

1. Industry-Ready Curriculum–The Education Board should ensure that the academic curriculum is designed to prepare the students to join the industry (just like job-ready). Thus, it should include incorporating the latest advancements in textile technology, sustainable practices, and quality control measures.
2. Research and Innovation– The institutions should encourage research and innovation within academics. Universities can establish research centres focused on textile technology and innovation. These centres can collaborate with the industry to develop solutions to real-world challenges.

3. Hands-On Learning– Universities can establish well-equipped laboratories and workshops where students can gain practical experience in operating machinery, designing textiles, and implementing innovative technologies. Thus, prompting hands-on learning experiences within the curriculum.
4. Internships and Apprenticeships– The academia should facilitate internships and apprenticeship programs where students can work with textile companies. These experiences could provide valuable exposure to industry operations and help them, apply their theoretical knowledge in practical settings.
5. Knowledge Sharing– Promote knowledge sharing between academia and industry by organising workshops, seminars, and conferences. These events can facilitate the exchange of ideas and technologies.
6. Skill Development Programs– Offer skill development programs within universities to enhance students' practical skills which can cover various aspects of the textile industry, such as machinery operation, quality control, and sustainable practices.

Through these implications, the universities can produce skilled graduates following the industry requirements, benefitting both the students and the textile industry by providing a skilled and innovative workforce.

- I. Incentivising Youth Participation in the Textile Industry– It is recommended that more emphasis should be laid on attracting youth to participate and the government should use incentives as one of the essential keys to lay them over to this industry.

Reason- The textile industry, particularly the handloom sector, lacks in innovation and technology aspects. Therefore, some of the reforms are required through which the younger generation or the coming generation could be attracted towards this sector as their profession. Some of the recommendations are-

1. Scholarships and Grants- The government and textile industry can collaborate to provide scholarships and grants to students pursuing textile-related education or training programs. This would result in decreasing the financial burden among them.
2. Internship and Apprenticeship Programs– These programmes in collaboration with the textile companies and the Ministry of Textiles could offer young individuals the opportunity to gain hands-on experience and exposure to the industry. Hence, working under the guidance of industry experts can ignite their interest in textiles.
3. Entrepreneurship Support– Encourage entrepreneurship among the youth by offering resources, mentorship, and funding for young entrepreneurs looking to start their textile businesses. This can be in the form of start-up grants or low-interest loans specifically tailored for textile entrepreneurs.

4. Industry-Education Collaboration–Universities along with the textile industry players should jointly develop curricula and courses that align with industry requirements and equip students with the skills and knowledge needed in the textile field. This collaboration can also involve exchange programs with international institutions to learn from global best practices.
5. International Exposure through Student Exchange Programme- Encourage young individuals to gain international exposure in the textile industry. Government initiatives can support students in studying abroad for around 6-9 months, learning different approaches to textiles and technology. Moreover, they could provide aid to actively engage the students with the learning exposure and environment. For example, the model in Malaysia, known for its quality textile education and affordability for international students, can serve as an example to understand global advancements.
6. Promote Innovation– Organise innovation challenges and competitions that could stimulate the interest of tech-savvy youth. Later on, recognize and reward the innovative ideas that contribute to the advancement of the industry.
7. Awareness Campaigns- Launch awareness campaigns to inform students and parents about the potential and opportunities in the textile sector by highlighting the success stories of young entrepreneurs and professionals who have thrived in the industry. Moreover, the universities can invite young or experienced industrialists to share their insights with the students and motivate them.
8. Partnership Module Courses– These courses should be able to allow students to access e-learning programs provided by renowned universities and agencies. These courses should cover a wide range of topics, including AI tools for textile design, digital literacy for accounting and management, and more. Along with this, financial aid should be made available to individuals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds to have the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge for the textile industry. This initiative aims to bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical application, enabling students to enter the workforce with valuable skills and competencies.

Hence, through these actions, the government can engage and empower the youth, bridging the gap between theoretical learning and practical application in the textile industry.

X. Conclusion

To conclude, the Indian textile industry is poised for significant growth and is expected to reach close to \$250 billion by 2025. This growth will be driven by the adoption of recommended policies and strategies provided in this paper, keeping in mind the role of sustainable practices. The industry would witness an increase in the production and consumption rate of textiles, supported by the improvisation of the industrial sector. This would be done, following the tripartite policy framework (like Ghana, a multi-party system-based democratic country), which would help in the implementation of the recommended policies, beneficial to the workers, traders and the government in an optimal way. Further creating an enabling environment for the industry to thrive. The presence of large and growing domestic markets provides ample opportunities for textile businesses, with the availability of e-commerce platforms and the upgradation of technology and other required requisites (like a skilled workforce) further facilitating market access, resulting in its expansion. The industry will also receive benefits from a standardised level of quality output and a vast pool of skilled workforce available at relatively low costs along with the efficient infrastructure facilities inclusive of logistics and transportation, which will help in reducing costs and improving the competitiveness of the textile industry in the changing market dynamics.

To achieve the goal of a \$5 trillion economy, believed to be achieved by 2026, both the central and state governments need to work together. This would be possible by aligning their efforts where India would become a formidable destination for textile investments worldwide, in the coming future. Hence, embracing new technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and Information Technology (IoT) will attract potential investors and foster the development of textile hubs. This will lead to the efficient utilisation of resources and further propel the growth of the industry.

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