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TEXTILE EXPORTERS IN INDIA: A CASE STUDY OF TIRUPUR

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ABSTRACT

The apparel industry in India includes woven and knitted garment industry. Tirupur is a dominant player in the knitting garment sector. This industry is also called as hosiery sector, hosiery garment sector, knitted garment apparel sector and knitted garment sector. Tirupur is known for the cluster activity and mostly each activity of garment making is being carried out in the outside units viz., knitting units, dyeing & bleaching units, fabric printing, garmenting, embroidery, compacting and calendaring and other ancillary units. To study the socio-economic profile of the exporters, the researcher used a validated questionnaire and survey method was employed to collect the first hand information from 600 sample respondents (apparel exporters) who are members of Tirupur Exporters Association (TEA). Tirupur Exporters Association, popularly known as TEA, was established in the year 1990. Today, TEA has a membership of 897 life members. The data thus collected were tabulated for easier analysis and interpretation. Statistical tools like Percentage, Average, Standard Deviation, Two-way table and Chi-square test were employed. The research was carried out during 2012 to 2013. The study found that there are 3.3% of apparel exporters with annual turnover of less than Rs.1 crore, 68.8% of apparel exporters with annual turnover of Rs.1-10 crore, 20.2% of apparel exporters with annual turnover of Rs.10-20 crore and 7.7% of apparel exporters with annual turnover of more than Rs.20 crore. The study also found that the exporters with annual turnover of the exporters are not professionally qualified. Of late, the entrepreneurs have started to diversify their export business and also have taken efforts to brand their export products. Yet, the infrastructural bottlenecks create hindrance to the growth of export businesses and the government has to speed up the industry modernization process through enhanced promotional measures so as to increase the textile exports from India.

KEYWORDS

India, entrepreneurs, exporters, textile industry, tirupur.

INTRODUCTION

he apparel industry in India includes woven and knitted garment industry. Tirupur is a dominant player in the knitting garment sector. The apparel exporters in Tirupur mostly produce and export knitted garments and the share of woven garment is insignificant when compared with knitted garment production and exports. In India, the other major knitted garment production centres are Ludhiana, Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai (Yoganandan, Growth of Apparel Export Industry in Tirupur, India, 2015). This industry is also called as hosiery sector, hosiery garment sector, knitted garment apparel sector and knitted garment sector (Jayabharathi, 2010). Tirupur is spread over 27.20 sq. kms and the seventh largest town in Tamil Nadu and 60 kms. from Coimbatore, the Manchester of Southern India (Yoganandan, An overview of Tirupur: The Textile city in India, 2015). It has grown by encompassing peripheral villages like Avinashi, Nallur, Mangalam, Kangeyam, Palladam, Koduwai, which are situated around 15-20 km. radius from Tirupur (Devaraja TS, 2011). Tirupur is also called as the Knitwear city, Banian city, Kutti (Small) Japan, Dollar city and is surrounded by other regions (cities) famous for their contribution to textile industry (Vetrivel T & Manivannan L, 2011). Apparel industry in Tirupur is predominantly a small scale industry where large numbers of players are small exporters (Yoganandan, External factors influencing textile exports of Tirupur: An application of Factor Analysis, 2015). The exporters in Tirupur focus on low-volume mid-fashion segment particularly the women and children wear segments.

CAPACITY OF UNITS IN VARIOUS OPERATIONS

Tirupur is known for the cluster activity and mostly each activity of garment making is being carried out in the outside units viz., knitting units, dyeing & bleaching units, fabric printing, garmenting, embroidery, compacting and calendaring and other ancillary units. There were 3000 knitwear exporters, 2000 knitwear domestic business oriented business houses, 1000 garment making units 100 embroidery units, 764 fabric printing units, 100 compacting units, and 729 dyeing units in 2009 (Office of Special Officer, 2009). Even though it has so many business organizations and it identified as textile cluster, it is facing certain challenges in the form of non-availability of quality infrastructure in the form of poor road connectivity, power supply problems, sea port and airport connectivity problems etc. (Yoganandan, Jaganathan, Saravanan, & Senthil kumar, 2013).

TIRUPUR EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION (TEA) AND ITS ACHIEVEMENTS

Tirupur Exporters Association, popularly known as TEA, was established in the year 1990. This is an Association exclusively for exporters of cotton knitwear who have production facilities in Tirupur. From the modest beginning TEA has now grown into a strong body of knitwear exporters. Today, TEA has a membership of 897 life members (TEA, 2012).

WHY DO NATIONS EXPORT?

Exports mean selling the home country's goods/services in other countries (Kumar, 2007). Export is a function of international trade whereby goods produced in one country are shipped to another country for future sale or trade (Investopedia, 2013). No country in the world is self sufficient in everything she consumes. The role of entrepreneur is critical in making the country self sufficient (Yoganandan & Vetriselvan, Entrepreneurship development in India, 2016). The disproportionate endowment of resources throughout the world made economies to go for exports and imports. The countries in the gulf region have abundant petroleum, China, Australia, United states of America and South Africa have abundant gold, Russia has natural gas, Botswana, Russia and South Africa are the leading producers of diamond, China, India, United States of America, Pakistan and Brazil are the leading cotton producing countries and India, China, Indonesia and Thailand are the leading producers of rice. But these economies need many other consumables (good and services) to survive. Hence, they have to engage in international trade by exporting the surplus of goods and services against import of all other goods and services the production of which is inadequate. Thus, the primary reason for exports is to import, that is to earn foreign exchange to pay for her imports. The export and imports of developing countries like India and Pakistan gained momentum after the reforms that took place in 1990 (Yoganandan, Globalization of Pakistan, 2010).

METHODOLOGY

In this article an attempt was made to study the socio, economic profile of textile exporters in Tirupur. This article draws lots of inputs from the doctoral research thesis submitted to Anna University, Chennai. A field survey method was employed to collect the first hand information from 600 sample respondents (apparel exporters). The data thus collected were tabulated for easier analysis and interpretation. Statistical tools like Percentage, Average, Standard Deviation, Two-way table and Chi-square test were employed. The apparel exporters have been chosen from the Tirupur Exporters" Association (TEA), Tirupur. The research was carried out during 2012 to 2013.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

Distribution of apparel exporters based on turnover: An attempt was made to classify the apparel exporters based on their annual turnover. The Tirupur Exporters "Association (TEA), Tirupur has 900 apparel exporters as members out of which 600 apparel exporters are contacted. The researchers used stratified proportionate random sampling method to gather the data from apparel exporters who are members of The Tirupur Exporters" Association (TEA), Tirupur. For this purpose, the four strata have been identified viz., exporters with annual turnover of less than Rs.1 crore, Rs.1-10 crore, Rs.10-20 crore and more than Rs.20 crores.

TABLE 1: DISTRIBUTION OF APPAREL EXPORTERS BASED ON TURNOVER

S. No.	Turnover and Classification	No. of apparel exporters	Percentage
1	Less than Rs.1 crore (Micro exporters)	20	3.3
2	Rs.1-10 crore (Small exporters)	413	68.8
3	Rs.10-20 crore (Medium exporters)	121	20.2
4	More than Rs.20 crore (Large exporters)	46	7.7
	Total	600	100

Source: Primary data

It is clear from the table 1 that in the chosen sample there are 3.3% of apparel exporters with annual turnover of less than Rs.1 crore and they may be called as micro exporters, 68.8% of apparel exporters with annual turnover of Rs.1-10 crore and they may be called as small exporters, 20.2% of apparel exporters with annual turnover of Rs.10-20 crore and they may be called as medium exporters and 7.7% of apparel exporters with annual turnover of more than Rs.20 crore and they may be called as large exporters. It is inferred that majority 68.8% of apparel exporters are small exporters with annual turnover of Rs.1-10 crore. This reflects the nature of apparel export industry in Tirupur which is still predominantly a small scale industry. This also explains why the government of India is taking many promotional activities to rejuvenate the growth of textile export industry in Tirupur (Yoganandan, Textile Export Promotion in India-Salient Features, 2015).

Distribution of apparel exporters based on period of establishment: An attempt was made to find out the period of establishment of apparel exporters" business. This would help one to understand the trend in new apparel export business getting started and also to understand the period in which the new entrants into the industry was at the maximum. For this purpose, the apparel exporters based on period of establishment are classified into three viz., apparel export firms that were established before 1995, during 1995-2005 and after 2005. It is found from the study that 38.3% of apparel exporters started their export business before 1995, 43.7% of apparel exporters started their export business during 1995-2005 and 18.0% of apparel exporters started their export business after 2005. Hence, it is inferred that majority 43.7% of apparel exporters started their export business during 1995-2005. Interestingly, this coincides with the period when the reform process or economic liberalization has been introduced in India.

Distribution of apparel exporters based on age-group of the promoter: The apparel exporters are categorised into three age-groups namely aged less than 40 years, aged between 40-55 years and aged more than 55 years. The study found that 35.2% of apparel exporters belong to the age-group of less than 40 years, 50.3% of apparel exporters belong to the age-group of 40-55 years and 14.5% of apparel exporters belong to the age-group of more than 55 years. It is inferred that majority 50.3% of apparel exporters belong to the age-group of 40-55 years. The above finding highlights the fact that apparel export business is slowly moving into the hands of younger generation of entrepreneurs.

Business experience of promoters: Experience may play a significant role in the conduct of apparel export business. For this purpose, the experience of the apparel exporters is categorised into groups viz, less than 10 years, 10-20 years and more than 20 years. The study found that 38.7% of apparel exporters have less than 10 years of experience, 28.3% of apparel exporters have 10-20 years of experience and 33.0% of apparel exporters have more than 20 years of experience. Therefore, it could be inferred that majority 38.7% of apparel exporters (apparel exporters) have less than 10 years of experience in the apparel export business. This indicates that the apparel export industry still attracts more and more entrepreneurs into export business.

Educational qualification of promoters: An understanding of the educational background would help in relating the current changes in educational background and of apparel exporters in Tirupur. For this purpose, the exporters are categorised into educational qualifications viz., Illiterate, Completed schooling (Higher Secondary Course), Undergraduates and Postgraduates. It is found that 6.3% of apparel exporters are illiterates, 43.7% of apparel exporters have completed schooling (HSC), 35.5% of apparel exporters are undergraduates and 14.5% of apparel exporters are postgraduates. This shows that though there is visible change in the educational background of apparel exporters as there are more and more exporters started acquiring higher qualification, still majority of the apparel exporters have only completed their schooling (Yoganandan, The strategies and expectations of apparel exporters in Tirupur, India, 2015).

Distribution of apparel exporters based on markets diversified: To understand the apparel industries ability, willingness to take risk and interest to serve buyers in many countries the apparel exporters are classified into four categories viz., apparel exporters exporting to less than 3 countries, apparel exporters exporting to 3-6 countries, apparel exporters exporting to more than 10 countries. It is found from the study that 21.0% of apparel exporters export to less than 3 countries, 49.2% of apparel exporters export to 3-6 countries, 23.3% of apparel exporters export to 6-10 countries and 6.5% of apparel exporters export to more than 10 countries. Hence, it is inferred that majority 49.2% of apparel exporters export to 3-6 countries. This shows that, the apparel exporters in Tirupur have not yet diversified in a big way in terms of geographical coverage covering more countries (Yoganandan & Saravanan, Export performance of Indian Textile industry during post reform period (1991 to 2010), 2011).

Distribution of apparel exporters on the basis of brand ownership: The brand ownership may influence their export performance; hence it is important to find out the brand ownership status of apparel exporters in Tirupur. For this purpose, the apparel exporters are categorised into exporters who use only buyers" brand and exporters who also have own brand. It is clear from the findings of the research that 81.3% of apparel exporters in Tirupur manufacture and export only in buyers" brand whereas the rest 18.7% of exporters manufacture and export not only in buyers" brand but also in their own brand. These findings match with the findings of Karthikeyan & Ramachandran (2009) who highlighted the need to establish strong brands in the international market. Also, the global recession played negatively on the efforts taken by the exporter to market the products under their own brand (Yoganandan & Saravanan, Impact of global recession on global textile exports and imports, 2015).

Distribution of apparel exporters on the basis of manufacturing activity: To study the distribution of apparel exporters in Tirupur on the basis of manufacturing activity, the apparel exporters are categorised into manufacturing exporters who complete the production of entire export order by themselves, manufacturing cum merchandising exporters who give part of their export order to sub-contractors and merchandising exporters who completely rely on sub-contractor for entire production of export order. It is found that that 36.2% of apparel exporters all under the category of manufacturing cum merchandising exporter, 63.8% of apparel exporters fall under the category of manufacturing exporters, and there is no merchandising exporter in the chosen sample.

Apparel exporters and usage of Indian and foreign machines: An attempt was made to study the usage of foreign and Indian machines in the manufacturing and processing activities. The apparel exporters may use both Indian and foreign machines in their production process. It is found that all the apparel exporters in Tirupur have both knitting and garment stitching machines. But only 43.8% of apparel exporters have foreign made knitting machines and only 45.8% of apparel exporters have foreign made garment stitching machines. This finding is in line with the findings of Shanmugasundaram. According to Shanmugasundaram et al., (2010), exporters in order to reduce cost chose inferior quality of yarn and also used indigenous machineries for their knitting and this research also confirms that only 43.8% of apparel exporters use foreign made machines for knitting (similarly for other processing activities) although they also use Indian made machines. Regarding dyeing and bleaching, 83.6% of exporters do not have their own dyeing units and depend on other independent dyeing and bleaching units. In case of fabric printing, 44% of apparel exporters have Indian and foreign fabric printing machines whereas 16.6% of apparel exporters do not have any fabric printing

machine and they are dependent on other units. 77% of apparel exporters have Indian embroidery machines and 67% of apparel exporters have foreign embroidery machines. In the compacting and calendaring, around 20 % of exporters have either Indian made or foreign made machines. 71% of exporters do not have compacting and calendaring machines.

It is revealed from the analysis that around 70% of apparel exporters do not have dyeing and bleaching units and compacting and calendaring units and they are dependent on other units (service providers) for this part of the manufacturing process and this is in line with the findings of Abhijit Banerjee and Kaivan Munshi (1999). They pointed out that out of seven principal stages in the production process except the most important knitting and stitching, the rest of the work is given to job-workers who are specialized producers. National productivity council report (2009) also stressed the need for expansion of spinning and dyeing units and Samar Verma (2002) highlighted that level of modernization in the textile industry is one of the constraints in the apparel industry is confirmed with the findings of this research.

Apparel exporters and sourcing of raw materials: An attempt is made to understand the sources of raw material, accessories and other man-made raw materials (synthetic fabrics and yarns). It is found from the study that all the apparel exporters in Tirupur used to source the raw materials (cotton yarn), man-made fibres and accessories from Tamil Nadu and other states in India. But there are 10% of apparel exporters who source cotton yarn and fabric from abroad, 27% of apparel exporters source accessories from other countries and 14% of apparel exporters source most of made-made fibres from abroad.

Apparel exporters and sources of fund: The primary source of fund is promoters own capital. But apart from promoters "capital the apparel exporters have also used other sources of fund. It is found from the research that majority 90.5% of apparel exporters rely on bank loans as the other major source of fund for their business operation. Only 9.5% of apparel exporters use loans from private institutions as the major source of fund apart from promoters" own capital. The apparel exporters do not prefer venture capital investments or public deposits as major source of fund. Small exporters are really unable to raise the funds for business activities and they continue to operate as small exporters with wafer thin profit margin. (Yoganandan, Saravanan, & SenthilKumar, Problems Faced by Small Knitwear Exporters in Tirupur, Tamil Nadu, 2013).

FINDINGS FROM CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS

It is found from the research that in the annual turnover of less than Rs.1 crore category, majority 50.0% of exporters established their export business after 2005. In the annual turnover of Rs.1-10 crore category, majority 50.6% of exporters established their export business during 1995-2005. In the annual turnover of Rs.10-20 crore category, majority 48.8% of exporters established their export business before 1995. And in the annual turnover of more than Rs.20 crore category, majority 67.4% of exporters established their export business before 1995. The chi-square analysis indicates that there is a significant relationship between period of establishment and annual turnover of apparel exporters in Tirupur. It is divulged from the study that in the annual turnover of less than Rs.1 crore category, majority 45.0% of exporters belong to the age-group of less than 40 years. In the annual turnover of Rs.1-10 crore category, majority 49.9% of exporters belong to the age-group of 40-55 years. In the annual turnover of Rs.10-20 crore category, majority 52.9% of exporters belong to the age-group of more than S.20 crore category, majority 58.7% of exporters belong to the age-group of 40-55 years. The chi-square analysis indicates that there is a significant relationship between age-group and annual turnover of apparel exporters in Tirupur.

It is found from the study that in the annual turnover of less than Rs.1 crore category, majority 35.0% of exporters have less than 10 years of business experience and more than 20 years experience. In the annual turnover of Rs.1-10 crore category, majority 41.4% of exporters have less than 10 years of business experience. In the annual turnover of Rs.10-20 crore category, majority 35.5% of exporters have 10-20 years of business experience. And in the annual turnover of more than Rs.20 crore category, majority 37.0% of exporters have less than 10 years of business experience. The chi-square analysis shows that there is no significant relationship between business experience and annual turnover of apparel exporters in Tirupur. It is identified from analysis that in the annual turnover of less than Rs.1 crore category, majority 35.0% of exporters are undergraduates. In the annual turnover of Rs.1-10 crore category, majority 43.1% of exporters have qualified as schooling completed. In the annual turnover of Rs.10-20 crore category, majority 43.8% of exporters have qualified as schooling completed. And in the annual turnover of more than Rs.20 crore category, majority 56.5% of exporters have qualified as schooling completed. The chi-square analysis shows that there is a significant relationship between educational qualification and annual turnover of apparel exporters in Tirupur.

It is found from the study that in the annual turnover of less than Rs.1 crore category, majority 40.0% of exporters have diversified into less than 3 countries. In the annual turnover of Rs.1-10 crore category, majority 51.1% of exporters have diversified into 3-6 countries. In the annual turnover of Rs.10-20 crorecategory, majority 55.4% of exporters have diversified into 3-6 countries. And in the annual turnover of more than Rs.20 crore category, majority 45.7% of exporters have diversified into 6-10 countries. The chi-square analysis reveals that that there is a significant relationship between markets diversified and annual turnover of apparel exporters in Tirupur. It is found from the study that in the annual turnover of less than Rs.1 crore category majority 55.0% of apparel export firms do manufacture and export in buyers" brand name. In the annual turnover of Rs.1-10 crore category majority 86.2% of apparel export firms do manufacture and export in buyers" brand name. In the annual turnover of Rs.10-20 crore category majority 88.4% of apparel export firms do manufacture and export in buyers brand name. And in the annual turnover of more than Rs.20 crore category majority 69.6% of apparel export firms do manufacture and export in buyers and laso in their own brand name. The chi- square analysis indicates that there is a significant relationship between brand ownership and annual turnover of apparel exporters in Tirupur.

It is found from the study that in the annual turnover of less than Rs.1 crore category, majority 70.0% of apparel export firms are manufacturing exporters. In the annual turnover of Rs.1-10 crore category, majority 63.4% of apparel export firms are manufacturing exporters. In the annual turnover of Rs.10-20 crore category, majority 60.34% of apparel export firms are manufacturing exporters. And in the annual turnover of more than Rs.20 crore category, majority 73.9% of apparel export firms are manufacturing exporters. The chi-square analysis shows that there is no significant relationship between manufacturing activity and annual turnover of apparel exporters in Tirupur.

CONCLUSION

Tirupur is one of the largest textile clusters in India offering foreign exchange revenue for the government at the same time generating millions of direct and indirect job opportunities. Tirupur exporters are usually small and medium sized business enterprises with relatively 10 to 20 years of experience in the export industry. The government of India has been taking promotional measures to promote the textile industry in India. Yet, the infrastructural bottlenecks create hindrance to the growth of export businesses. The lack of professionalism is clear from the fact that majority of the exporters are not professionally qualified. The entrepreneurs have started to diversify their export business and also have taken efforts to brand their export products. The government has also need to encourage in creating congenial climate for business organization to come out with innovative products, in their own brand name in order to make this export industry to sustain on its own.

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