

SILK EXPORTS FORM INDIA

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1. INTRODUCTION

Silk the queen of textile still remains unconquered among different fabrics, both natural and man-made. India has the unique distinction of being the only country producing all the five kinds of silk - Mulberry, Eri, Muga, Tropical Tasar and Temperate (Oak) Tasar. Though India is the second largest silk producer in the World after China, it accounts for just 5% of the global silk market, since the bulk of Indian silk thread and silk cloth are consumed domestically. Germany is the largest consumer of Indian silk. Over six million farmers are involved in sericulture in India. The sericulture industry is land-based as silk worm rearing involves over 700,000 farm families and is concentrated in the four Southern states of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Thelungana (The states of Assam and West Bengal are also involved in the industry to a certain extent).

2. METHODOLOGY

This paper attempts to discover the problems of silk exports from India. As per the literature, there are many problems which are come cross during the exports of silk and its products. This paper used secondary data which are collected from various sources including Reserve Bank of Indian Bulletin and central silk board and various reports and journals.

3. SILK INDUSTRY

Silk weaving has been one of the traditional industries ever since historical times when silk dominated the fashion world and glitter of those times. Traditionally the origin of silk weaving is in India from where the technique of silk weaving spread to other Asian Countries like Japan, China etc. Export of silk products in any form of clothing amounts to exports of products that are indigenously produced in Cottage Industries.

Apart from earning foreign exchange these products lend lustre to enhancing the image of the country. Export of silk products though being over shadowed by other competitive products like linen would still retain its level of importance where the quality of product over the centuries over shadows any competitive material attempting it.

4. SILK AND WORLD TRADE

Silk has a minuscule percentage of the global textile fibre market less than 0.2%. This figure, however, is misleading, since the actual trading value of silk and silk products is much more impressive. This is a multibillion dollar trade, with a unit price for raw silk roughly twenty times that of raw cotton. The precise global value is difficult to assess, since reliable data on finished silk products is lacking in most importing countries. Unlike some other textiles, silk wearing traditions and demand go back a long way. A good example is India, where the local demand greatly exceeds supply and hampers export growth. India has thus become the largest importer of raw silk, despite the fact that it is now the second largest producer. Some other silk producers are also experiencing fast growing local demand, such as China, where consumers are increasingly able to afford the low price range silk products.

This pattern is also expected to repeat itself in Vietnam. Silk has been linked with sought-after creations by the biggest names in Fashion Houses. Yet, many admirers of spectacular garments shown on the catwalks of London, Milan, New York and Paris are unaware of the modern origins of this illustrious textile product. The fact is that the raw material comes from rural areas in developing countries and transition economies is in stark contrast to the affluent environment where elegant garments of famous fashion houses are presented to a select few. International Trade Council is involved in its work to help developing countries to improve their exports. In fact, today's largest producers and suppliers of raw silk and silk yarn are in Asia, with the notable exception of Brazil. A major reason why International Trade Council stays involved is because sericulture and silk production are labour intensive at the village level, employing both men and women at all stages of production.

In China, this sector occupies some 20 million farmers, as well as 500,000 people in the silk processing industry. In India, sericulture is a cottage industry in 59,000 villages. As one of the most labour intensive sectors of the Indian economy, it provides full and part time employment to some six million people. India is the second largest producer of silk next to China. While the annual Chinese silk production is to the tune of 65,000 metric tons, India produces only 15,000 tons a year. Other world silk players are Brazil, Korea, Japan & Vietnam. Silk weavers in India have contributed to the development and fame of Indian silk. Across the length and breadth of the country, generations of weavers continue to create magic giving their creations a distinct touch - through the use of colors and designs.

Table No 1.1. Export of Silk from India from 1997 to 2017

Year	Exports (Rs)	Trend value (Rs)
1997-98	1006.43	1422.85
1998-99	999.45	1593.74
1999-00	1755.55	1764.64
2000-01	2421.98	1935.53
2001-02	2359.56	2106.43
2002-03	2294.05	2277.32
2003-04	2779.19	2448.22
2004-05	2879.56	2619.11
2005-06	3194.20	2790.01
2006-07	3338.35	2960.90
2007-08	3427.87	3131.80
2008-09	3488.19	3302.69
2009-10	3492.44	3473.59
2010-11	3559.56	3644.48
2011-12	3694.05	3815.38
2012-13	3969.56	2106.43
2013-14	3999.05	2277.32
2014-15	3999.99	2448.22
2015-16	4001.56	2619.11
2016-17	4002.56	2806.43

Source: Central Silk Board, Bangalore, 2018

Table 1.1 explains about the silk and silk products are exports from India, during 1997-98 to 2016-17. The data realities that continuously increasing up to 2011-12 from 1997 after that the export level is declining due to high order demand in domestic market domestic demand is increasing our the year and it damage the since of exports from India. However the raw silks importing more from foreign countries.

Table 1.2. Silks Exports from India (%)

S.No	Exports	2017	2016
1	Silk yarn	0.35	0.40
2	Fabrics, madeups	25.09	27.90
3	Readymade garments	118.79	111.49
4	Silk carpet	3.66	21.70
5	Silk wastes	9.66	4.64
Total		157.81	166.13

Source: DGCI & S Kolkata, 2018

Table 1.2 provides information regarding silks exports from India during 2016 and 2017 by different silk commodities like silk yarn, fabrics, readymade garments and silk carpet. The silk garment item is increasing from 111.49 to 118.79 but same other products are declining due to unfavorable terms of trade and increasing domestic demand the silk wastages are also increasing during the periods. India had traditional relationship with Thailand, Europe, Gulf countries, North America and Magnolia. The specific ideas about the silk products of the nations are follows.

4.1 Thailand

Silk is produced in Thailand's favorable climate by two types of silkworms, the cultured *Bombycidae* and wild *Saturniidae*, all the year round, mostly after the rice harvest by villagers from the central and northeast parts of the country. Women traditionally weave silk on hand looms, and pass the skill on to their daughters as weaving is considered to be a sign of maturity and eligibility for marriage. Thai silk textiles often use complicated patterns in various colors and styles.

4.2 Roman World

The Roman Empire knew of and traded in silk. During the reign of emperor Tiberius, sumptuary laws were passed that forbade men from wearing silk garments, but these proved ineffectual. Despite the popularity of silk, the secret of silk making was only to reach Europe around AD

550, via the Byzantine Empire. Legend has it those monks working for the emperor Justinian I smuggled silkworm eggs to Constantinople in hollow canes.

The Byzantines were as secretive as the Chinese, and for many centuries the weaving and trading of silk fabric was a strict imperial monopoly all top quality looms and weavers were located inside the Palace complex in Constantinople and the cloth produced was used in imperial robes or in diplomacy, as gifts to foreign dignitaries. The remainder was sold at very high prices.

4.3 Islamic World

In Islamic teachings, Muslim men are forbidden to wear silk. Many religious jurists believe the reasoning behind the prohibition lies in avoiding clothing for men that can be considered feminine or extravagant. Despite injunctions against silk for men, silk has retained its popularity in the Islamic world because of its permissibility for women. The Muslim Moors brought silk with them to Spain during their conquest of the Iberian Peninsula.

4.4 Medieval and Modern Europe

Venetian merchants traded extensively in silk and encouraged silk growers to settle in Italy. By the 13th century, Italian silk was a significant source of trade. Since that period, the silk worked in the province of Como has been the most valuable silk in the world. The wealth of Florence was largely built on textiles, both wool and silk and other cities like Lucca also grew rich on the trade. Italian silk was so popular in Europe that Francis I of France invited Italian silk makers to France to create a French silk industry, especially in Lyon.

Mass emigration (especially of Huguenots) during periods of religious dispute had seriously damaged French industry and introduced these various textile industries, including silk, to other countries. James I attempted to establish silk production in England, purchasing and planting 100,000 mulberry trees, some on land adjacent to Hampton Court Palace, but they were of a species unsuited to the silk worms and the attempt failed. Production started elsewhere later. In Italy, the Stazione Bacologica Sperimentale was founded in Padua in 1871 to research sericulture. In the late 19th century, China, Japan, and Italy were the major producers of silk.

The most important cities for silk production in Italy were Como and Meldola (Forli). In medieval times, it was common for silk to be used to make elaborate casings for bananas and other fruits. Silk was expensive in Medieval Europe and used only by the rich. Italian merchants like Giovanni Arnolfini became hugely wealthy trading it to the Courts of Northern Europe.

4.5 North America

James I of England introduced silk-growing to the American colonies around 1619, ostensibly to discourage tobacco planting. Only the Shakers in Kentucky adopted the practice. In the 1800s a new attempt at a silk industry began with European-born workers in Paterson, New Jersey, and the city became a US silk center, although Japanese imports were still more important. World War II interrupted the silk trade from Japan. Silk prices increased dramatically, and US industry began to look for substitutes, which led to the use of synthetics such as nylon. Synthetic silks have also been made from lyocell, a type of cellulose fiber, and are often difficult to distinguish from real silk.

4.6 Mongolia

Mongols used silk as part of the under-armor garments. Silk is tough enough that it was used as very light armor, though its special use was to stop arrow penetration into the body. The silk would stop an arrow from penetrating far enough into the body to be lethal, and the arrow could be pulled out of the wound by tugging on the unbroken silk. The head of an arrow pulled out this way would not contact the body, reducing the likelihood of infection.

5. CONCLUSION

Silk and silk products are exported to various countries like UK, USA and Gulf countries at large even though this industry has faced many problems like marketing, finance, technical knowledge and other problems of government can help to the silk and silk product exports units in India, it will attract more foreign currencies and earnings of also lead good relations for other products.

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