CHAPTER III

STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION OF YWCS

The predominant intellectual tradition of anthropology deals with analysis of the processes and problems of change. Development anthropologists have analysed the development process in a society due to local/regional factors. It was pointed out that the new opportunities and resources create a process of development, which, in turn, brings about a change in the socio-economic structure of a particular people (Baviskar 1980).

In order to understand the process of development, there is a need to know about the structure and organisation of a particular society wherein the development takes place. In view of this, the present chapter deals with the structural and organisational dimensions of Yemmiganur Weavers' Cooperative Society (YWCS). This would provide us the organic links of YWCS with the regional/local branches like the one in Gudekal. Further, it also deals with development and change that occurred in Yemmiganur area due to cooperative activity.

I

Cooperation among human beings is cultural and is governed by norms and conventions. It has become impossible to
understand the social and economic reality today without understanding cooperation. Emerging out of economic impulses, the cooperative movement is linked to the socio-economic life of modern society in all nations. Namjoshi (1977) observed that, in advanced societies, the idea of cooperation tends to become more specific and would be confined to specific activities. According to Nisbet (1968), cooperation is a collaborative behaviour directed towards some goal and in which common interests or hope of reward are involved. It may be voluntary or involuntary, direct or indirect, formal or informal. However, in any kind of cooperation, there is a combination of efforts toward a specific goal. In this, all the participants will have a stake, real or imagined. Cooperative movement has also its significant contribution in the economic upliftment of rural communities in India as can be seen in case of dairy cooperative movement in Gujarat (Shall 1992; Mascarenhas 1988), sugar cooperatives in Maharashtra (Baviskar 1980), weavers' cooperatives in Tamil Nadu (Arterburn 1982) as well as in Andhra Pradesh.

Cooperation in Human Actions:

The act of cooperation with one another has been evolved through various stages of the history of human kind. China provides the best example for the existence of cooperation in the antique period. The social customs of marriages and funerals in the villages of Asia took the cooperative idea further. When the tribesmen felt the need of a collaborative effort in irrigating their
arid zones, they got united into cooperative projects. Bakken (1963) says that the craft and merchant guilds all over the world during medieval times represented a conscious movement towards formal organisation. According to him, the craft and trade guilds became social guilds once the society acquired a community feeling. These social groups became the antecedents of friendly societies, which, in turn, were followed by the charitable trusts, fraternal groups, and social organisations of the present day. The thoughts of Robert Owen, who succeeded in bringing a number of social reforms in the European society, led the European community towards the cooperative movement (Lambert, 1963).

The concept of cooperation found its roots in the writings of Hobbes, Darwin, Morgan, Green, Comte, Owen, Fourrier, Durkhiem and others. Particularly Owen and Fourrier, along with their followers, paved the way for formulating a series of cooperative principles. Refuting the ideas of liberal capitalism, Owen introduced paternalism, which provide the living and security conditions for workers as a way out for social problems. The concept of villages of cooperation, which he later proposed, was aimed at enabling and organising the poorest citizens. He called on these sections to devote themselves to various activities that would save them from despair. Lambert (1963: 42-43) focussed on the moral concerns of cooperative thinking.

King and Michael Derrison, who were the followers of Owen and Fourrier respectively, realised the importance of the
principles of cooperation and added the principles of socialistic thought to the existing cooperative principles. Thus, these formed the basis of the Rochdalian Principles in 1844.

The cooperative movement thus initiated by Owen has turned into an effective economic movement. At present cooperative societies exist in various sectors like credit, banking, processing, production, housing, warehousing, transport, industry, etc. These cooperative societies are run on the basis of the principles laid down by the Rochdale Pioneer's Society in 1844. These principles are: 1) open membership, 2) one member one vote, 3) limited return on capital, 4) allocation of surplus in proportion to transactions by the members, 5) cash trading, and 6) stress on education, religious and political neutrality. The above principles were reviewed in 1966 by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), the world-wide organisation of cooperatives.

"Rochdale Equitable Pioneers Society", a tiny store, was established with 28 pounds as the share capital in a little street of Rochdale, Lancashire on October 24, 1844. During the first half of the 19th century there was too much of hunger in nearly every country of Europe. These years are spoken of today as the "Hungry Forties" (Saxena, 1974). Under these conditions, the society was started with twenty-eight persons, most of them being the Flannel Weavers. This had a world-wide repercussion on the Cooperative Movement. It was Charles Howrath, who suggested forming a cooperative store to overcome the famine problems. With a strong
charter of rules, the Rochdale Society conducted the business and progressed into a well-established cooperative society. Also the Society took interest in the establishment of the "Rochdale Cooperative Corn Mill" in 1850 and the "Rochdale Cooperative Manufacturing Society" in the same year. Thus the Rochdale Society became the trend-setter for establishing other cooperative institutions like, the "Rochdale Equitable Provident Sick and Burial Society", etc. The most important aspect of the Pioneers' Society was that it also worked as a wholesaler for other cooperative societies during 1850 and also it played a crucial role in setting up the Cooperative Wholesale Society in 1863. The cooperative movement in Yemmiganur, the present study area, has a lot of similarity with the above cooperative movement

Perspective of Cooperation in India:

According to Srivastava (1962) there were four forms of cooperation in the socio-economic activities of people in ancient and medieval India. These were Kula, Grama, Sreni and Jati. The first form of cooperative activity in India was supposed to be Kula and it functioned as a cooperative unit to promote the economic, social and political interests of a close knit group. In due course of time it was reduced to the status of a political unit, leaving social and economic functions to the joint family.

Achieving the social and economic progress of the village as a whole was the aim of cooperation at the grama (village) level. Gram Sabha\(^1\) (Village Assembly) and the other mutual aid
associations were the agencies of cooperation at this level. The agricultural and craftsmen families formed the Mutual-Aid Associations for providing help to one another. These associations were aimed to create basic harmony, a sense of cooperative spirit and mutual understanding amongst different groups in the village (Srivastava 1962; Desai 1969; Mukherjee 1969; and Reddy 1991).

In the Post-Vedic period, the highly developed Sreni emerged as the association of merchants and craftsmen. It was one of the dominant form of associations which played a significant role in social, political and economic life of people during Ramayana and Mahabharata, as well as Buddhist and Jain periods (Srivastava, 1962).

_Jati_ attained an effective cooperation in socio-economic and religious matters. Certain rules and established customs with regard to trade mailers for procuring raw material, wages, prices and marketability of the product were formulated by the _Jati Sangha_ (caste organisation), through its Panchayat. Fines and social sanctions were imposed on those who violated the rules. Thus, cooperation among its members in their social and religious activities was ensured. By establishing schools and providing educational facilities for Orphans and helpless, it catered to the needs of the poorer sections amongst them. _Jati_ made donations for religious and charitable activities (Srivastava, 1962).
History of Cooperative Movement in India had its origins in the erstwhile Madras Presidency, which can be traced back to the year 1892. During this year the provincial Government appointed Sir Frederick Nicholson as Special Officer to look into the relevance of the methods of cooperation prevalent in Europe to the Madras Presidency region for overcoming evils of rural indebtedness. On the lines "Raiffeisen" Societies in Germany, he recommended for the formation of rural cooperatives in the Madras Presidency region (Gazetteer, 1967). The promulgation of Indian Cooperative Societies Act in 1904, which was replaced by the Act-II of 1912, was viewed as a landmark in the history of modern cooperative movement (Baviskar, 1980). As a result of this, central credit as well as production and distribution societies were established.

The provincial Madras State Government brought the legislation known as the Madras Cooperative Societies Act VI of 1932. This allowed for of shifting the subject of cooperation to the provincial list from the Central list. Further, a separate enactment known as the "Madras Cooperative Land Mortgage Banks Act" of 1934 was passed to regulate the working of the land mortgage banks in the province (Gazetteer, 1967).

A strong community bond exists in activities such as fishing, weaving and agriculture. For instance, this is clearly noticeable in case of the Rochdale Society, whose founders were Weavers. There is a need to study such organisations from an anthropological perspective for an in depth understanding, as there are hardly any
in-depth anthropological works in this area, with the exception of Arterburn's (1982) study on Kancheepuram Silk Weavers' Cooperative. According to Arterburn, weaving occupation is based on strong social ethics rooted in inter- and intra-familial, and inter-caste social relations. These relations if converted into a cooperative effort by adding cooperative principles to them, such ventures will have greater chances of success. Shanti George (1994) emphasises on sociological aspects and their implications for a cooperative society. She points out that most of the cooperatives rely on pre-existing social structures. In a comparative study on sugar cooperatives in India based on a sociological analysis Attwood and Baviskar (1987) emphasised on identifying crucial organisational factors in their success. They viewed that they depended not only on the technical factors, but also on stable alliances among the small, medium and large-scale cane growers.

It is important to note that it was Mahatma Gandhi’s dream that each village would be self-reliant and that self-reliance would be based on a Panchayat, a school and a cooperative. During the initial years of Indian Independence, the situation with regard to cooperatives seemed to be very encouraging. They were seen as instruments of economic empowerment of rural India. Cooperative societies in India today are passing through a critical phase due to problems like undesired governmental interference, lack of sound cooperative leadership, magnified role of apex bodies in the cooperative sector, political tendencies, etc. Besides the existing
problems of the cooperative societies, the changed economic order under the new economic policy of the Government of India initiated in 1990s further complicated the problem. Given this, Shivamaggi (1996) feels that there is a need to redefine the cooperative sector in the wake of globalisation.

Chowdary Brahm Prakash Committee was appointed by the Planning Commission to draft a Model Cooperative Society Act in 1990. The Model Act minimised the government control and interference, simplified procedures for registration and dissolution of cooperatives. It minimised the role of the registrar to that of an enforcer of the law, and encouraged cooperatives to develop self-reliance and self-confidence.

The impact of liberalisation on industry reveals that the new economic policy appears to have accelerated the movement towards capital intensive technologies. Due to the new economic policy, there will be greater competition from private enterprises and the cooperative sector may not get favourable treatment from the government (Nadkarni 1993). It is in this context that the cooperative organisations started searching for more efficient and profitable methods of production. Cooperatives can play a significant role in encouraging entrepreneurship among small-scale producers in the present day context and accelerate economic development of the people concerned and the region. Anand Milk Union Limited (AMUL) and YWCS are the best examples which
have shown that cooperatives can withstand the onslaught of liberalisation and global competition.

There have been significant developments in cooperative legislation in different states of India. The Andhra Pradesh Mutually Aided Cooperative Societies Act (APMACS Act), 1995 is an important development in the cooperative movement\textsuperscript{2}. It acted as a catalyst for a chain of developments in which various states have undertaken efforts to introduce reforms in their cooperative laws on the lines of the Model Act of 1990. The APMACS Act was described as a milestone in the history of Indian Cooperative Movement.

Cooperatives have become centres of growth in their areas of operation. They bring about general social and economic development by providing educational, health, communication and other services for the community at large. This generates an ethos in which local people would acquire new skills and attitudes, which would bring about favourable changes in their lives. In this regard YWCS is a case in point.

\textbf{n}

Yemmiganur is one of the fast growing towns in Kurnool district, Andhra Pradesh, and is very popular for its weaving industry. It has been preponderantly weavers' area and it possesses the rich and prosperous heritage of handloom weaving in
the State. Yemmiganur, which was a unit of just a Panchayat board, rose to the level of a developed town and achieved the status of a Municipality. This was made possible by the Yemmiganur Weavers' Cooperative Society. The inception of cooperative society attracted weavers from the other areas.

Yemmiganur has been a centre for handloom weaving for centuries (YWCS working paper, 1983). Francis (1904) observed that the chief industry of Yemmiganur is the weaving of cotton, and mixed silk and cotton clothes for women. The weaving industry was revived by the efforts by Mr. F.W. Robertson, collector of the district from 1824 to 1838, while it was almost ceasing to exist. He took several measures and, as a result, many weavers from the Nizam's dominions migrated to Yemmiganur. After this, the Yemmiganur clothes became quite valued and were even exported to far off places like South Canara, in the present day Karnataka State.

Yemmiganur, along with Adoni, Kampli, Hampasagaram, Tambrahalli, Bachigondanahalli and Rayadurg, was one of the chief centres for weaving of mixed silk and cotton handkerchiefs in the erstwhile Mysore State. These kerchiefs were made in considerable quantities for the Lingayats, a Shaivaite sect, who used them to tie the Lingams' (Phallus, an image of Lord Shiva) round their necks or around upper arms (Francis, 1904:103).
Yemmiganur area was severely affected by famines during 1854, 1866, 1876-78, 1891-92, and during the later half of 1930s. In this regard the famine that occurred in the 1930s affected the people of Yemmiganur area badly. As a result, people started migrating to other regions. The colonial government opened a famine relief centre to provide relief to agricultural labourers in order to stop their migrations. This was planned on the lines of successful relief works undertaken in Bellary region during 1854 famine. But the relief centre, opened for agricultural labourers in Yemmiganur, was not useful to the handloom weavers, as their occupation is different from that of agricultural labourers. Thus, the new relief centres could not stop migration of weavers to other places. Earlier, this area experienced large-scale migrations during the great famine of 1876-78.

A famine weaving relief centre was opened in 1937 at Yemmiganur exclusively for the weavers in order to arrest their migrations to other places due to recurring famines. This separate weavers relief centre was planned based on the past experience. This measure of the government paid dividends. It not only arrested the migration of weavers but also attracted weavers from outside to Yemmiganur. Later with the improvement in the conditions, the famine weaving relief centre was closed down.

After the closure of the relief centre, weavers approached Machani Somappa, who was a member of the non-official advisory board, to continue the cooperative efforts of the weavers, as they
found the relief centre operated more on the principle of cooperation and was quite beneficial to them. Somappa was a popular leader of the dominant weaving community, Kurini, and was also a Master Weaver. Thus the Yemmiganur Weavers' Cooperative Society (YWCS) was established in 1938, under the leadership of Somappa, who was an educated and dynamic person. His initiative to form YWCS benefited weavers at large, in this area.

The initial membership of YWCS was only 20. It started with 20 looms and a paid-up share capital of Rs. 170/-. The progress made by YWCS was astounding as its maximum membership reached to 3,590 in 1980-81 with a working capital of Rs.1,01,07,400 and annual production of about 1.6 crores. It is one of the largest cooperative societies in India today and is well known among textile cooperatives. At present the membership, according to official sources of YWCS, is reduced to 2,841 due to various reasons such as yarn crisis in the industry and some political reasons. However, the share capital, from both the sources of members and government, has gone up to Rs.2.7 crores as well as the production has increased to Rs.3.6 crores.

Master Weavers controlled the weaving industry before the formation of the YWCS in 1938. These Master Weavers had widespread kinship networks, spreading to the neighbouring Mysore (presently Karnataka State) State also. Added to this, their traditional skills and techniques brought in good demand for their products. Their social visits to their kinsmen helped them to assess
the marketability of their products. Thus, the 10, 20 and 30 count saris with indigo dyeing in dark blue and the kerchiefs produced by them were marketed to the plantation workers of coffee estate areas of the then Mysore State, which had demand for these products. Also the Master Weavers encouraged the production of chemical dyed clothes in red, yellow and green colours, which were in good demand in the areas like Hubli and Dharwad, of Mysore State.

Weavers' Cooperatives were earlier profit making organisations and were also successful. The situation has changed now and they are on the decline. The success partly could be attributed to indirect subsidies, marketing services, etc. The subsidies have been withdrawn gradually. Further, withdrawal of equity share of the Government, following the Act of 1995, is considered a blow to these units. The Cooperatives that were to make very flexible use of its work forces are not able to continue the same in present circumstances. Earlier, depending on the demand, they were recruiting non-member weavers and when the demand dropped they were eased out. This was observable clearly in case of YWCS.

YWCS was successful to the extent that it was able to market its products through its sales counters established in different important places in Andhra Pradesh and neighbouring Karnataka. It did benefit from Andhra Pradesh Cooperative Organisation (APCO), the Apex body of cooperative societies in Andhra Pradesh,
who used to purchase the finished products from the YWCS. APCO stopped procurement in 1991 due to problems of pricing of YWCS products. YWCS felt that by reducing prices APCO equated the YWCS production with that of the other cooperative bodies. YWCS could not compromise on the quality of production in order to cut the costs. Thus, because of a slump in the market, YWCS stocks got piled up in their godowns leading to resource crunch. This had further led to problems in supplying yarn to its members. As a result of the crisis, a few weaver members withdrew from YWCS and joined under Master Weavers in silk weaving, who entered into the fray, to exploit the situation to further their business interests. The weaver members from Gudekal, who withdrew from YWCS, found silk weaving profitable and later formed a silk weavers' cooperative society, the Mallikarujuna Silk Weaver's Cooperative Society, in Gudekal.

The setback the YWCS faced resulted in tardy growth and slump in its profits. However, in spite of the desertion of members it had turned around, as it did in the past, by adopting some management and technical reforms. In this context, it is important to understand the entrepreneurial dynamics of YWCS.

The YWCS has adopted changes according to the market situation. Introduction of such changes in the YWCS included the introduction of new varieties and technological changes. One can observe this over a period of time in terms of different phases, which can be grouped under the following four phases. During the
first phase its production was limited to the famous coarse variety of Indigo saris with Alligarine red stripes in 10 and 20 counts only. It started producing bandage cloth (Gazu gudda), and mosquito net cloth (domtera batta) for the army during the Second World War in the second phase. It introduced bed-sheets (duppati) and crepe shirring; and started exporting crepe shirting to the United States and bed-sheets to Oman, Singapore, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, and other places during the third phase. After the yarn crisis and other problems in the organisation, there emerged the threat of Master Weavers in silk weaving. To counter their threat, it has started producing silk products as well. Thus, the entrepreneurial dynamics and response of YWCS to the ever-changing market helped it to not only to survive but also emerge as a stronger cooperative organisation.

The YWCS had developed a very generous policy of paying a basic wage to all members and non-members, besides the occasional bonus. In the wake of new policy measures, it is imminent that YWCS has to find new avenues for its development to sustain itself in the market. In fact, the factors, which contributed indirectly for its smooth functioning earlier, may not contribute towards its growth today. Hence, the thrust here is to understand the future of YWCS under the changed circumstances. The present discussion would help to focus on how the YWCS, which survived through successive crises periods by adapting to the changing situations) can meet the situation which will arisen
after the enactment of the 1996 Act of Cooperatives in Andhra Pradesh. Before understanding this, it is imperative to know about the structure of weaving industry in Yemmiganur area.

Structure of Weaving Industry in the Area:

Kurnool is one of the few districts where cotton weaving is quite extensive and, besides Nalgonda, Mahboobnagar and Anantapur districts, silk weaving is also very popular in this district. Yemmiganur and Kodumur are the two well-known centres of weaving and dyeing in Kurnool district. The district has about 41 cooperatives and 4,625 weavers, both cotton and silk. Though the district has been preponderantly agricultural, there are some villages wherein some communities are entirely dependent on weaving occupation. The products associated with Kurnool are saris and coarse doth made of cotton.

The study area, Yemmiganur, possesses the rich and prosperous heritage of handloom weaving in the State. This area was considered to be the main centre for producing a variety of qualitative cotton blends. Francis (1904) mentioned that the weavers from Mala (SQ caste made the coarse white clothes in considerable quantities. Yarn produced at the yarn mills of Bellary (presently in Karnataka State) was mostly used in these products. The quality of the products was highly appreciated and some of them were exported to Ceylon (presently Sri Lanka), and some European and African countries. Also, these clothes had good demand in local villages and at the nearest weekly market.
All the cotton thread traditionally used in this area is mill-made and bought ready-dyed. A general exception to this is that for indigo dyeing the thread was dyed locally. The colour called maddi, a handsome dark-red colour, is also occasionally dyed to the thread by the dyers in the nearby areas in the Nizam’s principalities. They used Madderu, the bark of the root of maddi (morinda citrifolia) tree, to extract maddi. The same variety of thread was chiefly imported from Bombay and certain parts of Europe. Clothes produced in this area were easily identified elsewhere, for they were usually produced in seven regular and popular colours. The customers of YWCS prefer the products in the following order of preferences: white (un-dyed), grass green, scarlet, yellow, black, dark red and indigo blue. Indigo was the most popular colour among the cottons, and was the prevailing tint of dress of any crowd of women, working women in agriculture, labour, housewives, etc. (Francis 1904).

The most obvious and demanding clothe that was produced by the weavers in Yemmiganur area has been a variety of silk and handkerchiefs keeping in view of its social importance with the Lingayat community. As observed already, Lingayats use this cloth to cover the portable Linga worn in silver or a metallic casket, usually suspended by a string around the neck, in the form of a pendant or tied to upper arm. The chief centres of production of these clothes were Adoni, Yemmiganur, Raydurg and
neighbouring places like Kampli, Hampasagaram, Tamarahalli and Bachigondanahalli (presently in Karnataka State).

Formation of YWCS:

Formation of YWCS in 1938 has some history. Its formation was due to several socio-economic and environmental reasons. The area was severely affected by successive famines. The famine of 1833, called Guntur famine, had affected Tungabhadra region. There were severe famines during 1854, 1866, 1876-78,1891-92 and during the later half of the 1930s. Writing about the famine of 1854, Francis states that "the relief-works consisted almost entirely of earth-work on new roads and they were chiefly controlled by military officers working under the "civil engineers". Some Rs.10,000/- were spent in cleaning out and deepening the fort ditch in Bellary. Piecework rates were nowhere tried. The wages given were at first 2 annas for men and 1.6 annas for women and children. But in July they were reduced to 1.3 annas and 8 pies respectively. The majority of the people on the works were farm-labourers, ordinary coolies and weavers" (1904:126).

The famine of the 1930s is considered to be the worst. Though some relief works were taken up in the Yemmiganur Firka of Adoni taluk, was not satisfactory. Hence, people began to migrate to other areas. The colonial government opened a famine relief centre for the agricultural labourers at Yemmiganur in 1936 to contain the migration of people. However, the relief centre was not useful for the handloom weavers. This was because the weavers'
work culture was different. In the relief camps, as stated earlier, the work included laying roads, repairing village canals, tanks, etc., to which the weavers were not accustomed. As a result, the government organised weavers' relief centre in 1937 to arrest the migration of weavers from Yemmiganur area. Many weavers were attracted to the relief centre and got accustomed to the relief camps. The government closed down the famine relief centre after the conditions have improved for weavers. Since the weavers found the relief centre beneficial to them, they approached Somappa, who was a member of the famine committee on the non-official advisory board, to convert it into a cooperative society. Thus, the Yemmiganur Weavers' Cooperative Society (YWCS) was established in 1938 under the leadership of Somappa.

Situation before the Formation of YWCS:

Weaving industry in Yemmiganur area before the formation of YWCS, i.e., before 1938, was totally controlled by Master Weavers. They had developed good demand for their products due to their widespread kinship networks coupled with their traditional skills and techniques. Particularly, their sense of professionalism developed with their gauging of marketability of cloth during their visits to Mysore State (presently Karnataka) to attend social functions. The kerchiefs and 20 and 30 count saris were popular among coffee plantation workers in Mysore State, as they were tough enough to withstand the coarse coffee plants. This had
encouraged the Master Weavers in Yemmiganur area to produce these saris dyed in dark blue.

Rise of YWCS:

Documenting on Yemmiganur, Francis noted that, "Its chief industry is the weaving of cotton (and mixed silk and cotton) clothes for women. It is said that at one time the industry had almost died out but that it was revised by the efforts of Mr. F.W. Robertson, Collector of the district from 1824 to 1838, who among other measures, brought over to it a number of weavers from the Nizam's dominions. The Yemmiganur clothes are now much esteemed and are exported even to South Canara" (1904:121).

TABLE 3.1: Branch-wise Membership of YWCS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>Branch</th>
<th>Members*</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Active</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sleeping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Yemmiganur</td>
<td>1240 (76.5)</td>
<td>1620 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>380 (23.5)</td>
<td>(58.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Gudekal</td>
<td>208 (58.4)</td>
<td>356 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>148 (41.6)</td>
<td>(12.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Nandavaram</td>
<td>125 (47.7)</td>
<td>262 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>137 (52.3)</td>
<td>(09.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Nagaladinne</td>
<td>84 (36.2)</td>
<td>232 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>148 (63.8)</td>
<td>(08.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Gonegandla</td>
<td>33 (27.7)</td>
<td>119 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>86 (72.3)</td>
<td>(04.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Gudur</td>
<td>38 (38.0)</td>
<td>100 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>62 (62.0)</td>
<td>(03.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Kosigi</td>
<td>24 (24.0)</td>
<td>100 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>76 (76.0)</td>
<td>(03.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>1752 (62.8)</td>
<td>2789 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1037 (37.2)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Exclude 52 looms arranged in Model Weaving Centre
As noted earlier, YWCS started with only 20 founding members, 20 looms and a paid up share capital of Rs.170, the YWCS has made a steady progress. It reached to its maximum membership of 3,590 in 1980-81 with a working capital of Rs.1 crore. Also, it became one of the largest cooperative societies in India and a popular one in textiles. But the present membership has come down to 2,789 members of whom only 1,752 are active and this includes 1,050 cotton weavers and 150 weavers specialised in silk fabric handlooms on pit looms; and 330 active framed looms (out of 420). The weavers under YWCS in the district account for about 60% of the district's total weavers (4625).

The YWCS has its branches at Gudekal, Nandavaram, Nagaladinne, Kosigi, Gudur and Gonegandla, besides its main branch at Yemmiganur. The above table (Table 3.1) indicates that most of the members are active (62.8 %) and many of them come from Yemmiganur and Gudekal. Majority from the other branches became sleeping members, as most of them belong to non-traditional weaving castes/ communities. There is a greater need to strengthen YWCS and its branches by adopting some innovative measures as most of the sleeping members have joined Master Weavers in silk weaving.

Role of Caste and Kinship in Forming the YWCS:

Caste and kinship played a significant role in the formation of YWCS. There are various communities involved in weaving occupation in Yemmiganur. These communities can be categorised
into traditional weavers and non-traditional weavers, based on the nature of their attachment with the occupation. Kurini, Padmasale, Devangam, Togatasale and Sakulasale are the traditional weavers. In the second category Muslims, Katika Muslims, backward classes such as Besta, Valmiki etc., and Schedule castes (Mala and Madiga) are included. Kurini (hereafter Kurini) is numerically the largest caste among the weavers in Yemmiganur. The Kurini is a large extended social group with strong bonds of kinship. They live in proximity and maintain close inter-personal relations with one another. All Kurini are closely related either through marriage or through blood. In this given social set up, the exchange of gifts, periodic visits, reciprocal support in personal emergencies, etc., further strengthen their relations with one another.

The other weaving castes like Padmasale, Togata, Sakulasale and Devangam also have played a significant role in the formation of YWCS. Interestingly, Ghurye, while commenting on the housing cooperatives observed that "only those cooperative housing societies have succeeded most which have restricted their membership to their caste fellows" (1969: 298). This also holds well in case of YWCS. The founders have well utilised this nexus to form and successfully run the YWCS. Various branches were established on the strength of the caste members. The case of Basappa, manager of Gudekal branch of YWCS, clearly brings out this factor. Basappa belonged to Banda dan, which is related to the founder's clan Machani by marriage. All his relatives and caste
men in the village helped his father to form the branch (YWCS) on the advice of the founder Somappa. Basappa's father said that he felt it is a moral compulsion to help his kinsmen by starting a YWCS branch in his village. That is how he mobilised his caste men to enrol their membership in this branch. He explained that, the cooperation existed not just between two families but among all members of the caste as a whole. Thus the branches of YWCS at Nagaladinne and Gudekal villages in 1947, at Nandavaram in 1951 and other three branches in 1960s have been established with the cooperation extended by the caste and kinsmen to the founders of YWCS in these villages.

We can see a substantial increase of membership, between 1943-44 and 1948-49, due to the establishment of the YWCS branches at Gudekal and Nagaladinne, where the traditional weaving communities were predominant. This also coincided with the demand for its products, which were supplied to the Indian army, during World War II. The post-war period and the dawn of Independence have created a decline in demand for the products of YWCS due to problems of marketing. This was reflected in the decline of membership during 1949-50. However, the membership increased during 1950-51 due to the establishment of a YWCS branch at Nandavaram in 1951. It is important to note that about 36% of the paid-up share capital of the breakaway Andhra Handloom Weavers' Cooperative Society Limited, was owned by
YWCS at the time of its split from the parent organisation, Madras Handloom Weavers' Cooperative Society in 1953.

TABLE 3.2: Trends in the Performance of YWCS Over Years*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year-94</th>
<th>No. of Members</th>
<th>Production (Rs.)</th>
<th>Profits (Rs.)</th>
<th>Paid up Share Capital</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1938-39</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>4,472</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>1,323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942-43</td>
<td>1,090</td>
<td>14,4462</td>
<td>54,737</td>
<td>8,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947-48</td>
<td>1,719</td>
<td>16,05,580</td>
<td>2,30,000</td>
<td>83,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948-49</td>
<td>1,741</td>
<td>14,71,953</td>
<td>1,27,108</td>
<td>91,458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-51</td>
<td>1,674</td>
<td>15,06,118</td>
<td>3,67,601</td>
<td>96,533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-61</td>
<td>2,208</td>
<td>18,45,017</td>
<td>54,417</td>
<td>1,34,379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-71</td>
<td>2,341</td>
<td>44,15,375</td>
<td>2,69,540</td>
<td>288,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-76</td>
<td>2,854</td>
<td>85,31309</td>
<td>10,34,708</td>
<td>4,24,823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>3,590</td>
<td>1,59,38,480</td>
<td>7,07,312</td>
<td>9,60,465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993-94</td>
<td>3,091</td>
<td>2,89,57,000</td>
<td>1,59,000</td>
<td>27,00,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995-%</td>
<td>2,841</td>
<td>3,60,00,000</td>
<td>3,98,000</td>
<td>27,00,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Source: YWCS Working Paper
* Data for the period between 1983-93 were not available.

In 1960s two branches in Gonegandla and Kosigi were opened. These two areas had less number of traditional weaving castes/communities, who are largely the constituent members of YWCS. Thus, during 1960s the increase in membership was slow. Increase in membership after 1970-71 was attributable to the benefits extended to its members, such as housing, free education to the children of members, production bonus, etc. The deteriorating health of the founder Chairman, Somappa, between 1976-78 had its impact on the fortunes of YWCS. During this period the profits of YWCS declined. In the year 1978 Somappa passed away leaving a leadership vacuum in YWCS. During mid 80s YWCS faced yarn crisis. Apart from the crisis in yarn as well as leadership, the problems of political interference also played a
significant role in the decline of membership between 1981 and 1996 (Table 3.2).

It is essential to note that, since its inception, persons related to a particular clan of Kurini caste, Machani, have been getting elected as chairman of the YWCS. Though people from other castes were elected to YWCS, at the decision making level Kurini people matter most even today. The weavers' colony, which was constructed by the YWCS, obviously shows the predominance of Kurini caste. Out of 150 houses sanctioned to the homeless and poor weavers in 1947, about 118 (81.4%) houses were sanctioned to the Kurini caste members. Among others Padmasale occupy 17 (11%) Togata 8 (5%) and the rest by the others. This shows the importance of Kurini caste in YWCS activities. Shivaiah, one of the surviving founder members of the YWCS, stated that, "we were rich enough to start some other business with the resources available with all Master Weavers at that time. But we wanted to do something for the community because most of the weavers, who were migrating to other regions due to famine, were Kurini. Again, among them, most of the people were closely related to ever\textsuperscript{7} one of us". Thus, it is clear that the caste/community attachment was a strong basis in forming the YWCS.

Social Composition of YWCS:

Majority of the weavers under the YWCS belonged to Kurini caste. They are also called locally \textit{Nese}. Thurston (1909) observed that the name Kurini is derived from the words \textit{Kuri}, meaning
sheep, and *vanni*, meaning wool, in Kannada language. Kurini were originally wool weavers and were engaged in cotton and silk weaving, besides practising agriculture. *Kunigiri, Jada or Jandra*, etc., terms are also used as synonyms for Kurini. The prefixes such as *Hire* or *Chikka* for Kurini in some places are found to be the two names of the two major sub divisions among the Kurnis. While the *Hire* sub division is vegetarian and follow a sanskritized way of life, the *Chikka* members eat meat, take alcohol and also dine with non-Kurini.

Padmasale are the second largest weaving community in the area. Mythologically, Padmasale trace their origin as warriors and as descendants of Lord Vishnu. Thurston (1909), quoting Andhra Padaparijathamu, states that these people have been the result of a union between a kamsala man and a potter woman. He further observes that, according the particular legend, the celestials that desired to secure clothing for themselves and their dependants, asked sage Markandeya to supply them clothes. Markandeya offered prayers to Lord Vishnu and sought his help in this regard. Lord Vishnu, who was pleased with his prayers, appeared and directed him to make a sacrificial offering (*Yagna*) to lord Indra, the king of Celestials. Accordingly, Markandeya performed the *Yagna* and from the fire was born the sage Bhavana, with a ball of thread in his hands, which he had manufactured under Lord Vishnu's guidance from the fibre of the lotus, which sprang from the Lord's navel. With this ball of thread Bhavana made clothes for the
celestials. Subsequently, he married the daughter of Sun God, Bhadravathi, and gave birth to a hundred and one sons, who later prepared clothes and supplied them to the celestials.

The Souvenir (1988), released by the Kurnool Zilla Padmasale Dwithiya Mahasabha, says that, Bhavana Rishi used the skeletal remains of the demon Makasura, whom he killed and gave relief to the celestials, as the implements for his loom to weave clothes for the celestials.

Togata Sale and the Sakula Sale are the other two weaving castes, who come next to the above mentioned communities in weaving occupation in Yemmiganur area. The Togalas regard themselves as a sub-caste of Devangam. The Sakula Sale, who is also called Patlakare, means specialists or experts in weaving the bordered saris, speak Marathi language. This caste can be compared with Patnuvaasan caste in Tamilnadu. Thurston (1909) cites a brief history of this caste, which was published in 1891 in support of their claims to Brahmana status. He explains how they got involved in various occupations and came to be known as Patnulkaran. He also slates that the term is derived from the Tamil words patnol meaning alik and karan means means man, which a silk weaver.

Devangam, who are famous in weaving saris in pure cotton with a silk border, is another traditional weaving community in this area. They worship the goddess Chamundeswari Devi.
Thurston (1909) narrates the origin of Devangam caste with the help of a legend, which depicts a story similar to Padmasale. He identifies Jadaru, Jada (great man), Dendra, Devara, Dora, Seniyan and Sidam as synonymous to Devangam. Hayavadana Rao (1926: 238) identifies two main linguistic divisions among them, Kannada and Telugu, who do not intermarry. According to him, the Kannada section is subdivided into 1) Sivachar Devangas, 2) Siryadavaru or those of Sira in Tumkur, 3) Hatagararu and 4) Hadinentu Maneyavaru (households belonging to 18 families), who appear to have seceded from the main group owing to certain heterodox practices.

The term Devangam is derived from two words Deva and Angam, which means limb or body of God. Devangam are also referred to as Attakaras, in the village. The local people describe that the term Attakara is derived from two Canarese (Kannada) terms, Hasa and Kara, which means stubborn and doer respectively. The name Attakara also is associated with black magic. They always gain an upper hand on the opponent in any magical dual and see to it that the opponent magician is defeated. Hence the name Attakara.

There are certain families from other communities/ castes who are engaged in weaving in YWCS. They are basically from a non-weaving traditional background and adapted to this occupation only due to economic considerations. The main castes/ communities among this category are Muslims, Katika.
Muslims (Butchers), Besta (fisherman), Chakali (washer man) and Boya.

Among the traditional weaver castes, Padmasale is considered hierarchically superior to Kurini, Devanga, Togata sale and Sakula Sale castes, respectively. They are separate endogamous groups and have communal relations. The caste distinctions are reflected in their worshipping of different deities and also in marital exchanges.

III

YWCS' Adaptation to New Challenges:

The YWCS, which established its branches in many villages in the area, has established its sales depots (9) even in neighbouring Karnataka State, along with 40 sales depots in Andhra Pradesh. Each of its branches is specialised in different products keeping in view the demands of the consumers. This was the reason why YWCS became vibrant to changing market and consumer aptitude and could sustain itself in face of challenges. It facilitated exchange of different techniques used by different weavers of the area. The branches of YWCS encouraged local designs and these products were later handed over to the main branch. YWCS developed new designs, using all the local designs thus collected.

Any person who wishes to become a member of the YWCS has to pay some share capital, which entitles him to get a loom,
and, subsequently, he will be supplied with raw materials like yarn every month on the basis of work progress. The weaver, in turn, has to submit finished goods to the society for which he will receive remuneration. Thus weavers began to procure equipment and tools and selling the cloth produced jointly in an organised way. Once demand was established for its products, YWCS introduced new varieties keeping in view the market situation and changed the technology accordingly. One Dory section was established for winding and reeling purposes. A separate section was opened for helping the divorced and widowed women for sizing of the yarn. YWCS has introduced a dye house for making yarn in different colours. It reduced the burden of weavers from paying extra charges for dyeing the yarn. Introduction of bed-sheets, bandages clothe (Gazu cloth), and mosquito net doth necessitated introduction of improved technology.

YWCS has established the following infrastructure, as a part of modernisation during the successive years of its progress (Plate3.1):

- Modern Dye House
- Hank Mercerising Sections
- Preparatory Work, Printing and Design Sections
- Main Goods Godowns - 2
- Head Office Production Centre
Modern Dye House:

The YWCS has established its own dye house. The entire coloured yarn required by the YWCS members is dyed through this Dye House. This Dye House is housed in a separate building with necessary vats and bleaching tubs. An overhead tank with 10,000 gallons capacity of water was connected to the Dye House to provide continuous water supply through pipelines. This facility was in demand due to increased production, which required a corresponding increase in the dyed yarn. The Dye House was modified twice, after its establishment. Firstly, it was modernised keeping the need for greater output and to ensure uniformity in the shade of yarn. The Dye House was used to boil 1,400 KGs of yarn and to dye 900 KGs of yarn daily. This modern Dye House played a significant role in popularising the products of YWCS and became instrumental in bringing down the costs of dyeing.

Hank Mercerising Plant.

YWCS had introduced a Hank Mercerising Plant to its infrastructure. It is unique and first of its kind for a primary weavers' cooperative society in the country. This act of YWCS had helped in enhancing the saleability of its products and increasing exports to a considerable degree. This plant helped in getting a lustre and silk-like appearance to the YWCS products. Also, the durability was enhanced by 30% while the increase in cost was only 10%. Apart from this, YWCS imported a Mercerising Plant from Switzerland and acquired all allied machinery indigenously.
Preparatory Work, Printing and Designing Section:

Long warps, ranging from 100 to 500 yards, are required for special type of looms. The society takes up the preparatory works like drawing the yarn into warps, processing it, etc., before supplying it to members. A block, screen and roller-printing section and a designing section allied with YWCS functions effectively to bring in effective designs evolved, keeping in view the market trends.

Main Goods Godowns:

The YWCS had constructed two goods godowns for storing the raw material as well as the finished products (clothes). The godown used for storing the finished clothes, procured from the weaver members is very vast. Another godown is used for storing the raw material like yarn.

Head Office Production Centre:

The Head Office Production centre is located in YWCS main branch at Yemmiganur. This centre supervises and coordinates the production activities of all other sections working under YWCS, relating to administration, procurement of yarn, purchase of other raw materials, payment of wages to weaver members, marketing the products, etc.

Quality of Production:

There are certain specific factors adopted by YWCS to improve the quality of production. These factors are:
a) Raw Materials: Supplying of best quality materials to its members was the main factor that contributed to the growth of YWCS. It continued to get yarn from Madurai, in spite of problems in procuring, till the spinning mills in Yemmiganur and surrounding areas started functioning. Even when yarn was available from the local spinning mills the YWCS management did not compromise on the quality of the yarn. It continued to procure yarn from Madurai, as its quality was better than that of the local mills.

b) Task Table Register: The task table register is used to enter the details regarding quality of yarn. This was a measure undertaken to ensure maintenance of quality. The quality of yarn was worked out for each variety on the basis of count construction particulars of the cloth. It is counter-checked by working on a loom before it is registered in the task table.

c) Reeds and Healds: The society started supplying yarn in the reeds only in proportion to the required specification. All weaver members used to get two to four reeds of different specification and were healding it free of cost. This had ensured the quality of cloth in the given specification and facilitated a quick changeover from one variety to another in keeping with market demand.

d) Supervising Looms: The Maistries (supervisors) with a good weaving expertise were appointed to guide the weaver members to maintain the quality and to ensure that the doth is returned in a stipulated time. Maistries were 16 in number and they were controlled by a head maistry. Each maistry had to supervise 200
looms. Their responsibility was to inspect every loom at least once a week. They were entrusted the task of guiding the weaver members about the new varieties as and when they were introduced by YWCS. This measure of YWCS helped in avoiding any loss of yarn/cloth due to amateur weaving. Besides, they always attended the complaints from members regarding loom adjustments.

e) Appraisers: Appraisers with dynamism and technical ability were appointed as persons-in-charge. Their job was to check the cloth specifications while receiving it from the weaver. YWCS approves the cloth only after it passes through different stages of approval before the approver certified them (Plate 3.2). Fines would be imposed on the weaver for any defect and it varies depending on the nature of the defect. Cases of defects with manipulative motivations to cheat the society would be referred to a Special committee, which meets once in a month. Five members with long-standing experience and trusted dealings with YWCS constitute the Special Committee. They take up inspections and recommend suitable action. The punishments range from imposing fine (which may be some times equal to their wages) and, in extreme cases, suspension from YWCS membership for two weeks. However, if the defects are due to natural reasons they are ignored after nominal fines. The defective clothes would be sold through YWCS counters at cheaper rates.
Product Mix:

The YWCS, due to its concerted efforts, was able to sustain itself in weaving enterprise. It adopted the product diversification programme for solving the recurring problems of accumulated stocks. As a result, the weavers are gradually helped to switch over from the traditional varieties of plain woven saris and dhoties. Switching over to the improved looms like frame looms, Jaquad looms and pedal looms introduced by the society, majority of the members of YWCS have benefited. Pit looms, which are continued by those who did not like to change, also are modernised, in response to the market demands, with doby attaches, long length warp devices, etc. This allowed them to weave the same traditional varieties generally patronised by the rural segment of the consumers who still continue to buy YWCS products. This mixed loom culture of the society has enabled it to produce diverse range of products, catering to different segments of consumers. Thus the introduction of bed-sheets, pillow covers, drills, furnishers, honey combed towels, mosquito nets clothe, casements, dress materials, etc., were added to the list of YWCS' products later.

Other Features of YWCS:

Marketing:

The YWCS markets its products through its 56 sales depots established in important towns (except 6 depots, which are in other states) throughout the State. More than three fourths (77%) of the total sales' turnover comes from the retail sales only and the rest
accounts for wholesales to APCO and All India Handloom Fabrics Marketing Cooperative Society. The society, in the past, had followed a procedure of paying incentives (commission) to sales staff, if their sales exceeded the fixed sales target.

Wages and Thrift Fund:

The society has provided continuous work to its members on reasonable wages until the 1980s when it underwent a crisis of yarn shortage. The wages were revised regularly keeping in view the market conditions and other changing circumstances. It followed a democratic process in revising the wages based on the recommendations of a special advisory committee comprising of 25 members, duly appointed for this purpose. Besides, Thrift Fund was created and a sum of 6 paise for every rupee they earned was deducted and credited to the Thrift Fund account. Thus it inculcated a habit of thrift among the members.

Amenities:

The YWCS has adopted several welfare measures for its members. It provided medical benefits, extended financial contribution to those who underwent family planning and provided free education up to intermediate level for the children of the members. There was a provision even to pay for funerals. The expenses for these welfare measures were drawn from the Common Good fund of the society.
Housing Facility:

The YWCS had also provided accommodation to its homeless and needy members. This was necessitated due to migration of large number of weaver families from the adjoining villages came and settled in Yemmiganur. It has got the distinction of being the first handloom cooperative to launch a housing scheme for weavers in the cooperative fold. The existing weavers' colony was constructed on the advice of J.R.Rayon., the then Joint Registrar of Cooperative Societies. Despite government restrictions (as the government had restricted housing colonies only for organised labour), the colony was constructed. The credit for this goes to Machani Somappa, who evolved a housing scheme financed by YWCS suitable for weavers' needs and the capacity of the members to repay. This colony is considered to be a best weaver colony in the country, even today.

YWCS was granted Rs.3.18 lakhs towards building a housing colony, along with five other cooperative societies in the erstwhile Madras State. This enabled the YWCS to implement the schemes designed to improve the housing conditions of weavers. On the advice of Sir J.C. Rayon, the then Joint Registrar of Cooperative Societies, who after visiting the weavers' houses in 1944 suggested a housing colony on the outskirts of the village. The weaving colony was established under two housing schemes. There are 150 houses in the colony, built for its members. Thus, the
establishment of the weavers' colony was the direct result of the cooperation.

Working Capital:

The funds for the society are mainly from the equity fund supplemented by government assistance per equity. The society has invested some part of its funds on buildings, in shares of other cooperative institutions and government securities. The remaining, created out of profits, is kept as reserve fund. This reserve fund is utilised for running the business of the cooperative.

Production:

In the initial years, when product diversification was started on improved looms, it was running 60 looms in Model Weaving Centre at the headquarters of YWCS. Later, this was closed down as its purpose was served. However, the total number of looms under YWCS has come down due to the introduction of silk weaving by Master Weavers. Also, there were instances of younger members of weaver families switching over to other professions like workers in spinning mills and other industries in the area. The effective loomage of the society was 2,841 and the annual production of the society had reached to Rs. 3.6 crores in the year 1995-96. The production per loom per day is around 5 meters. The production value per loom per month works out to Rs.625/-, of which Rs.375/- is the value of the yarn consumed. Thus, the average wage earning per loom per month is Rs.250/-. Members of the society are mainly two loom owners and the number of single
loom owners is negligible. Thus an average minimum monthly income per member family is Rs.500/-.

Management of YWCS:

The management of YWCS is vested in a Board of Directors consisting of nine members. Among them eight are working weaver members, including two women. The Board gets itself elected by the General Body once in three years. It meets regularly to discuss the problems of members. The directors are given allowances for attending meetings. The YWCS has also made provision for allowances to the members on special committee and wages committee also. There is a secretary deputed by the Government to run YWCS.

Cooperative Activity - Diversification into Other Sectors:

As noted in case of Rochdale Equitable Pioneers Society, YWCS also had initiated cooperation to encourage entrepreneurship among the other sections of the society. Thus, the Yemmiganur leather workers cooperative society (for Harijans); the Yemmiganur cooperative house building society, Yemmiganur consumer cooperative stores, the Yemmiganur cooperative marketing society (for farmers) etc., were established.

1. Cooperative Town Bank In Yemmiganur:

The establishment of the Cooperative Town Bank in Yemmiganur was indirectly influenced by the YWCS. The Multanis, lending money at exorbitant rates of interest to the
weavers who were very much need of credit. If they did not return the money in time Multanis used to occupy the client's houses by force. Thus, in Chayano's words (1987; 263) "relative weakness of local capital" gave rise to a sense of cooperative in banking matters. The credit for this also goes to Sri Somappa for the idea of forming a Cooperative Town Bank, when the local people expressed their problems with Multanis. Thus, he established the cooperative town bank, to serve the financial needs of the local community in the year 1946, with a membership of only 10 and a paid-up share capital of Rs.3375/-. It has the distinction of "A" class bank continuously for a long period. The success of the Yemmiganur Cooperative town Bank lies in its low rate of interest, the inculcated habit of depositing, and Cooperation of the members in repaying the loans, interests, etc. The credit of bringing such cooperation among the members goes to Somappa, who by holding periodical meetings taught the members, the habit of depositing their surplus funds in bank and borrowing from it when in need.

2. Yemmiganur Cooperative Stores:

   The Yemmiganur Cooperative Stores also owes its origin to the severe crisis of food grains during the Second World War. Thanks to the initiative taken by M. Somappa it was started in 1942. It was aimed at providing food grains, clothes and other controlled commodities for reasonable prices. Starting with 45 members and a paid-up share capital of Rs.2, 660/-, it made a steady progress and is still running successfully and earning reasonable profits.
3. The Cooperative Milk Supply Society:

This was established in Yemmiganur in 1952. Somappa with his innate common sense and initiative extended the cooperative activity to better the conditions of milk producers. Earlier, women from the rural areas used to bring milk to Yemmiganur to sell to hotels. But the hotel owners used to pay less prices and also the payments were usually delayed. Having realised the problem, Somappa came up with the idea of forming the Cooperative Society for milk suppliers.

4. Yemmiganur Leather Workers Cooperative Society:

This cottage Industrial Cooperative Society for the leather workers was established in 1952 under the Presidentship of Somappa. It was established in order to stop the migrations of Harijan families to other areas. Somappa felt that these political aspirations would be destabilised if the Harijan, who were his main supporters, migrated to other places. It was due to his initiative that the town became a renowned centre for manufacture of sandals after the society came into existence. The Society was engaged in the development of village leather industry under the purview of Khadi and Village Industries Commission. The Society was providing employment regularly to Harijan families. However, at present, the society is not functioning well due to financial problems, failure of management and other political reasons.
5. The Yemmiganur Cooperative House Building Society:

It was another venture of the cooperative movement in Yemmiganur led by Somappa to cope with the problem of rapid growth of Yemmiganur and to meet the corresponding problem of accommodation facilities for the increasing population, the society was established in 1955 in an about 55 acres of land.

Present Status of YWCS:

Due to several reasons, a sort of uncertainty prevailed in YWCS during late 80s. The problems of Unions with management and the shortage of yarn in the market and other political reasons are some of the reasons for the declining importance of the YWCS. Besides, the high prices of its products also added it owes. The higher prices of its products are due to a large contingency of establishment and the component of salaries. APCO, the Apex body of weavers of Andhra Pradesh, which was marketing the products regularly, besides it market through YWCS outlets, did not come forward this time to buy and market YWCS products. Thus a stock (worth of about Rs.70 lakhs) was accumulated in the godowns, resulting in major financial crisis in YWCS. Consequently, the management could not supply the yarn to the members for their month long work. Thus the disappointment and distrust started among the members during late the 1980s gave rise to the emergence of Unions from the members side also.

The emergence of Telugu Desam Party in the state in 1983 brought effective changes in YWCS. The YWCS was traditionally
under the control of M.G. Brothers (Machani Gangappa Brothers) who are in Congress Party. The Telugu Desam Party (Local MLA belongs to Telugu Desam Party) wanted to have a hold on YWCS. This political development had partly affected the YWCS.

The organisation has also grown in size and it led to dissension among the members. The Union leaders were demanding democratisation in functioning of YWCS. The members and unions have been complaining that the successive leaders after Somappa have been functioning more autocratically and the organisation is becoming, as a result, less democratic. The present leadership is failing to meet the needs and aspirations of members and the unions. This also is one of the major threats for the survival of YWCS as a Cooperative Society.

There is a growing challenge from silk weaving that has emerged under Master Weavers in this area. This has resulted in the dwindling of membership of YWCS. This dropout in the membership of society became another setback to the YWCS. The larger the size of the membership the better would be its contribution to run the Cooperative Society profitably and meet the costs of staff, infrastructure etc. But with the decline in the membership there may be a need to prune the scope of the activities of YWCS in order to make it a viable and a vibrant unit. Otherwise, YWCS should change its strategies of production in response to the needs of market and strengthen itself as it did earlier. In response to the challenge of silk Master Weavers, YWCS
has initiated the conversion of looms into silk looms in a phased manner with financial aid of Rs.70 lakhs from NABARD. Thus, the entrepreneurial dynamics of YWCS has kept the cooperative as a vibrant organisation.
1. Gram Sabha was an assembly of elders and heads of families representing the entire village. It functioned as an organisation through which the people of the village undertook various activities for their social and economic benefit. It looked after functions such as construction and maintenance of irrigation works, banking, health and sanitation, community development, charitable and religious activities, judicial functions, construction of roads and rest houses, maintenance of communications, up-keeping of pasture lands, etc.

2. As per the New Act, conducting elections and auditing the accounts have become the responsibility of the respective cooperative society. Affairs of the cooperative would be governed by their own bye-laws, subject to very limited restrictions in the Act. Staff patterns, staff remuneration, service conditions, etc., which had required prior approval of the Registrar of cooperatives, are now the responsibility of respective cooperative society. Also, the New Act states that, the cooperatives will be no longer need to take the Registrar's permission, which was the case earlier, to invest its funds for different purposes like buildings, housing for its members, etc.

3. Weavers work altogether in a different atmosphere. They are accustomed to sit and work in shade in closed doors. So they are habituated to avoid going under hot weather. Hence the weavers consider it difficult to work under sun

4. YWCS organises stalls on weekly shandy days at Yemmiganur on every Friday. YWCS also sells its products during the month-long Kara panduga, annual Neelakanteswara Swamy Jatara (fair), through its temporary outlets opened specifically for the people to buy their products, as its products are Popular in the region and also elsewhere in the State.