

Research Article

Contradiction and Change in the Carpet Industry of Bhadohi

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ABSTRACT

The paper examines the changes in the carpet industry due to the effect of globalisation by highlighting the changes in the use of the technology at the three stages of the carpet production namely designing, dyeing and weaving. The proposed paper examines the technological change in the carpet production process. The paper examines that the traditional mode of production is replaced with a new mode of production in the carpet industry. The paper examines the replacement of *kath* with *khaddi*, *nakshakari* with *computer-aided designing* and *bhatta* with *boiler-dyeing plant*.

Key words: Globalization, Technology, Contradiction, Change, Skilling, Deskilling, Social exclusion

INTRODUCTION

The paper examines the technological change in the Bhadohi carpet industry. It examines that how traditional mode of production is replaced with a new mode of production in the carpet industry of Bhadohi. It is elaborated in the paper that the replacement of *nakshakari* with computer-aided designing (CAD), *bhatta* with *boiler-dyeing plant* and *kath* with *khaddi*. There are reasons for replacement of one with another. All these changes lead towards deskilling of carpet workers. Eventually, they have to reskill for their survival. The process of deskilling and reskilling is highly complex in the carpet industry. The paper discusses that how globalisation can affect the local area to restructure the economic system. It can restructure the processes of working. The paper has tried to locate social exclusion in the context of the changes brought in the Bhadohi carpet Industry because of

the upgradation of technology in light of globalisation to cope up with the national and international competition. The term social exclusion in the paper is examined other than the structural perspective embedded in Indian society. Haan (2000) looks at social exclusion in terms of deprivation due to cause-and-effect relations and processes. Sen (2000) considers social exclusion in terms of capability deprivation. Thorat (2003) has looked upon dalits as a socially excluded group within the framework of caste in the Indian society. The paper has tried to point out that a new kind of exclusion has started in the postmodern society in terms of the replacement of old technology with the new technology. Castells (2000a) the new restructuration of capitalist society is because of new informationalism. The relationship between technological development and social dynamics has emerged as a key theme. The informational society is transformed from the mode of production to mode of development to informationalism (Stadler, 2006, pp. 20–33). Castells views the informational mode of development where ‘*the action of knowledge upon knowledge itself [is] the main source of productivity*’ (Webster, 2006, p. 119). Manuel Castells has talked the ‘Fourth World’ in his *magnum opus*, ‘The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture Vol-III.’ Castells defines ‘social exclusion as the process by which certain individuals and groups are systemically barred from access to positions that would enable them to an autonomous livelihood within the social standards framed by institutions and values in a given context. Under normal circumstances, in informational capitalism, such a position is usually associated with the possibility of access to relatively regular, paid labour, for at least one member of a stable household. Social exclusion is, in fact, the process that disfranchises a person as labour in the context of capitalism’ (Castells, 2000b: 72). Castells’ social exclusion refers to inability in accessing resources due to technological upgradation and change (Matin, 2015). More or less, there is an attempt in the paper to look at the persuasion of the skill of labourers as thesis, deskilling of labourers as antithesis and reskill of labourers as synthesis due to upgradation of technology (Matin and Karimi, 2015, p. 45). Those who have the knowledge are to be included in the stream of production, and those who do not have the knowledge are excluded. Here, the knowledge is coined in terms of skilling, deskilling and reskilling. The term skilling discussed in the paper refers to those who are having the knowledge of using traditional technology. The term deskilling refers to those who are not having the knowledge of using new technology.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) Pattern of upgradation of technology at different stages of carpet production.
- 2) Technology is playing the role in the process of social exclusion.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The paper is qualitative in nature and used inductive logic of enquiry for primary data generation. The research strategy, which is inductive in nature, starts from the collection of data and then proceeds to derive generalisations (Blaikie, 2000). The paper has used case study as an approach for the data generation. ‘ “Case Study is an intensive study of a case which may be an individual an institution, a system, a community, an organization, an event, or even the entire culture” (Matin, 2004, p. 34). It has used interview as a tool for data collection Goode and Hatt (1954) Interview is fundamentally a process of social interaction. The elements in social interaction which is most difficult to define, is that of insight or institution. The process of social interaction in the interview is complicated by the fact that the interviewee also has insights (cited in Matin, 2004, p. 87). The area of the data collection is Bhadohi. Bhadohi is a city, Lok Sabha constituency and a municipal board in Sant Ravidas Nagar a district in the state of Uttar Pradesh, India. The district is surrounded by Jaunpur District to the north, Varanasi District to the east, Mirzapur District to the south, and Allahabad District to the west. It is located between 25.12° to 25.32° North Latitudes and 82.12° to 82.42° East Longitudes. The total geographical area of the district is 1055.99 sq km which gives it the distinction of being the smallest district of Uttar Pradesh (GOI (MSME-DI), 20??, p. 3).

TRADITIONAL VERSUS NEW TECHNOLOGY

The paper has pointed out the change in the process of making carpets from the traditional to the new method of adopting technology in the different stages of carpet production. First, it is in the stage of designing, dyeing and weaving. Globalisation has compressed the whole world into the small unit. Where, there is the competition for which there is the demand for the reduction in the cost of production of carpets, and also, there is the demand of delivery of products on time. For which, there is the change in the use of the technology from *nakshakari* to the use of CAD for designing of carpets. For the purpose of dyeing wool, there is the change for the use of boiler-dyeing plant in comparison with the use of *bhatta*, and in weaving procedure there is the replacement of *kath* with *khaddi*.

Nakshakar

The person who made the designs of carpets is known as *nakshakar*. *Nakshakar* use to make the designs by using the traditional methods. They are assisted by the painters and tracers. Painters and tracers helped the master *nakshakar* in making the designs. Painters are those individuals who are in the starting of acquiring the skill of master *nakshakar*. It does not depend that up to what level he will pursue to learn the skill of *nakshakari*. Whether he will leave the job by remaining only

up to acquiring the skill of the painters or he will learn more, it depends on his acceptance to the technology. The work of *nakshakari* is a manual way of making the designs, and it is the traditional method of making the designs. The master *nakshakar* along with the painters and tracers made the designs manually. In the manual method of *nakshakari*, the *nakshakar* made the designs with the help of painters and tracers in his premise or he gives the work of painting and tracing to the tracers for their home. In this way, the work of *nakshakari* is done at home to home. The men and women were employed in the work of tracing and painting.

Cad

There is the upgradation of technology with the introduction of CAD for making the designs. The technology of CAD has brought more efficiency to compete in the market. With the introduction of the technology of designing that is CAD, it has increased the productivity and reduced the cost of production for designing. It saves the time and has increased the efficiency of making the design.

Bhatta

Bhatta is the traditional method of dyeing the wool. In *bhatta*, the wools are dyed through traditional method. Traditional *bhatta* refers to the traditional technology of dyeing wool, in which the wools are coloured by the *rangsaaz*. The workers involved for the purpose of setting *lachhi*, drying of wool and assisting *rangsaaz* for making the colour.

Boiler-Dyeing Plant

The boiler-dyeing plant was the new method for dyeing the wool. Now, the emerging pattern is to locate the *boiler-dyeing plant* because of the fast production of dyeing wool. In *boiler-dyeing plant*, there is one master *rangsaaz* and the other technician who operates the *boiler-dyeing plant*. The labourers involved in boiler-dyeing plant are less in comparison with the *bhatta*.

Kath

Kath is the traditional technology for weaving the carpets. It is the oldest and the traditional method of weaving carpets. The carpets made upon *kath* took lot of time for weaving. The artisan has acquired the skill of making carpets from the Mughals. It's unique in its quality and design. Upon *kath*, the weavers sit and weave the carpets by making knots that is the traditional method for weaving.

Khaddi

khaddi is replacing the *kath*. The reason is to reduce the cost of the production and to face the challenge of the delivery of products on time to the buyers. The

carpets made upon *khaddi* requires less time in comparison with the carpets made upon *kath*. The number of weaver involved into *khaddi* is less in comparison with the number of weavers involved into *kath* for the production of the same quantity of carpets.

CASE STUDIES

Case Study: 1 (All Names in the Paper are Pseudo Names)

Shamim is a *nakshakar* of 58 years old who belongs to an Ansari caste. He has acquired the skill of *nakshakari* from his father. He is a manual *nakshakar*. He made the designs by using the traditional graph paper. He used the local term *pagoji* and *tara* that refer to y and x axes the same as we see in the graph paper. He makes the design manually, in which he took the help from the tracers and painters. Tracers are those who made the copy of the designs. Painters are those who paint the designs. In the work of tracing and painting, most of the women have got an opportunity for employment at home. As they can do the work of tracing and painting by remaining at home, they are paid by the master *nakshakar*. The technology of CAD started to be used by the *nakshakar* in the carpet industry that has declined the number of the workers namely tracers and painters. The *nakshakar* has told that it was not the first time that the technology has introduced, before CAD, it was *plowright* camera that has affected and reduced the work of those *nakshakars* who were expert in making the designing plates.

Case Study: 2

Amir is of 28 years old. He has started making the designs by using the technology of CAD. He has told that his father was the manual *nakshakar*, but he has acquired the skill of designing through CAD. His father has not asked him to acquire the skill of manual traditional designing because the demand of manual traditional designers has now declined. He has acquired the skill of *naksha* making from one competent person of CAD. The difference between manual designing and CAD designing is that they utilise the computer and printers to develop the same type of *nakshas* in many numbers and ways, so it doesn't require the tracers and the painters to assist them. Involvement of other individuals means giving salary and work to those likewise; however, the *nakshas* made through CAD do not require the number of other technical workers namely (a) painters and (b) tracers.

Case Study: 3

Murli was a skilled *rangsaaz*. He is 45 years of age. He works in his own *bhatta*, he is the *malik* (Owner) of that *bhatta*. In his *bhatta*, he had employed many unskilled and semi-skilled workers for the purpose of colouring *kati*. When he was 18 years of age, then he had acquired the skill of *rangsaazi* by working into

others *bhatta* as a semi-skilled worker on daily wages. He has told after acquiring the skill of *rangsaazi*. He had opened his own *bhatta* in which many semi-skilled and unskilled workers work on daily wages. They are employed for the purpose of dyeing wool like work of opening *and* setting *lachhi*, drying of the *lachhi*, firing of the *bhatta* and others. As per requirement (depending upon the scale of order), he hires the labour. Dyeing the wool in *bhatta* requires many labourers but the wool dyed in boiler-dyeing plant requires less labour. In *bhatta*, there are various procedures for colouring of the wool. On the other hand, in boiler-dyeing plant, there are many procedures for dyeing wool.

Case Study: 4

Ravi is the owner of the boiler-dyeing plant. Before that, he had learnt the skill of dyeing by working in others *bhatta* on daily wages. Afterwards, he himself has opened his *bhatta*. But realising the demand, he has installed the boiler-dyeing plant. The number of carpet workers required in the boiler-dyeing plant is less in comparison to the *bhatta*. In boiler-dyeing plant, there are some skilled workers who do the work for dyeing. In his campus, there are two sections for the work. In one section, the *bhatta* is installed at other section there is the installation of the boiler-dyeing plant. In his *bhatta*, he has employed number of semi-skilled and unskilled workers on daily wages. On the other hand, in his boiler-dyeing plant, he has employed a skilled worker to look after the works.

Case Study: 5

Shyam was a weaver of *kath* carpets. He is 47 years of age. He is working in the *karkhana* of *kath* carpets. He has acquired the skill of weaving carpet from one of the weaving centres. He has migrated to Bhadohi in search of job. He is now working in the *karkhana* of *kath* carpet since last 6 months. His job is not permanent. If he gets more order here then he will continue, otherwise he has to search for other *karkhanas* of *kath*. If he will not get work for weaving then he will search for alternative livelihood like working in Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Gaurantee Act MGNREGA or by going for job to some other places. According to the particular demand of these types of carpets, they are demanded. The carpet made upon *kath* took lot of time. With the changing time period, the patterns and designs of the carpet making has changed the carpets made upon *kath* are costly. The carpets made upon *kath* took lot of time, and it requires many weavers due to which its cost of production is high. That has become the reason for the change in the technology for weaving carpet.

Case Study: 6

It is the *karkhana* where handmade carpets are manufactured by using new method

namely the carpets made upon *khaddi* by using tufted guns. The carpets made here are different then the carpets made upon *khaddi*. Here, the same type of carpet can be produced with only one weaver by using the tufted guns that will save the time. In this *karkhana* of *khaddi*, for each *khaddi* one weaver is available. Among many weavers, they are the migrant weavers of *khaddi*. They are happy with the work of weaving. They are having the skill of the particular pattern of carpets. When there is the demand for the supply for their pattern of carpets, then they get an opportunity for the work of weaving in those *karkhanas*. It is the demand of the types of carpet according to which they get an opportunity for employment. The carpets made upon *khaddi* with the use of tufted technology helps in reducing the cost of production.

DISCUSSION

Because of the replacement of old technology with new technology, the work of manual *nakshakari* is declining day by day. By the replacement of old technology with new technology, there is the reduction in the number of workers in designing called painters and tracers in the carpet industry of Bhadohi. As a result, the painters and tracers moved from one place to the other in search of job. Their skills have become redundant in the carpet industry of Bhadohi. The painters or the tracers had left the occupation and moved in search of the other means of livelihood to other towns or involved in the alternative livelihood. The other stage of carpet production that is dyeing of wool in which also due to the notion of time there is the replacement of one technology that is *bhatta* is replacing with boiler-dyeing plant that has led towards the redundancy of semi-skilled and unskilled workers. In the stage of weaving, the carpet made upon *kath* is replaced with the carpets made upon *khaddi* due to replacement of old technology with the new technology. By the replacement of *kath* with *khaddi* and vice-versa, there is the process of skilling, deskilling and reskilling among carpet weavers. In that process, there is the exclusion of one group of weavers or the other group of weavers.

TRADITIONAL VERSUS NEW TECHNOLOGY

1. Designing

Manual traditional designer (labour intensive) Computer-aided designer (technology intensive)

2. Dyeing

In *bhatta* (labour intensive) In the boiling plant (technology intensive)

3. Weaving

Kath carpets (labour intensive) *Khaddi* carpet (technology intensive)

Source: Adapted from Appendix-D, Karimi (2016, p. 178).

CONCLUSION

The paper has observed the replacement of old technology with new technology and its consequences. There is the replacement of *kath* with *khaddi*, *nakshakari* with *CAD* and *bhatta* with *boiler dying plant*. The changes in terms of partial technological upgradation in the processes of production that has led to contradictions in terms of social exclusion, that the process of skilling to deskilling led to exclusion of the person on the basis of the skill of the person from the stream of production. However, there are also some who are too old to adopt the skill of new technology, they are excluded from the stream of production because of their being deskilled. As there is the upgradation of technology, there is reduction in hiring of labour. The paper concludes by highlight that redundancy of labour could be seen as one of the component of social exclusion. Because of the technological upgradation, there is the redundancy in the number of labourers. There are reasons for replacement of one with another. All these changes lead towards deskilling of carpet workers. Eventually, they have to reskill for their survival. The process of deskilling and reskilling is highly complex in the carpet industry.

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