CHAPTER - I
INTRODUCTION

Clothing is a basic human need as food and shelter. In fact the history of textiles worn by people would be the history of mankind since the Neolithic period. The textiles have effected and have been affected by cultural, political and religious history of man throughout the globe1.

The existence of Handloom dates from times immemorial in India. Though Handloom literally refers to a traditional weaving method, symbolically it stands for much more. It represents a philosophy - a way of life. The philosophy is the simple faith of Indian folk artisan - the handloom weaver - the man behind the loom. Handloom stands for the revitalization of traditional creative energies and the certainty that they can be infused into our modern civilization. Though the methods employed in making handloom fabrics are simple, the results are extraordinary. The human effort results in creations, which are both aesthetically delightful and extremely durable.

Till the nineteenth century, when there were no machines for the production of cloth, the handloom industry was the sole supplier of cloth for the entire needs of the world. Notwithstanding the fact that the handloom is seemingly an out dated tool of cloth production in this space age, most of people all over the world still look at it as a symbol of the glorious past of the entire human race. The handloom products are not mostly mere pieces of decoration but also a source of livelihood to several millions of artisans and their families all over the world2.

The area under cotton cultivation in India is the largest in the world. India has the second largest spinning capacity after China in hand weaving sector and a long tradition of producing some of the finest and costliest fabrics in the world.

Handloom industry in India is an ancient cottage industry. References to the use of handloom are abundant in the recorded details of epics like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. This industry seems to have flourished between 5000 and 3000 BC. The
civilizations of Harappa and Mohanjodaro reveal the use of woolen and decorative embroidery in handloom. The industry as we understand it today is constantly associated with Indian rural economic scenario ever since.

The Handloom industry being a part of the Indian culture and tradition, it is one of the oldest cottage industries in India diffused widely throughout the country. The artisans of India are famous for hand spinning, hand printing and hand typing. They are accustomed to the art of weaving as a hereditary occupation. The industry transcends sectarian linguistic and communal barriers. The industry is providing direct employment to 12.5 million people in Indian decentralized sector. Further the industry generates indirect employment to others like loom manufactures, dyers, twistiers, processors, etc., thus one in every 60 in the country is engaged in this industry in one way or the other. The Handloom weavers produce textiles from a third of nation’s cotton product and over 60 per cent of the exported is next only to agriculture.

The handloom industry generates production at low capital cost, mostly using indigenous raw material and utilizing local skills, widens entrepreneurial base, facilitates balanced regional growth and prevents the migration labour to the metropolitan areas.

1.1 PRODUCTION OF HANDELLOOM FABRICS

There are several processes involved in the production of handloom cloth, which can be broadly categorized as pre-loom and post-loom activities. Besides weaving, winding, sizing, warping and beaming are the pre-loom activities while bleaching, printing, calendering and finishing are the post-loom activities, which have to be done in a systematic process. Some of these handloom products may be directly sold soon after weaving and some other products required post-weaving process to find market.

The process of weaving takes certain period of time which the weaver has to perform with much attention, care and patience. A simple mistake can spoil the material within no time. Further, the favour of suitable climatic conditions is essentially required. The production of handloom fabrics shows its due influence and impact on the socio-economic lives of the poor weaver labourers.
1.2 MARKETING OF HANDLOOM FABRICS

Marketing of Handloom cloth is done by weavers themselves, master weavers, middlemen, co-operative societies and also by marketing organizations, like Apex Weavers Co-operative societies, Handloom houses of Apex, All India Handlooms Fabric Marketing Co-operative Societies and sales and showrooms of Handicrafts and Handloom Export Corporation etc., Further there are organizations directly or indirectly supporting the marketing facilities of handloom fabrics for both domestic and export purposes. Some of these organizations are, National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC), Association of Corporations, Apex Societies for Handlooms (ACASH) and Marketing Development Assistance Scheme (MDA). They are expected to safeguard the interests of handloom weavers by releasing them from the clutches of the middlemen and improving the standard of living by providing enough employment opportunities and facilities to them to market their products at competitive prices.

Presently government policies are increasingly influenced by the globalization processes and are related to WTO-induced trade regimes. As the controls on exports get liberalized and domestic markets open up, the handloom scenario in the country is likely to undergo drastic changes in terms of skills, inputs like designs, market trends and changing demands therein. The question is whether these changes include the interests of weavers who are still practising their traditional skills and knowledge.

Many policies and schemes are being implemented by government for the benefit and welfare of handloom weavers and for the progressive growth of handloom industry which has been providing livelihood for many people directly and indirectly. Yet, the handloom industry is still staggering in crisis. Hence an attempt is made in this study to examine and analyse the production performance and marketing of handlooms fabrics as well as various problems and constraints that come across in the process of weaving fabrics on handlooms and in marketing the woven fabrics, more particularly the problems of the weavers are studied.
1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The handloom sector plays an important role in the economic development of the rural poor in the state. It contributes significantly by generating more employment opportunities and providing bread to the rural poor. It absorbs more than 4 million people in its fold. Realizing its importance, a plethora of measures is undertaken by the government in order to promote the handloom sector.

Unfortunately the situation in Andhra Pradesh is not in favour of handloom sector due to multifarious reasons. Despite several measures taken by the government by the way of institutional support and direct financial assistance to the handloom weavers, they have been in miserable state due to myriad problems and are sustaining continuous losses. These problems include improper supply of raw material, price hike in yarn, lack of proper marketing facilities, lack of market awareness and promotion, lack of proper financial resources, involvement of middlemen, competition from mill and power loom products, lack of modern technology, lack of prompt and timely support from the government and other allied agencies and so on.

It is a well known fact that the handloom weavers in some parts of the state are starving to death and even commit suicides, due to lack of facilities as well as disproportionate earnings corresponding to their labour, in the weaving activity. The standard of living of the weavers is significantly low and they are leading miserable and pitiable life due to unemployment and underemployment. This situation prevails everywhere in our country. Prakasam District, which is chosen for detailed research study, is no exception to this situation. This pathetic condition of handloom industry in Prakasam District demands thorough investigation into the problems and measures to plug the loopholes and find remedies to the problems confronting handloom weavers.

1.4 PRESENT STUDY:

At present the state of Handloom weavers in Prakasam District is at stake and the weavers are panic stricken with miseries since they are facing acute production and marketing problems. A majority of them are struggling hard to survive and labour weavers have become bonded laborers. Prakasam District in Andhra Pradesh has much
economic importance as high concentrated handloom fabrics are produced there. As the handloom industry is established in a larger scale in Prakasam district and most of the people in this district are weavers, an organized study is required. And the fabrics are being exported to various countries. The weavers in Prakasam District are facing multiple problems in the production and marketing of their fabrics. Competition of mill or power loom products, unfavourable climatic conditions, as well as their poverty and under employment also have added fuel to the fire of the miseries

1.5 OBJECTIVES:

Keeping in view the above problems, this study is proposed to carry on with the following objectives.

1. To evaluate the progress of Handloom Industry in Andhra Pradesh
2. To analyse the socio-economic conditions of the sample handloom weavers.
3. To assess the adoption of technology and production of handloom weaving.
4. To observe the marketing facilities of handloom fabrics in the study area.
5. To study the problems of handloom weavers in the study area.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

The present study is confined to a general survey of some broad aspects regarding the socio-economic conditions of the weavers and the general problems faced by these weavers with regard to technology, production and marketing of handloom fabrics. For this purpose, a sample study of 305 weavers is made out of an estimated 11,982 weavers' households in Prakasam District in Andhra Pradesh as per the census records of the year 2001-2002. Though the sample is limited to about 3 per cent owing to certain constraints, the samples are drawn in such a way as to reflect the characteristics of the total population. Hence, the resultant conclusions in the study can be treated as having universal application.

1.7 METHODOLOGY:

To obtain a comprehensive analysis the methodology mentioned below is adopted employing the following sample design.
1.7.1 SAMPLE DESIGN:

The basis of the study is sample survey. Stratified survey method is used while drawing the samples. Prakasam District is divided into three revenue divisions, namely, Kandukur Division, Markapur Division, and Ongole Division. In every division two mandals are chosen where weaving is highly concentrated. They are, Kanigiri Mandal and Pedacharlapalli Mandal from Kandukur Division; Bestavaripet Mandal and Markapur Mandal from Markapur Division; Chirala Mandal and Vetapalem Mandal from Ongole Division. Again two villages from every mandal are selected by stratified random sampling with proportional-allocation techniques.

Village wise list of the households of the handloom weavers is obtained from the office of the Assistant Director of Handloom & Textiles, Ongole, in Prakasam district. Using simple random sampling technique 15 per cent of the households in each weaver's village is selected for the study. Thus the study is confined to 305 handloom weaver households in Prakasam District.

Weavers' households in this universe have been divided into independent weavers, master weavers, and weavers under middle men, co-operative weavers and labour weavers. The number of sample weavers for all the classes is limited to 305. Ultimately the sample is divided into 45 independent weavers, 15 master weavers, 132 weavers under middle men, 18 co-operative weavers and 95 labour weavers. The universe and sample design in the study area is given below:
### Table 1.1
THE UNIVERSE AND SAMPLE DESIGN OF STUDY AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Revenue Division</th>
<th>Selected Mandals</th>
<th>Selected Villages</th>
<th>Total No. of Weaver Households in the Village</th>
<th>Sample (15%) Weaver Households</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Kandukur</td>
<td>Kanigiri</td>
<td>Yadavalli</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vagupalli</td>
<td></td>
<td>87</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pedacharlapalli</td>
<td>Talakondapadu</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Marrikuntapalli</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Markapur</td>
<td>Bestavaripet</td>
<td>Bestavaripet</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nekunambad</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Markapur</td>
<td>Markapuru</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Puchakayalapalli</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Ongole</td>
<td>Chirala</td>
<td>Jandrapet</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>186</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Epurupalem</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Vetapalem</td>
<td>Vetapalem</td>
<td>624</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Desaipeta</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2040</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1.7.2 DATA BASE:

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data are derived from the responses of the sample handloom weavers to the pre-designed schedules. Proper care is taken to explain to the weavers all the aspects in the schedule and elicit truthful and unexaggerated feedback from them. The schedules are pre-tested before conducting the field survey. Secondary data are collected from the offices of the Development Commissioner for Handloom, New Delhi and Government of Andhra Pradesh. Supporting data collected from published and unpublished sources like reports, books, journals, periodicals and minutes of the meetings. The literature on the subject available in the libraries of Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati; Indian Institute of Handloom Technology, Venkatagiri; The Commissionerate for Handlooms and the Director of Handlooms and Textiles, Hyderabad; Andhra University, Visakapatnam and CHIP (NGO), Chirala are also utilised.
1.8 TOOLS OF ANALYSIS:

Suitable and appropriate statistical tools and mathematical devices like averages, percentages, and the analysis of variance, student's "t" test, Chi-square test are employed while tabulating, analysing and interpreting the data.

1.9 SCHEME OF THE STUDY:

To present a comprehensive analysis the study is organized in Eight Chapters

**First chapter** introduces the problem of the study, that is, on Handloom Industry. Besides, methodology adopted and objectives proposed for the study along with sample design as well as scope of the study and organization of study are presented in this chapter.

**Second chapter** is divided into two sections. Reviews on various dimensions of handloom industry are discussed in section-A and profile of the study area, i.e. Prakasam district is picturised in section-B.

Progress of the handloom industry is studied to evaluate the present status of the handloom industry in Andhra Pradesh, in the **Third Chapter**.

**Fourth chapter** provides the glimpses socio-economic profile of the sample weavers.

**In chapter five**, an attempt is made to understand the technology implementation in the production of weaving industry.

**Sixth chapter** deals with marketing of handloom fabrics in Prakasam District.

**Chapter Seven** analyses the problems of handloom industry in Prakasam district.

**Chapter Eight** presents a brief summary besides observations along with suggestions and conclusion.
REFERENCES:

