PREFACE

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 effected by cultural, political and religious history of man throughout the globe. The textile industry is the largest single industry in modern India. The handloom industry is a part of textile trade.

Handloom industry in India is the second largest employer after agriculture. The Indian handloom industry has occupied an important position in respect of its export to foreign countries from an early period. The handloom fabrics of India occupy an immeasurable position in the early civilization of Egypt, Rome and Babylon. Majority of the handloom weavers in India are self-employed artisans who are carrying on their profession in their own houses with the assistance of their family members in pre-loom and post-loom processes. On attaining Independence, Government of India rightly recognized the important role that the industry can play and a number of policy measures were formulated and executed to bring the industry on sound footing.

The study presents a historical account of the industry with a view to identifying the factors leading to its decline. The study gives broad indications of the likely consequences of different policies and committees options and analyses various textile policies. It also attempts among other related aspects of the industry, viz., process of production, types of looms, mode of acquisition of looms, supply of raw materials, quality of raw materials and their prices. In addition, the marketing and organizational issues of the industry have been dealt with. The problems of marketing, financing and others have also received attention in the study.

A handloom fabric occupies an important place in the Indian mythology, history and tradition. Indian handloom industry is the oldest industry. Since
times immemorial handloom industry has been an integral part of the Indian economy. Handloom industry is not only very ancient but also unique in the sense that in no other country hand weaving is carried out on the major decentralised industries and it is highly labour intensive which plays a crucial role in the rural economy.

However, just one study, like the present one, cannot be adequate to cover all the gaps in our knowledge about the industry. There is always scope for a more specific and in-depth examination. Hence, an attempt is made to analyse the Production and Marketing of Handloom fabrics in Prakasam District of Andhra Pradesh in this work.