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INSTITUTION'S INNOVATION COUNCIL (IIC)



JNNCE - MBA Meets Entrepreneurship: Shyli Handloom Garments



Ms. Veena C R

Shyli Handloom Garments–About the Enterprise

Introduction

Shyli Handloom Garments is a renowned local enterprise based in Shivamogga, Karnataka, dedicated to promoting traditional handloom clothing. Established with the vision of preserving India's weaving heritage, the brand blends cultural authenticity with contemporary fashion trends, making handloom more accessible to modern customers.

Heritage & Vision

The core philosophy of Shyli Handloom is to revive and sustain traditional weaving techniques while creating sustainable livelihood opportunities for artisans, especially women from rural areas. The brand believes in celebrating Karnataka's rich handloom culture and promoting eco-friendly, sustainable fashion.

Products

- Handloom sarees (cotton, silk, and blended varieties)
- Kurtis, stoles, dupattas, and shawls
- Ethnic and fusion wear designed with modern patterns
- Customized handloom garments for special occasions

USP (Unique Selling Proposition)

- Authentic handloom products with natural dyeing methods
- Fusion of traditional weaving with modern designs
- Direct support to local artisans and women weavers
- Sustainable and eco-friendly production practices

Customer Base

Shyli has a strong customer base in Shivamogga and nearby regions. With the rise of digital platforms, the brand has also expanded to a wider audience through Instagram, WhatsApp marketing, and exhibitions across Karnataka. Customers prefer Shyli for its authenticity, comfort, and cultural connection.

Challenges

Like most handloom ventures, Shyli faces challenges such as competition from machine-made textiles, fluctuating raw material supply, and the need to constantly educate customers on the value of handloom.

Shyli Handloom Garments stands as a proud example of entrepreneurship rooted in culture, sustainability, and social responsibility. It not only preserves a traditional craft but also empowers artisans and inspires young entrepreneurs to combine passion with purpose.

1. Madam, could you share your background and how your journey as an entrepreneur began?

Since my childhood days, I have an exposure to cultural richness and traditional crafts of Malnad region, Karnataka. From a young age, I was fascinated by weaving and tailoring that led to engaging myself in small-scale handloom work. After completing my education, I worked briefly in a garment unit, but I realized that my heart was in creating something of my own. I wanted to combine my passion for fashion with my desire to create employment for women. That dream eventually gave birth to Shyli Garments in 2016.

2. Why did you choose the handloom industry specifically?

Handloom represents both heritage and sustainability. Unlike mass-produced fabrics, handloom carries a personal touch, cultural value, and uniqueness. Unfortunately, I noticed that the craft was declining because artisans were struggling to find markets. I felt it was my responsibility to revive this art, give opportunities to local weavers, and show that handloom can still be commercially viable in today's fashion industry.

3. Was it your dream from the beginning to become an entrepreneur?

Initially, no. Like many women, I thought I would simply take up a job and support my family. But as I grew older, I realized that jobs can give security, while entrepreneurship gives both freedom and impact. When I saw the struggles of weavers in Shivamogga, I realized that if someone could create a platform for them, it would benefit both artisans and customers. That thought encouraged me to step into entrepreneurship.

4. How did Shyli Garments come into existence?

Shyli Garments started as a very modest venture. In 2016, we had just two sewing machines, a rented small space, and four artisans who believed in me. We focused on school uniforms and women's ethnic wear in the beginning. Slowly, we added handloom sarees, kurtis, and custom-designed outfits. Today, we have a workshop with over 25 employees, and we also support nearly 50 local weavers indirectly by purchasing their fabrics regularly.

5. What products do you specialize in?

We specialize in handloom products both for men and women including Jubba Pajamas, sarees, kurtis, dupattas, uniforms, and eco-friendly cotton garments. Also we produce bags and purses. Recently, we also launched a line of contemporary clothing made from handloom fabrics, blending tradition with modern design. Our uniqueness lies in offering both ready-made garments and custom tailoring, with a strong emphasis on sustainable fashion.

6. Who are your key customers?

Our customer base is diverse. At the local level, we serve households, schools, and small boutiques in Shivamogga. At the state level, we have partnerships with Bangalore boutiques that promote handloom-based clothing. We also cater to online customers, especially young professionals who prefer eco-friendly, handmade products. Interestingly, NRIs also show great interest in our handloom products and buy in bulk.

7. How do you maintain quality in handloom products?

Quality is at the heart of our business. We carefully source cotton and silk from trusted suppliers, ensure natural dyeing wherever possible, and involve skilled artisans in every stage of weaving. After weaving, each garment undergoes a quality check for fabric strength, finish, and detailing. Since handloom is a slow process, we educate customers that patience results in better durability and exclusivity.

8. What were the main challenges you faced as a woman entrepreneur in handloom?

The challenges were multi-dimensional. Firstly, financial support—convincing banks and investors to believe in a woman entrepreneur in a tier-2 city like Shivamogga was not easy. Secondly, societal bias—many people thought I would not be able to handle a garment business independently. Thirdly, competition from power loom and machine-made fabrics, which are cheaper. Overcoming these challenges required resilience, continuous networking, and proving myself through consistent quality and dedication.

9. How do you manage and motivate your workers, especially women artisans?

Many of my employees are women balancing family responsibilities. We provide flexible timings and a safe, respectful work environment. I believe in treating them like partners rather than workers. We celebrate festivals together, offer training workshops, and encourage them to try new designs. This motivates them to give their best and stay loyal to the organization.

10. The handloom industry is both traditional and competitive. At the local level in Shivamogga, our competitors are almost none, however, power loom-based garment makers are the competitors.

However, what differentiates Shyli Garments is our focus on community and authenticity. Unlike the other brands, we directly work with local weavers and artisans, ensuring that their craft and livelihood are sustained. Our pricing is fair – we make handloom accessible to middle-class customers without compromising on quality.

11. What milestones has Shyli Garments achieved so far?

One of our proudest milestones is that we grew from a 3-machine unit to a recognized garment brand within five years. We received appreciation from the District Industries Centre for promoting women's employment. We have participated in state-level exhibitions in Bangalore and Mysore, and our sarees were showcased at a Karnataka handloom fair. Most importantly, we have created steady income for more than 30 women and 50 weavers, which is more valuable than any award.

12. What is your leadership style?

I don't take decisions alone. For example, when we plan new designs or decide pricing, I involve my team, especially the designers, because they know the market pulse and production challenges better than anyone. This collective decision-making builds a sense of belonging among employees.

13. Do you receive support from government or cooperative schemes?

Yes. Initially we had received financial support under the Mudra Loan Scheme, which was crucial for purchasing additional machines. We also have got support from various Departments, which helped us connect with exhibitions and training programs. These schemes may seem small, but they make a big difference for entrepreneurs like me.

14. What are your short-term and long-term goals?

In the short term, I want to strengthen our online presence through e-commerce and social media, so that customers across India can access our products. In the long term, my dream is to make Shyli Garments a recognized sustainable fashion brand from Shivamogga, creating at least 100 jobs and supporting 200 artisans.

15. Do you plan to expand into exports?

Absolutely. Handloom products have great demand abroad, especially among NRIs and eco-conscious customers. We are currently exploring tie-ups with online platforms that cater to overseas buyers. In the future, I hope to directly export sarees and handloom-based fashion wear to countries like the USA, UK, and the Middle East.

16. How do you ensure customer satisfaction at Shyli Garments?

Customer satisfaction has always been the foundation of Shyli Garments. In the garment and handloom sector, especially in a place like Shivamogga, our reputation depends on how happy and loyal our customers are. We focus on satisfaction at multiple levels:

Quality Assurance

Every garment that leaves our unit goes through a thorough quality check. Since we deal with handloom and tailored outfits, small details like stitching, finishing, and fabric strength matter a lot. We never compromise on quality—even if it means slower production. Customers trust us because they know they'll receive long-lasting, well-crafted clothes.

Customization & Personal Touch

Many customers approach us for custom designs—whether it's bridal wear, uniforms, or handloom sarees. We listen carefully to their preferences in color, style, and budget, and deliver accordingly. This personalisation makes them feel valued and increases satisfaction.

After-Sales Service

If a customer has issues like fitting corrections, we immediately address them. We believe customer satisfaction doesn't end with the sale—it continues until the garment is worn comfortably and proudly.

Transparent Pricing

We clearly explain fabric costs, tailoring charges, and design complexity to avoid surprises. Our customers appreciate this honesty, especially when competing with large brands that may have hidden costs.

Digital Feedback & Reviews

Through WhatsApp, Google Reviews, and Instagram, we encourage feedback. Positive reviews give us confidence, while critical feedback guides us to improve. Many customers have told us they felt more connected because we genuinely considered their suggestions.

Building Relationships, Not Just Sales

We make sure our customers don't feel like just 'buyers'. For example, during festivals we send greetings, sometimes small discounts, and updates on new collections. This ongoing relationship creates repeat customers, which is the strongest sign of satisfaction.

17. What qualities do you think an entrepreneur must have?

An entrepreneur must be resilient because challenges will always come. Creativity and adaptability are equally important—especially in industries like fashion where trends change quickly. Good communication skills, the ability to manage finances, and empathy towards employees also make a huge difference.

18. What advice would you give MBA students like me who dream of becoming entrepreneurs?

Use your MBA knowledge wisely—understanding finance, marketing, and strategy gives you an edge. But beyond theory, focus on execution. Start small, test your ideas, learn from the market, and don't be afraid to fail. Most importantly, network with mentors and industry experts who can guide you.

19. What message would you give to aspiring women entrepreneurs?

My message is simple: believe in yourself. Society may have doubts, but you should not. Women have the ability to manage homes, finances, and emotions beautifully—these same skills apply to business. Don't be afraid of failure; each failure teaches you something valuable.

20. Finally, how do you want Shyli Garments to be remembered in the future?

I want Shyli Garments to be remembered as more than just a business. I want it to be remembered as a platform that empowered women, revived traditional handloom, and gave Shivamogga its identity in sustainable fashion. If future generations can proudly say, "This brand from our city changed lives," that will be my greatest success.

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