Chapter - VII

Summary and Conclusions
Handloom industry in India is an ancient cottage industry with a decentralised set up. The industry is an age old source of livelihood for millions of people in the country. About 10 million people are directly depending on the industry to eke-out their livelihood, while many more millions of people are depending upon the subsidiary occupations connected with the handloom industry. The share of employment provided by the handloom industry in the total decentralised sector is about 5.5 percent. Thus, the industry constitutes one of the major sectors, employing the largest number of persons, rent to agriculture. In regard to the production, the industry is meeting one-third of the total cloth requirements of the masses in the country.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY ARE:

i) To assess the socio-economic conditions of the handloom weavers in Prakasam district.

ii) To enquire into the employment, income, wages and capital aspects of handloom weavers.

iii) a) To examine the size of the loom and estimates the utilisation of capacity and idle capacity per loom in the industry.

b) To enquire into the indebtedness of the weaver households.
iv) To analyse the problems and prospects of the handloom industry.

v) To suggest suitable measures to stabilise and strengthen the handloom industry in Andhra Pradesh in general and Prakasam District in particular.

**METHODOLOGY:** Prakasam district consists of 56 Mandals. The handloom industry is scattered over 33 Mandals but is concentrated only in 13 Mandals of the district. In these 13 Mandals there are 12363 handlooms in 7925 households. Hence for a detailed study these 13 Mandals are selected. Among the 7925 households, a sample of 5 percent was selected for the survey on the basis of stratified random sampling method so as to collect necessary data by old ministering the pretested schedules. In all, 396 households have been selected for the study. Care is taken to have a fair representation in the survey of all the four categories i.e., independent weavers, weavers, working for master-weavers, weavers working for co-operatives and weavers working for corporations.

**SELECTION OF THE DISTRICT:** The handloom industry is widely scattered almost all districts of the Andhra
Pradesh. But it is highly concentrated in few districts namely Cuddapah, Karim Nagar and Prakasam. There are few studies in the State is relating to the Cuddapah, Karimnagar Districts. No one study have been conducted so far on the problems of handlooms weavers in Prakasam District. Moreover in the recent years the district Weaves were suffering and struggling a lot, because of getting employment. In the year 1991 there are 72 starvation deaths occurring among weavers in the state of which 22 were reported from Prakasam district. There is a great need to solve the problems of Weavers in the district. Hence the researcher select Prakasam district for a detailed study. There are mainly four categories of the weavers' Organisation of establishments which provide employment to the Weavers in the district i.e., those working independently, working for master-weaver, working for co-operatives and working for Corporation. The socio-economic conditions of the four categories of Weaver households reveals that there are about 29.55 percent who belong to the age group of 55-69. About 9.60 percent belongs to the age group of above 69. It is evident that the weavers are working till they are very old. In general the aged people are suffering from in-health. This is very high in the weaver community. The government should open health centres where the
weavers are highly concentrated areas to look after their health.

Housing is an important criterion to judge the standard of living of the weavers, as such a stands of the housing enjoyed by the sample households will enable us to know better the living standard of the weaving communities in general. There are about 70 percent of the respondents are having own houses and the rest about 30 percent are dwelling in rented houses. While the 74-24 percent are living in thatched huts with mud walls, and about 76.64 percent are living thatched huts with brick and stone walls all these dwellings are without any privacy. In fact, when one enters a typical weaver's house, one can see only his loom occupying the whole house. There is hardly any space left even for the preparation of his food. A study of the distribution of space in the house of the sample households for weaving and living shows that more than 60 percent of the households use 50 to 75 percent of the space as work place. There is an urgent necessity to look into this particular problem of the weavers. Government could provide some common sheds near their own houses in which the weavers could set up their looms.
Generally, majority of the sample units are individual units and only a negligible proportion of the sample units are joint families. The survey also reveals that all the sample units belong to Padmasali and Devanga communities. These two castes are notified as backward communities. Are weaker sections the Government should take proper steps for the Welfare of Weavers.

The research survey reveals that the marital status of the weavers. The rate of child marriages is high in the weaver communities which is about 52-88 percent. This is very high in the case of master-weavers and co-operatives than others because they provide more mandays.

To know the age group of the dependents the researcher enquires into the age-wise classification below 14 years and above 69 years. There are about 23.55 per cent of the males in the age group of 30-44. The weavers think that if the size of the family is big that they will earn more. The weavers do not adopt family planning methods. There is a great need on the part of the weavers to learn more about the drawbacks of a big family and adopt suitable methods to reduce the size of their families.
The research survey reveals that the literacy level of the family members is not adequate. In general, around 61.60 percent of the total members of the units are illiterate. Further in the case of female members as many as 64.22 percent of them are illiterate. While about 13.39 percent of the males are literate up to primary level. About 17.20 percent females are literate up to primary level. About 17.20 percent females are literate up to S.S.C. level; there are about 2.01 percent of the family members who are literate up to post graduation, a few persons have technical education. The number of literate people are high in the case of corporate weavers. There are about 59.52 percent.

Weaving is a traditional profession. There are about 76.19 percent engaged in this profession because of their traditional activity. In India about 70 percent of the people are engaged in traditional professions. The people engaged in this profession have been suffering a lot. There is a great need to develop the traditional skills in the country as a whole. When the researcher asked the weavers how they have been motivated to enter into the industry. There are about 54.55 percent of the weavers motivated by their family
members and the local merchants and others. Hence it is noticed that the local merchants also encourage the weavers in this district. There is a great need to improve the local markets in this district.

In recent years the industry has fallen into a severe crisis. A greater number of weavers in the country try to change their profession. An attempt is made to know whether they would continue to work in this profession. There are about 74.49 percent who said that they would continue in this profession because there is no way out. A little over about 25.51 percent said that they would try to change their profession if they get better jobs.

The modern way of life has crept to the lifestyles of the Indians in the later half of this century as a result even in remote villages in India. One can find ruralizes put on with synthetic and polyester blended cloths. There is a surge towards modern way of life by the people at large the impact of this can be gauged by rapid decline in demand for cotton fabrics the negative impact of this could be seen in large scale unemployment in the traditional sector of handloom industry especially in rural areas of India. The study collaborates this fact. In the study it is
found that there is a large scale unemployment rendered many worker deprive even the essential needs of life. A good number of handloom workers are identified stagnating themselves under poverty line. This is largely due to the fact that alternative employment opportunities are far too less so as to absorb the displaced handloom workers in rural India.

After thoroughly studying the statistical results obtaining in the various regression analysis carried out between variables that may possibly explain the status of weavers categorised as households working independently, household working for master-weavers, households working for co-operatives, and households working for corporations. We found that 50 percent of the cases the category of households working for the co-operatives are not having any dependence on the various independent variables like employment on wages, employment and subsidiary income cost of dyeing and cost of yarn, cost of sizing and cost of warping, weaving charges and cost of winding, cost of cloth and cost of yarn. Similarly observations are households working for corporations are also not having any strong multiple co-efficient of determination. This shows that weavers working for co-operatives and corporations are having very little dependence of relation between the
fifteen sets of variables that are considered. However for almost all sets of variables the strong relation as explained by $R^2$ is always observe for the category of households working for master-weavers i.e., it may be said that if at all there is any strong explanation of employment and activity of weaving occupation. The household working for master weavers alone is showing a significant dependence of various independent variables for their categories of households namely those working independently. Those working for co-operatives and corporations are not showing any considerable contribution in the weaving production activity.

As a matter of suggestion organisations like corporations and co-operatives that employ weavers must take initiatives in boosting of the production activity and the related economic projects to stand on par with the master-weavers.

The pattern of production reveals that the weavers are weaving sarees and lungies because they know to weave them only. The items which are produced on handlooms are all produced on powerlooms. The handloom cloth requires more markets. The production capacity is more in households working for master-weavers and less in households working for co-operatives. The
households working for corporation are suffering more because of the unsatisfactory functioning of the corporations.

The research estimates the production capacity on yarn. It indicates that there are about 0.77 per cent using the yarn in between 401 and 500 Kgs. The weaves are not able to meet their requirement because of the hike in the cost of raw material. The capacity of annual production reveals that about 57 households are utilising the maximum capacity. Those households working for master-weavers and households working independent weavers are getting maximum capacity.

The researcher tries to examine the idle capacity of the weavers and identifies that the weavers are using one team to their looms. After finishing the set of items they lose their employment for a minimum of 4 or 5 days to prepare another set of beam. It may be suggested that the weavers purchase a beam with on investment of Rs.600 per each loom.

Irregular supply of yarn is a major problem of the handloom industry and the like in the cost of the raw material results in many problems regarding employment. The government should supply the yarn with reasonable and stable prices through co-operative with
in the district. To increase the production capacity of the spinning mills the government should take several measures.

Handloom industry has been facing the problem of proper financial facilities. As a result the weaver's co-operative societies and corporations are not functioning well. The weavers find it difficult to get loans from commercial banks. They are depending on private agencies like money-lenders. The money-lenders demand higher rates of interest from the weavers. The district weavers require more banking facilities like short term and long term loans.

The raw-material prices increase every year and the weavers are facing many problems because of the like in the cost of the raw material. The cost of the inputs increase the cost of finished products. As a result the cost of handloom products increased than the powerloom cloth. The ordinary consumer prefers only cheaper cloth. Hence it may be suggested that the government should encourage handlooms with reasonable and stable prices of the raw materials.

The major proven of the weavers is lack of proper dying and finishing facilities. These facilities are available at Chirala and Vetapalem mandals. The
The weavers are forced to visit only these mandals to get these facilities. The weavers also lose their employment during this time. There is a great need to develop the dying and finishing facilities in the district.

A study of the indebtedness of weavers reveals that of the 179 respondents nearly half of the sample selection are in debt. One consoling feature of this aspect of study is that in spite of the low income level and hand-to-month existence, 50 percent did not have any debts outstanding at the time of the survey. Not having debt does not mean that they are self-sufficient and that they have adequate income to meet both ends. Rather it is observed during the survey that due to the lack of sureties they are not able to get loans from any services.

It is seen that almost all of them incurred debts for consumptions purposes such as meeting marriage expenditure, celebration of feasts, medical expenses and for day-to-day expenditure. It is said to note that majority of the weavers force acute problems to secure loans it is rather distressing to know that in spite of all the governmental effort to reorient banking functions in favour of weavers sections of
majority of the members of the weaving communities are not able to secure loans when needed.

During the survey it is observed by the researcher that those who responded negatively are those who generally do not have the means of repaying. They prefer to starve rather than in her a debt which they know they cannot repay and thus avoid the disasters consequence of non-repayment of debts. Added to this, they have almost nothing to show as securing. So it is a case of resignation to their helpless situation rather than not having the need to borrow. It is in a way a case of loan-level equilibriums.

Mostly borrowing is done from mater-weavers, money-lenders, friends and banks. It only shows that it banks are to serve the needs of the weavers they must be very sensitive to the problems of the people and do every thing in their power to break the barrier between the common man and the bank. The bank should go to weaver rather than waiting for the people to come to them. It is true that certain efforts have been done in this line. These efforts need to be strengthened to achieve the desired results. It is a pity, as seem from the study of the preference to lending agency, that the weavers prefer to approach the
master weavers and friends for loans. The compliment which the master weaver got as 'being nice people' easy to approach should be earned by the Banks by their people-oriented and more human approach to the needs of the poor and needy.

The supply of yarn is another chronic problem facing the industry in Prakasam district. An adequate quantity and the required quantity of yarn at reasonable prices are not available to the handloom weavers in the district. It is impossible to imagine that the weaver is likely to make a decent living out of this work so long as he continues to buy in the dearest (yarn) market and sell in the cheapest (cloth) market. Intermediates in the yarn trade should be eliminated in order to solve the yarn problem. This calls for the expansion and strengthening of the cooperative coverage in the industry.

In recent years most spinning mills because dormant because of lack of proper financial assistance. There is a great need to develop the spinning mills. The yarn sellers are located at Chirala and Vetapalem mandals. The whole sale yarn dealer fixes higher prices for the yarn. The supply the cheaper cloth as a result of all these effects, accumulation of stock has
taken place in the handlooms industry.

The prices of the other inputs like dyes and chemicals are also on the rise in the market. The government should provide the subsidiary rates to the weaver households and institutions. The state government would thus be required to work out the consumption date on the basis of past lifting and the producers can thus make available these quantities to normal trade channels.

The district weavers expressed their problems regarding the raw materials. One problem is the prices of the raw materials are high. The Government should supply the raw materials at cheaper rates, and provide financial resources to improve the financial condition of the weaver.

The labour problem of the weavers reveals that the independent weavers are facing the problem of paying higher wages to the hired labourer and also the scarcity of skilled labours. It is evident that the district weavers are only producing ordinary varieties. There is a great urgent need to develop the weavers service centres in the district to train them in modern skills with the latest designs. The weavers are using the old type of machinery and equipment. As a result of
this the production capacity of the weaver is low. The Government should supply the industry with related instruments at subsidised rates to the weavers.

Marketing of handloom cloth produced in Prakasam district in one of the most important problems that calls for the drawing up of a suitable strategy. Otherwise any amount of aid given to the industry at production level will amount to waste of national resources. It is true that marketing problems cannot be handled at the individual weaver's level. The co-operatives are supposed to shoulder the responsibility of talking the problem on the lines in which industries in the organised sector do by virtue of their organisational and resource position.

The market strategy should aim at strengthening the co-operative sector. The share of the co-operative sector in the total market for handloom products in the state is quite meagre at present. Inadequate co-operative coverage and the weak organisational and financial conditions of the primary weavers' co-operative societies are mainly responsible for this. The number of co-operative sales outlets in the state is inadequate. Moreover, most of these are located in regional and rural areas only. Further more most of
these sales outlets are located at inconvenient places in the respective centres.

The market strategy should also aim at expanding the existing market and fully exploiting the potential ones, both internal and external. The major portion of the districts' handloom production, at present, is consumed within the state. Yet, the share of handloom cloth produced in the state is very low in the market of total handloom textiles the state. The handloom products of other districts have captured a major part of it through unhealthy competition. This shows that there is enough scope for the exploitation of the market within the district. Any attempt to exploit these markets for handloom cloth produced in the district must give due weightage to the peculiarities in the different market segments.

An attempt has been made know about the expansion of the weavers. There are about 65.41 percent who plan to expand their units, about 43.1 percent need additional loans about 40.48 percent and about 35.59 percent want to add new products. Moreover, the weavers require technical assistance for improvement of looms and other equipment.
The researcher observed that the cc-operatives and corporations are not functioning well because of lack of proper financial assistance from the government. Hence it is suggested that the Government should allot huge resources to develop the industry.

In general, the weavers are aged persons. They have the problem of ill-health. In the district the weavers go for medical help to hospitals which are located at far places. There is a great need to open more primary health centres within the regions and to take necessary steps to provide good health conditions to the weavers.

The study had found that the weavers have own houses but they are not comfortable to do their work. The Government should construct new housing colonies for the weavers in their areas.

Only Padmasali and Devanga people are engaged in this profession but also other communities are involved in this profession nowadays. Hence the Government should treat all the weavers as a weaker section and provide more benefits to encourage the weavers and solve the unemployment problem in India.
The incidence of the child marriages is very high among the weaver households. As a result of this the explosion of population is a major obstacle to developmental programmes. Hence it is suggested that more benefits should be given to the people who are belong to families of small size.

Many weavers in general all in the age group. The dependence of weavers reveals to encourage the weaver by giving old age pensions and children below 14 years should be sent primary educational institutions.

The survey shows that the female illiteracy is high when compared to male illiteracy in the district. To solve the industry related problems if women are educated they will be able to know about the welfare programmes. Hence the government should open night schools to encourage the weavers.

India is a great country with an ancient culture and heritage. The handicrafts and the handlooms are of special importance. To encourage the weavers and to impart modern skills in designing the government show start many weavers-service centres.

In general local merchants encourage the weavers. There will be than improvement in the local markets.
There is a direct relationship between clothing and civilization. The civilization passed several stages, changing the clothing habits, tastes and fashions at each and every stage. It is ironical to note that the changes in fashions and tastes of the people directly affect the demand for the cloths. The handloom industry, which is meeting one-third of the clothing requirements of the country, should follow carefully the changes in fashions from time to time and should adopt modern designs to attract the consumers. Unfortunately, the weavers could not able to produce the well designed products to meet the changing requirements. The poor weavers with little educational and technical background, who are mostly located in rural areas, are not able to observe the changing fashions in the urban market. By the time the weaver observes and incorporates a new design, it is becoming out dated in the ever changing market. Hence, there is a need to educate and train the weaver in such a way that he can individually observe and produce the cloth in new designs. The primary weavers co-operative societies should take initiation in this respect and provide the latest designs to the member weavers. At this juncture, it is noteworthy to mention the services of weavers' service centres in providing new designs.
There are only two such centres in Andhra Pradesh, situated one at Hyderabad and the other at Vijayawada, working considerably for the above cause. It is desirable on the part of the Government to promote much more service centres in various handloom concentrated areas in the State. The study revealed that most of the respondents are following traditional or conventional designs for production. Only 50 percent of the total are adopt in a modern designs.

There is a general feeling among the weavers that nobody is giving any publicity for the products produced by them. If proper Publicity is given by the State Government by conducting local fairs and through newspapers, the weavers have expressed the idea that they will have ready market. Some of the respondents have expressed that they are producing highly qualitative varieties but unfortunately people are under the impression that quantitative products come only from certain centres but not from all centres. Some centres might have supplied certain varieties of quantitative products previously. But, the consumers still have the impression that the well known centres can only supply high quality fabrics. Technology has developed very much. Latest designs are adopted by almost all the weavers throughout the state. Hence,
qualitative products cannot be considered any more a prerogative of certain centres only. Under these circumstances to convince the consumers, publicity is a must. The individual weavers with their limited earnings cannot afford to take up this expensive task. Therefore, in the interest of the weavers, it is desirable on the part of the State Government in collaboration with the local authorities and co-operative societies to conduct fairs and exhibitions periodically at different important centres. Further, the State Government should give wide publicity through films, newspapers, radio, etc. about the variety, availability, price and quality of handloom products from different production centres.

The most important and powerful rivals of handloom sector are the powerloom and mill sectors. It is too well known that mill and powerloom sectors have an edge over the handlooms. The threat to handloom sector therefore is not imaginary, but a distinct possibility in a non distant future. The handloom workers should be provided with alternative sources of employment near the place of their present day employment.

The Government should prepare a long term perspective plan for the development of the handloom
industry. The technological developments occurring in the handloom industry should be publicised to the weavers and they should be encouraged to use the latest technology. The Government should also take care of the private sector while formulating the handloom development plan.

The fiscal concessions so far extended to the powerlooms on par with handlooms should be discontinued and powerlooms should be treated on par with mills. Adequate and regular supply of raw material should also continue to develop the handloom industry and the production of the optimal productive capacity of the industry.

After depicting the conditions of weavers the researcher makes the following recommendations for their betterment:

Illiteracy is rampant in weavers' community since the children of weavers assist them in their work. A separate school mainly for weavers' children has to be started after 5'0 Clock in the evening; in which, emphasis should be given for technical training connected to weaving.
Special banks must be opened exclusively for weavers, so as to curb this tendency of borrowing from private persons and to create in their minds consciousness of becoming entrepreneurs. There is, for evolving a policy of providing regular credit to the handloom weavers on the lines of agricultural loans.

The Government must start publishing a monthly magazine on handlooms and organise annual exhibitions on handloom products at the district headquarters to enable the weavers to gain knowledge in the improvement of the industry.

Finally insurance facility must be provided to weavers. Half of the premium amount must be borne by the master weaver and the rest by the weaver. Master-weaver has to collect from the weaver his share of premium adding his share remit the premium amount to the L.I.C.

Separate hospital for weavers must be started to treat the sick and the weak.

Levy of excise duties on powerloom and mill cloth should be implemented effectively by plugging the loopholes by handloom sector can be reduced.
Handloom Development Fund should be part of or similar to 'National Renewal Fund'. The objective of Handloom Development Fund should be to stop the fast growing unemployment and under-employment in handloom industry which is an important employment oriented traditional occupation; next only to agriculture.

Handloom Weavers should not be denied the help and assistance given to organised mill workers because handloom weavers are un-organised and consequently, not a pressure group. While planning to generate new employment opportunities, the existing employment intensive occupations in rural areas should not be allowed to die, leading to starvation deaths.

The National Handloom Development Corporation, does not have funds to procure bank yarn produced under the 'Hank yarn obligation order' as well as dyes and chemicals and supply them to primary co-operative societies. Sufficient funds should be provided to NHDC from out of the National Renewal Fund.

In some Centres, removal of under-complement does not ensure improvement in income levels. The wage rate should be improved. This could be done through enhanced productivity and planned market development.
The industry needs better institutional support. The present abnormal delay in paying the sale proceeds of primary societies should be avoided. The apex institution must quickly pass on the market intelligence to the primary societies so that the weavers can better be served failing which, the fruits of new product promotion will be taken away by the power-looms. If adequate number of genuine and competent co-operatives could not be encouraged at the weavers' level, large number of small yarn/fabric traders as noted in Prakasam district could be encouraged through, various weavers, including institutional finance, so that the weavers will have access to competitive master-weaver-yarn dealer system. Measures to supply yarn on the lines of public distribution will serve the weavers' yarn requirements which will also reduce the under employment and dependence on master weavers.

The product reservation for handlooms should be strictly ensured failing which the powerlooms take away the benefits of market promotion as was seen with the case of recent popularisation of jacquard varieties and material cloth which was ultimately exploited by the powerloom sector.
There are some special products which require higher man hours per unit of output and extraordinary skills. Such fabrics have become expensive over years. Lack of a dynamic yarn market and adequate working capital could lead to large scale open under-employment as observed in Prakasam district. The co-operative societies with limited resources could not help the industry much.

Wherever the weavers are functionally well supported in terms of yarn supply, credit, marketing by dynamic co-operatives their productivity has increased considerably. Such institutions have proved that improved production processes and methods could be adopted effectively for the benefit of weavers and their productivity and income as observed in Prakasam District. In some centres like Chirala and Vetapalem through the Weavers do not suffer from unemployment, their earnings are very low, because of low wage rate. The master-weavers, who also dominate the co-operatives, have turned to be less responsive. In the absence of an effective institutional alternative or other employment avenues, the weavers are compelled to work for low-wages. Thus, the availability of enough work does not guarantee minimum subsistence income for such weavers.
In some centres, the master-weavers have full hold over co-operatives. Majority of the co-operative societies are either dormant or fictions and manipulated to the advantage of master-weavers during the official rebate season. In such centres weavers have no commitment either to the master-weavers or co-operative societies as they do not see any difference in wage rates and other terms of service. If the yarn market is not very responsive, the weavers find it difficult to operate independently.