IJARETY

International Journal of Advanced Research in Education and TechnologY (IJARETY)

Volume 11, Issue 6, November-December 2024

Impact Factor: 7.394

www.ijarety.in editor.ijarety@gmail.com

International Journal of Advanced Research in Education and TechnologY(IJARETY)

| ISSN: 2394-2975 | www.ijarety.in | | Impact Factor: 7.394| A Bi-Monthly, Double-Blind Peer Reviewed & Referred Journal |

|| Volume 11, Issue 6, November-December 2024 ||

DOI:10.15680/IJARETY.2024.1106018

Factors Enabling Commercialization of Natural Dyes for Large-Scale Production in the Textile Industry

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ABSTRACT: Plant, animal and mineral origin dyes are very old to be used in textile dyeing. But since the use of synthetic dyes began in the nineteenth century, and it became cheaper to produce and more efficient the usage reduced drastically. Over the past several decades, awareness over environmental pollution and deterioration and health hazards randomly related to synthetic dyes have reformulate the global interest towards natural dyes. This paper seeks to consider the conditions that make it possible to upscale use of natural dye from experimentation to industrial application in the textile sector. Such factors include technology, present market trends, pressures from legal aspects and availability of resources for their production. The paper also involves a detail study of the Indian textile industry which has given a good initiative for using the natural dyes. Other challenges including cost, color match and complexity of the system are also explored. Last section of the paper focuses on the outlook for natural dyes in textile industry as well as the collaborative approach of governments, industries, and consumers.

I. INTRODUCTION

Today's textile industry is one of the leading polluters, and the use of synthetic dyes is known to be particularly damaging to the environment. These are soaks, stains, bleach and other brands of chemicals that pollute water bodies, soil and air thus causing social injustice to the society. As a result, people have started to trend towards products that are organic and environment friendly, thus natural dyes provide a solution to this problem. Form majoring as a craft item, natural dyes are today being considered suitable for industrial use. This transformation of artisanal production to industrial production is because of various factors some of them being; technology, increased customer knowledge and legislations. The natural dyes being marketed on commercial levels have their advantages and disadvantages. The potential is in the constantly increasing global demand for eco-friendly fabrics but the problem is, the dyestuff quality's constant standard, availability of raw materials and to be able to offer a cheaper price than synthetic dyes. Technological advancements intractability of natural dyes and environmental economical and market forces are key areas that will be explored in this paper for the large-scale commercialization of natural dyes. Further, the paper will also illustrate the involvement of the Indian Textile Industry in setting up the global trend of using natural dyes in large scale, which will be an explicit example of associative function, in this subject.

II. HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF NATURAL DYES

Natural dyes are pre-industrial revolution examples of colors in textiles. Natural dyes are obtained from plant, animals, and minerals, which was time-consuming and yielded erratic colors and fast fading treatments. But they were valued for their color and also for associations with native civilizations. People in India, Persia, and South America were using indigo, madder, and cochineal, respectively up to the middle of the nineteenth century when synthetic dyes came into the market. The artificial dyes, starting with the mauveine that William Henry Perkin synthesized in 1856 literally changed the textual industry. Synthetic dyes were cheaper and more vivid and provided shade faster than the natural dyes that were used. Consequently, artisanal application of natural dyes was displaced at a very fast rate. Nonetheless some arguments that are associated with toxicity and effect on the environment of synthetic dyes, there is now a renewed interest in the natural products.

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III. FACTORS ENABLING COMMERCIALIZATION OF NATURAL DYES 1.TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS

An attribute that plays a major role in commercialization of natural dyes is the enhancement of extraction, dyeing and fixing. In the past, the lack of efficient means to extract pigments from natural sources only allowed their application in restricted production categories. But the advent of advanced technology has seen the improvements of yield and quality natural dyes by other techniques like supercritical fluid extraction, ultrasound assisted extraction, enzymatic extraction. They cut down the span and effort needed to extract dyes at the same time it provides a more standardized quality. Further, improved methods of dyeing have enabled the use of natural dyeing on commercial scale. New types of dyeing machines developed allow natural dyeing procedures that are suitable for industrial use. Together with friends with environment conservation, the natural dyes conform to the industry standards of wash fastness and color fastness through the modern dyeing machines used in machine fixatives or mordants. Mordants like aluminum, iron and tannins have also been improved to remove the toxic heavy metals which will help to enhance the nonhazardous procedure for dyeing.

1. Growing Market Demand for Eco-Friendly Products

Customer needs and demands are gradually tilting in the consumers' direction when it comes to selection of green products. The birth of the dreaded "Green Consumer" is now challenging markets and have greatly influenced the textile industry through appeals for the use of textiles, which does not contain any hazardous chemicals and was processed eco-friendly. The societal awareness of climate change, pollution and ethical practice of fashion production have increased over time due to awareness of ecological factors across the world. Due to its natural origin, being renewable and biodegradable substance, natural dyes well fit in this requirement of consumers. This is due to the consumer pressure on companies to find a better substitute for synthetic dyes – compounds that commonly are derived from petrochemical and have toxic production by- products. Such companies as Patagonia, Eileen Fisher, and Levi's have now included natural dyes into the market in order to meet this demand. Other certification bodies like GOTS (global organic textile standard) and OEKO-TEX, encouraging the use of nontoxic and sustainable more substance have also propelled the naturally dyed textiles. The increasing demand for organic and sustainable products including clothing sets the basis for good market incentives that support the use of natural dyes.

2. Regulatory Pressures and Environmental Policies

The strict environmental rules and regulations all over the world are forcing governments and regulatory agencies to cheque industrial dyeing processes. Manufacturers of textiles in areas such as the European Union and North America have serious restrictions on the utilization of several chemicals especially on man-made products where dyes are used extensively. Some associations include ever tightening laws on the use of hazardous materials on apparels, for example the REACH regulation in EU. These regulations drive firms to find more organic and less damaging materials and processes. In addition, the textile industries that are dominant in countries like India and China have faced more emission laws due the growing environmental consciousness. For instance, the textile industry in India has been accused of polluting the River Ganges through discharging effluents from the production of synthetic dyes. Such regulatory pressures have made manufacturers to look for better options /practices for dyeing clothes and natural dyes seem to be the best bet owing to their non toxicity and biodegradable nature.

3. Availability of Raw Materials

This paper shows that accessibility of raw materials is a critical proposition that determines the commercial viability of natural dyes. Natural dyes are different from synthetic dyes, which are basically products of petroleum by-products, and are obtained from renewable resources like plants and some insects and minerals. Annual fiber plants like indigo, madder, and turmeric have started being farmed again because the market for natural dyes has now emerged. Many of these plants are grown under the organic farming system, which increases their attractiveness as organic crops. Still, it has one trivial issue – the problem of making certain that a steady stream of supplies enters the business. Most dye plants have cultural requirements for growing, and climate changes and land use can hinder the growth of dye plants. In response to this, a few companies have started sourcing sustainable production of the dyes crops through sharing investments with the local smallholder farmers in the regions where the plants are naturally grown. Strategies including the contract-farming system and supporting agroforestry has stabilization the provision of raw material as well as empowered local people. The re- application of traditional indigo in India which has seen a practice in Tamil Nadu and Gujarat states is one way that can be adopted to solve on the issue of mass production of natural dyes.

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4. Economic Factors and Cost Competitiveness

However, one of the main difficulties discussed for natural dyes commercialization is the cost comparison to synthetic ones. Traditionally natural dyes are costlier as they are derived from natural sources, the extraction process being time consuming and some natural dye stuffs being seasonal. Nevertheless, with the current increased technological development and the law of small numbers, the cost of production of natural dyes is coming down steadily. Also, due to the increasing consumer consciousness about natural fabrics, firms are also more willing to go for natural dyes even though it may not be cost effective in the immediate future. This explains why natural dyes are cheaper to use since the costs of treating polluted water, and paying fines for polluting the environment have not been factored in the cost of synthesizing synthetic dyes. Synthetic dyes may become costlier in the future due to high requirements set by governments through enhancing environmental conservation standards on production of the product. Organizations that prefer sustainable dyeing techniques may also be subjected to subsidy, tax credit, and any other financial encouragement for environment friendly activities.

Industry Case Study: The Indian Textile Industry

India has had a very long experience of natural dye and few of the prominent dyes used historically were indigo and madder. The textile industry in this country has been central in the revival and the continued use of natural dye. The use of vegetable dyes as a sustainable resource has gained some attention in the recent past and some Indian companies and artisan groups have adopted its use in production. For instance, a leading Indian textile manufacturing company, **Arvind Limited,** has made research and development in natural indigo dyeing for marketization. The company has been able to increase natural indigo production since the industrial extraction and dyeing technologies enhance the production process about colorfastness. Likewise, there are few Indian SMEs who are sourcing dyewoods from local farmers and developing organic dyeing processes. The government of India has also encouraged the industry in the field by also rewarding organic farming and eco-friendly textiles production. Also, we have identified other programs, as KVIC, that encourage the application of natural dyes for handwoven textiles and that given a greater impulse to the industry in the way to sustainability. Challenges to Commercialization Although natural dyes have their advantages, there are few considerations that must be overcome to reach a commercial level.
These challenges include:

Consistency of Color:

Compared to synthetic dyeing where specific colorant is used to match the colors, natural dyes are known to change color in response to the nature of the soil, climate and method of extraction among others. This will prove somewhat challenging for manufacturers in meeting the exact color that clients need for their products.

Scalability:

The challenge of meeting global textile industries demand for natural dyes requires capital investment in production facilities and equipment. The consumer supplies for natural dye are not very developed compared with synthetic dyes and it becomes difficult for large demands to be met.

Cost:

Technological development has made natural dyes cheaper than their earlier prices but they are much more costly than neon dyes. There is therefore the need for companies to factor cost when identifying how to achieve sustainability.

Challenges to Commercialization:

The Second Perspective of Riviera Home Furnishing As the campaign for natural dyes has gained popularity, firms such as Riviera Home Furnishing, a furnished goods company in Panipat, India, have many challenges as they try to move towards large-scale production of naturally dyed fabric. Despite the environmental and market-driven appeal of natural dyes, Riviera Home Furnishing was unable to sustain its efforts in this domain for several key reasons:

1. High Cost of Raw Materials:

Among the primary problems of Riviera Home Furnishing was the expensive price of raw materials used for natural dyeing. While synthetic dyes may be generated from common cheap petrochemicals, natural dyes commonly originate from limited plants or animals that require growth or collection on a large scale. This can lead to fluctuations in costs which depends on factors such as the season, availability of resources as well as detailing regional factors. The company realized that the cost of acquiring the natural dye materials was much higher than envisaged, which led to his/her inability to be price competitive within international textile market.

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2. Large Quantities Required:

Natural dyes are also known to be costly for the simple reason that they demand large amounts of core material in order to yield bright and steady colors. For instance, natural dyeing of numerous pieces of fabric such as linen, cotton or even wool requires using severalties more of the natural dye agents like indigo or turmeric. This highlighted rise in the quantity uptake of raw materials also increases the costs and hampers the sourcing of right, cheaper supplies for greater number production. However, they major challenge later faced by Riviera Home Furnishing was the unavailability of the raw materials for natural dyes in large quantities required by their large-scale production.

3. Lower Payoff in Comparison to Synthetic Dyes:

One major problem raised by Riviera Home Furnishing is that natural dyes provide less profit than synthetical dyes. The synthetic dyes provide brilliant and stable hues and are easy to standardize and achieve quality all through the different batches. Some natural dyes yield relatively low levels of color intensity, and gaining an optimum level of color saturation may necessitate at least several cycles of dyeing. However, the fastness and wearing qualities of naturally dyed fabric may not always be as good as those of synthetically dyed fabrics especially when exposed to light and washing or wear. The company noted that even though the amount of natural dyes materials used was higher than the synthetic ones, the intensity and brightness of the products were not as good as those produced using synthetic dyes.

4. Mass Production Challenges:

Riviera Home Furnishing also faced problems with regard to adoption of natural dyeing process during the process of making the products on a larger scale. But natural dyes pose many challenges in terms of time and effort that can be devoted to it; they take a long time and thus may very much slow up the rate of production. This means, that contrast in the shades obtained and increased time required for dyeing process makes the introduction of natural dyes into a fast-paced and high turnover production process even more problematic. This proved difficult for a company working at the industrial level because the speed which was necessary for the company to meet market needs could not be determined due to the many time-consuming natural dyeing processes. Therefore, the company could not satisfy the customers' big orders while using natural dyes for the production.

The experience of Riviera Home Furnishing underscores the broader challenges faced by the textile industry when attempting to adopt natural dyes for mass production. While the environmental benefits and growing consumer demand for eco-friendly products provide strong incentives, practical issues such as cost, material usage, color payoff, and production efficiency must be addressed before natural dyes can become a viable alternative to synthetic dyes on a large scale.

IV. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

The availability of natural dyes for industrial scale application is stimulated by technology, intensified consumers' concern in eco-friendly product, market demands, and regulation standards, and availability of raw materials. Still, there are challenges here that have not been solved: color consistency, scalability, and costs; yet, the industry is progressing in finding ways to address these issues. Some of the best explored examples of usage of traditional knowledge blended with modern technology can be illustrated through the large-scale usage of natural dyes by Indias textile industry. With the perspective of sustainable textile production worldwide, there is likely to be a rise in the use of natural dyes. It is going to take governmental and industrial support coupled with the support of the consumers for natural dyes to transform from what it is today to being a main stream product. The potential that exists for natural dyes in the textile industry to revolutionize the use of dyes and printing whilst at the same time play diplomacy to culturally identify products and systems cannot be overemphasized. When it comes to natural dyes, it is good to know that materials used for producing them are not standard all the time. Environmental conditions for example soil nutrient content and chemical additions like fertilizers or pesticide will change the characteristics of plant items utilized in making of dyes hence altering the strength or color yield. Hence, the use of natural dyes to come up with the similar outcome means balancing between the environment and farming.

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International Journal of Advanced Research in Education and Technology

ISSN: 2394-2975 Impact Factor: 7.394

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