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SUSTAINABILITY IN TRADITIONAL HANDLOOMS

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Abstract

The handloom sector constitutes a distinct feature of the rich cultural heritage of India and plays a vital role in the economy and cultural identity of the country. It is an ancient industry and is source of livelihood for many villages in India. Its spread varies in style, practice and scale throughout the country - in certain regions it is has a proficient industry, while in others its establishment is localized, where it is a family-based activity. While, hand-woven fabrics are well-sought after both nationally and globally, weavers currently remain marginalized and often impoverished. The well-set power loom industry has further added to their woes. Given the progressive failure of centralized production and distribution ideologies, handlooms represent a decentralized distributed means of livelihood security, environmental consonance, employment generation, skill enhancement, cultural (diversity, identity and) integrity and sustainability. The fabrics and dyes used in the handloom industry are environment-friendly and often unique to a region (based on available skill and resources). The paper comprehensively evaluates and forecasts sustainability in the context of traditional handlooms in India. Results of the study and recommendations are presented in this paper.

Key words: dyes, traditional handlooms, sustainability evaluation and forecast

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