Chapter-VIII

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Findings

From the analysis of statistical data collected during field survey with regard to the “Economic Assessment of Handloom and Powerloom Industry in Karnataka-A case study of Ramdurg Taluka” following findings are observed.

1. The handloom and powerloom weaving activity in the area under field survey is essentially a household based activity. The manufacturing processes are carried on by the family members in their own houses.

2. It is found that there is close relation between economic standards and level of education of weavers’ family members. One of the reasons for the lack of development / modernization in handloom and powerloom industry in study area is low level of education. About 55.84% of owners of handloom units are illiterate. They do not feel the necessity of education in running weaving industry. At the same time about 13.33% powerloom unit holders are illiterate. The weaving community gives less importance to higher education. Only 2.33% units that too of powerloom units are having degree level of education. It is
observed that the poor economic background itself is responsible for such state of education among weaving community.

3. About 68.34% of handloom and 39.44% of powerloom household units possess one loom each. The size of household units in handloom industry is limited to only 2 looms (31.66%), where as in case of powerloom industry it varies between 2 to more than 15 looms.

4. Almost all the handloom and powerloom weavers in the area under study have their own loom, but it does not make the weaver an independent manufacturer. The weavers do not get the orders directly for their work but the orders are got by the agencies like the master weavers, IHDP and khadi Co-operative society. These agencies cater to the order requirement by giving work to the weaving households on wage basis. These weavers work on their own loom for wages.

5. The looms used by weavers are old and out dated. About 35% of the handlooms range between 30 to 40 years old, and 15.83% units are of more than 50 years old. In case of powerloom units 43.34% looms range between 20-30 years of age and 25% units have the age of 30-40 years.

6. There is underutilization of the loom capacity both in handloom and powerloom sector. It has been observed that due to shortage
in supply of raw materials about 20.25% handlooms and due to shortage in supply of electricity about 7.40% of powerlooms are kept idle. It reveals that there is problem of basic facilities to the weaving activity in the area of study.

7. The handloom sector constituted mainly the weavers working under Intensive Handloom Development Project (IHDP) (68.33%) and those working under khadi co-operative society, Hudli (31.67%) on wage basis. The powerloom sector constituted 83.33% weavers working on wage basis under master weavers and 16.67% master weavers. The handloom weavers are out of the control of master weavers but the powerloom weavers are yet under the control of master weavers.

8. The handloom weavers working under IHDP are not involved in pre-loom activity of preparing warp, as they are supplied with ready warp beam, but the khadi weavers have to invest lot of time and energy in pre-loom activity. In the same way the powerloom weavers are also supplied with ready warp beam and are required to prepare only weft i.e. pirnwinding. In total there is less or no modernization and mechanization in manufacturing processes in khadi cloth weaving than in others.

9. The products manufactured both in handlooms and powerlooms are limited to one or two items. The weavers working under IHDP
produce mainly school uniform cloth and that of khadi handloom weavers produce either towel or kerchief or lungi. On the other hand the powerloom weavers of study area produce poly cotton or poly silk sarees. It means there is no diversification in products which could use the talent and skills of weavers in order to increase their earnings.

10. It is found from the field survey that neither the volume of production, nor the intensity of employment decides the levels of income of weavers’ families. The percentage of families having income below Rs.3000 per month is more in handloom sector (52.50%) than in powerloom sector (19.44%). The highest limit of income in handloom sector is Rs.7000-9000 per month (6.67%), but in case of powerloom sector it is above Rs.20,000 per month (17.78%). This difference in earnings has lead to the shifting of handloom weaving to powerloom weaving and decrease in the number of handloom weavers.

11. It is found that in the area under survey, there are no co-operative societies developed either for handloom or for powerloom weavers. About 45% handloom weavers working under IHDP and khadi co-operative society, Hudli do not feel the necessity of developing co-operative society. 30% of both handloom and powerloom weavers express their opinion that if they are involved in co-operative activities, they may lose day’s
earnings by weaving activity. There are the weavers to the extent of 15.33% saying that the master weavers do not allow them to establish co-operative society. Hence, there is need of proper measure to develop favourable attitude towards co-operative activities in weaving sector in study area.

12. The production capacity of handloom units is less than powerloom units. Per year production capacity of handloom units varies between 600 meters to 2160 meters, where as the production capacity of powerloom units varies between 3840 meters to 5760 meters.

13. The amount of fixed capital invested in handlooms and powerlooms differs based on type of loom i.e pit loom, frame/semi automatic loom or powerloom. As the state of these looms is traditional, fixed capital requirement is less compared to working capital. The requirement of working capital in handloom units in area under study varies between Rs.46,480 to Rs. 98,280 per year. Under the present conditions the working capital / raw materials to the handloom weavers is provided through the IHDP centre at Ramdurg and khadi co-operative society, Hudli. But in case of powerloom weavers the requirement of working capital ranges from Rs.1,52,200 to Rs.4,02,600. The raw material requirement of powerloom weavers is met by master weavers. Hence, the present problem of the weavers is provision of working
capital/raw material on their own. The observation of economic condition of weavers indicates that, it is out of their reach to avail raw material on their own investment and develop weaving on commercial lines.

14. It is found that almost all weavers who are very poor are denied of the financial facilities by the institutional agencies. Hence, 36% of weavers depend for their financial needs on friends and relatives. In powerloom sector, the master weavers control the weavers working on job-basis by providing loans / advances. Recently some women members of weavers family have developed self help groups among themselves and as a result 12.66% household units have taken loan from SHGs. The weavers are in need of government support to solve the financial problems.

15. It has been found that there is ample scope for employment opportunities in weaving activity. In the area under survey for 120 handloom sample units about 320 family members are employed but there are no hired labourers in case of handloom weaving. Comparatively speaking for the powerloom units selected for study both the family members (738) and hired labourers (405) are involved in weaving activity. Hence through the provision of necessary infrastructural facilities, the weaving activity can be developed towards the creation of more
employment opportunities and also economic development of the area.

16. For the economic assessment of handloom and powerloom industry, it is necessary to know the marketing methods operated by the producers. It is found that neither the handloom weavers nor the powerloom weavers are concerned with marketing activities directly. But due to lack of marketing knowledge/facilities, the actual weavers are denied of their profits from weaving activity. The Intensive Handloom Development Project Centre is facing the problem of shortage of staff members to maintain marketing outlet and the khadi co-operative society, Hudli is facing the problem of attracting consumers towards its products. In case of powerloom sector it is the dealers and agents who grab all the profits. Hence, there is need to educate weavers regarding marketing strategies to protect handloom and powerloom industry in the present days of competition.

17. A review of the opinions of the weavers reveal that about 43.33% of handloom units and 47.22% of powerloom units wanted to continue existing scale of operation, not because they are interested in weaving activity, but because of lack of alternative avenues of employment. About 18.33% of handloom and also powerloom households wanted to reduce the scale of operation, as they could not weave due to old age. No handloom household
weaver wants to expand weaving activity due to laborious work involved in it and less earnings. But about 19.45% of powerloom households, which are maintained by youngsters wanted to expand the activity, due to their capacity to work hard. It is at the same time disheartening to note that about 38.84% handloom units and 15% powerloom units want to wind up the weaving activity due to lack of scope to earn sufficient income and lack of basic facilities for the weavers. Most of the owners of the units do not want their children to continue weaving occupation. Hence, all this warns the government authorities about the discontent among the weavers community for the lack of basic facilities. It is high time that the government take a positive attitude towards the problems of weavers and the weaving activity. Otherwise there is fear of the weaving activity being vanished away where by Karnataka would lose an important source of employment and income generation.

**Suggestions**

One of the basic characteristics of the textile industry is its great heterogeneity. No integrated picture emerges when we study it. Whether it is from the point of view of technology, raw-materials, quality of the products or efficiency of the production, there is considerable divergence. Often one section of the industry does not
know what is happening in the other sections by which it might be profoundly affected.

In case of handlooms and powerlooms the individuality of design and quality are paramount importance and price is of secondary consideration. There is no doubt that handlooms will continue to play a major role in production. But where the standardization and economy of production are important, it is inevitable that handlooms will gradually be replaced by powerlooms or even automatic looms.

The powerlooms in the country have been increasing irrespective of the policy of the government. Every time a committee has been appointed to study and report on a particular sector of the textile industry, its recommendations have had an adverse effect on the other sectors. But the pressure of economies will continue further and powerloom sector may go on expanding. This is inevitable, but the handloom and powerloom sectors can co-exist only when they act as compliment to one another.

The recent consumption pattern of textiles have shown that as the level of education, income and urbanization increase there will be a change in the consumption pattern of textiles from gray to finished cloth, from traditional to cosmopolitan garments and from natural fabrics to synthetics and blends. It is inevitable therefore that in
future, an ever increasing quality of fabrics will be produced from a multiplicity of fibers and the distinction between handloom and powerloom sectors on the basis of fibers will disappear.

The handloom and powerloom sectors of Karnataka have immense potential to offer for growth and socio-economic benefits. But there are certain constraints which come in the way of realization of these benefits. To mitigate these constraints the following suggestions have been made.

1. In order to bring about homogeneity between handloom and powerloom sectors, handlooms should be increasingly used for the production of high cost fabrics in sophisticated design where uniqueness of design is more important than the cost of production. There is an increasing demand in the country for novelty fabrics with unusual blends and powerlooms are not capable of producing them. In items where cost effectiveness is required it should be reserved for the powerloom sector.

2. The basic problem of the handloom and powerloom units is the non-availability of the funds. It is because of this problem the weavers cannot start fully their own enterprise. The financial institutions have their rigid rules for the credit worthiness of a client. Most of the weavers are disqualified from taking institutional finance due to these norms. Therefore, it is
necessary that government should issue policy directions to these
financial institutions and specifically direct them to follow
favourable rules and regulations easy enough to enable handloom
and powerloom weavers to take the benefit of institutional
finance. The rate of interest of the institutional finance must also
be such, as to make the weaving operation profitable to average
weaver.

3. Co-operative sector, once a vibrant method of reviving weaving
activity has been riddled with corruption, lethargy and dependent
thinking. They have been transformed into ‘pocket’ organizations
of influential business men, caste leaders and political party
leaders. The government welfare schemes cannot be implemented
through the co-operative organizations. Many handloom /
powerloom weavers are not members of these co-operatives.
Government has to stop these co-operatives as primary sources
for routing government funds and schemes. Co-operatives have to
become independent of any influence in case of management and
decision making.

4. Handloom/powerloom sector has been lagging behind basically
because of lack of proper conditions for growth. While the
markets are changing the handloom and powerloom sectors could
not change themselves for different reasons and factors. Principal
among them is that investment has been limited to input supply
only. There is no investment on sectoral growth. While there have been some piece meal projects such as work shed cum housing, project package schemes, they perpetuate the existing conditions. There has been no thinking on basic requirements of the producer. Infrastructural support has been zero. Facilities such as land, water and electricity need to be provided in many places of handloom / powerloom weaving centre. Common facilities such as godowns, credit facilities (banks in the vicinity), roads, proper sanitation, etc. have to be provided. However, it has to be remembered that the handloom / powerloom production is a family based activity and is inseparable from the living atmosphere of the weavers. Hence, it is necessary to understand this and plan accordingly.

5. In a centre where both the handlooms and powerlooms co-exist, there is need to develop textile parks with all the facilities like land, water, electricity and also input supply facilities like yarn shops, credit institutions, storage facilities, etc. Such investment could be recovered through enhancement in economic growth.

6. One of the important factor / problem impeding the growth of handloom / powerloom sector is non-availability of yarn at reasonable price and of reasonable quantity. The prices of yarn keep on fluctuating without any reason. To overcome this difficulty yarn banks or the decentralized spinning mills have to
be established in the centre where weaving activity is the main occupation of the people.

7. The handloom / powerloom weavers usually work for long hours and the level of wages are very low. There is also no job security. The medical and educational facilities are very poor. Hence, there is need of implementing the welfare programmes for weavers by the organizations of weavers established by themselves at local level. It suggests for Welfare Agency to be established at the centre of weavers for quick realization of benefits of the schemes of the government meant for weavers.

8. There is need of research activity in handloom and powerlooms. This would facilitate the balanced growth of the sectors and also minimize the uncertainties due to technological changes. The services of Textile Research Association and also of powerloom service centre must be made available easily to the weavers of rural area through the provision of technical assistance.

9. We cannot think of handloom and powerloom weaving without the involvement of women folk. Women contribution to the weaving industry is enormous. Women presently, share enormous work burden with no commensurate compensation system. Their work is not recognized. Their living and working conditions are of a serious concern. Hence, it is suggested to recognize the depth of
the role played by women in weaving activity by arranging for separate payment for the pre-loom and other activities done by women. Appropriate programmes have to be worked out in this direction, without burdening the women in any manner.

10. Handloom products require more visibility. This means better and wider market network. One-off exhibition organized with the support of government might support, but do not suffice. Presently handloom products are available only in fewer places. The marketing system for the powerloom products is such that, the middlemen grab much of the benefits of powerloom products. Unless the direct link between the producer and the consumer is built up either through the co-operative type of organizations or state owned area development corporations, there is no solution to the problem of reasonable earnings from the sale of products. It suggests for the arrangement of sale of products of both handloom and powerlooms by the government agency.

11. The wages paid to the weavers have not increased according to the increase in cost of living. Weavers are living in hand to mouth condition, with no house or assets for them for years together. These issues need to be addressed.

12. One of the significant cause for the dwindling fortunes of the weaver community is lack of information regarding various policy
measures and schemes. It is also disheartening to note that even the agencies related to the handloom and powerloom sector suffer from inadequate information and data, resulting in widening gap between policy formulation and implementation. Hence, there is need of weaver focused, area based and target oriented and result oriented policy implementation by the government.

13. Presently, government policies are increasingly influenced by the globalization processes due to which the textile scenario in the country is likely to undergo drastic changes- in terms of skills, inputs, market trends and changing demands. The question before us is: whether these changes include the interests of large number of weavers who are still practicing age old skills and knowledge? Do we have a moral obligation to preserve certain amount of these skills to the coming generations? If so, where do we strike the balance between mass production and production by the masses? So all these questions suggest working out viable models for sustainable development of handloom and powerloom industry. In this direction we may think of public-private partnership (PPP) model.

**Contribution of the Research to the Area of Study**

From the empirical study we can draw various inferences which is of practical use to the society and the government. In the event of
globalization the handloom and powerloom industry is fast showing declining tendency but this is alarming to note that handloom industry is almost inevitable for the economy because of its employment potential. In the study it is made known to the public the plight of handloom and powerloom weavers and the diversified problems that they face.

To tackle these problems practical suggestions have been made. The government can take hints from these suggestions in framing a suitable policy for the weavers. The NGOs and other groups of people in the society can also work in the direction of the suggestions referred to in the thesis to make the weaving sector more remunerative. It is high time that something has to be done to see that handloom and powerloom sector of India becomes more competitive to face the threat of globalization and to make the weavers remain in the weaving sector itself.

**Conclusion**

Textile sector in India is growing and has been undergoing enormous changes within its structure, which affect its basic characteristics. Handloom weaving activity plays an active role in the growth process of the state as well as the nation. This sector has been considered important because of the traditional artisan craft skills of the weavers which meet the local needs and demands.
Handloom sector has self sustaining mechanism, training for irrespective of gender. The inheritance of skills and capacities is beyond the realm and reach of any modern training and educational institution. However, there is also sufficient flexibility for all types of communities to take up handloom production as a profession.

Handloom sector has different strengths in the modern economy. It is simple, and is associated with appropriate technology, the knowledge of which lies with the people. Knowledge dissemination is not locked in any consultancies or training institutions. The very essence of this technology is that it can be assembled by anybody within no time.

In a world which is seeking for clean air and water, handlooms are well suited because they are eco-friendly. Energy impacts from handloom technology are almost zero.

The nature of powerloom industry is such that there is great scope for many new comers. It is also true that the industry will survive and prosper because of originality, individuality and workmanship of the artistic weaver. But at the same time it has been rightly observed that with the rapid advancement of textile technology resulting in large scale production of cheap mill cloth and artificial fabrics with captivating designs and texture poses a formidable problem for the future of the powerloom industry. Its general
prosperity against powerful competition will not be assured unless the new techniques of production are introduced to suit the changing needs of the time.

The prudent strategy lies in bringing a happy compromise between retaining the cultural heritage of the profession and introduction of modern technology in the weaving activity. To enhance the scope of weaving activity, measures should also be taken to provide raw materials, finance, marketing facilities and other requirements.

The decade 2006-15 is the decade of manufacturing for India. So there is need for focused attention to the specified sectors of manufacturing which are labour intensive and also enjoy competitive advantage. The textile industry is identified as one such sector. The handloom and powerloom sectors of textile industry have many advantages. To enable these sectors to realize full potential, the bottlenecks which hinder the development must be removed. Both the governments at the national level and state level should recognize the role of handlooms and powerlooms in achieving sustainable development. On its own the government would never be able to provide employment to such a large work force. Despite adverse conditions, due to larger support from the consumers and being a livelihood option for millions of weavers, both the handloom and powerloom sectors have been surviving. Government has to ensure a
‘level playing field’ towards healthy competition among the sub-sector of textile industry.

**Concepts Connected to the Area of Study**

1) **Looms:** The process of weaving primarily constitutes interlacement of two sets of threads viz. warp and weft and the equipment which operates this interlacement is called ‘loom’.

2) **Handloom:** An equipment made out of wooden frame to weave cloth by human effort.

3) **Powerloom:** An equipment made out of iron frame to weave cloth by the use of power/electricity.

4) **Pit loom:** The loom which stands over a pit and the process of picking is done by throwing the shuttle across the slay by hand.

5) **Frame loom:** The loom used to weave designed varieties with more than two treadles, used in weaving fabric requiring mass production.

6) **Semi-automatic looms:** The loom operated by human effort by pedaling with legs or by moving the sley by hand.

7) **Warping:** Lengthwise yarn preparation.
8) **Weft preparation:** Breadth wise yarn preparation.

9) **Weaving:** Sending the shuttle which contains the weft thread from one side of the loom to the other through threads of the warp, and in driving the weft threads closely together to form even cloth.

10) **Piecing:** Joining of the thread ends of the old warp with the thread ends of the new warp.

11) **Beam:** Wooden / iron creal / drum to wound the yarn required for producing large quantity of cloth.

12) **Pirn winding (Weft winding):** Transferring yarn from wooden cone to pirn with the help of spinning wheel, locally known as ‘Kandike Suttuvadu’.

13) **Reeding or Gaiting up:** Drawing the strands of the warp yarn through the eyes of healds (beza) and the dents of the reed.

14) **Household:** A household is a group of persons who commonly live together and would take their meals from a common kitchen unless exigencies of work prevented any of them from doing so. But not on the road side, pavements or temple mandaps and the like.
15) **Household industry:** A household industry is one in which an individual unit is run by the head of the household himself and or mainly by the members of the household. Further, the unit does not run as a registered factory.