

EMPLOYEE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN TAILORING INDUSTRY

Abstract

In recent decade, people are demanding for more personalized tailors in the stitching industry and requirement for customized cloths are in great demand. In order to sustain tailoring businesses, and remain as market leaders, and in high demand, the tailors need to have cutting edge competitiveness. Only excellent dressmakers can transform their current practice of fulfilling customer's demands. This research paper explores the survey on 200 tailors in Bangalore, which talks about the challenges faced by tailors and opportunities ahead for the and how to overcome the tailoring market that is down with Covid-19 impact. It is essential in addressing the challenges and opportunities government is providing for tailors.

Implications: This exploratory and descriptive research includes both qualitative and quantitative data to analyze tailors problems and attempts to provide alternatives of solutions by bringing in the awareness s of government schemes provided for tailors. People from this profession are shifting their jobs to others is a main concern in this research paper and tailors do not prefer in preparing their kids to enter into tailoring industry. In particular, men's wear tailoring is decreasing in great numbers and this is due to transformations in textile industry in India. Tailoring industry comes into the textile sector and people tend to buy clothes from them at a low price and tailors are only used for altering clothes which are bought from a retail store or via online.

Keywords: Government initiatives, Tailors, Stitching industry, Challenges faced by Tailors.

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I. INTRODUCTION

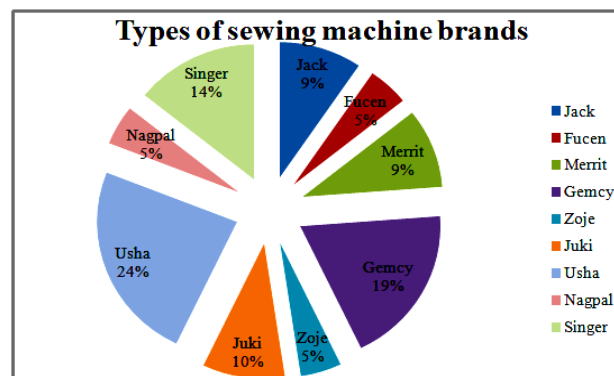
- 1. Brief history on stitching industry:** Tailoring is the process and art of designing, cutting, fitting, and finishing clothes. The word tailor comes from the French *tailleur*, to cut, and appears in the English language during the fourteenth century. In Latin, the word for tailor was *sartor*, meaning patcher or mender, hence the English "sartorial," or relating to the tailor, tailoring, or tailored clothing. The term bespoke, or custom, tailoring describes garments made to measure for a specific client. Bespoke tailoring signals that these items are already "spoken for" rather than made on speculation.

The art of tailoring dates to the early medieval times. Probably the earliest designers were cloth armorers by profession, meaning they made exceptionally, cushioned material pieces of clothing that were worn under chain mail to shield the wearer from the abrading related with weighty protective layer. From this occupation, the earliest designer's organizations were brought into the world in Europe. Tailoring started to broaden in Western Europe, between the twelfth and fourteenth hundreds of years. Before this time, articles of clothing were by and large produced using a solitary piece of fabric and were made for the sole motivation behind covering or hiding the body; individual style was of no specific interest to an article of clothing's producer or wearer.

- 2. Changes in stitching industry:** During the revitalization, the customary free robes worn by the two genders started to be abbreviated, assembled, fixed, and sewn together in shapes that looked like the genuine human edge. Before this, clothing was not bought; everything was made in the home, which implied that the people who had more ability with needle and thread were well on the ball when that individual style started to arise.



When individuals started to want clothing in specific styles, for various body types, or in novel examples, the interest for talented designers arose. The way that designers existed at all uncovers that mentalities about attire were evolving. Garments were currently more than necessities; they were a way for individuals to put themselves out there, project their status, and hotshot what they viewed as their best highlights. Overall, the rise of designers is confirmation that style was creating as an idea. The earliest Oxford English dictionary reference to "tailor" gives the particular date as 1297; yet it is generally accepted by that date fitting societies, weaver's organizations, and material shippers were at that point fundamentally settled in Europe.



Graph 1: Showing the types of sewing machine brands.

Skills required by tailors are advanced sewing, attention to detail, dexterity, communication; customer service and basic math skill as often use to take measurements. Graph-1 clearly depicts different brands that is used by the tailors in Bangalore. Gency and Zoje brand is highly used by these garment makers.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As per **Karen Elwis** (2018), “The art of tailoring” shares in detail about the art of tailoring, where he compares the tailor who is an apprentice and how he teaches. He adds that lot of effort is needed for the learner. People who learnt from the apprentice and show their skill with the master who taught them earlier in a positive way. He connects other dressmakers in the fields, mountains, the heaven, these beauties of nature, and gives difference between manufacturing and tailors, which is quite commendable. Manufacturing is life less where its stitches clothes only for covering but not elevated but when it comes to bespoke person who tend to elevate, beautify, enable and to elevate the art.

Dr. Neeta Nagori (1991) “A study on the functioning and problems of tailors of Gandhidham and Adipur region of KUTCH” speaks about the challenges faced by tailors while stitching a cloth, she mainly focused on needle issues which breaks for every change of cloth material like thick, thin and soft clothes, when it comes to denim jeans kind of cloth, the tailors has to use fat eye needle to stitch. And also focused on seam quality, which is also a very important aspect to note while stitching. If we use a low quality needle for jeans, then it will break and the tailor will incur costs to purchase the needle.

Indian Tailoring Industry Going Bespoke by Indian retailing bureau (2014), and in his article has mentioned that people are migrating from ready-to-stitch clothes to ready to wear clothes, which has been happening since 1990, when the industry was revolutionized. Where there are heavy manufacturing units that can satisfy the customer in price as well as the quality of clothes. In addition, it says that ready-to-wear market is 80% and 20% for ready-to-stitch. Women who are now working are opting for salwar-kameez-dupata (SKD) where they want personalized clothing, so women opt for ready-to-stitch.

As per **Matthew Milasius** (2016) in his research article on “4 Sewing Stitches Used in Manufacturing and Their Benefits”, gives information on what are the factors to be considered while purchasing clothes like seam strength, thread used and stitches per inch. He

also gives commonly used sewing stitches like chain stitch, which uses two or more sets of threads that come together and give an aesthetic appearance. Secondly, multithread chain stitch, which is formed by one or more needle thread that coming through the fabric, it can be used for elastic in waistbands, blazers etc. Thirdly, lock stitch, which uses a single needle, is a common sewing stitch used by dressmakers as it is strong compared to other two types of stitching. In addition, the last one is over lock stitch it is also called as over edge this type of stitch is used to contain the thread on the edge of the fabric and to neat the edge.

Kerrie Boles (2012) mentioned in his research article on “Examination of Alternative Fabric Joining Techniques Compared to Traditional Sewing”, has brought up new technologies, which can be used for attaching two fabrics. He talks about the uses of ultrasonic seaming, thermal bonding, laser enhanced bonding. In this he specifies the use of an ultra-sonic method of seaming which is inexpensive than that of traditional methods. Where in earlier we use hands then sewing machine and now think of new technology, which can reduce the time taken by the tailors by adopting new technology, which uses thermal plastic, synthetic material and low melting polymer tape. He has also given data like how much fabric to use at what speed, pressure and amplitude.

In various other articles the author specifically speaks about the before and after effects, then and now so on. The author tells what happens when you buy a readymade cloth and how one can alter one's old clothes into new ones, so they thought of experimenting with it. They took old clothing to a tailor for its changeover and took readymade clothes. The tailor customized the clothes as per their author requirements. The author was satisfied with the service given by the tailor and their professionalism.

All the articles I read were all on one topic where the authors speak on why one has to prefer tailors to that of readymade clothes, before and after effect, and only single issues faced by tailors. However, in this article, one can have an overview of the problems faced by tailors in Indian scenario and what are the different benefits they will can avail from Indian government.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Entire research article is focused on primary research based on an interview with 200 tailors in and around Bangalore and secondary details and published notes collected from various resources like journals, textile magazines and various textile websites. An in-depth analysis discussion and on issues faced by tailors brought out in order to create an awareness of their daily issues regarding their livelihood and how they can avail the government schemes and make the most use of them.

1. Impact of covid-19 pandemic on tailors: Due to this widespread virus, tailors were hit very badly. Most of the tailoring shops were closed and clothes became negligible for people. Government did not allow local tailors to open their shop and when government lifted lockdown, people were not ready to spend their money on stitching cloths. Even though tailors reduced price from ₹ 750 to ₹ 650 for stitching service. Tailors are surviving by stitching blouses, saree falls, and alteration of cloths, which purchased in online or in retail store. In the survey, the business for tailors before Covid-19 was good up to the mark was making a decent revenue, during pandemic there were no business at

all which went to zero, people were starving for food while some shifted their jobs one of them moved to online and made business which went good, after Covid-19 the footfall is increasing in a diminishing rate where people are still struggling.

2. A Brief note on Indian government schemes

- **National pension scheme for traders and the self-employed persons:** This scheme was made under Unorganized Workers Social Security Act, 2008 section 3(1) for Vyapari's to safeguard them in their advanced age. This scheme's goal is to give social security and old age protection to the retailers/ dealers/ self-employed people called the vyapari's between the age of 18-40 years who are not occupied with EPFO/ESIC/PM-SYM. having annual turnover not more than 1.5 Crore in rupees They are the retailers or proprietors who have negligible or little shops, cafés, inns, land specialists and so on. The government has expected 25lakh people to enroll, but only 25000 people have enrolled for this scheme.
- **Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan Yojana:** The scheme PM-SYM was made to protect unorganized workers who perform work like street vendors, agriculture related work, construction site workers, workers in industries of leather, handloom, mid-day meal, rikshaw or auto wheelers, rag picking, carpenters, Hamals, fisherman's etc. the scheme aimed to give them social security who are not engaged in EPFO/ESIC and who does not qualify to be taxpayer between the age of 18-40 years. There are approximately 10 crore beneficiaries.
- **Aam Aadmi Bima Yojana**
 - The scheme was brought by the GOI for the individuals whose family pay falls below the poverty line (BPL) or marginally above the BPL covered under vocational group and is between the ages of 18-59 years.
 - This scheme acts as a social security scheme because it provides for insurance cover for the people who are categorized under vocational groups or rural landless households such as fisherman, rikshaw pullers, beedi workers, brick kiln workers, lady tailors, tannery workers, papad workers, primary milk producers, tendu leaf collectors, forest workers etc.
 - Individuals benefited with this plan can guarantee for protection from the nodal office when some disaster happens like permanent total disability, or demise because of mishap, deficiency of one eye and one appendage because of mishap.
 - In 2015-2016 were the number of beneficiaries in India was 4,52,04,535 and 34,18,619 in Karnataka
- **Atal Pension Yojana**
 - This scheme aimed at providing social security to the representatives of private sector or those unorganized sectors who does not offer annuity advantages to their workers on their retirement. To profit himself under this plan, he/she ought to be an Indian resident and between the ages of 18-40 years having bank account connected with Aadhar.
 - The contributor can on his choice attain a pension of 1000-5000 rupees he can likewise get a gathered amount of the annuity after his demise. The gathered sum

will be given to the mate or on the other hand in the event that the life partner is dead also, to the candidate. The donor probably contributed for at in case of 20 years of his business. This plan gives a feeling of government managed retirement to the individual in the event of mishap, sickness, or illnesses and so on.

- Subscribers of Atal Pension Yojana are 3.68crore.

- **Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana**

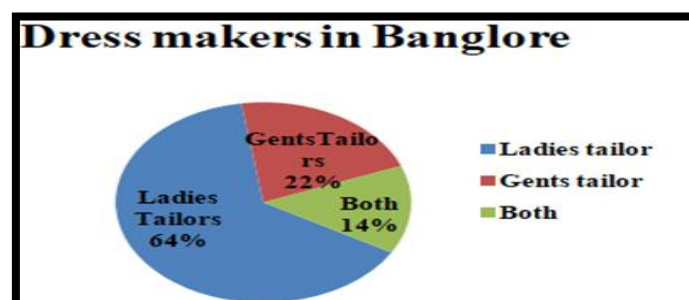
- This scheme is to provide socio-economic security to the BPL workers by providing them with health insurances. A person who with a family of five members can enroll for this scheme if he is categorized under BPL.
- The central government will contribute 75% of the sum and 25% will be contributed by the state government. The recipients just need to pay thirty rupees of enrollment (per annum for all) as premium.
- The insurance sum will be of 30,000 rupees per annum for each family enrolled under the scheme.
- The insured sum will cover expenses incurred in hospital, previous illness if any and any common illness.
- Currently there are three crore persons enrolled to the scheme

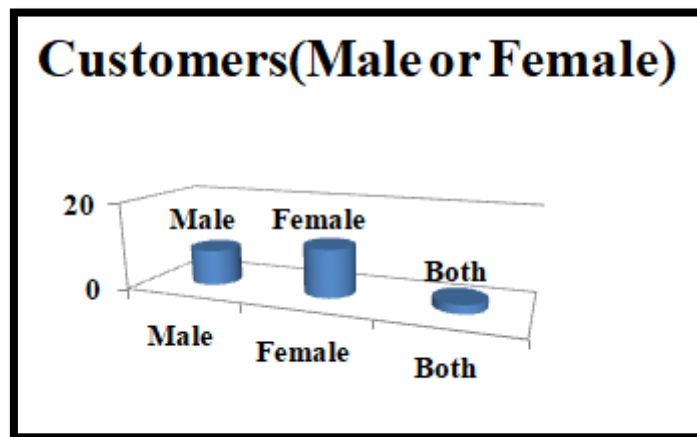
- **Karnataka Government Initiatives during Pandemic**

- The Honourable Chief Minister has announced a special package for various categories of workers, due to the lockdown declared by the Government to prevent a second wave of Covid-19. Which resulted in the loss of their daily earnings?
- Among them, one-time relief of Rs.2000/- each to 11 categories of unorganized workers engaged in the profession of Hamalis, Domestic Workers, Rag Pickers, Tailors, Mechanics, Washer men, Barbers, Gold Smiths, Iron Smiths, Potters, and Kiln Workers will be implemented through Karnataka State Unorganized Workers Social Security Board.
- To get the announced relief, eligible beneficiaries belonging to the above said categories have to apply in the Seva Sindhu portal ([https:// sevasindhu .karnataka .gov.in](https://sevasindhu.karnataka.gov.in)) and after verification, the relief amount of Rs.2000/-each will be directly transferred (DBT) to the Aadhar linked bank account of the respective beneficiaries.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

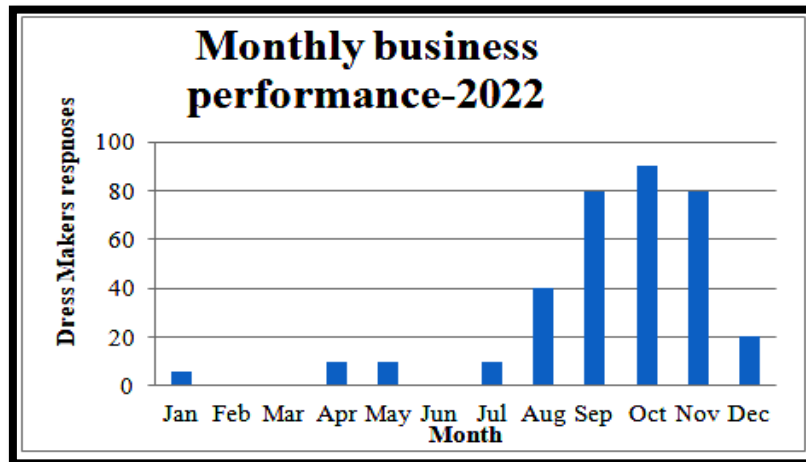
1. Problems faced by employees in stitching industry





2. Tailors who are specialized in Men's stitching are thriving a lot to make a penny, which leads to a decline in the numbers of men's wear tailors locally. The rise in multinational companies who came into the clothing business where they manufactured a large quantity of clothes for a low price and due to the e-commerce business, which made tailors suffer a lot.
3. Due to globalization and privatization, which happened in 1991, it had a huge impact on local businesses, small traders who now have been forgotten. The introduction of readymade clothes has completely shattered local tailors and now with e-commerce. People prefer buying readymade for that of stitched clothes, which is cost-effective. To stitch pants and a shirt, it costs around ₹750-800 and he should buy fabric, which will cost around ₹600-700, whereas if one goes for readymade cloth, he/she will get it for ₹1000.
4. Tailors work in poor environments where they are so sophisticated, in a very small place and who are not able to expand their business in fear of high rent, which will be double the burden than the earnings, where one earns ₹10000 and the rent would be ₹15000-20000.
5. Unlike other businesses, the tailors are not able to increase the price for a stitching service. It remains stable for two to three years and due to the shrinking number of clients, some dressmakers are also reducing the price to attract clients who are not too able to succeed in this business.
6. 'Recognition is one of the important things for each and every individual in their life, like some will be awarded or rewarded for being consistent in their job, excel in their profession and for the social work they do. We all know that actors, pilots, farmers, doctors, YouTubers, tik tokers have been awarded for the number of years who have been in industry are recognized. However, we did not hear about a tailor being awarded for his excellence, experience and for the knowledge, he has in this profession. I know a tailor who has been working for more than 30 years who is consistent in his work, working on Saturdays and Sundays without taking a leave or spending time with his family, but still he is not recognized by anyone'.

7. 'Some customers give their measurements and place an order but don't bother to collect their fabrics back and some bargain or pay less than the money quoted earlier; the tailors have no other way other than accepting it to retain their customers. Customers take advantage of this kind of situation and pay less'.



8. The waiting period is quite long. When they get orders during festival time and work overtime in this period, the rest of the time remains waiting for customers. Tailors struggle with paying rent at the end of every month.
9. They are also facing physical and mental problems like eyestrain (ergonomic problem), neck pain, back pain sitting for a long time and stress are the major problems faced by tailors. Tailors who started their career in the 90s have now become 50 years of age who are unwilling to work under others' leadership.
10. People migrate from one place to another in search of a job; they just know the basics and just start with stitching the fabric for customers at a low cost. There is no proper stitching or the materials used by these tailors are not appropriate. Which leads to customer dissatisfaction and this causes the customers to generalize that the well-reputed tailor will not use appropriate equipment. This affects good tailors who do their job perfectly.
11. The government announced ₹ 2000 for the unorganized sector during Covid-19 in the month of May 2021. People with whom I have taken the survey are not aware of this relief fund. Those who were aware of this benefit had applied for it and are still waiting for the government to credit the money. That is why people are losing hope in the government in their difficult times and take loans and fall into an interest rate trap.

V. SUGGESTIONS

1. First is knowledge and skill in stitching, like knowing the sewing machine, learning about garment stitching, body measurement and body measurement, learning about pattern drafting, learning about garment fit and cutting the fabric for garment parts. These are the basics that every tailor should have.

2. The options left for them are to specialize in both Men's and Women's wear, or to work in a big industry, take risk and expand their business, or to open a boutique.
3. For newcomers who choose tailoring as a profession, must create an app in which customers can give their measurements, choose which color fabric they want and style as per their preferences.
4. Customer can choose tailors nearby who can stitch for them under a stipulated time and alter if there is any issue in size which connects customers and clients where both are benefited.
5. Tailors can form a trade union that may protect their individual rights and privileges.
6. The central government and state government have some which are meant to unorganized sector which they can avail. The problem here is they are not aware of the available schemes and how to apply them. The government here can advertise the scheme on TV, social media and also teach people how to apply for the scheme.
7. Tailors should take risks in the current changing world to survive in the market; they should come up with a new idea, design, and style. And keep on updating with the present trend to sustain the market.
8. Customers nowadays expect home delivery. The tailors should provide this option for those clients who opt for home delivery and take measurements at their home if possible, which is convenient for customers.
9. There is a major difference between a tailor and a fashion designer. A fashion designer is an alpha and omega, the creator and the brain behind the very design the tailor copies from to sew for a customer, a tailor is the one who gets to take measurements of customers and then sew a pattern to fit with the customer's measurements and design chosen from a book or magazine and nowadays, from the internet via Instagram or Facebook. This art needs to be inculcated by tailors too for increasing their financials.
10. Supply And Demand for Sustainability Increases-A move toward more eco-friendly materials is another important development in the tailoring market. People are looking for greener products due to rising climate change worries. Because of this, the textile business has been adopting eco-friendlier practices in order to retain customers. The tailoring business employs the following methods to promote more environmentally friendly procedures:
11. One of the most noteworthy ways that the tailoring industry has updated for sustainability is the creation of clothing that is easily recyclable. Many businesses, for instance, now consider tailoring as a circular, rather than linear, process. Part of this shift in perspective is an increased focus on making products from natural, renewable resources. That way, customers can get multiple uses out of different types of cloths.

VI. CONCLUSION

Like any other profession, dressmakers also suffered a lot from the Covid-19 pandemic. People were also struggling to survive in this profession. The central government, which has come up with various schemes, should be advertised in proper media, which can reach each individual, and so people can avail this benefit.

In India, the young population is quite high, so abiding with the old style of tailoring doesn't scale up the tailoring business. It needs to be updated with a new style and made of trendy clothes, a design which will be liked by the youths. If tailors consider the above suggestion, they can scale up their business and make huge profits. The fabric and design a person selects are not the only choices to consider when making clothing. Stitches play a vital role not just in seam strength, flexibility and appearance, but also in the length of sewing cycles and cost of manufacturing. Some situations may call for lockstitches. In others, a combination of overlock stitches and lockstitches are necessary. Whatever the combination, these decisions and one r desired stitching properties would ultimately affect the quality and cost of one's order.

By knowing four basic common stitches and how to evaluate each, one will be able to examine one's garments with greater scrutiny during product inspection at the factory. One will also be in a better position to follow the latest fashion trends and give one's customers the products they want. Finally, this gives one a greater control over the product to prevent quality issues.

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