INTRODUCTION

Handloom Industry is one of the oldest industry in India. It has provided jobs for millions in olden days as well as today. However, with the scientific advancement, powerlooms and textile mills were introduced. Rapid changes in the fashion and in values started cropping in and as a result of it, the traditional handloom industry started facing several problems. The skills that the weavers had developed became of no use in the modern days. Several studies of Handloom Industry specially that of the weavers were done. However, even after several studies, commissions and Government planning, Handloom Industry in most part is surviving on oxygen and several famous centres of Handloom Industry were closed down. Primarily because the coordination could not be set between the cost of the production and the profit. There is another important reason that is responsible for the decline of this industry. With the changes all over the world the Handloom weavers prefer to be as traditional as they were. Obviously when one cannot meet the balance of demand and supply considering the need of the people the industry is likely to decline.

1.1 History of Handloom

The history of handloom fabric is as old as the story of civilization or history of man himself said Stout (1961). When man shed the bark and leaves and animal skins and started wearing cloth made out of spun yarn, it marked the greatest revolution in human civilisation opined Reddy and Vatsala (1989).
Origin and development of the construction of fabrics from strips or strands is a subject on which authorities do not agree said Hess (1966). Cotton was probably grown, spun, woven into cloth in India expressed Gupta and Singh (1979). According to Manu the sacred thread of Bramhins in the Vedic age was of cotton. Excavations at Mohen-Jo-Daro have unearthed bits of cotton which seem to be 5000 years old it is suggested in Indian handicrafts (1972).

The principles of weaving were known to primitive man before spinning said Corbman (1987). He knew how to make baskets and mats by interlacing twigs, reeds, and grasses expressed Labarthe (1964). These fibres were long and required no spinning into yarn. Later, man learned how to twist short fibres together to form yarn and woven clothes; suggested Wingate (1942).

According to Birrell (1959) long before man made his rudimentary attempts of weaving, somewhere in the rich river valleys of China, India, Mesopotamia or Egypt, the discovery of fibres challenged man to improve his crude methods of fabricating cloth and eventually led him to the discovery of the loom. India is the first country in the whole wide world to have perfected the art of weaving, it is suggested in Master pieces of Indian Textiles (1970).

The first handloom was crude, the warp yarns in a fabric were suspended from a limb of tree and held in tension by stone weights at the end near the ground. The loom of the American Navajo warp yarns are tied between two sticks. In less primitive looms wooden frame was made to hold the warps, when strung paralleled in this frame.
In early looms the crosswise yarn were carried under and over each of the warp yarns by sharpened stick. For greater speed harness was developed. In 1733 AD, John Kay of Burg England invented Fly shuttle loom. This loom paved the way for development of the next series of looms. In fly shuttle pit loom the combined advantages of both pit loom and fly shuttle loom are achieved stressed Wingate (1953). Slanting looms found among the rug makers of the East said Woolman and McGowan (1954).

The French philosopher Denis Diderot in his Encyclopedia narrated the construction and use of the loom. He helped demystify a process which eighteenth century trade guilds wanted to keep secret said Hjert and Rusestiel (1978).

In India the inception of the handloom can be traced back to the Vedic period. The first known method of weaving in India was provided with an upright vertical frame to hold the warp in stretched condition, weft thread with the finger through alternate warp threads. This method was succeeded by shed stick weaving in which a shed was produced by passing a stick through alternate warp threads. The weft was inserted through this shed by weavers hands and beating up of weft was to be effected by means of a separate wooden comb.

The next improvement was to pass the warp threads through the loops of healds, these were called "Horizontal loom" which were being used for weaving fine muslin or silk.

There was a kind of loom which was erected by sinking the frames in the ground and the treadles were to be operated inside
the pit by the feet. It is called the pitform. This loom had been known to be used in India in 5000 to 6000 years B.C. and continues still today in the same form. This loom seemed to be the invention of India although it may be seen from time to time in paintings of Northern Asia.

In throw shuttle loom a metal wire is used for holding the pirn in the hollow of shuttle. This kind of loom is still in use in India and the same exclusive variety of fabrics are still produced on the same type of loom (Wingate, 1953). Improvements in loom are made to speed up the weaving process. Hollen and Saddler (1955).

1.2 Statement of Problem

Present study relates to the traditional Handloom Industry. Here, the handloom industry of Nagpur is to be studied from three different aspects. First the organisational structure, the second its technique and the third weavers present status. So the problem can be stated as a study of Handloom Textile Industry Nagpur, its organisational structure, technique and economics with special reference to the weaver and its present status.

India is one of the principal cotton growing countries said Taggert (1985). Records show that for about 3,500 year India was the centre of cotton growing and processing industry. Some of the ancient fabrics were not equalled in delicacy and texture until the last century, opined Shenai (1989). It proves the glorious past of the Indian handlooms. But today the handloom weavers are not in position to get a square meal. Hence in order to bring back those glorious days of handlooms researches are necessary. Ishida (1979) expressed
that preparation of loom is an expensive and time consuming matter. Fannin (1979) exhibited his woven materials highly appreciated in U.S.A. Nagpur Handloom Industry requires an intensive technical study to modify their ageold looms. According to Rajesh's speech (1995) One lakh twenty thousand skilled weavers fingers were cut off by Britishers, to prevent cultural and economic development of the country. Still there are skilled weavers in India. It is high time to conduct a Research to find out such an important matter. Roben (1978) and Gohl and Vilensky (1987) dealt with the processes which improve the quality of the cloth. Booth (1982) and Totora suggested that for handlooms textile finishing can be a valuable aid as it modifies it's appearance.

Considering the opinions of the above authors it is necessary to conduct studies on the processes used in the industry and develop the techniques used.

1.3 Aims of the study.

Whenever an industry is studied the focus of attention is either the economy or the workers. Present study aims at carrying out a comprehensive investigation of the Handloom Textile Industry in Nagpur with special regard to its organisational structure, its techniques today being employed and its economy. However this is only half of the aim of study the main focus is the weaver who is the key individual in this industry and the study aims at studying the weaver from three different aspects namely social, economic and educational.

1.4 Objectives of the Study.

The objectives can be stated as follows.
Socio Economic status.

To know agewise distribution of weavers.
To study size of the family.
To examine educational standard of the weavers.
To investigate weavers main and subsidiary occupation.
To find out income of the respondents.
To understand details of work place and place of residence.
To know reasons for not separating work place from residence.
To find out joint and nuclear families of the weavers.

Organisational Structure of Handloom Industry

To know type of loom and it's ownership nature.
To find out approximate working hours of the workers.
To know reasons for keeping the loom idle.
To find out number of members of weavers cooperative society.
To know reasons for not becoming members of the society.
To understand the establishment of the business.
To find out problems faced in purchasing handlooms.
To be aware with the nature of training facilities available.
To understand the processes involved in selecting the weavers.

Techniques of Handloom Industry

To know number of looms possessed by the respondents that are in working or idle conditions.
To know the willingness of the respondents for opting for improved type of handloom.

To understand difficulties faced in opting for improved type of handloom.

To know reasons for not opting for improved type of handloom.

To know opinions regarding the benefits of power loom.

**Economics of Handloom Industry**

To understand reasons given by different members of the groups for keeping the looms idle for the short period.

To be aware of the reasons for not continuing any of the family member in this profession.

To examine the level of job satisfaction of the respondents regarding their occupation.

To find out sources from which money is borrowed.

### 1.5 Delimitations of the study.

In fact handloom textile industry in Nagpur is counting its last hours. It is kept alive by the weavers primarily because of two reasons, either they are unable to do any other job or they are motivated by the attractive schemes introduced by Government organisations. As a result of it a few delimitations were imposed upon the study.

1) The area selected was limited because only in those localities the handloom industry is being run:

2) There was not much scope for carrying out a random sampling technique because the number of weavers available are relatively very few.
3) Homogeneity of the weavers cannot be maintained because of the diversity. Some are the owners of the looms. Some are just the worker and some are working in Government organisations.

4) The approach that was used in present study was a univariate approach multivariate could not adopted.

5) The investigator has to rely on the information provided by the respondents and the Government authorities because the middlemen were not ready to give their cooperation.

Since this is a survey there were no specific hypothesis framed for the study, it was mainly directed by the fact finding approach.