

Gender Roles in The Textile Industry of Apayao

RONALD O. OCAMPO

ascrnd@yahoo.com

Apayao State College, San Isidro Sur, Luna, Apayao

PHILIPPINES

Abstract - *This study was conducted to examine the dynamics of the community, farms and households, in order to understand the role of men and women in the textile industry. Specifically, it is intended to : determine the activities of men and women in the textile industry; determine the time spent by men and women allotted to their daily tasks; analyze the role of men and women in the textile industry. The descriptive method of research was used with the gender analysis tool kit as main data gathering tool. Purposive sampling was done in selecting the respondents of the study which involves 30 respondents. Results showed that women are heavily involved in textile related activities especially weaving but also share the responsibility. Men assist in the production of textile products. Men devote of their time in their primary source of income-farming. Based on the above findings, women play a great role in the textile industry. They are the key players for they are the one involved in most of the textile related activities particularly weaving. Men also share responsibility in the textile industry by assisting the women perform their work. In the light of the findings, the following are forwarded as recommendation: conduct seminar/ training on gender sensitivity among couples; conduct trainings on fiber processing especially banana and abaca and other abundant fibers in Apayao to both men and women; similar research should be conducted to other commodity looking at the contribution of both men and women in the industry.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The province of Apayao is endowed with rich natural resources. Dubbed as the “Cordilleras’ last Forest frontier”, the province continually preserve its luscious natural beauty as well as its rich cultural diversity. The province is a melting pot of various cultural groups which are distinct from each other. Cultural differences may be manifested in their dances, beliefs, customs, traditions, and even their ethnic woven products. Weaving has usually been associated with women, as a women's craft in many cultures and times. Today, weaving is a popular handicraft and art for many women.

Loom weaving is a century-old industry throughout the world. A home-based tradition in the rural area in the Philippines, loom weaving has graduated into a firm level production in some parts of the country (1911-2005) to mention a few we have the mountain Province, Bicol Region, and the Visayas. In the province of Bohol, loom-weaving industry is a major contributor to the regions economy and has become a major provider of family income. It is a surprise however, that in other provinces, loom-weaving industry has failed to pick up and even gradually made down in Negros Oriental where handloom weaving was popular in every

household during the early years become really unpopular in the 70s. Lately however effort has made to revive the interests in this early craft, not only for domestic consumption but as an important household entrepreneurial activity. Particularly in the town of Bacong, a group of women has been engaged in weaving for quite sometime now. In Bolokbolok, Dauin, a cooperative was established in 1981 composed of a group of young and adult women who showed interest in handloom weaving. This was disbanded however, a few years later. At present in Bantayan, Dumaguete City, a group of weaving enthusiasts organized themselves and calls the group, HIKABAN.

At this stage, loom-weaving cannot be considered among major dollar earners. Nevertheless, it has provided alternative sources of income to the displaced sectors of the country side. In Bohol, income derived from the industry according to recent survey conducted by DTI-Bohol, can actually support the daily requisites of a family of five.

Loom-weaving industry offers a lot of opportunities in terms of employment generation, high market demand, strong agency and government support services, financial assistance from the funding industries and above all, presence of established buyers. According to the same report, its value of each of hand woven cloth would be valued at over one million dollar. However, order could not be met because of low production. This is due to the primitive type of loom weaving machines and equipment used.

Relative to the upholding of their textile industry, men’s role differ from women. Their differences emerged as they perform their daily living activities to include their task relative to the textile industry.

Much has been said that women play a greater role in the weaving industry, this study will look into roles of men and women in the textile industry.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study examines the dynamics of the community, farms and households, in order to understand the role of men and women in the textile industry. Specifically, it is intended to determine the activities of men and women in the textile industry; to determine the time spent by men and women allotted to their daily tasks; and to analyze the role of men and women in the textile industry.

III. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Women In Textiles

The IWW had committed itself to equality for female workers from its very inception. Although only about a dozen

delegates to the founding convention were women, a reflection of the attitudes in the established unions sending representatives, women were given considerable visibility. On the podium at the opening were Mother Jones, indefatigable advocate of miners' rights and foe of child labor, and Lucy Parsons, an anarchist orator and widow of one of the Haymarket martyrs. Luella Twining, later entrusted with managing Haywood's 1908 national tour, was a voting delegate and chairperson of the ratification session. Shortly after its founding, the IWW would draw brilliant female organizers to its standard, the most notable being Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and Matilda Rabinowitz. Such female IWWs spoke to, organized and led male workers as well as females. While the IWW became increasingly active in male-dominated industries after 1913, it never abandoned efforts to organize women. The IWW was the first American labor union to discuss the status of housework as a category of labor and the first to organize chambermaids and prostitutes.

The major industry in the East earmarked for organization by the IWW was textile manufacturing. Approximately half of the textile workers were female, a large percentage under the age of twenty with many less than fourteen. Women played such a pivotal role in textiles that industrial unions without their full participation were inconceivable, just as industrial unions in Southern lumber had been inconceivable without the full participation of blacks.

Paterson, the center of the nation's silk industry, employed 25,000 workers in dyeing and manufacturing. Late in 1912, the mill owners embarked on a policy of speedups and wage cuts. The result was a spontaneous strike and a call for IWW assistance. The tactics recently used elsewhere with such great success were again employed, and top IWW organizers led by William Haywood and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn were constantly on the scene. Nonetheless the strike did not go well. One factor was an unprecedented rate of arrests, which created a chronic shortage of funds for strike benefits, legal fees, fines and bail.

Historical Connections of Women and Weaving

The Industrial Revolution began, in large part, as mechanization of the production of textiles, and so this change in weaving and cloth-making production meant immense changes in women's lives -- and may have helped give rise to the movements for women's rights.

Ancient Egypt. In ancient Egypt, weaving linen and spinning thread were important activities of the household economy.

Ancient China. China credits Si-ling-chi, wife of the prince Hoang-ti, with discovery of the usefulness of silkworm thread and the methods of weaving silk thread and of raising silkworms, all about 2700 BCE.

Weaving in Vietnam. Vietnamese history credits several women with the introduction of silkworm breeding and weaving -- and even has a legend crediting a Vietnamese princess with the discovery of the use of silkworm.

Persia (Iran). Persian rugs are still well known: Persia (Iran) has long been a center of carpet production. Women, and

children under women's guidance, were central to the production of this practical and artistic creation, crucial to the economy as well as the arts in early and modern Iran.

Anatolia, Turkey. Carpet weaving and, earlier, carpet tying have often been the province of women in Turkish and Anatolian culture.

Native Americans. Navaho or Navajo Indians in the Southwest of the United States tell how Spider Woman taught women the skills of loom weaving. Navajo rugs are still popular for their beauty and practicality.

American Revolution. In Revolutionary era America, the boycott of British goods, including inexpensive manufactured cloth, meant that more women went back to home production of cloth. Spinning wheels were a symbol of independence and freedom.

18th and 19th Century Europe and America. In Europe and America, in the 18th and 19th century, the invention of the power loom helped speed the Industrial Revolution. Women, especially young unmarried women, soon began leaving home to work in the new textile production factories using this technology.

20th Century: Weaving as Art. In the 20th century, women have reclaimed weaving as an art. In the Bauhaus movement, women were virtually relegated to the loom, however, as sexual stereotyping shaped assumptions about "women's art."

Among the tribal areas of North Bengal, weaving is done mainly by women who weave for the entire family. In fact, tradition has it that a young girl has to know weaving before she can be married. Her skill in weaving determines to a great extent her popularity amongst eligible bachelors.

Each tribe, each community has its own special patterns, and even within a tribe, there are special designs, which only a privileged person is allowed to wear. A particular warrior shawl of Nagaland, known as the Tusungkoteptu shawl, has in the centre a white panel enclosed by red and black stripes and cheeks. This white panel carries drawings made in indigenous, indelible black ink, of *mithuns*, cocks, human heads, spears and *daos*, and of the sun and the moon. This shawl can be worn only by the warriors who has been victorious in battle and has taken a head.

IV. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study made use of the descriptive survey method of research with questionnaire, observation and focus group discussion as data gathering tools. The study was conducted in selected towns of the province of Apayao. These towns have been known for their weaving industry. The participating respondents of the study were 15 couples who are directly involved in textile related industry. The respondents were selected using purposive sampling techniques. The instruments used in this study were Gender Analysis tool kit, interview guide, observation and focus group discussion (FGD). Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentage were used in the study. The 5 point scale was used in rating the

degree of involvement of men and women in textile related activities.

Degree of involvement in textile - Related Livelihood Activities

Scale	Scale	Interpretation
5	4.20-5.00	VMI
4	3.40- 4.10	MI
3	2.60- 3.39	Mo I
2	1.80- 2.59	NMI
1	1.00-1.79	NI

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the profile of the respondents. Majority of the respondents fall under the age bracket of 50-59 years old (50%), of the 30 respondents, 53% were isnags, their type of house is concrete (67%), their education is high school level (80%), their primary source of income is derived from farming (86%) and their average income derived from textile industry is 1000-2000.

Access to Household Resources

Production of major crops are men's responsibility. Men and women in the household may differ in their responsibility, access and control of livelihood activities and resources. Table 1 presents the responsibility, access and control of livelihood activities and resources among household members.

Table 1 . Profile of the Respondents

Profile	n= 30	%
Age		
50-59	15	50
40-49	10	33
30-39	5	17
Gender		
Male	15	50
Female	15	50
Ethnicity		
Ilocano	8	27
Isnag	16	53
Igorot	6	20
House type		
Concrete	20	67
Semi-concrete	10	33
Highest educational Attainment		
College Level	3	10
High School Level	24	80
Elementary Level	3	10
Primary Source of Income		
Farming	26	86
Sari Sari Store	2	7
Labor	2	7
Average monthly income derived from textile related activities		
2000-3000	2	7
1000-2000	28	93

Table 2. Responsibility, access and control of livelihood activities and resources of household members.

Livelihood activities/ resources	Responsibility	Access	Control
Rice Farming	Husband	Husband and wife	Husband
Corn Farming	Husband	Husband and wife	Husband
Vegetable farming	Husband and wife	Husband and wife	Husband & Wife
Home gardening & planting other crops	Wife	Wife	Wife
Livestock (pig , ruminants, etc)	Husband & wife	Husband & wife	Husband & wife
Poultry	Wife	Wife	Husband & wife
Farm tools and Equipment	Husband	Husband & wife	Husband
Weaving equipment	Wife	Wife	Wife
Capital	Husband & wife	Husband & wife	Husband & wife
Formal credit	Husband & wife	Husband & Wife	Husband and wife
Informal credit	Wife	Wife	Husband and wife
Fuel wood	Husband & wife	Husband & wife	Husband & wife
Animal fodder	Husband & Wife	Husband & wife	Husband & Wife
House maintenance	Wife	Husband & wife	Wife
Weaving	Wife	Wife	Wife
Marketing of Woven products	Wife	Wife	Wife

The production of major crops and farm tools are under the control of the father while weaving, marketing of woven products, weaving equipment , house maintenance, and home gardening are controlled by women. The rest such as capital, formal and informal credits, provision of fuel wood and animal fodder, vegetable farming and livestock production are shared by both the husband and the wife.

Access to informal credits is done by women due to their frequent moving out from their houses (going to market, etc). This incidence give them opportunity to establish acquaintances.

Both the husband and the wife share responsibility, have access and have control to formal credits. Formal creditors such

as banks, credit cooperatives and others require collateral and other pertinent papers.

Time Management of Men and Women

Time is one important resource that should be well managed. As they say, “time lost can never be regained” and that “time is gold”. Men and women differ on how they spent

their time throughout the day. Plentiful income were usually observed during harvest season of major crops (palay and corn) usually during the months of March, May, September and October. These are the peak months of crop productions. Lean months are usually observed in the months of January, February, and November. Time spent of men and women differ during peak months and lean months.

Table 3. Time Spent women and men during peak and lean month of production in the farm.

Activities	Men		Women	
	Peak months (hr/day)	Lean months (hr/day)	Peak months (hr/day)	Lean Months (hr/day)
Weaving & other textile industry related activities	0	1	2	6
Farming and related activities	12	7	7	4
Household chores(cleaning, cooking, etc)	1	2	4	2
Attending to children’s needs	0.5	1	2	2
Spiritual activities	0.5	1	0.5	1
Resting	8	8	7	7
Socialization/recreation	2	4	1.5	2

Most of their time are consumed in their productive activities such as farming and other related activities. Weaving is done by most women and most of their weaving time is during lean months where they have lesser work in the field. Weaving provides them alternative livelihood to make them more productive individual.

Involvement of Men and Women in Textile Related Industry

Men and women play roles in the textile industry. Their involvement in textile related activities is revealed in table 3.

Women are very much involved in weaving, weave designing, product development, marketing and pricing of their products. This could be attributed to the fact that loom weaving is the only textile related industry in the province. Loom weaving is a women’s industry and women is directly involved in these activities.

However, utilization of fiber as cordage and rope are done for home and domestic consumption. Likewise, dyestuff are utilized as colorant to food and paper. The most commonly used dyestuff are achuete and luyang dilaw.

Table 3. Degree of involvement of men and women in textile related activities.

Activities	Degree of Involvement (mean ratings)			
	Men	VI	Women	VI
1. Production/ sourcing of raw materials	2.1	NMI	2.3	NMI
2. Transport of raw materials	2.4	NMI	2.1	NMI
3. Fiber Processing	3.2	MoI	3.5	MI
4. Production of dye stuff	1.5	NI	1.3	NI
5. Dyeing	1.2	NI	1.1	NI
6. Weaving	2.6	MoI	4.7	VMI
7. Weave design	3.1	MoI	4.3	VMI
8. Product development	3.4	MI	4.3	VMI
9. Marketing	2.4	NMI	4.4	VMI
10. Pricing of products	2.1	NMI	4.3	VMI

Despite the fact that weaving is a women dominated industry, men also involve themselves in the production cycle. They involve themselves in product development, fiber processing, weaving and weave designing. Textile related activities were undertaken to have extra income for the family. Most weavers are engaged in crop production as their major source of income. Rice and corn are the main crops produced by the family. The peak season of production is during the months of December to March and June to September. At the onset of the rainy season when harvesting is over, weavers

devote more time in the production of loom. However, if they have available time during crop production cycle, they spend a little time to weave.

Production of major crops such as rice and corn still constitute the greatest percentage contribution of the family income. This is being followed by vegetable and livestock production. This is due to the favorable agro-climatic condition of the province. In fact, the province has surplus supply of rice and corn. Among the weaving households, only 8% of the income come from weaving activities.

Table 4. Contribution of Livelihood activities to income (indicate percent contribution of the following economic activities to household income).

Economic activity	Percent contribution
Rice production	40
Corn Production	25
Vegetable production	12
Fruit production	3
Livestock production	12
Weaving and other textile industry related activities.	8

The fact that weaving is a women industry, men also share the responsibility by assisting in the processing of fiber crops or in the extraction of fibers, product development and marketing and suggesting in design of weaves. Activities such as establishment of contacts for raw materials, processing of fibers, weave designs, development of products from loom, packaging and marketing of their products are women's responsibility.

Table 5 shows the role of men and women in textile industry

Table 5. Role of men and women in textile industry

Activities	Men's role	Women's role
Sourcing of raw materials	-----	Establish contacts/ negotiate on price
Processing of fibers	Assist in the processing of fibers/ extract fibers	Process fibers
Weave Designing	Suggest designs	Design weave
Weaving	Assist in weaving when needed	Major activity of women
Product Development	Assist in product development	Develop product from woven fabrics
Packaging	----	Package products
Marketing	Assist in marketing products developed	Established market, sell products, product pricing

Looking at the benefit analysis, the thread (raw material) is basically used in weaving and in making accessories and handle, woven products are used in festivities, as accent to uniforms and in the production of buy products such as coin purse, bags, slippers and others. Men and women share responsibility on who decision making. Most activities in the production cycle is done by women. Most of the income derived from the industry are utilized for household

expenditures and as capital in buying raw materials. Relevant to how products are being used, men and women decides on the use of raw materials/ thread, woven products and some products derived from woven products like accent to uniforms and cellphone casing. Women decide on some use of by products from woven fabrics such as coin purse, bags, slippers and dress.

Table 6. Benefit Analysis

Products	How to used	Who decides	Who does it	If sold how cash is used	Who decides on use
Raw materials / thread	Accessories/ handle/ used in weaving	Women	MF	For household expenditures	MF
Woven products	Festivities/ uniform, etc	MF	F	For household expenditures	MF
By products of woven products					
- Coin Purse	Keep money	MF	F	For capital/ buying raw materials	F
- Bags	Keep things during travel/ accessories	F	F	For capital/ buying raw materials	F
- slippers	Use in home/ offices during siesta	MF	MF	For capital/ buying raw materials	F
- dress	Festivities/ special occasion	MF	F	For capital/ buying raw materials	F
- accent to uniforms	For identity/ fashion	MF	MF	For capital/ buying raw materials	MF
- cellphone casing	Protection/ hold cellphones	MF	MF	For capital/ buying raw materials	MF

There are various problems encountered by the respondents in the production cycle of their woven products. Among the problems identified by the respondents are limited market, high cost of thread, limited weave designs, poor quality of products and others. Abundance of raw materials both on fibers and dyestuff and the presence of line agencies such as DOST, DTI and TESDA are seen as opportunity for the industry to grow. Tapping the potentials of these would mean greater chance for the people in Apayao to prosper this industry.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above findings, women play a great role in the textile industry. They are the key players for they are the one involved in most of the textile related activities particularly weaving. Men also share responsibility in the textile industry by assisting the women perform their work.

It is hereby recommended that there is a need to conduct seminar/ training on gender sensitivity among men and women involved in the industry and to conduct training on fiber processing especially banana and abaca and other abundant fibers in Apayao to both men and women. Similar research should be conducted to other commodity looking at the contribution of both men and women in the industry.

REFERENCES

- Bird, Stewart, Georgakas, Dan, Shaffer, Deborah, eds., *Solidarity Forever: An Oral History of the IWW*, Lake View Press, Chicago, 1985
- Lewis, John Johnson. Historical Connections of Women and Weaving.
<http://womenshistory.about.com/od/artcrafts/tp/weaving.htm>
- Monteclaro, Agnes Rezalena. Loom Weaving: A Case Study.
http://www.wvcst.edu.ph/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=260&Itemid=266
- Sim, Jovita M. and D.T. Meldoz. **Women in Sweetpotato Enterprise Development in Aringay, La. Union and Baguio City**. BSU Research Journal. No. 48, September 2005.
- Women in Textiles.
http://www.lucyparsonspj.org/iww/women_in_textiles.html
- <http://www.norsu.edu.ph/colleges/CIT/thesis/chapter8.htm>