

GENDER PARTICIPATION AND WOMEN'S VIEWS ON THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY IN BAGUIO CITY AND BENGUET PROVINCE⁴

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ABSTRACT

The study documented gender participation, women's textile-related activities contribution to household income, and women's views of the textile industry in Baguio City and Benguet Province. Rapid market and municipal surveys were conducted, followed-up with informal in-depth interviews and case histories of some key players such as the thread and yarn suppliers, the weavers, knitters and manufacturers of textile-based products, the wholesalers and retailers of finished products, and farmers engaged in sericulture.

Women are the prime movers of the textile industry representing 97% of the textile players in Baguio City and Benguet Province. Women function as proprietors-managers of weaving, wholesaling and retailing enterprises, and as weaver-designers of woven fabrics and made-up products in addition to their responsibilities in household and food management, child care and education. Participation of women in textile industry-related activities contributes PhP750-70,000 per month to their household income which makes the women feel empowered, i.e. less dependent on husband's income, stronger influence in household decisions and recognition of their talents.

The textile industry is a potential investment opportunity and employment for women and men, regardless of education, age and time involvement, and is presently more in the informal sector. It has an important role in the tourist economy of the city and province attracting worker migrants mostly from Mountain Province and Ifugao.

KEYWORDS: textile industry, gender participation, weaving, women of business, knitting, buying and selling, sericulture, and indigenous practices,

INTRODUCTION

The textile industry is among the top three export earners of the Philippines but little is known about the women's contribution to this industry. Men and women play complementary roles in income generation, but in many instances it is the women that play multiple roles. In addition to traditional women's job such as child care, housekeeping, food preparation, and other activities such as gardening, weaving, knitting

and crocheting are recognized contributors in keeping household economies self-sufficient. Yet, these women's contribution in sustaining the household economy and the textile industry as a whole, particularly in Baguio City and Benguet Province is unknown or undervalued.

The textile industry in Baguio City and Benguet Province basically belongs to the

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informal household enterprises. Women are perceived to dominate primary textile processing activities like weaving, knitting, crocheting, spinning, dyeing of thread and finishing. Some are also engaged in the trading and supply of threads, yarns and other raw materials, the selling of finished products, and the production and processing of fibers such as silk and maguey. In these activities, there is a lack of gender disaggregated data to fully understand how men and women contribute to the textile industry.

Therefore, this study aimed to: (a) document gender participation in the textile industry, (b) describe the characteristics of women and men engaged in the textile industry, (c) assess contribution of textile industry-related activities to household income, (d) determine the views and ideas of women on weaving, sericulture and other aspects of the textile industry, (e) determine the risks and constraints in the participation of women in the textile industry and (f) identify areas for improving women's conditions and participation in the textile industry.

METHODOLOGY

The target group identification started with the collection of secondary data and inventory of the industry from concerned institutions and government units in Baguio City and all the municipalities in Benguet. A follow-up fieldwork using a combination of data gathering techniques like key informant interviews and observations were done. There were 69 entrepreneurs and 14 organizations interviewed, comprising of 330 men and women. Semi-structured interview guides were used. Case studies on selected women informants were done to give more in-depth discussions of women in the textile industry. Key questions asked include the following: (1) What are the characteristics of gender relations in terms of gender divisions of labor, men's and women's access and control of resources, women's participation in decision making at household/community level and

organizational capacity, images of women and men, and women's physical integrity, (2) What ideas and views do men and women have on weaving, sericulture and other aspects of the textile industry, and (3) What are the barriers in the social or economic aspects to women's participation in the textile industry.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description of the Textile Industry

The textile industry in Baguio City and Benguet Province includes the trading and processing of threads and yarns into finished products, and the buying and selling of finished products made up mostly of woven and knitted fabrics; components of sericulture; and the processing of *maguey* or *sisal* fibers. Processing activities include spinning, weaving, knitting, crocheting, dyeing, sewing and finishing into textile goods. Sericulture includes silkworm rearing, cocoon production, processing, and silk reeling.

Being the regional center of trade, 48% of the textile players in Benguet are found in Baguio; 23% in the municipality of La Trinidad; 15% from the municipalities of Atok, Tublay and Mankayan; 10% from Tuba, Itogon and Kabayan; and 2% are from other Benguet municipalities. The remaining 2% sourced their textile products from other provinces like Mountain Province, Ilocos Sur and Ifugao (Figure 1). Women from other provinces take part in the Baguio-Benguet textile industry. Nearby provinces like Mountain Province, Ifugao, La Union and Ilocos Sur sell their products in the city because their products are purposely for the use of Benguet people; and because some are regular and hired weavers or knitters of Baguio-Benguet based textile traders and wholesalers.

There are three kinds of textile business organizations mentioned in Baguio City and Benguet Province: single



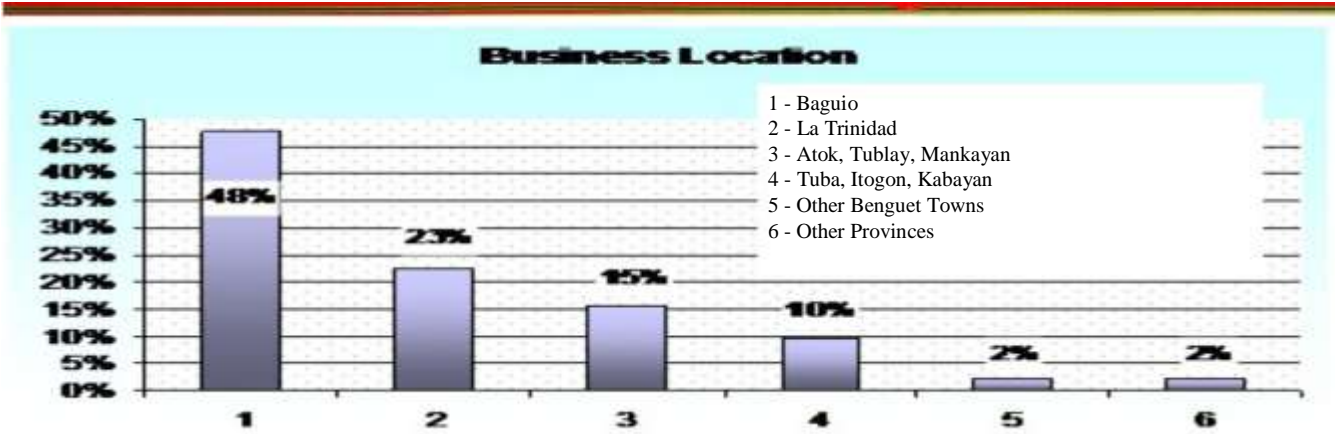


Figure 1. Location of textile-based industry in Benguet Province

proprietorship, corporation and non-government organizations (NGO's) as shown in figure 2. Most of the interviewed respondents claimed that their textile business are sole proprietorship regardless whether this are formally licensed or belongs to the informal sector; 17% claimed that the business is owned by the association; 4% are private corporations like Narda's and Easter Weaving; and the rest of the respondents are mere employees or contract weavers.

Extent of Gender Participation in the Textile Industry

Involvement of women and men.

Women dominate the industry than the men (Table 1). Women are engaged in weaving, knitting and the buying and selling of woven, knitted, crocheted and finished products which constitute the bulk of the industry; while the men are mostly into the buying and selling of

finished products and sericulture. Crocheting was not mentioned although crocheted products are sold along with woven and knitted products. Financing was also mentioned by some traders who supply raw materials, have their own market outlets of finished products and have regular or contact weavers.

Activities of women and men. Weaving and knitting are activities done by women mostly on a part-time basis (Table 2). They devote 2-7 hours a day, or beyond when there are job orders. Part-time job supports the multiple roles of women whose main responsibilities include housekeeping and child caring. However, for women and men entrepreneurs, management of the textile business, which includes buying and selling activities, some into financing of weavers and finishing of textile products, is a full-time job where they spend even beyond 9hrs/day (Tables 2 and 3). In some instances,

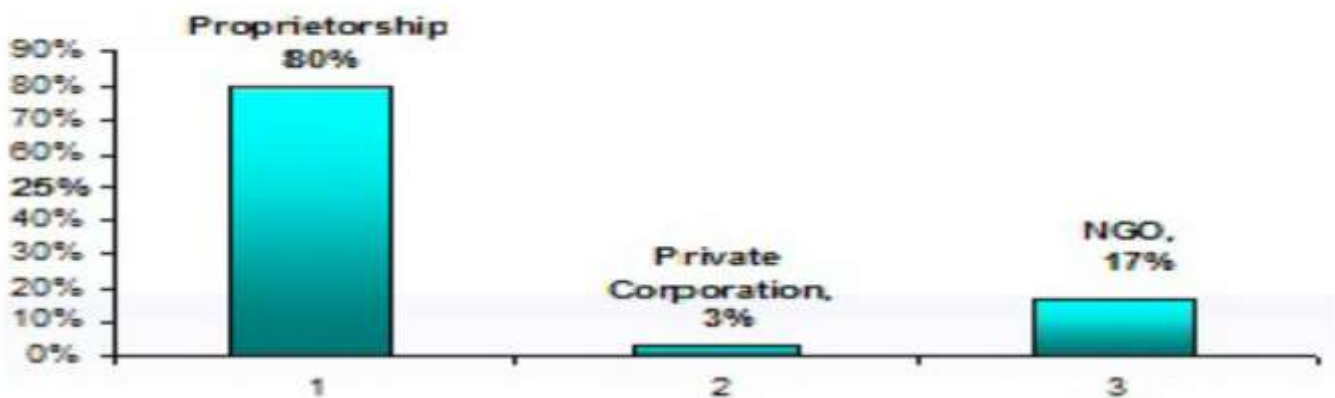


Fig. 2. Kinds of textile business organizations

Table 1. Number of men and women engaged in the different aspects of the textile industry in Baguio City and Benguet Province, Cordillera Region

TEXTILE INDUSTRY ASPECTS	WO-MEN	MEN	ORGANIZATION	TOTAL	
				#	%
1 Weaving	23	-	5	28	34
2 Knitting	5	-	-	5	6
3 Trading-FP	13	6	2	21	25
4 Trading- RM	2	1	-	3	4
5 Weaving, knitting & trading of finished products	15	1	6	22	26
6 Weaving, knitting & trading of raw materials	2	-	-	2	2.5
7 Sericulture	1	-	1	2	2.5
TOTAL	61	8	14	83	100
8 Sericulture members*	7	13	-	-	-
9 Members/ contract workers/ employees of weaving PO's	240	1	-	-	-
TOTAL	308	22	-	330	-
	93	7	-	-	100

2008.

Table 2. Activities by women and men on a part-time and fulltime basis in the textile industry of Baguio City and Benguet Province

TEXTILE INDUSTRY ACTIVITIES AND TIME INVOLVEMENT	% OF RESPONDENTS			
	WOMEN		MEN	
	PART-TIME	FULLTIME	PART-TIME	FULLTIME
1 Weaving	31	0	-	-
2 Knitting	6	0	-	-
3 Buying and selling	3	12	0	19
4 Management	0	37	5	14
5 Sericulture	7	1	62	
TOTAL	100		100	

in the case of Mrs. Pili of Kabayan Weaving and Arts, the husband took over the responsibility of looking after the children; or in the case of Mrs. Cabasoy, a thread trader at Hilltop-Baguio, child care was relegated. These are examples where the combination of housekeeping, child caring and textile business overworks women as mentioned by the Pambansang Kalipunan ng mga Manggagawang Impormal sa Pilipinas (PATAMABA, 2005). That is why the assistance of husband's and children specifically in re-

winding threads, dyeing raw materials and taking over some housekeeping jobs is a big relief for women, for them to cope up with their weaving, child caring, food preparation and other responsibilities.

Weaving and knitting are culturally a women's job. These are jobs which requires patience that better



Table 3. Time spent by women and men in the textile industry

TIME INCURRED	% OF WOMEN/ MEN
1 2 to 4 hrs	27
2 4-7hrs	33
3 7-9hrs	20
4 9hrs	20
TOTAL	100

suits women’s temperament. Knitting became a men’s job when bigger and heavier knitting machines were introduced by textile companies. Unfortunately, most of this textile companies closed down. That is why some men knitters were employed in the informal sector.

Role of women and men in the textile industry. The textile industry in Baguio City and Benguet Province belongs to the informal sector. Those involved are members, job-contract workers or employees of non-government and business organizations (Table 4). There are few household-based weaving/knitting proprietors who are registered. Most textile processing activities are hidden under the business registration of wholesaler-retailers of textile goods and other products. Women outnumber men as proprietors, as managers, and as members, job-contract workers or employees of organizations involved in the textile business.

Role of the textile business in the empowerment of women. Thirty six percent of the women interviewed claimed that their textile business is the main source of their family income

(Table 5). In the case of Mrs. Modesto who had been in the business since the 1980’s (when her husband is still an employee at Lepanto Mines) claimed that her textile business (buying and selling of threads and finished products) is a continuous business enabling her to acquire material wealth. Mrs. Dagoyen, the president of the West Quirino Hill Weavers Association claimed that weaving business is her main source of income since she is already widowed. Her weaving business also supplement the income of her married children. The women who regard their textile business as supplemental source of income, claimed that weaving had provided the school allowance of their children (as in the case of Mrs. Paduyao at Loakan, Baguio City and Mrs. Calpotura at Lepanto Mines), and helped them buy food or pay their debt from the sari-sari store as in the case of Mrs. Wakit of Itogon. Weaving is also the skill of migrant women from Mountain Province who came to Baguio City and La Trinidad, Benguet for employment.

Weaving is not merely an activity because of income, or else these women should find other financially-rewarding activities. Women are continuously involved with weaving because they have already embraced it as part of their lives. Reinforced by the passion they have in the crafts, they have learned to deal with the dilemma faced by the textile industry. Young women are prompted to learn the skills culturally passed on to them. Weaving became instrumental to some women to attain their present situation - political leaders in their respective areas like Leonarda Paduyao, Antonia Dagoyen, and Wilma Capuyan. There are others who were

Table 4. Role of women and men engaged in textile business in Baguio City and Benguet

ROLE	% OF RESPONDENTS		
	TOTAL	WOMEN	MEN
Proprietor	11	9.8	2.1
Corporation manager	.5	.5	
Cooperative chairman	.3		.3
Non-government organization/ association president	3	2.3	.5
NGO/NGA members/ contract workers	85.2	79.6	5.7
TOTAL	100	92.2	8.6

Table 5. Role of the textile business as a livelihood among households engaged in the textile industry in Baguio City and Benguet Province

SOURCES OF LIVELIHOOD	% OF WOMEN		% OF MEN	
	MAIN	SUPPLEMENTAL	MAIN	SUPPLEMENTAL
1 Textile business/ activities	36	29	50	17
2 Employment	17	7	0	17
3 Farming	2	3	0	0
4 Other Business/ Jobs	4	2	8	8
TOTAL		100		100

successful in their own crafts related to textile like Narda Capuyan, Maxencia Pili, Rubilyn Mayat-an, Carmen Modesto, and Francing Cabasoy to name some. These women have one thing in common-the dedication and diligence to excel in their chosen fields. As to their life stories, they have overcome and continue to rise above the expectation of being a wife, a mother and as a woman.

Extent of women participation in decision-making. In any countries, the women shoulders most of the responsibilities and tasks related to the care and nurturing of the family (including laundry, food preparation, cleaning, child care, and care of the sick). These tasks add to women's workload and are often an obstacle to engage in political action or in expanding economic activities (UN, 2002). In this study, it shows that women have high participation in the textile business, yet they still assert their decisions on some important issues on family like food purchase and child care (Table 6). Based on these findings, it can be stated that women especially the respondents from Mountain Province, have the authority in the

family. This implies that with this authority, it is their responsibility to ensure that the family is doing well in all aspects.

In a study conducted in East Timor, women weave new opportunities, culture and commerce for development thus, considering hand-weaving as threads of hope. The weaving process is a social process undertaken communally with often four generations of women, providing spaces for individual and communal expression and creativity. The whole process fosters and strengthens intergenerational relationships and processes of cooperation between genders (ETWA, 2009).

Characteristics of Women and Men Actively Involved in the Textile Industry

Other occupation of women and men engaged in the textile industry. Women who does part-time job in the textile industry claimed that their other work includes being a full-time housewife, as farmers in sericulture, as *barangay* officials, buyers and sellers of non-textile goods, and the rest as employees or in other business.

Table 6. Participation of women in decision-making in the society

ACTIVITIES/ CONCERNS	% OF WOMEN'S RATING ON THEIR PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING				
	Strong	Less strong	Compromise	Weak	Total
Textile business	91		9		100
Food purchase	87	3	10		100
Education of children	58	4	13	4	100
Child care	75	5	10	10	100
Small household investment	57	5	38		100
Other capital investment	56	13	25	6	100

This result proved that being a housewife is still the priority of the women even if they are employed, in business or in politics. Likewise, for men, sericulture is also part of their farming occupation, with seven percent serving as a baran-gay official and the remaining 14% are engaged in other business (Table 7).

Table 7. Other occupation of women and men engaged in part-time textile industry activities

OTHER OCCUPATION	% OF RESPONDENTS	
	WOMEN	MEN
Housewife	46	
Barangay official	8	7
Buy and sell	16	
Sericulture	22	79
Others	8	14
TOTAL	100	100

Age range and years in textile. Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) study shows that there are only few females between the age 17 and 30 who are engaged in weaving (DTI, 2007). This is due to other profitable employment opportunities for them in the urban centers like Baguio and La Trinidad. In this particular study, 62% of both women and men textile players are within the age of 25 to 50 years old. The remaining are more than fifty years old (Table 8). As to the years in textile business, 31% of them have been involved in the textile industry from 11 to 20 years; 28% have devoted their time in weaving for more than 20 years; 25% are with the textile trading business for less than 5 years;

and 16 % are in the business for five to ten years (Figure 3).

Table 8. Age group of the women and men involved in the textile industry

AGE GROUP	% OF RESPONDENTS		
	WOMEN	MEN	BOTH
25-50 years	56	6	62
More than 50 years	33	5	38

Civil Status. Married women and men comprised 84% of those engaged in the textile industry while the single, widowed or separated comprised 16%. This shows similar result with the DTI case study (2007), that weaving industry employs mostly married women as weavers, traders, managers, and sewers.

Table 9. Civil status of women and men in the textile industry

CIVIL STATUS	% OF RESPONDENTS		
	WOMEN	MEN	BOTH
Single, widowed, separated	16	0	16
Married	73	11	84

Ethnic group. Migrant women from Mountain Province mostly from the municipalities of Besao, Bontoc, and Sagada dominate the industry (Figure 4). It is good that Benguet people are now inclined into weaving unlike in the old days where the Benguet woven cloths were purchased from Ilocos.

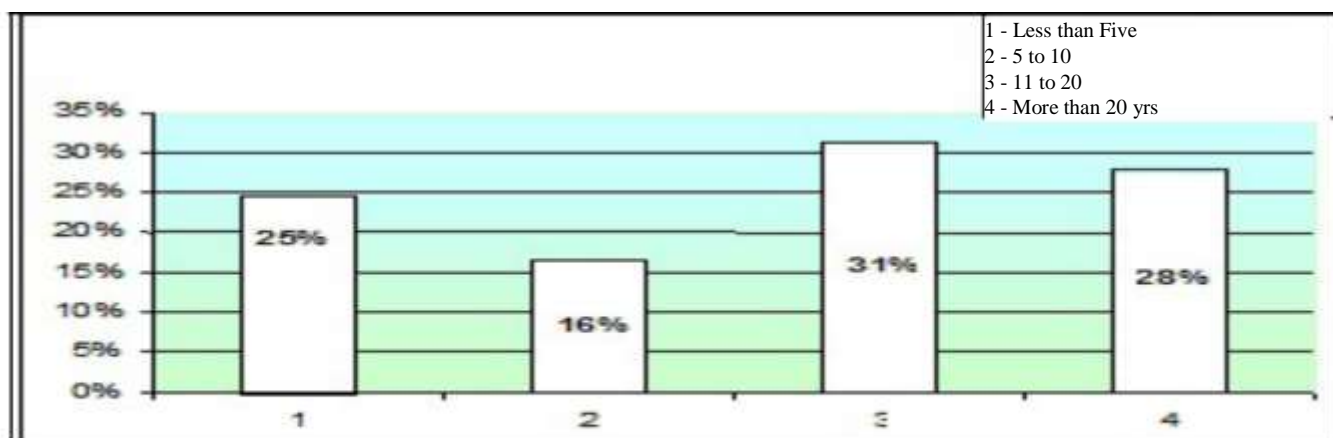


Fig.3. Number of years women and men are engaged in the textile business

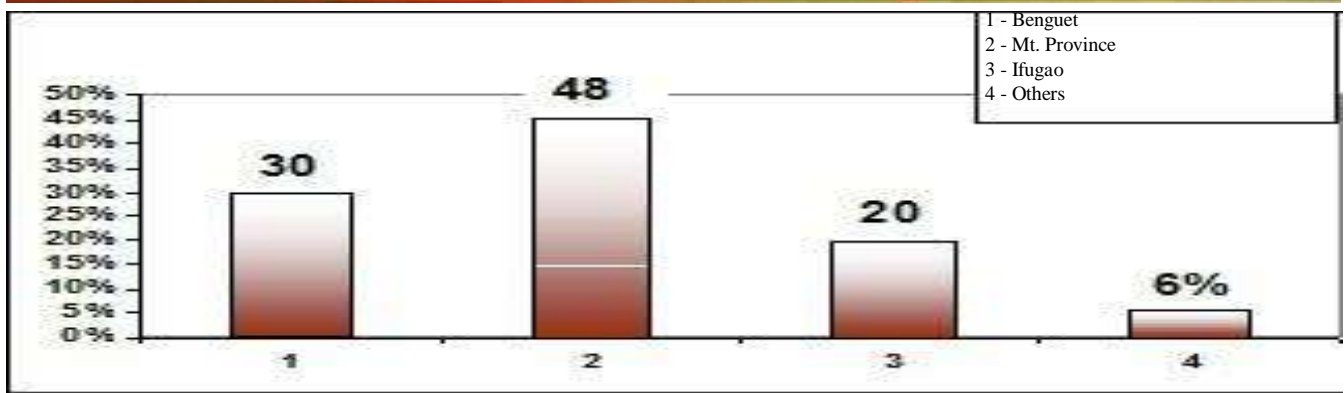


Fig. 4. Ethnic affiliation of women and men textile players

Educational attainment. In this particular study, there are 47% who were able to attained and graduated in college; 29% have entered or graduated from high school level; 22% reached elementary level and 4% have no formal education. In some studies like DTI, weavers have only reached the elementary level. In this study, it was observed that most of the respondents who are college graduate are mostly engaged in textile trading business as a result of being unemployed, underemployed, or taking over the business from their parents. Most of the weavers and knitters have only reached elementary, secondary level or college drop outs. Others who have availed of the non-formal education are more than 50 years old.

Table 10. Educational attainment of women and men engaged in the textile industry

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	% OF RESPONDENTS		
	WOMEN	MEN	BOTH
1 Elementary	20	2	22
2 High school	27	2	29
3 College	38	9	47
4 Non-formal education	4	0	4

Membership in organization. The textile industry in Baguio City and Benguet Province is not yet well-established. Only women weavers have some sort of organization, 59% of the industry players are not members of any organization, while the rest are members of non-textile related organizations like barangay council and market vendors association (Table 11).

Table 11. Women and men membership in textile industry organizations

MEMBERSHIP IN ORGANIZATIONS		% OF RESPONDENTS		
		WOMEN	MEN	BOTH
1	None	50	9	59
2	Weaver's/ women organization	26	0	26
3	Other organizations	12	3	15

Existing weaving organizations are weak as most were formed to avail of loans, training and market. Some members did not pay; others got orders and market on their own. They recognize that their organization depends on sustenance of their members. Because of the conditions demanded from the association, others prefer to work independently. In some cases, the association (not women or weavers' group) is helps in the security of space in their areas.

Views of the Women and Men Involved in the Textile Industry

Views on skill providers. Most of the women respondents claimed that weaving and knitting are skills learned from elders, especially for the women in Mt. Province and Ifugao. The skill of weaving G-strings and 'tapis' is a highly priced economic skill of Ifugao women in the early 19th century based on the documentation made by



Roces (1991). Some younger generation weavers still have a high regard on the quality of products being made by the old weavers (mother). Younger weavers learned the skills from their neighbors and informal trainings provided by woven product suppliers like Mrs. Bugnosen. Acquiring weaving skills is a necessity in order to earn income and for them not to be dependent on their husband as claimed by Mrs. Daguyen, Mrs. Wakit, Mrs. Cabigat and others. Having the basic skills on weaving is also a requirement for women who are employed by weaving firms like Narda's and Easter Weaving. A man also learned the skills of making woven slippers from a friend. On the other hand, there are 11%, mostly in Benguet, who have learned the skills from formal trainings conducted by DTI, Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and the missionaries in Ifugao. The remaining 17% learned their skills from their parents or neighbors and were further enhanced by the formal trainings they have attended.

The trainings were on loom weaving (thus enhancing their back strapped weaving skills), Sagada's design and color combinations. However, the weavers claimed that skills enhancement trainings done are very limited. Sentiments of the weavers from the livelihood service providers are: there should be follow-up trainings on color combinations or new designs, and some financing for the home-based weavers in order for them to purchase bulk threads and products. For example, although some women were trained on silk thread weaving, the present handlooms are not configured for silk thread weaving. Weaving skills will continuously be passed on as long as there are interested individuals willing to learn and teach their skills.

Source of labor and views on labor.

Consistent with the kind of business organizations, workers employed in the household proprietorships are members of the family with some hiring one or two helpers, or maintain a

Table 12. Source of skill providers in learning and improving textile processing

SKILL SOURCE	% OF RESPONDENTS		
	WOMEN	MEN	BOTH
1 Informal (parents/ neighborhood)	69	3	72
2 Formal (trainings/ school)	11	0	11
3 Both formal & informal	17	0	17

regular number of contract weavers or product suppliers. Private corporations hire women weavers or piece-rate workers. The NGO's have their members as contract weavers or piece-rate workers (Table 13).

Most of the wholesaler and retailers of woven/knitted products have their own regular suppliers and contract weavers or knitters. Contract workers prefer to be paid for their labor only but they are paid on a per piece basis which they claimed is too low. They have no choice since they were supplied or given a loan of thread which will be deducted later on from the payment of their output; or they engage in weaving only as a part-time. There is no shortage of skilled weavers, sometimes husband or children help especially in rewinding threads and transport of products. For women engaged in trading of threads and finished products, they claimed that they have a shortened time for their family. Knitting / weaving industry employed many, but the present lack of demand, knitters or weavers were laid off, e.g. from 25 to only 3 knitters of the Sim's Knitwear.

Views on starting capital. Weaving, knitting, and crocheting are home-based industry such that initial investment are usually small, loaned from DSWD, TESDA, credit suppliers (sister/ parents), from savings, earnings from working abroad, and from formal institutions like banks and Baguio-Benguet Community Credit Cooperative. Capital source is not a problem. Starting capital of the sole proprietors or



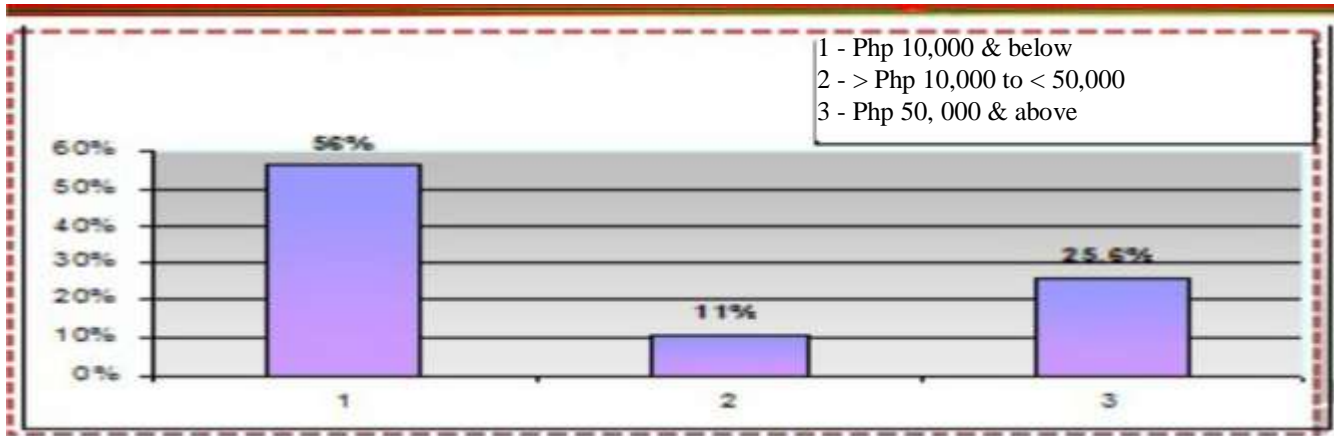


Fig. 5. Initial capital of women and men textile proprietors

Table 13. Source of labor employed in the textile industry

SOURCE OF LABOR	%
1 Family	56
2 Hired	7
3 Family & hired	13
4 Family & contract workers or product suppliers	24

household entrepreneurs range from PhP1500 to PhP300,000, the lowest capitalization in the 1980's and the latest this 2008. Initial capital is mostly used for buying threads or yarns, textile products and the construction of looms. Most (56.4%) of those who are in household-based weaving, and those who started before the 20th century have lower initial capital (Figure 5). The initial amount invested often excludes the credit they have obtained from their suppliers. However, for those engaged in buying and selling of textile finished products especially the late comers in the thread business, they need a bigger capital to stock products. Trading of threads and finished products needs an initial capital of PhP50,000 although there is no limitation on the amount of needed capital when engaging into this kind of business. The respondents did not mention a need for capital source. Apparently, there are enough lending organizations, in addition to the thread-credit suppliers.

Views on contribution to income. The textile industry is a source of part-time or full-time employment for mothers, and an investment

opportunity for those having savings. Income from textile-related activities provided a source of extra money for the education of children, for food (no debt from store) and for women who don't have to be dependent on husband's income. Investors also did it to provide employment for others. For some, weaving is also an alternative if not a better source of income than gardening.

As to the income derived from the textile activities (Table 14), majority of the women are earning PhP5,000 and below from their textile-related activities. This income is consistent with the result that most textile business is into household-based weaving and as a part-time activity. Monthly net income ranges from PhP750 to PhP70,000 for the 41 respondents who revealed their income.

Table 14. Net income by women and men in the textile business

NET INCOME PER MONTH (PHP)	%
Below 5000	56
5,000 to 10,000	17
10,000-20,000	15
More than 20000	12

Views on products. The textile industry products is dominated by the woven fabrics and its made-up products like coin purses, bags, wall decors, native costumes, formal attire and upholstery materials.



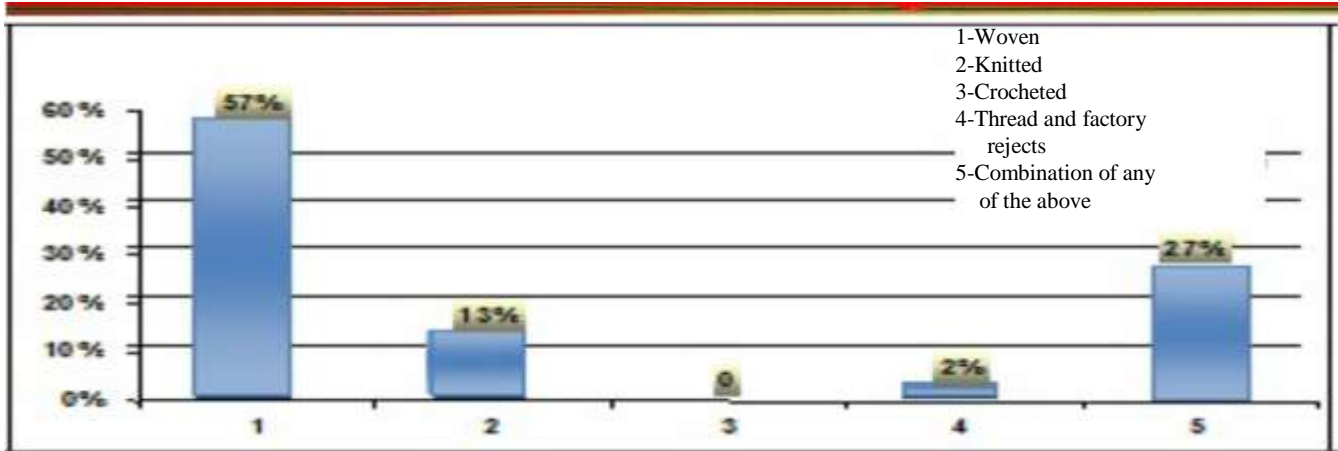


Fig. 6. Textile products processed and sold in Baguio City and Benguet Province

This is followed by a combination of any textile products- woven, knitted, or crocheted (27%) and purely knitted products (13%) which are usually sold to tourists. Those who are into the trading of raw materials like thread, yarns and textile factory rejects comprise the remaining 2% but these traders are also selling woven or knitted products (Figure 6). There is no proprietor who is into crocheted product processing and selling per se because it is combined and sold along with other products.

According to wholesalers-retailers, there are many suppliers of woven, knitted and crocheted products; that small items like purse, cell phone cases, bonnets, foot rugs, etc. are easier to sell. Sometimes, demand is more than their current stocks that they have to buy from big-time suppliers. Small weavers/knitters do not stock. The big-time product suppliers are the thread traders who lend or have their unsold threads be woven by others and they buy back and stock the finished products.

The designs of the products are passed on or copied from one weaver/knitter to another thus resulting to price competition and sacrifice of quality. However, those who create their own designs of products like Mrs. Kigis and Narda's enjoy an advantage as they have better quality

and can dictate price. Retailers claimed that end-product buyers are always looking for new

designs and good color combinations. Present designs are dictated by available thread or orders of labor contractors cum thread traders (dull colors, Sagada design, pot wall hangers). They claimed that there will always be buyers of textile products; and said, it is better than wood carvings as textile goods can be stocked for longer years, but they also have to sell a variety of products. The designs of the knitted products are also dependent on the current trends/fads to make these sellable.

Source and views on raw materials.

Most (73%) of the small-scale producers depend on the thread suppliers found in Baguio and La Trinidad for their weaving-knitting activities. These thread traders who have bigger capital to buy bulk quantity of threads are procuring raw materials from Metro Manila (10%), from Baguio and other provinces like Ilocos Sur (16%), and the least percentage of respondents (1%) is sourcing out raw materials from other provinces. Availability of raw materials is crucial. They said, that as long as there is thread, there is weaving. Availability and cost of threads are affected by global industry trends. Industry analysis showed a serious lack of locally produced raw materials, prompting some textile companies in Metro Manila to closed. With the rising price of thread and the unstable supply of mercerized cotton or color of the thread needed, many weavers would like to buy in advance and stock the thread. Other weavers even stopped because of the increase in cost of raw materials.



Views on market or product outlets.

Findings show that 89% of the respondent's sell their products in Baguio and La Trinidad. Only 6% had both local and export sales to markets in the United States, Japan, Europe, Canada and Australia. These exporters are weaving firms like Narda's Trading, Easter Weaving Room, Mayatan Handicrafts, and Kabayan Weaving and Arts. The remaining 5% have market outlets not only within Baguio and La Trinidad but also in Metro Manila and other provinces. These are the traders who have contact buyers from Metro Manila and other provinces.

From tourism viewpoint, Baguio is now an established source of woven/knitted products. However, the local market now is not as good as in past (before 2008) since it was affected by global recession, meningococemia scare, export over runs, used clothes imports and others. Price competition (*bagsakan* of prices) is common but then quality of products suffered and some stopped weaving. Market buyers, although regular, are not enough, hence their clamor for a centralized market center for promotion and exports. The cultural presentations, tourism, and the move to use ethnic designs for uniforms have contributed to the increase in sales of woven products. Also, due to decrease of buyers, there is a tendency to close the business during rainy season and opens when peak tourist season comes.

Views on machines. The hand loom machines patterned after the Ilocano looms originally provided mostly as grants by government agencies like DSWD, TESDA, DTI, DOLE, and mining companies like Lepanto and Philex, were used as patterns for those who invested in their own loom machines. Usually, it is the husband who will construct the loom for their wife. The hand loom machine is an improvement from the traditional back strapped weaving. However, for weaving of newly introduced fibers like abaca and bamboo, there is still a need for replacement of some parts like the '*gal-on*'. There are also looms/knitting machines previously loaned to associations or belonging to individuals which are now idled as

some weavers and knitters stopped operations either they have no orders or they shifted to other more lucrative employment.

Views on sericulture. Sericulture is a full-time job requiring two or more family members to work together, since maintenance of the mulberry field, gathering and hauling of mulberry leaves, and taking care of the silkworms are time consuming job. The promise of high returns as lectured is also not true because of the high labor incurred to maintain mulberry fields and the seasonality of production, aggravated with the delayed payment of cocoons. However, it helps in supplementing farm income once the mulberry plantation and rearing houses are already established. Sericulture is not an exclusive activity for men; there are women who are into this kind of activity. In fact, one of those who had sustained this venture is a woman (Mrs. Agustina Ambes). Her husband assists her in the clearing and cleaning of the mulberry plantation.

Views on local government support.

Local government unit support to the textile industry has been limited to one-time budget provision for training and has no follow-up. Sad to say, the textile industry is not being attended to by the local government. Local governments can now maximize their resources and raise revenues. Given the right leadership, local institutions may develop ingenious ways of raising revenues or even enlisting the involvement of the local private sector for their development programs. Further, this ability of local governments to carry out programs on their own also translates to more responsive governance. This principle can be applied to the textile industry. (LOGODEV 2008)

Risks and Constraints in the Participation of Women in the Textile Industry

Weaving is an activity that needs patience and dedication. Those engaged for long period of time suffers



from back pain, neck pain, pain in the buttocks and eye strain. Weaving could not be done for longer hours because physical health will suffer. As a coping mechanism, weavers and knitters are using eye glasses. It is also advised not to wash hands after the weaving activity to prevent uncontrolled shaking and profuse sweating of hands, a condition locally termed as '*pasma*'. Dust from the threads and from road dust affects some weavers, retailers and their families. These health risks however, do not pose a threat to the industry. They are more threatened with losing their markets- under pricing by others, lower costs from imports, competition from imported second hand clothes, copying of their original designs and creations, and security of their retail area.

The problem on security of space is being experienced by the traders at Hilltop Market area. The plan of developing the area will displace the small business owners. As of this study period, no clear plans from the city government were presented. Similar case is being experienced by the vendors at Mines View, there is an on-going negotiation of a new building to be constructed in the area.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

The contribution of women's activities such as weaving, knitting and retailing to the household economy, and to the textile industry is vague, but the results of this study proved that women are the prime movers of the textile industry in Baguio City and Benguet Province. Women are the key actors (93% of women as compared to 7% men) in the whole industry- from thread buying, weaving, knitting, sewing, finishing, wholesale-retail business even in the hauling and transporting of products. Women can weave part-time or fulltime any time of the year because textile products can be stocked. During lean season or rainy months, they produce limited quantity,



but during the tourist months from November to May, more production is done to meet market demand. These women were mostly migrants from Mountain Province and Ifugao who had been in the weaving and textile trading from 11 to more than 20 years.

Men are also involved in the textile industry, more in sericulture and in *maguey* processing. In the thread business in the city, men are hired on a daily basis to assist in the manning of the area and to do hauling activities. Few men can be seen in the wholesale-retail or marketing aspect of the textile industry where they also acknowledged as their main source of family income. Men that are employed in the knitting industry are former textile factory workers who were acquainted with the use of flat machines. This kind of machine produces export-quality knitted products.

The women in the textile industry are already empowered. In addition to important family responsibilities like food purchase and child care, they have still strong participation in economic activities - as managers, weavers, farmers or employees, and even as *barangay* officials. With their own earnings (PhP750-70,000 per month), they lessened dependence on husband's decision and earnings. Income derived from textile-related activities was spent in the education of the children and augmented food expenses. The textile industry is a saving grace, for it employed many women whether full-time or part-time basis regardless of educational attainment and age.

In the cultural aspect, especially on the woven blankets and native attires, it is the women who produce this kind of material culture. This kind of weaving skill is passed on from generation to generation. Women are prompted to learn weaving skills from parents or elders not only because of the need to earn income but also of the need to pass on culture.

A conclusion can be drawn that the textile industry, particularly in weaving and knitting, is an established industry playing an important

employment and livelihood source in the city of Baguio and the province of Benguet, even if it is generally, women in the informal sector. Based from the findings of the study, the following should be considered as areas for improvement:

Product development. There is really a need to transcend from the traditional designs and look for other designs that would capture the interest of more consumers. Equipping the producers on new products designs, color combination, packaging, promotion and marketing is necessary to cope with the fast development of trends in the market.

Capability building. In relation to product development, support should also be extended to designers and entrepreneurs who make use of the locally-woven fabrics in ready-to-wear clothes, fashion designs and accessories. The recommendation of the PATAMABA study that there must be a provision for learning new skills and exploration of alternative income-generating activities should be considered. This is in anticipation of lesser orders and dwindling sales as a result of competition from the global market.

Leadership. Command responsibility and overall strong leadership in the association is crucial. Leaders should be assertive and good implementers to ensure the sustainability of operations. This will encourage the members to stay and engage with textile-related activities or any endeavors of the group whether in full or part time basis. There is still a need for capability building and strengthening of women's groups.

Recording. There is a need to emphasize the importance of recording especially to assess whether member's inputs are compensated. It was observed during the data gathering that few are able to have their record on their textile-related activities. Records are important as future reference for further studies and assessment of the textile industry.

Follow up on the services extended to the weavers and knitters. There is also a

need to assess, follow-up, and evaluate the past services extended. This will determine priority needs and avoid duplication of services. Many of the women's group were trained or given capital, but few were able to sustain their textile operation.

Involvement of the local government units in the development plans of the textile industry. In coordination with the NGAs, NGOs, and foreign agencies, LGUs should also give attention to this kind of industry. This is in consideration that the textile industry is the main source of income and employment for women in the city and some municipalities of the provinces. Continuous monitoring, evaluation, and technical assistance to these producers and a more organized trading area will lead to further improvements in the textile industry.

ACRONYMS

Acronyms used in the study:

DOLE - Department of Labor and Employment
DTI - Department of Trade and Industry
DSWD - Department of Social Welfare and Development
NGA - Non Government Association
NGO - Non Government Organization
TESDA - Technical Education and Skills Development Authority

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