CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The concept of entrepreneurship has been identified as the most important factor in the process of economic development. The entrepreneur is regarded as the kingpin in the growth process and acts as a catalyst and propeller of change. Thus, entrepreneur plays a significant role in a nation's socio-economic progress and there are several socio-cultural and economic factors that play a significant role in influencing and promoting entrepreneurship. Our study analysed the role of above factors in promoting entrepreneurship among the handloom weaving castes/communities of Gudekal, in the previous chapters.

I

The main focus of the study was that certain traditional socio-cultural advantages such as family, kinship, caste, socialisation and other primordial factors play significant role in entrepreneurial performance among the traditional cottage based entrepreneurs. In the competitive world of today, the traditional enterprises have to adapt to the changing circumstances. They need to be highly entrepreneurial in order to survive and compete in the market In this process of adaptation, the traditional advantages strengthen and also add to the entrepreneurial
dynamics among the small/cottage-based entrepreneurs. Further, ideas of an entrepreneur get streamlined into the group to which he/she belongs. He/she gets his/her fellow members cooperation and makes the entrepreneurship an integral part of the particular social structure, which in turn nurtures the entrepreneurial abilities in the society. This is clear in case of YWCS leadership\(^1\) in the inception and later development stages of YWCS.

Studies on entrepreneurship emphasised that entrepreneur's emerging as a new social force in entrepreneurship history were a consequence of a tangled web of demographic, legal, technological and material perspectives. However, the studies, by and large, ignored that the entrepreneurs also adopt socio-cultural dimension, a most crucial dimension.

Available literature on entrepreneurship from different social science disciplines, behavioural sciences and management studies was reviewed in the first chapter in order to gain an insight into the concept of entrepreneurship. This review had helped to attain a conceptual clarity and to frame our theoretical perspective. The theoretical perspective adopted in this study views that the tradition and entrepreneurship are not contradictory to one another. Instead, tradition plays a significant role in the promotion of entrepreneurship among the tradition based small/cottage entrepreneurs as they enjoy certain advantages over the others.
Some have argued that the traditional institutional and normative patterns of the Indian society are not conducive to promote modern technology. In fact, the caste system was considered to be a stumbling block for the economic progress as it was rigid and did not permit economic growth. Thus, removal of caste inequities was considered as an important step for the economic growth and modernisation of the Indian economy and promotion of entrepreneurship. The above views are based on an erroneous perception coloured by western outlook. In fact studies have established that the traditional factors have helped in promoting and adapting to economic changes (Seth, 1979; Baviskar, 1980; and Hadimani, 1985). Our study confirms the above and demonstrates how the traditional factors have their impact on the differential performance of entrepreneurs from both traditional and non-traditional weaver castes/communities. Further it also reaffirms the theoretical position held in the thesis that the traditional factors act to invigorate the entrepreneurial abilities and strengths of the entrepreneurs. In fact, they are the additional resources to an entrepreneur.

Our study regards entrepreneurs as the persons who have the ability and against all odds attempt to achieve something in the profession. A successful entrepreneur manoeuvres different resources at his command and moves up in the entrepreneurial ladder. In this regard, kin, caste and other networks play a significant role in the entrepreneurial success, be it at the individual
or at the caste/community or at the organisational levels. As argued rightly by Baviskar (1980), culture and tradition of a group influences its members to acquire the attributes of innovators and entrepreneurs and thus, they become more successful in an enterprise where they have these advantages over the others. Seth (1979) points out that the flexible nature of Indian tradition in fact permits the entrepreneurs to move from the traditional to modern economic structures in a smooth way.

It is important to note that entrepreneurship depends not only on the socio-cultural and economic settings but also depends on the way a community is organised into a cooperative effort to attain higher levels of participation in the enterprise and promotion of entrepreneurship. Our study clearly establishes this in case of YWCS. The structure and organisation of YWCS provided the organic links of YWCS with the regional/local branches like the one in Gudekal. It had catapulted the entrepreneurial abilities of weavers and also other occupational based entrepreneurs through a cooperative effort. In fact, it only reiterates the Rochdalian experience in Europe during the 19th Century.

The study village Gudekal provided the ideal situation to analyse the role of both the traditional caste, kin and other primordial factors and modern market forces in the promotion of entrepreneurship. Gudekal is located in the Yemmiganur area of Kurnool district in Andhra Pradesh, which has a rich tradition of weaving. This village also responded quickly in a crisis situation
and switched over to silk weaving from the traditional cotton weaving. The study village has different weaver castes/communities, such as Kurini, Padmasale, Togata, Sakulasale and Devangam from the traditional category of weavers; and Muslim, Katike Muslim, Telaga and Boya from the non-traditional category of weavers. Among these, Kurini are the dominant weaver caste. They are dominant not only in the study village but also in the Yemmiganur area. Their dominance can be seen in the YWCS organisation, in the weaving enterprise and also in the political participation in the region.

Crisis always brings out the best out of the entrepreneurs. The study village has a diverse socio-economic and cultural background as it has a number of weavers, agricultural, artisan and service castes. It is observed in the study that there is a culture of entrepreneurship in the study village among the weavers. The weavers of this village responded to the famine conditions during 1940s by forging an alliance with the weavers in the region and formed into weavers' cooperative society, thereby exercising a restraint in their migration to other places. In fact, the cooperative movement was a major entrepreneurial move on the part of the members of the weavers' community to the changing situations. Crisis brought out the entrepreneurial leadership of the weavers, which resulted in the formation of YWCS, a giant among the handloom cotton weavers' cooperatives.
The entrepreneurial dynamics of the weavers of the study village were also demonstrated in the recent past as the weavers of Gudekal responded to another crisis situation that has arisen due to crisis in cotton yarn supply in the State. They have switched over to silk weaving under Master Weavers, initially, and quite a few became Independent Weavers in silk. The silk weavers of this village have formed into a cooperative in 1992, thus reiterating the cooperative outlook, which stood by them during crisis periods. The process of the formation of silk weavers cooperative has a resemblance to the formation of YWCS in 1938. In both the cases the role of Master Weavers was quite significant. The Master Weavers, who controlled the weaving industry, with their widespread kinship and other professional networks provided the entrepreneurial leadership in the formation of weavers' cooperatives.

Introduction of silk weaving and the emergence of Master Weavers in silk were studied in the wake of crisis in YWCS. It was affected by the state level yarn crisis, which resulted in incapacity to provide full time work to the members. A sort of uncertainty prevailed among the members about the future of YWCS. Besides shortage of yarn in the market, trade union problems and political reasons and high prices of its products also added to its woes. The higher prices were the result of large establishment and salaries.
An organisation with a long history of entrepreneurial dynamics always would attempt to wriggle out of crisis situations by adapting to changing situations. This is found to be true in the case of YWCS. Time and again YWCS responded to the challenges by adapting to the market situations. The mixed loom culture of YWCS as a strategy enabled it to produce diverse range of products to meet the requirements of different consumers. YWCS overcame the recent yarn crisis situation and the challenge posed by silk weaving by modernising its administration and switching over to silk weaving, thereby demonstrating its capability to survive in the competitive world due to its entrepreneurial qualities.

The formation of YWCS amply demonstrated the role of caste and kinship in entrepreneurship and in the formation of cooperatives. Kinship and caste were found to be the seedbeds of entrepreneurship among the traditional weavers in the study village and the region. With meagre resources, the entrepreneurs among the traditional weavers in the study village used their kinship and caste potential and flourished in the profession over the others who lacked them. This clearly endorses the theoretical position held in this study.

The skills of entrepreneurship nurtured by the small-scale cottage based enterprises, as observed in studies on entrepreneurship, have become springboards for the entrepreneurs
to rise to the levels of corporate managers. In case of YWCS, we notice the emergence of Machani Somappa's family as corporate managers (popularly known as Machani Gangappa Brothers, MG Brothers) in automobile, transport, oil mills, spinning mills, etc. They owe their entrepreneurial success to the YWCS, which incidentally was founded by them in collaboration with other Master Weavers in 1938. They crafted their kinship and caste linkages into effective weavers' cooperative, which became a launching pad for their emergence as corporate leaders in the region and the State.

An entrepreneurial culture and atmosphere flowers in situations where there exists an organisation to reassure reduction in perceived risks to the entrepreneurs. The organisation prepares the entrepreneur to manage the enterprise through the management of social relations and trains him/her in different aspects of entrepreneurship. It becomes a springboard for entrepreneurial development. This holds good in case of YWCS that turned many weavers into entrepreneurs. In this process, the role of kin, caste, and other primordial factors is quite significant. The concentration of entrepreneurs in certain traditional weaver castes can be attributed to the advantage of kin, caste and other primordial links that they enjoy over the others. Thus, Kurini entrepreneurs enjoyed a definitive edge over the others in weaving enterprise, be it cotton or silk. This only reiterates our theoretical position.
The entrepreneurial culture sponsored by Kurini benefited the YWCS to become a successful enterprise. The success of YWCS was attributed to the efforts of Somappa, a Kurini, who played a crucial role in roping all the Master Weavers (then among cotton weavers) into YWCS as its Directors. He used the traditional advantages to make YWCS pass through the successive crisis situations. Kin, caste and other networks that existed among its members helped the organisation to grow into one of the most popular cooperatives in India.

The entrepreneurial leadership becomes a crucial factor for an organisation to become successful entrepreneurially. During 1840s there was food crisis in Europe and this period was popularly known as 'Hungry Forties'. The Rochdalian Society founders turned this crisis period into an opportunity. A similar development in case of YWCS indicates that an entrepreneur converts a crisis situation into a situation of opportunity and in the process an entrepreneur utilises available resources, including the traditional advantages. The Weavers relief centre established by the Government, in Yemmiganur, to arrest the migration of weavers to other places during the famine of 1930s was transformed into a cooperative venture by the entrepreneurial leadership. It grew into a huge organisation and provided employment to large sections of the society and contributed for local/regional development. Also, it fostered cooperative and
distributive ethics not only among the weavers but also in other sectors.

It was focused that the weavers, particularly Kurini members, from Yemmiganur area had brought market for their products. During their visits to their kinsmen to attend life cycle rituals and other social functions, they had observed the marketability for 20 count saris in the then Mysore State region. The weavers have sensed that the coffee plantation workers preferred the 20 count saris due to its coarseness suitable to work in coffee estates. Thus, kinship, caste and other primordial factors had helped them in nurturing their entrepreneurial abilities.

III

The study discerned that differential performance of weavers depended on their social background. The cultural factors such as family, socialisation and marriage were responsible for inculcating the ethics relating to hard work, sincerity, etc. The factors like kinship, caste background and other primordial factors helped some weaver castes to perform better entrepreneurially than the others. These aspects were discussed in the fourth chapter in detail, thus, emphasising the theoretical position held in the thesis.

Generally viewed, the traditional factors helped the traditional weaver castes that had been practising weaving for
generations. It is interesting to note that among the traditional weaver castes it was Kurini who showed better performance in the weaving enterprise. Their increased level of participation and the kinds of attachment to the profession revealed their performance in the enterprise. The main reason was that the Kurini had the advantage of widespread kinship network in the weaving enterprise. They are basically a large extended and closely-knit kinship group and have kinship relations in several places. Due to strong kinship bonds and caste attachments the meagre resources were shared among the inner circles of relatives only.

Mobility in any occupational hierarchy takes place within the framework of a status hierarchy in a given social structure. The weavers in the study village show a status differentiation and a hierarchy. Thus the terms Dhani, Shaukar, Dalari and Jithagadu used to refer the Master Weaver, Independent Weaver, Middlemen Weaver and Hired weaver, respectively, were considered as denoting their status. Status of Master Weaver is considered high followed by the Independent Weavers. Middlemen Weaver takes the next position and the Hired weaver, both silk as well as cotton hired weavers, occupy the lowest position in the status hierarchy. The mobility of a weaver entrepreneur is measured in terms of mobility in the status hierarchy.

Besides the above, kinship and caste were the most crucial factors responsible for entrepreneurial performance highlighted in the study. It was observed that the stronger the kinship base of an
entrepreneur the more successful he or she would be entrepreneurially. The dynamics of entrepreneurship hinge upon these bases. Also, the variation in the nature of relationship that a weaver entrepreneur maintains with the others can provide a clue to the performance of an entrepreneur. Weavers from Gudekal were like the subsistence peasants and it was difficult for them to become on their own Independent Weavers and Master Weavers. Support extended by kinsmen and caste men of the Gudekal weavers helped them to invest and establish in weaving enterprise.

The above findings are broadly in conformity with the theoretical perspective held in this study. This becomes clear from the pattern of entrepreneurship among the traditional and non-traditional weaving communities. The traditional weavers, especially Kurini, owned the highest number of silk looms, which is regarded as a feature of entrepreneurial success, than the non-traditional weavers. Thus, the traditional weaving castes were considered to hold highest entrepreneurial status. In fact, very few from non-traditional weaver castes/communities posses silk looms, hence, they occupy a low entrepreneurial status.

The traditional weaving castes had an advantage of certain primordial factors and socialisation, besides the advantages like exposure, education, etc. In contrast, the non-traditional weavers only depend on factors like qualities of individual, education and professional relations. The traditional weaving communities always acted as catalysts in changing the nature of weaving
industry, thereby defining the status of weaving occupation. On the contrary, the non-traditional weaving families have drawn their entrepreneurial abilities from the entrepreneurs from traditional weaving castes.

The social and cultural bases of entrepreneurship play a significant role in the promotion of entrepreneurship. It was observed in our study that the social and cultural bases are strong among Gudekal weavers and that is the reason why the traditional weaver entrepreneurs of Gudekal proved to be largely successful. The family is an important unit of production and the role of family in the promotion of weaving enterprise is quite important. In case of traditional handloom weavers in Gudekal the work culture demands the family members to be together. Family played an important role in the success of entrepreneurs among the Gudekal weavers, who always made use of different resources - cultural, social, professional and technical - to further their entrepreneurial ability. In fact, it is the family, which is the basic unit of production of cloth, which adopts the changes.

Women and children play an important role in cottage based enterprises, as also in agriculture, and the study village is no exception. In fact, women are the routes through which flow different designs, techniques of weaving, etc., into the weavers' families. This adds up to the cross fertilisation of weaving techniques and promotion of entrepreneurship. Socialisation is an important process through which both the boys and girls of
traditional weaving castes are introduced to the niceties of weaving. This education process involves telling stories and riddles, and singing lullabies to make child sleep, which generally revolve round their occupation. Thus, the traditional weaver castes firm up their position in the weaving enterprise. This only strengthens our theoretical proposition.

In light of the above, any attempt for a planned modernisation must take cognisance of the linkage of traditional pattern of behaviour in the particular socio-cultural system. But these aspects are hardly addressed to by the planners and policy makers in development planning. The approach in development planning has been top-down with a tendency towards adoption of a uniform approach, with scant regard to cultural, social, ecological and economic diversities. Hence, micro-level planning, a lone voice of anthropologists for a long-time has gained momentum. The anthropological approaches were acknowledged as more suitable for development planning. This holds good even in case of entrepreneurial development. In this regard there is a need to carry out further research among caste based cooperatives, which promote entrepreneurship among the occupational based castes/cottage-based industrial enterprises. Further, there is also a need to undertake anthropological studies on entrepreneurship taking note of cultural and sociological factors. These studies have not only academic implications but also have implications for policy planning.
END NOTES

1 Somappa played a pivotal role in promoting entrepreneurship in a cooperative movement through YWCS. He tried to inculcate the entrepreneurial culture among the other communities also.

2 This in way suggests that caste inequities need to be maintained. In fact, removal of caste and other inequalities should be the priority for the development of an equitable society and opportunity structure. However, existence of inequalities and economic modernisation or development are not contradictory to one another.