CHAPTER-IX

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The main aim of this chapter is to recapitulate the main findings of the research and make suggestions on the basis of the main findings on the various aspects covered in the present research investigation.

The chapter is divided into two sections, section-A is concerned with main findings of the research investigation and section-B carries with it a scheme of policy recommendations.

9.1 SECTION-A

Introduction

Silk is a natural fibre, which gets with the eco friendly campaign. It is biodegradable and is considered as the second skin of the body. The industry itself is heavily labour intensive. Hence the production base has shifted from the developed nation (in EU) to developing nation like China and India, where labour is available cheaply and in plenty.

Till the 19th 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. Not withstanding the fact that the handloom is seemingly an outdated tool of cloth production in this space-age, most people the world over still look at it as a symbol of the glorious past of the entire human race.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 world.

The silk handloom industry is only a segment of the handloom industry. The importance of the industry lies in its ability to provide vast employment potential and its ability to earn large foreign exchange. At present, the pure silk industry is facing a stiff competition from power looms, mill sector as well as art silk industry.

The central as well as state Governments, have been in the past giving more importance to the development of sericulture without giving due importance to the silk
handloom industry. The various Government policies and programmes initiated over the years to aid the handloom industry were intended for the cotton handloom industry. Only at a later stage, the silk handloom industry has been eventually incorporated into these programmes. The silk handloom industry has been facing problems relating to raw materials, finance and marketing besides competition from the powerlooms and mills. All these factors have resulted in the large scale unemployment and under-employment among the silk weavers.

The Government thought of co-operativisation as the only solution to solve all the problems of the silk weavers. However, still a large number of silk weavers are outside the co-operative fold. Thus, the silk weaving industry in Karnataka, particularly in Bangalore Rural district, is both under the co-operative sector and private sector. The performance of the silk co-operatives is found to be not upto the expectations of the silk weavers. Many of the societies find it very difficult to provide continuous employment to the weavers for want of working capital.

The silk weavers outside the co-operative fold have not been provided with any institutional assistance. As a result their production has been subject to wide fluctuations with consequent unemployment of the weavers.

Most of the small units working for master weavers suffer from lack of organization. Since they work for middlemen, and since their bargaining power is weak, a very narrow margin of profit is left for them. Hence, there is little incentive to improve their equipment and to increase production.

Handloom weavers in Karnataka mostly use mill-made yarn. The weavers either purchase the yarn from the retail dealer, or get the yarn and return the finished production to him and receive a wage for the work done.

Thus, a situation has now arisen in Karnataka warranting immediate measures to solve the various problems faced by the silk handloom industry in Bangalore Rural district particularly in respect of availability of adequate finance and supply of
essential raw materials required by the industry as also marketing of the finished goods.

9.2 Major findings

Structure and Organization

The pure silk handloom industry consists of an organized and unorganized sector. The unorganized sector comprises master weavers, independent weavers and coolie weavers (working under master weavers). The organized sector consists of Karnataka Handloom Development Corporation, Silk Co-operatives, the Karnataka Co-operative Handloom Weavers Federation (Apex society) and the weavers working under the silk co-operatives (member of co-operatives).

Master Weavers

This type of organization is the most common type of production unit found in Bangalore Rural district. During field work it was observed that 23.43% were working as master weavers. Even though, co-operativisation is the long term policy of the Government to find out a solution to the problems of weavers, the master weavers are still playing an important role in the silk handloom industry. The coolie weavers weave on the loom provided by the master weavers. Since, the silk co-operatives are production-cum-sales societies, the coolie weavers are entirely left to the mercy of the master weavers.

The coolie weavers are paid fewer wages than the members of co-operatives. From the weavers' point of view, it is understood that they are exploited by the master weavers by paying less wages than the silk co-operatives. The master weavers keep their weavers under their clutches by providing interest free advances. This practice of making the weavers permanently indebted and bonded to the master weavers acts as a stumbling block, preventing the weavers becoming the members of silk co-operatives and from enjoying the benefits of co-operation and other welfare facilities provided by the Government for the member of co-operative societies.
The above findings emphasise the need for controlling the master weavers about their dealing with coolie weavers. But at the same time they should not be eliminated from the silk handloom industry. Being an efficient sector, they deserve all types of assistance from the Government.

**Independent Weavers**

The independent weavers are unorganized and scattered and they do not have any organization to protect their interests. The data reveals that 42.8% of the respondents were working as independent weavers. They have not received any financial strength to face the stiff competition from the master weavers on the one hand and the silk co-operatives on the other procuring raw materials as well as marketing their finished goods. As a result, the independent weavers are fast disappearing. If this state of affairs continues, the independent weavers will degenerate to the position of wage earner either under master weavers or co-operatives losing all their entrepreneurial skills.

**Silk Co-operatives**

At the end of 2008-09 there were 09 primary silk weavers’ co-operative societies and 1000 handlooms in Bangalore Rural district. All these societies are affiliated to Karnataka Co-operative Handloom Weavers Federation (Apex society). Out of 9 societies, only 8 co-operative societies are working. Out of 8 working silk societies only 2 societies are big and their performance is considered to be praise worthy.

**District Profile**

The profile of Bangalore Rural district reveals the prevailing socio-economic conditions and other aspects. It is found that the district is endowed with rich natural resources. Infrastructural facilities are also fairly good. Karnataka is known for small scale and village industries, especially for the handicrafts. The prevailing climatic condition and strategic advantages have been responsible for the location of many
large scale and public sector undertakings in the state. Availability of physical and human resources in large quantity has been responsible for many large, medium and small-scale industries to flourish in the state. The contribution of textile and silk handloom industries to the state’s income and employment is laudible. However, the recent structural changes duly introduced in big industries have led to the wide spread obsolescence in rural sectors. The small and the traditional sector not susceptible to this change are pushed to the verge of closure. Dependency on multinational companies has been increasing in both manufacturing and service sectors.

Agriculture is the main occupation in the district. Same is the case with the sample villages also. The traditional rural industries are the next sectors that have accommodated the large number of people with employment followed by animal husbandry and fisheries. From the point of view of physical infrastructure, the study area is of course, not regarded as the most backward. But it is not true in case of technological development. Except the information technology, the achievements in other aspects of this field are not commendable. Efforts are lacking in the development of indigenous technology in the back drop of fast changing modern technology that was most warranted in the changed context. Industry, trade and agriculture in the state need to be developed from the point of view of their employment potentiality in the present context of global market opportunities.

Bangalore Rural district is endowed with agricultural and horticultural crops such as ragi, rice, groundnut, sugarcane, castor, grapes, mulberry, etc. There are infrastructural facilities such as transport and communications, banking credit and marketing. Though the region is not rich in mineral sources, its non-metallic mineral resources are utilized for bricks, tiles and stoneware manufacture. For many years now, weaving has also been a major occupation for a large section of the population. The soil and good climatic conditions are congenial for the cultivation of mulberry, rearing of silk worms and production of silk, besides agro based industries.

Bangalore Rural district is essentially an agricultural district but it has sufficient scope for industrialization, dairy development and sericulture.
Caste

In the research area, no doubt, we had a sprinkling of all caste groups, but major groups engaged were Togata, Devanga and Padmasali. Respondents of Hoskote and Devanahally Taluks belonged to Togata caste and Doddaballapura and Nelamangala Taluks majority of the weavers belonged to Devanga caste. Intermarriage between the castes is strictly prohibited. As a result, they live as if geographically and culturally totally divided though belonged to the same weaving community. This seems to be the hurdle for their natural understanding within the community. Even some of the non-traditional communities like Muslims and Gowdas have entered silk saree weaving in Doddaballapura town. The other obvious reason for non-entry of other caste people is that handloom weaving is running under loss and there is no demand for sarees compared to powerlooms and mills. Even though silk handloom is running under loss many of the weavers are working because they love their Kulakasubu or caste-occupation very much even today and moreover they don’t know other job.

Occupational Background

Information about the occupational background of respondents was collected to gain a deep understanding into the conditions and circumstances through which they entered into the occupation. Silk saree weaving is a hereditary occupation in which the acquisition of units takes place by virtue of inheritance. Naturally, all respondents were trained by their elders and acquired their present establishments by inheritance. It is observed that no respondent in the sample entered this industry with his own new establishment. Their family background made the respondents to take up their fathers’ occupation easily without any external influence. The socio-economic conditions of their families were also such that they could not have exposure to any other better avenues of occupation. Few respondents (2%) possessed small pieces of land and carried on the agriculture on part time basis. But majority (97%) of respondents carried on their traditional silk saree weaving on full time basis. It was the fact with their elders too. The inter-occupational mobility was very low among respondents. It
might be due to three reasons, one is that no outside formal agency was in existence to impart training to other community people to pave them an entry into this industry. Secondly, compared to other work, it is hard and long process work. Lastly, it can be said that the non-profitability, less demand and more competition, all these factors have contributed to this immobility.

**Education**

Literacy and level of education are the important characteristics that depict the individual’s ability to learn and acquire professional skills. This is true of all the artisans including weavers. Education is necessary in modern days. Education equips individuals with knowledge and necessary attitude for change. It is clearly seen in the study that the education and exposure to the modern developments would have its impact on the entrepreneurship. Out of the total 320 respondents, 26% were illiterates and the remaining 74% were literates. But only 14% had education upto SSLC level and only 0.93% had gone up to PUC level. 32.18% of the respondents had education up to 4th standard and 26.8% had education up to 7th standard. The fathers’ (66%) of respondents were illiterates. Respondents identified as literates told that they completed their education in the schools and colleges located in their own village and town. There was no instance of any respondent even moving out of his native place for the purpose of education. This industry has failed to attract the educated persons. Introduction of modern methods of production, product design, packaging, improvement in technology, etc., would attract the educated persons into the industry.

**Age of Entry**

57.19 percent of the respondents in the sample had entered the industry when they were in the age group of 15-20. The next highest percentages of respondents who have entered industry were in the age group of 20-25 (i.e.31.87%). 89.06% of the respondents had entered this industry when they were between 15 and 25 years of age. The percentage of respondents who entered the industry before 10 and after 25 years of age was relatively insignificant.
Present Age

To understand whether village industries were attracting younger generation into the industry, the present age of respondents at the time of survey was recorded. The study revealed that more than 60 percent of the respondents were 40 and above of age. The age of respondents has varied between 20 to 69 years. 45% of the respondents were in the age group of 40-49 years and another 16.56% between 50-59 years. 5% of respondents (senior citizens) in the age group of 60-69 were working on the handlooms at the time of field study. The data collected indicates that almost two-third of the weavers were quite old. Out of 320, only 7% of the respondents were below 30 years of age indicating that this industry was not recruiting new generation of entrepreneurs. It is a very dangerous development from the point of future of handloom industry.

During field study it was observed that more of coolie weavers were younger in age than independent weavers, master weaver or member of co-operative societies. The implication is clear that the younger workers especially males are not attracted to the handloom industry. Reasons to this are many. Firstly the wage rate prevailing in the industry is low compared to many other rural occupations in the area. When a male agricultural labourer is able to earn 100-150 for a day’s work, the maximum a weaver can earn is around Rs.75 in the co-operative sector. Apart from this there is the problem of instability in employment.

Investment and Finance Characteristics

Respondents’ investment is classified as fixed assets and working assets. Though the fixed assets include building and work equipments, only the weaving equipments are considered as fixed assets of a concern, since the building is used both as a place of residence and the place of work. Therefore, the buildings of respondents are treated as their private properties. Working equipments like loom, Kuntemara, Dobby, Achhu reed, Mudukoludhonne, Hagga, Lali, Bendu are treated as business assets. The average fixed assets of business of each respondent were worth Rs.6124.
Almost all respondents have inherited their fixed assets from their elders. Only some amount of price appreciation was observed in these fixed assets without any addition in real sense. Therefore, the matter of financing the fixed assets requirement did not arise for many respondents.

The silk, warp, zari, dyes and some chemicals were the only current assets used in this industry; besides a small amount of cash to meet day-to-day expenses. The value of these current assets forms the major portion of working capital requirements of respondents. The extent of working capital required varies from person to person depending upon the number of sarees manufactured by him in a year. The average of total capital requirements of a respondent was calculated at Rs.26,578. This forms about 80% of average total capital of each respondent. The ratio of average working capital to average total capital was 4:5. The ratio of total working capital to total capital was 1:1.23. In the beginning of their establishment, the number of respondents who were in need of the working capital of less than Rs.10,000 was 295 and this number was 33 at the time of study. In other words, it indicates that the need for higher amount of working capital has increased during the tenure of occupation of respondents. But the data relating to the quantity produced reveal that the quantity produced during that period has decreased. Besides, during the same period, there was no change in the quality of sarees woven and the quantity of raw materials used per saree; this increase in the working capital requirement without increase in the quantity produced, was attributed to the impact of price increase of raw materials during the period.

The increase in the cost of raw materials followed by the increased need for working capital has driven away many weavers from this occupation in the past 10 years. It was also observed that the respondents had the difficulty in mobilizing the working capital from outside agencies. Almost all respondents financed their working capital needs from the weekly credit by the vendors and/or out of their weekly turnover. Their credit period of working capital is therefore, at large, is one week. Except the respondents in Thymagondlu village, no co-operative society in the study area is meeting the working capital needs of respondents. The banks and other

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financial institutions functioning in the study area were of the opinion that the credit worthiness of respondents is very poor and hence they could not consider the respondents as their target group for lending.

Government Assistance

It has been the established opinion that the rural traditional industries hardly survive in the absence of Government assistance and protection. Since these industries shoulder the national responsibility with regard to employment and environment, it has to be the responsibility of the concerned governments to encourage them. As was evident in the study, no respondent was found in receipt of any type of assistance by the Government at the time of study, other than the facilities of loan, subsidy, bank credit and work sheds to 9 persons. Being well understood of the Government's attitude and the nature of their support, 82.81% of the respondents did not make their mind to approach the Government for help.

Co-Operative assistance

An important observation with regard to the co-operative movement in this industry is that 83% of the respondents were the members of silk weaver's co-operative societies in their respective village. These co-operative societies were meant for assisting their members with working capital and marketing of their products. Excepting the co-operative societies in Thyamagondu and Nelavagilu villages, almost all such co-operative societies in the entire study area were defunct (dead). Office bearers of these societies were of the opinion that it was due to the slackness of demand for silk sarees in the market.

But most of the respondents express that it was the mismanagement, favouritism, corruption and non-co-operation among the office bearers that led to the inactiveness of their co-operative societies. According to their assessment, the office bearers of these societies and some officials of co-operative department were not committed in their duties to develop these societies. Some respondents recapitulate the
misuse of even the Government assistance by their own leader. They helplessly tolerated the behaviour of some office bearers and bureaucrats for caste reason.

Employment

Average employment per unit in the sample was 3.08 persons. The highest average employment was in Gowdanakunte village (5.2), followed by Muthugadahally village (4.2) and the least in Iregenahally village (2.04). The average output per man-day of labour was highest in Nelamagala town (Rs.413.08) followed by Thyamagondlu village at Rs.310. the least output per man-day was in Gowdanakunte village at Rs.113.97.

PERFORMANCE AND PROBLEMS

A. Performance

Operating capacity

The installed capacity of respondents at the time of their entry into the occupation varied from one to 200 sarees per year. There were 113(35.31%) respondents who produced less than 100 sarees per annum and 207(64.69%) respondents who produced from 100 to 200 sarees per year. There were no respondents who produced more than 200 sarees per year. Almost all were operating at 90 to 100 percent of their installed capacity. This percentage decreased at the time of the study. This clearly indicates that there has been a fall in the percentage of capacity utilization by respondents at the time of study; when compared to their performance in the year of their establishment.

Growth in Fixed Capital and Labourers

The study revealed that only 4.68% of the total respondents reported growth in fixed capital. But the growth in fixed capital in case of many villages was insignificant. Only 3.75% of the total respondents reported growth in number of labourers employed. When compared to last 10 years the rate of growth is very low.
This is a very dangerous feature for handlooms. This is due to less wages, more competition and slackness in demand for handloom products.

**Quantity Sold**

All respondents sold their sarees immediately after production. They did not have the practice of stocking them with the intention of selling them at convenient time. Hence, it is presumed that the quantity produced was also the quantity sold. As has been stated already, there was a decrease in the quantity of sarees produced during the tenure of occupancy of respondents. Therefore, it is implied that the quantity sold has decreased. The decrease in sales was said to be due to the slackness in demand for sarees in the market and more competition from powerlooms that forced the respondents to reduce their production.

**Technology**

The technology used by the respondents was primitive and simple. Even today, they use the same traditional pitlooms for weaving. They have not made any efforts to improve the loom. Only one respondent was using power in pitloom. Efforts made with regard to the modification and diversification of products by improving the technology and mode of production were very deficient.

**Expansion**

No respondent could expand his unit during the tenure of their occupation. The fixed assets of respondents were the looms acquired by inheritance from their elders at the time of their entry into the occupation. No additional investment was made so far on these assets. Not only that, no improvement was observed in the holding of their other assets like household equipments, furniture, etc., during this period. There was no change in the new products, but some respondents switched over from manufacturing of Dupion fabric to sarees. There was no change in the marketing arrangements. There is no innovation in the handloom industry.
B. Problems

Raw Materials

The silk handloom industry is not only confronted with the problem of inadequate supply of raw silk and zari but also with the problem of ever increasing prices of such inputs. The silk handloom industry is almost depending on Surat for its zari requirements. As there are no institutional agencies to procure the zari and dyes and chemical requirements of the industry from outside the state, it has to rely on intermediaries who charge exorbitant prices.

Production:

In the silk handloom industry, traditional techniques and equipments are still predominant. The present state of technological stagnation of the industry is partly due to the dearth of innovations and partly due to the poor transfer of technology. Most of the silk weavers in Bangalore Rural district are still using the pitlooms. All these factors hamper the production efficiency of the weavers.

The silk weavers have been using outdated and primitive methods for performing pre loom processing activities such as sizing, warping, winding and dyeing. All these factors result in enormous consumption of labour which leads to a hike in the cost of production of silk fabrics. Therefore, with a view to increase productivity every effort should be made to modernize the machines or modify the process.

It is ironical to note that the changes in the fashions and tastes of the people directly affect the demand for the clothes. Unfortunately, the weavers cannot produce the latest designed products to meet the changing requirements. The weavers with little educational and technical background are not able to observe the changing fashions. By the time the weaver/society observes and incorporate new designs, they would be outdated in the ever changing market.
Marketing

The product development and diversification by the silk handloom industry in Bangalore Rural district is not in tune with the fast changing habits of the consumers. The entire silk handloom industry is engaged in the production of only one product item i.e. of silk sarees. It was found that the quantum of silk sarees production accounts for more than 85% of the total production. But the demand for the silk sarees is only seasonal in character. However, the production is carried on by the silk weaving units throughout the year so as to provide continuous employment to the weavers. All these factors result in periodical accumulation of stock.

The silk weaving units find it very difficult to change the prices of the fabrics in accordance with the changing prices of silk yarn or other supplies. If they do so, the sales will come down. The market requires some time to adjust itself to the increased cost.

The silk handloom industry is facing a stiff competition from the mills and power loom industries in marketing silk fabrics because the price of art silk is comparatively cheaper than pure silk and the powerlooms are using handloom design which creates confusion among the public.

The pricing policy adopted by the silk co-operative (cost plus approach) unmindful of the market trend has acted as an added contribution to the fall in the demand for their silk fabrics. The majority of the silk co-operatives are depending on the Federation (Apex society) as their major channel of marketing. However, the Federation may not cope with the ever increasing needs of the silk societies. Like the silk co-operatives, the master weavers too adopt cost plus approach in pricing their silk goods. But they are adopting a pricing policy known as flexible pricing policies which enable them to meet and conquer the market.
The silk co-operatives, as well as the master weavers pay less attention to the promotional efforts. The sample survey reveals that not even a single society had spent even 2% of sales revenue on advertising in any year.

The independent weavers are entirely at the mercy of the master weavers or local cloth dealer for marketing their silk fabrics. Consequently, a lion’s share of profits goes to the master weavers or local cloth dealers.

**Financing**

Financing is the most pressing problem of the silk handloom industry. The demand for the silk fabrics is seasonal in character but the production is carried on throughout the year. This phenomenon leads to periodical stock accumulation. Further, the industry uses very costly raw materials. The production of silk fabrics involves a lengthy process and requires more time.

The credit provided by the financing agencies is not only inadequate but also untimely. Consequently, the silk weaving industry is confronted with the problem of inadequate finance.

**a) Co-Operative sector**

The greatest difficulty of the silk weavers’ co-operative society is lack of adequate working capital for production and marketing of silk fabrics. The silk co-operatives are dependent mainly upon the working capital provided by the State Government and NABARD under the RBI scheme of handloom finance which is adequate. A majority of weavers’ co-operatives has not been able to utilize the current assets effectively. Mismanagement is yet another factor that affects the working capital.

The delay on the part of the state Government to settle the rebate amount due to the societies also creates financial strain to the silk co-operatives. The difficulty about
credit is greatly intensified by the delay in settlement of the dues by the Federation for goods procured by it from the silk societies.

**Power and Labour**

Power is used only for lighting purpose in this industry as been mentioned earlier. Respondents (except one) were not found using power for their manufacturing and other activities. 46.87% of the respondents replied that the supply of power was inadequate they were getting power only for 3 hours in a day. Without lighting weavers could not work on the looms. The researcher observed that when compared to electricity problem in towns, the interior villages were facing an acute problem of electricity. Since many of the respondents (84.25%) were using their family labour, they did not face any labour related problems. However, this investigator faced the difficulty while estimating the cost of family labour. It was needed to estimate the total cost of production. Estimation of total cost is a difficult task in the absence of the figures of labour cost.

Only one village did not employ any hired workers. In case of this village, the production processes involved were such as they provided employment to a composite family. If the important work like weaving was done by adult workers, other members of the family like females, children, aged, attended to minor processes. Hence, there was no need to employ outside labour. Secondly, the price fetched by the finished product was not too high as to make taking outside labour profitable. The silk handloom industry due to low wages has not facilitated the entry of labourers from non-traditional castes into the industry. Some villages hired outside labourers because of more looms and less family members. Though there was variation from village to village, the average percentage of respondents who hired outside labour was relatively less.
Technical and Managerial Assistance

All the respondents were aware of the deficiency inherent in their product and the benefits embodied in the competing products. It is the general belief and also the fact that the rural industries hardly require any sophisticated technical and managerial assistance. However, the role of these assistances in the development of silk handloom industry also cannot be over emphasized. All respondents said they received no help from any person or agency relating to the technical or managerial assistance. They did not feel the dearth of skilled and proficient workers. In fact, they felt that these assistances were not their immediate requirements. However, they are expecting that something should necessarily be done to their looms to modify their products. It is their desire that technology should do something in a bid to improve their looms and quality of work. For this purpose, they did not seek help from the Government or non-government agencies. Out of 320 only 5 of the respondents mentioned about the non-availability of skilled labourers and the remaining have not expressed any problem relating to technical and managerial assistance.

The problem of obsolete technology is plaguing every sector of our economy. Even modern industries faced the problem of obsolete technology. It is well known that obsolete technology adversely affects the productivity and cost structure.

During the field study it was observed that all the repairs of machinery were done by the respondents only and they replied that there were no major repairs in silk handloom, moreover they were working on the looms since many years. But in the process of adoption of modern, improved technology the weavers faced many problems which varied from unit to unit. The problems were financial, attitudinal lack of information about the place of its availability; the method of obtaining it etc. Majority of the respondents did not have education exposure with regard to the modification and the marketing of their products. As a result, they have developed such a mindset that the existing nature of product and the mode of production cannot be changed. Hence, it may be concluded that the respondents are ridden with
manufacturing, marketing, financial and attitudinal problems, which need immediate attention.

The equipments used in the silk industry are simple and less capital intensive. This leads to three important consequences. They are, low value addition, heavy dependence on manual skill and economies of scale being negligible. These features create a situation where the industry becomes highly competitive, very risky and inhabited by many small firms.

Future Plans

As has been mentioned earlier, the entire industry is in crisis and at cross roads. During the past 10 years, large number of weavers gave up its non-profitability and bleak future for silk sarees. All the respondents have expressed their unwillingness to expand their units in the present situation and in future. All the respondents are not happy with the units and are waiting for an opportunity to switch over to other trade or occupation which would fetch them bread and butter. 97.19% of the respondents replied that they are ready to convert the handlooms into power looms but they are unable to adjust the capital. If they get finance from any source, they are ready to convert the handlooms into powerlooms.

9.3 SECTION-B

Scheme of Recommendations

Based on the findings of the present study, an attempt is made in this section to recommend some policy measures.

A- Master weavers

To exercise control over the master weavers, for the benefit of the industry, the following steps may be initiated and implemented:
A.1. Master Weavers may be warned to give wages and other facilities to the weavers working under them on par with the members of co-operatives.

A.2. All the master weavers should be compelled to register their names in the Office of the Commissioner of Textiles and Handlooms.

A.3. It should be made a statutory obligation to all the master weavers to register the weavers working under them.

A.4. Such registration should be numbered and a pass book carrying the registration number be supplied to each master weaver. The pass book should show all the particulars regarding the issue of supplies, production of fabric, wages, advances, recoveries, etc., of the weaver concerned.

A.5. Silk yarn and other supplies to master weavers should be based on the number of registered weavers so that failure to register them should entail automatic penalty of reduced supplies.

A.6. It should be the duty of the Office of the Commissioner for Textiles and Handlooms to make random checks about the registered weavers and there should be penalties for failure of registration, false registration of weavers, failure to fill up the pass book and failure to pay wages according to the Minimum Wages Act.

A.7. All the master weavers should be compelled to send quarterly reports to the Office of the Commissioner for Textiles and Handlooms in the prescribed forms, which show the qualities and varities of silk yarn and other materials consumed and the qualities, varities of silk fabric produced, sold and other information as the Commissioners' office requires. These steps will go a long way in eliminating many of the evil practices adopted by the master weavers and will also protect the weavers under their control.
B. Independent Weavers

In order to encourage, the Government should take the following measures;

B.1. All the independent weavers should be asked to register their names with full particulars regarding their looms ownership, type of fabric woven, etc with the Office of the Commissioner for Textiles and Handlooms.

B.2. Such registration should be numbered and pass book carrying the registration should be supplied to every independent weaver.

B.3. On the basis of such registration, silk yarn, zari and other supplies should be provided.

B.4. A service co-operative society should be set up to undertake to supply inputs to the independent weavers at their locality or centre.

B.5. The Federation (Apex society) should pay cash and purchase the silk fabrics produced by the independent weavers.

C. Silk Co-Operatives

To strengthen the structure of co-operative sector, in which the hope of the industry lies, the following suggestions are given.

C.1. The Office of the Commissioner for Textiles and Handlooms should identify the weak and unviable societies and provide them with special working capital finance at least for a period of 5 years, so that the society can acquire sufficient strength to stand on its own. If the societies are too small (on the basis of membership) they should be merged together to form economically viable units.

C.2. The Government should see that no coolie weaver is denied membership in co-operative societies. It is also the duty of the Government to inspect the silk co-
operative regarding overall issues besides check on providing the government package of welfare facilities to their members.

C.3. The existing active co-operatives should be strengthened. The dormant co-operative societies should be activated and efforts should be made to start new co-operative societies. If necessary, silk co-operative societies should be merged with the active societies.

C.4. The Government should initiate steps on training of staff and office bearers on principles and practice of co-operation while the member weavers should be imparted education and training in latest technology and new designs.

C.5. The Government should ensure that the master weavers should not gain entry into the silk weavers co-operative societies in a disguised form as a small weaver. The membership in the silk weavers' co-operative societies should be restricted to weavers who own one to three looms. This policy should be very strictly enforced by the Government. If a member acquires more than 5 looms during the tenure of membership, he should be removed from the membership.

C.6. The Government should also exercise strictly against the newly forming silk co-operatives about fake members and take steps to seize fake looms before providing facilities to the society.

D. Raw Materials

D.1. The Government should undertake the responsibility of both procurement and distribution with the view to ensure adequate supply of raw materials at reasonable prices.

D.2. To ensure continuous supply of raw materials, the state Government should develop a raw material bank exclusively for this industry. For stock keeping, central godowns should be constructed in different places of the district where a large number of weavers community is concentrated.
D.3. It is absolutely essential to carry out bleaching and dyeing in a scientific manner so that a uniform and long lasting colour is obtained. For this purpose, it is quite necessary to set up a modern bleaching or dyeing facilities in each society or at a group of societies.

D.4. For the dyes and chemicals which are available in India, the Government of Karnataka should enter into contracts with the producing firms for supply at the price fixed by the Government. The state Government should also make proper arrangements with the import controller for the import of dyes and chemicals which are not available in India.

D.5. The Government of Karnataka should consider the feasibility of creating a silk handloom supplies corporation to procure and supply all the inputs to the silk weaving industry. The corporation may be either owned entirely by the Government or with part of capital contributed as shares by the beneficiaries.

E. Production

E.1. In order to take care of pre-loom processes it is recommended to carry out warping, winding activities by using modern techniques. The introduction of dabba winding machine may be considered, since it would triple the existing productivity of the winder.

E.2. The possibility of using horizontal type of warping in the silk weaving industry should be explored, since it would give four fold increase in production.

E.3. Since Street sizing process restricts the tape length of the warp to be sized, suitable sizing sheds be provided to the weavers, so that warps of the greater length could be prepared.

E.4. With a view to undertaking the challenging task to modernization of looms and pre looms processing activities. The Government should set up technical cells exclusively for silk weavers in all the major silk weaving places in the district.
E.5. These cells should employ experienced staff who would set right the loom defects, furnish technical know how and train the weavers. They should also be in a position to check quality of silk yarn, zari, fabrics, chemicals, dyes, etc. and to introduce quality control measures to improve the quality of the fabric.

E.6. The technical cells should also undertake continuous research to improve the looms as well as other processes involved in weaving. They should also disseminate the latest technological improvements in weaving among the silk weavers. In short, they should act as a friend and guide to the weavers.

E.7. The silk co-operative should ensure continuous supply of inputs to the weavers. This can be accomplished by purchasing their inputs through the Government agency as mentioned earlier.

E.8. To ensure the loyalty of the members, the silk co-operatives should provide more wages, interest free loans and steps should be taken for effective implementation of package of welfare measures to the member weavers, so that weavers may not keep their looms idle.

E.9. Whenever a weaver wants to leave a society, he should be compelled to give due notice to the society concerned and close his account. Similarly, when weavers working for the master weavers go over to co-operatives, they should also bring a certificate that their accounts with the master weavers have been settled.

E.10. The small societies should increase their size by admitting new members. They should become economically viable units.

E.11. Therefore, 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-operatives should take initiative in this respect and provide the latest designs to the member weavers.
E.12. To solve the problems of under-utilization of looms, the silk co-operatives should strictly enforce the existing practice of charging penal interest to the weavers, who fail to return the finished goods within the scheduled time.

E.13. The practice of weavers working for both the co-operative sector and the master weaver should be discouraged.

E.14. The silk co-operatives and master weavers should provide timely supply of inputs to the weavers.

F. Product Diversification

F.1 Product diversification is the need of the hour to boost the sales. In addition to the existing products, the silk weaving units should produce dress materials, readymade garments, ties, scarves, stoles (shawl) etc.

F.2 To identify the consumer preferences with reference to changing taste and fashions for the silk fabrics, the Karnataka Co-operative Handloom Weavers Federation (Apex society) should conduct a market survey to identify the public tastes or this survey should be entrusted to research institutes.

F.3. Producing a variety of products expands market and brings in more revenue. Unfortunately, a large majority of rural entrepreneurs are not aware of these aspects. They are habituated to produce only sarees. They should be educated about the importance of having more than one product in the product line. They should be encouraged, assisted, guided to manufacture other new products to the existing product line. Efforts are being made by the respondents to diversify the products in terms of size, usage, colour, designs and other reserved handloom products.

G. Marketing

G.1 To change the prices of the fabrics in accordance with the changing prices of silk yarn or other supplies, it is quite necessary to ensure that the range of
variations of prices of silk yarn and other inputs should be reduced to minimum possible. During the periods of sudden hike in the price of raw materials, the Government should supply the inputs at subsidized prices.

G.2. To overcome the competition from powerlooms, the consumers should be properly educated regarding the superiority and the durability of natural silk fabrics over its close rival viz., powerloom cloths. In this respect, the Central Silk Board and Weavers' Service Centre should take wide publicity measures throughout India, propagating the use of natural silk.

G.3. The Government should immediately take steps to give directions to the commissioner for Textiles and Handlooms to supervise the powerloom industry for the strict implementation of Handlooms (Reservation of eleven articles for production).

G.4. The existing practice of charging 20 to 30 percent margin over the cost of production should be reduced to 10 to 15 percent and price fixation should be based on market trend and competitive conditions.

G.5. A separate Federation (Apex society) should be created exclusively for the marketing of silk fabrics of silk co-operatives. The Government should see that Apex co-operative society has to purchase finished products of the primary societies on cash basis.

G.6. To survive in the competitive world all the silk societies should come under common programme to promote their silk goods. The silk co-operative societies should give due importance to improve the salesmanship.

G.7. Mobile service counters are to be organized at important places like agricultural produce markets and the occasions like weekly market days, cattle fairs, to exhibit and sell the products by educating the public. The information about the latent advantages of the products and the method of their use have to
be demonstrated at these counters. Effective teams of efficient salesmen should be organized for penetrative selling.

G.8. The products of the industry are not at all branded so far. From the point of view of effective marketing, it is essential to have a special brand name for all the products manufactured.

G.9. In order to protect the interests of the independent weavers, the Government should bring them under the silk weavers' co-operative marketing societies. Therefore, the Government should organize silk weavers marketing co-operatives in places where majority of independent weavers are concentrating in the district.

G.10. Considering the export potentials of this industry, the Government of India should make all the necessary efforts to face the competition from the Chinese. India should devise methods for generic promotion at the consumer level. The silk export promotion council should conduct a market survey in European countries to understand the needs of consumer tastes and preferences. Further, it should undertake huge publicity and sales promotion measures in foreign countries to meet the competition from China.

G.11. The Central Silk Board should intensify its research activities effectively on sericulture not only to improve the quality of silk but also to increase the yield per acre. Being the certifying authority for the quality of the silk goods export, the Central Silk Board should see that the quality of the Indian silk goods meets the international standards.

G.12. It is suggested that attractive advertisement of Indian silk goods should be made in Indian hotels frequented by tourists and at the airports. It is worthwhile to keep in such a place samples of such goods in the same way as handicrafts are exhibited now. Brochures and pamphlets may also be supplied to such hotels and airports to enable them to distribute the same to the foreign tourists.
Above all, the Central Silk Board as well as the Silk Export Promotion Council should co-ordinate their activities and launch a long term plan to meet the competition from China in the international market.

H. Financing

H.1. The norms prescribed in financing the working capital requirements of the silk co-operatives by the NABARD may be relaxed keeping in view the cooperative nature of the weavers’ societies and the importance of handloom industry.

H.2. To tide over the problem of shortage of working capital during the slack season, it is suggested that silk co-operatives may be provided with credit on adhoc basis in that period.

H.3. The presidents and other elected functionaries of silk co-operatives should be trained about the financial management to have a clear concept of working capital and its management.

H.4. The state Government should see that the rebate amounts due to the silk societies are settled promptly by making budget allocation every year.

H.5. To avoid delay in settlement of dues, the Federation should purchase fabrics from the primary silk societies on cash basis or settle the amounts due to the silk societies within one month from the date of its procurement.

H.6. The RBI should implement a new scheme for financing the handloom weavers in private sector. The commercial banks and district Central Co-operative Banks may be directed to stipulate easy conditions to finance private sector weavers. The present system of giving fixed term loans may be replaced by the system of cash credit as in the case of weavers’ societies.
I. Education and Training

1.1 With a view to encourage the non-weaving communities, to undertake weaving as a profession, silk weavers training centre should be established in the major silk weaving centres.

1.2. The Government should also consider the question of introducing silk weaving as a craft in the primary and secondary schools situated in areas where silk weavers are concentrated.

1.3. All the illiterate weavers should be brought under the adult education programme, and they should be taught to read and write and they may also be taught the ways and means of improving their skills and trade.

1.4. Efforts are needed to change the mindset of weavers who are under the impression that their production and production methods cannot be changed or modified for any more than what it is today. They have to be exposed to new developments taking place not only in India but also all over the globe. Almost all respondents expressed their willingness to undergo any training that would improve their lot without creating extra financial burden on them. They must be sent on study tours, as was the practice earlier, which is now discontinued. When such programmes are organized at free of cost under the Government assistance, care should be taken to see that only actual weavers would participate in it.

1.5. To instill confidence in weavers about progress of their occupation, success stories of innovative entrepreneurs within and outside their industry can be effectively communicated, besides other educative and field publicity programmes like film shows arranged through mobile vans, television, radio and news paper advertisements etc.
J. Technology

J.1. Efforts are needed to upgrade the technology to improve the quality of the product and production methods by modifying the loom in a way that would increase productivity.

J.2. In order to keep these industries labour intensive, necessary importance is not given for technology improvement. The output per man day or value added per worker turned out with this technology in many industries is so small that, instead of retaining labourers these industries drive them away, in many cases to agriculture and other small scale industries labour. Hence, there is an urgent need to introduce improved technology which increases labour productivity. There is an urgent need to develop new types of tools, equipments and machines.

J.3. To demonstrate new technology and techniques of production mobile vans may be used to carry the message from village to village. Technological improvement would remove the social stigma attached to these industries that it is below the dignity of an educated person to work in this industry and attract them.

J.4. The silk handloom industries are located throughout the length and breadth of our vast country. But they are not organized into industrial unions or workers associations. Encouragement of industry association at taluk, district, state and national level serves many purposes. Extension of technological improvements is easier. It helps in exchanging already existing technology, techniques of production, and products in different parts of the country.

J.5. Technological support is needed to ensure skills and production up gradation. Linkages needed to be established between changing market needs and the production centre and new markets need to be systematically explored and developed. Unless state support is directed at making the sector more vibrant,
the fate of the handloom sector will always be vulnerable to political interference.

J.6. As merchandising and marketing are central to the success of the handloom sector, the present package schemes for production of value added fabrics should be streamlined, innovative market-oriented schemes should be introduced, and joint ventures encouraged both at the domestic and international levels. Brand equity of handlooms should be commercially exploited to the extent possible.

J.7. Effective support systems in research and development, design inputs, skills upgradation and market linkages should be provided.

J.8. The consumer is the king. Government and the weaver must understand his needs. In the process how best these can fulfill his needs at the price affordable by him. Unless he is satisfied, all their efforts will be in vain. So they must evolve concrete models, to understand who are their buyers, what they buy from them? What they expect from them and when they want to buy their requirements at what price? etc.

K. Others

1. The weaving occupation has failed to attract the younger generation. It is a dangerous development from the point of future of handloom industry. Therefore, the Government should see that the industry should attract the younger generation. In order to achieve this, the Government should implement all the existing welfare schemes effectively besides educating the weaver community about the Government package of welfare schemes.

2. The Government should compel all the master weavers to pay at least one month average wage as bonus to weavers working under them.
3. Among the different categories of weavers, the coolie weavers are the worst sufferers like the land-less agricultural labourers. The coolie weavers do not have any money to purchase a loom. Even if they borrow money for purchasing a loom, they do not have sufficient space in their house for setting up a loom. The remedy lies in the organization of industrial type of silk co-operatives in different places of the district.

4. The nature of some activities carries with them health hazards. Therefore, the artisans are to be brought under Employees State Insurance (ESI) schemes to provide them the much desired medical facilities.

5. Small booklets, containing information about products, technology, techniques of production, sources of technology etc., should be brought out in regional languages from time to time and issued to the weavers in villages.

6. The mass communication media like news papers, television channels, and cable networks should be compelled to design advertisements and slide shows to promote the use of the silk handloom products to educate the prospective customers. Governments could do these activities more effectively than isolated individuals or institutions.

7. The Government can start a permanent training centre to provide the necessary training to impart the required skill, technology, and knowledge to the weavers to enable them to keep up the quality upto the market expectations.

8. A handloom research centre should be set up at the national level to undertake research on demand patterns, designs, weaving technology, raw materials etc.

9. To improve the standard of living of weavers, their average monthly income should be increased. The monthly income of a weaver depends on the rate of wage paid and the quantum of work given to him continuously. Therefore, the Government should increase the minimum wages payable to the silk weavers at least by 25% because the existing wage scale is very low.
10. Legislative and other steps are urgently called for to enforce the policy of reservation and to protect the handlooms from the unfair competition from power looms, lest the handlooms go to antiquity in the near future in the area.

11. The present welfare measures do not meet the needs of the starving weavers. Government should provide identity cards, Healthcare, insurance, pension facilities, gratuity, special ration cards, measures to curb malnutrition etc., to the weavers.

12. The brand of ‘hand made in India’ should be created to promote export of handloom cloth.

13. The loan amount to the weaver housing scheme should be increased to one lakh rupees with 50 percent subsidy component.

9.4 Conclusion

Rural traditional industries are known for their employment potentiality and ability to cater to the needs of local markets in particular and rural people at large. They require very small amount of fixed capital, simple technical know-how and average level of managerial skill. But their contribution to the National Income, employment and environmental protection is laudable and hardly quantifiable in terms of money. These are the only means through which avenues of employment can be effectively generated at the place of living of people.

The silk fabrics, the queen of all textile fibre, the symbol of social status, comfort and beauty are woven by the bright, unrivalled and skilled weavers who are inherently talented for silk weaving. The weavers of the silk enjoy the dress elegance and freshness of the silk fabrics indeed. It is a pity that the weavers’ ever sincere and enterprising work goes unrewarded and unrecognized. The weaver and his family toil and moil to eke out their daily bread to keep their body and soul together. If the present study helps in eradicating the poverty of the silk weavers and his family, the researcher would feel gratified that this work has served the desired purpose. Finally,
it can be concluded that the recommendations made here based on the findings of the study would be seriously considered by the concerned policy makers and institutions for the earnest implementation to give fillip to the industry and save large number of hand weavers of silk products and their families. If the study enriches the knowledge on silk handloom industry and kindle the future researchers to pursue research in this area, where there is a vast potential for research, the researcher would feel satisfied that his work has served its end.

The above measures, if implemented properly, will certainly benefit the industry. The Indian silk handloom industry will have a great future if it gets better organized and adapts to changes.

9.5 Scope for Further Research

In the course of literature survey and during the period of field survey, the researcher has felt that there is scope for further research on some areas of silk handloom industry. But, much of it is limited due to data limitations.

There is need to undertake a comparative study on the statistics of handlooms and power looms which deserves attention for further research. There is also an imperative need to assess the impact of the Government measures on encouragement of co-operative sector and its welfare facilities.