CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Handlooms weaving has become very intimately associated with India culture. Weaving is as old as Indian culture. It is one of the most important occupation among the cottage industries. Its origin can be traced from as for back as the Indian civilization. It is a well known that Mesopotomia used to trade in wool and take back the fine cotton cloth from India. There are descriptions of weaving looms in the Epic and the Vedas and the Upanishads. Koutiya's Arthashastra speaks of handlooms weaving. In ancient times kings used to encourage weaving. Plini says that the Roman emperors had spent much of their gold purchasing Indian silk and cotton cloth. Similarly Herodotus also says that Indian cotton cloth was exported to Arabia. Indian cloth was also exported to Sirya, Babylonia, Iran, China etc., through the sea route.

It is said that in Karnataka during the rule of the Kalyani Chalukyas King Someshwara the condition of weaving was excellent. The Malamals produced here was known for the fine texture. The Mughal emperors, the Vijayanagar Kings and the Maratha Peshwas encouraged handloom weaving. In Karnataka, Bijapur, Gulbarga and Raichur were the main centres of weaving. The dyes produced at Raichure had immense demand from Amirs. Portuguese merchants come to purchase the cloth woven at Bijapur. The Indian handloom industry had an important position in the Mediaval period.

The industrial revolution had an adverse effect on the cottage industry. The Indian handloom industry particularly suffered and began to decline. Due to this the manpower declined and the use of machines become popular. Unhealthy problems like unemployment grew with the decline of cottage industries and village artisans become unemployed. British economic policy controlled India. The country became the center for producing only the raw materials. Cloth initially was sold in India from Manchester. By this the
weavers dependent on handloom weaving become paupers as they had no other income. The British Government did not make any schemes for the welfare of weavers.

The British Government suppressed Indian cloth as it did not compete. In 1744 A.D. the 'Calico Act' was passed affecting the sale of Calico cloth.

During the time of Second World War that is 1939-45 the country did not get raw material and yarn the weavers also suffered. When Mahatma Gandhi started the freedom movement the handloom industry again received importance. To remove rural poverty and unemployment, weaving was again followed. Gandhiji made the 'Charka' the symbol of work and the symbol of removing poverty. Gandhiji said weaving would give employment to the weak and downtrodden sections of India. He also stressed the importance of weaving. Weaving became associated freedom with the freedom movement.

After the Independence, the Indian Government passed several legislation and initiated welfare to encourage the Indian cottage industry. A large section of the population in India were dependent on cotton and silk weaving. However after Independence when Nehru was the Prime Minister the country became industrialised. Its first effect was on the handloom industry. The "Kanungo Report" was submitted in 1952. The Kanungo Committee had given first Report on handlooms which was as stated.

Handlooms are not suitable for pure and easy cloth manufacturing and it is not possible to weave them in different varieties and quality cloths at the low price. Therefore, we recommended to alter handlooms in to power looms in the next 15 to 20 years period.

After 20 years, Santanam committee report tried to give recommendation for handlooms. Santanam Committee Reported recommended as below.
“Excise duty should be imposed on power looms and on handloom manufacturing. Some selected cloth should be kept reserved for handlooms for internal distribution and export. In marketing, the weavers co-operatives could come as a main rules”.

Knowing the problems faced by weavers, the Government established the “All India Handloom Weavers Boards” under Fact-Finding Committee in 1941 A.D. Other than this the Central Government has also established All India Handloom Board in 1978. In this way the Government has tried to solve the problems of weavers.

In 1985 the New Textile Policy reserved 22 commodities in handloom field. After this the Government policy began to show much importance to power looms. Some power loom owners began to brand their handloom product and sold them in the market. Thus was branded power loom cloth introduced in the Indian markets.

During the 1990s, the “Meera Sait Committee” tried to investigate into the role of the power looms. The report showed that 30 per cent of power looms were not registered. The Committee observed that there should a compulsory registration of power looms.

The Government announced a new textile policy on 2nd November 2000. Its objective was to help the handloom weavers. International market for textile products technology revolution in production sector, modernisation of loans giving more employment opportunity to weavers and a better standard of living were given importance. These were the main factors of the New Textile Policy. These are helping to improve the condition of the Indian handloom industry. The handlooms industry has gone through several ups and downs. It is now gradually and slowly developing.

The undivided Bijapur district is selected for this research study. The district an is an important producer of cotton cloth as well as having important
many weaving centers in North Karnataka. The main weaving centers are Hungund taluk (Ilkal), Basavan Bagewadi taluks (Nidagundi and Golasangii) which are selected in this study for field work. In these villages next to agriculture, weaving is the main occupation of the people. In these areas, though there are weaver’s castes, there are also some people from other castes also who have taken to weaving. Most of the weavers however belong to the Devanga castes. The area is selected in order to study the social and economic condition of the weavers. The data was collected through appropriate sociological tools of data collection and sampling techniques. The head of the selected weavers family was administered the questionnaire schedule.

The study shows that a major part of the respondents, 91.79 per cent of respondents are male weavers as they are heading the family.

Most of the respondents were in the age group of 31-50 years. This is the economically active age group and hence this age group is well represented in the sample. Generally weavers past the age of 60 years do not take up weaving as at requires good eyesight.

The respondents were selected from the villages of Nidagundi, Golasangi and Ilkal. These are the mains weaving centers having a large number of handloom weavers.

The majority of the weavers are either illiterate or have only primary school education. Education gives awareness but the respondents are uneducated and many of them also do not encourage the education of their children. This leads to school dropouts and prevalence of child labour in the area. Children are utilised in different type of subsidiary work related to weaving.

Women’s literacy is less. They argue that there is no need of for women to be educated. Importance of women education is not understood in the weaver’s family. The literacy among the master weaver is higher became they
are economically better off and education to them is a necessity for dealing in their business with different states and different regions. Hence one sees that a majority of the master weavers are better educated.

The common or primary weavers are poor. They get their food only when they work. Otherwise they starve. Hence all the family members are involved in weaving. There is a co-relation between poverty and literacy. The children joining preparatory process of weaving miss their school.

Most of the weaving is done by those belonging to the weavers' castes. However other people also have taken to weaving such as Marathas, Lingaits and Muslims, in the area of study. About 64.29 percent of weaving is done by the “Devanga Caste’ people in this area. Their population is more than the other weaving caste such has Kuruninshetty. Padmasali, Togataviraru and Swakulsali. Other than weavers’ caster, Muslims, Lingayats, Ambigers also weave here. But they are less in number and also weaving come from respondents.

Most of the respondents are Hindus that is 93.93 per cent in the study area. Very few respondents are agriculturists. Some do weaving along with agriculture. However a majority of the weavers do not like to cultivate land, as it is hard work in the out doors. They feel they are not suited to take up this as a vocation for additional income. Weaving is always an in-door occupation.

There is a gradual change in the nature of family, 76.06 per cent of weavers have nuclear family. Since a number of family members are required as necessary to do this occupation, one used to see joint families. Now the weavers pre-loom and post-loom activities are all done by other labours. So now it has lessened the need for members. So weavers family are becoming nuclear families. The importance of joint family is declining. The propaganda by the Government and voluntary social agencies is also anther reason. So they have accepted family planning to control their poverty. Still 39.29 per cent of weavers have not accepted family planning. A number of women have

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increasingly accepted family planning, but men who still believe in superstition are not accepted family planning. The knowledge and use of family planning methods should be properly guided among most of the weavers. Hence the Health Department and Voluntary social agencies should do more work.

Marriage is a sacred institution. A married man has a better status in society and therefore a majority of the respondents are married. This 55.35 per cent of weavers were married at the age of 19 to 24. About 26.4 per cent of weavers got married below 18 years. Hence we see that weavers get married at an early age. Women are married before the age of 15. Elders of the family wish to marry their girls before they are mature. Among the weavers the age of the husband is more than the wife.

The recent Government policy is to help the weavers construct a large number of houses. About 61.79 per cent of weavers have their own houses, among them 33.92 per cent of weavers live in Government house. In the study a large numbers of respondents live in rural areas. There is no value for land. The weavers require large area to put of looms. So they cannot live in rented houses. They live in their own houses. Now a day the Government has constructed weaver's colonies. Such an area is helpful for their livelihood and their occupation. Data shown that 57.85 per cent of weavers' houses have semi-pucca and 35 per cent of weavers have Kachha houses. Most of the weavers do not have pacca houses. Their standard of living is low because they are poor. Their profit margin is also low. Weavers do not have separate kitchen and bathroom, Only 55.72 per cent of weavers have separate weaving room. They per from all the family activities in a single room. Only 11.79 per cent of weavers have four rooms houses.

Most respondents are have one or two rooms houses. Borewells and Public Taps are used by weavers for drinking water. Today the Government has special plans for drinking water. In every colony borewells and Public Taps are constructed. About 85.71 per cent of weavers use electricity to light their
houses. In the Government constructed colony, weavers use kerosene for lighting because electricity is not yet supplied. Electricity is necessary, as the houses are not properly ventilated. The houses have small windows so that the wind does not blow and disturb the yarn. Weaving is done till late in the evening.

Most of the respondents are from their original place. Only 11.79 per cent of weavers are migrants. Some of these respondents migrated when their villages submerged in the waters, of Upper Krishna Project. Hence some weavers migrated to different places and started their occupation elsewhere. They do not visit their native village but visit it only an special occasion.

Many respondents do not send their children to school. About 37.86 per cent of the weavers’ children do not go to school. About 50.94 per cent of weavers use their children in weaving. So they are not able to send them to school. The weavers who are poor also do not send their children to schools. 71.51 per cent of weavers children do not get scholarship which is given by the government. Therefore without any help, many weavers’ children are not able to study.

Because of illiteracy weavers are not having the habit of reading daily newspapers. They are engaged in their loom work. For recreation they see T.V drama and cinema. Some of them have the habit of drinking alcohol, chewing, tabasco and gambling. They spend their money on their habits every day and spend Rs 10 to 20 on this. The data showed that the respondents’ social life depends on these habits.

The weavers low economic condition is because of their lack of constant demand for handloom cloth. Weavers think that weaving is their main and only occupation. They do not want to take up any other occupation. They accept weaving as their culture. They still do weaving even though they do not obtain profit. Their income is not often enough to meet the basic needs.
Economic condition is thus not good. In villages some of the weavers participate in farming work during slack season.

For 97.86 per cent respondents weaving is their hereditary occupation. This occupation has came to them from their ancestors. So they do not require any special training. Most learn weaving techniques as children. When they grow up in such an atmosphere. Weaving is a work, which they learn from childhood. So weaving is hereditary. The respondents' annual income is from Rs, 8001 to 12000. When we compare with other occupations, the income is less. All the members of family work for nearly 8 to 10 hours per day every day, but even then the income is less. All the weavers are dependent only on weaving only. Some weavers do petty business. In some families one or two jobholders may be found, but these are master weavers. Their savings are very low as their income is also low. Weavers spend more for their food in their income and also spend for recreation but not on children's education.

A majority of respondents had more than one article. They have fan. TV. Bicycle by obtained through loans 88.22 per cent of weavers do not having any land. Some have only 1 to 2 acres, of land.

Most of the weavers produce artsilk and pure silk sarees. The KHDC weavers produce polyester, cotton and Janata cloths. More number of weavers prepare the most popular Ilkal sarees. They also prepare sarees having different boarders like Chiktiparas, Gayatri, Gomizari, Koundichikki. 75 per cent of weavers prepare silk heading sarees.

Weavers weave 2 to 3 sarees every week. The Chikki paras and Gayatri boarder sarees take more time to prepare. The pattal seragu sarees very simple, this type of sarees are prepared more. If the KHDC workers get raw materials means the production may increase. But the raw materials are not supplied so the production is not as per the imagination. This authority to decide the designs is left to master weavers, KHDC and co-operative societies.
Master weavers often say that weavers do not show much importance on the quantity of products. More number of weavers gets Rs. 150 to 250 per week. Weavers get less money during slack season. Their condition of poverty more also.

Weavers use pitlooms while preparing Ilkal sarees. And the KHDC weavers use frame looms. Every loom produces different type of cloth.

Most of the weavers get raw materials from master weavers. Weavers working in KHDC and Co-operative society get their own raw materials they also bring raw materials from Bagalkot, Colmbatore, Banglore, Salem and Mumbai. Most of the weavers are wage labours so they sale their materials to master weavers, Co-operative society and KHDC who had supplied them raw material in markets.

Most of the weavers work for many hours a day to earn their livelihood. Their work generally starts from early hours of morning and is over only around 12 'O' clock in the night.

Most of the weavers use old designs as their elders used to weave. Now it important to weave new designs. Today the Shahapur sarees, Urban handloom scheme's denim jeans, and Koppal's Bagyangar sarees are produced in new designs. Hence they have become popular. They make more profit. The master weavers, KHDC, Co-operative societies identify the designs and weavers produce these. Since they are able to compete in the modern market they are unable to sell the sarees in traditional designs. They do not have any idea about market conditions or satisfying the needs of consumers. This is because of their illiteracy and ignorance. This is also another reason for their poverty.

All most every weaver takes a loan lend. The main reason is the high price and their low wages. The money is repaid by doing weaving work. They borrow money for marriages, festivals etc. Many weavers are not in a position
to repay the loans. The amount borrowed by weavers is generally above Rs.10,000. Some use this money for house construction, daily maintenance and purchasing of raw materials. But we see weavers using this money for unproductive work. They repay the borrowed money, but they again borrow money. This cycle continues of this has become a various cycle.

The weavers do not have a plan for saving. Hence they do not save money for their future. But a few weavers save money in banks, Co-operative societies and Post Office. Most of the weavers do financial business with their relative and friends.

Weavers spend most of their money only for social and religious functions. They borrow money to manage this type of functions.

Most of the primary weavers are in debt to Master weavers and middlemen from whom they always take a loan. Thus they are always exploited.

Most of the poor weavers are deeply in debt. Many weavers in India as reported in daily newspapers have committed suicide having unable to bear their poverty and debt. To put up a power loom it requires not less than Rs. One Lakh which the weavers cannot afford.

To help the weavers the Governments has encouraged the weaver’s Co-operative society movement. But the success of this movement can be understood only if all the weavers become its members.

The Government has established KHDC. Today in every weavers centers the co-operative society and KHDC are doing their work. By this the exploitation to some extent has stopped. But even today we see 28 per cent of weavers are not the members of this organisation. Their illiteracy and ignorance made them still to work under master weavers.
Co-operative societies are trying to help the weavers. Their membership is slowly growing.

The Co-operative society gives different types of facilities to weavers. They mediate between weavers and Government. They supply construction loans raw materials, looms and financial aids to weavers' etc.

We see more being availed by the educated Master weavers and their relatives. So still the condition of primary weavers is bad. Some of the weavers were saved from the clutches of the middlemen after starting of this organisation. Thus the Co-operative society is doing useful work in weavers' colonies. Weavers do not attend the annual meeting conducted by the organisations. The Government is giving training facility, work sheds facilities Living cam workshed. Asha Jyothi Scheme, Health Package Scheme and scholarship.

SUGGESTIONS

There are some suggestions to solve this types of problems, they are

1. Weavers have to change their looms to power loom to increase and by their production obtain more profit.

2. The weavers should change the designs as per the fashion. This will help to make the handloom cloth more popular.

3. Weavers should get compulsory and basic education. This will help to solve some problems.

4. Women weavers should be provided a minimum financial assistance during the maternity period.

5. The aged and needy weavers be provided with spectacles.
6. Areas having concentration of handloom weavers be identified and efforts be made to undertake integrated development activities locations.

7. The Government should give wide publicity to handlooms and popularise them in the market. The cloth woven on power loom and branded as handloom cloth must be strictly prohibited.

8. Government should lend money to weavers with less interest. This money should be repaid in easy installments. They should also get a subsidy.

9. Government should identify the poor weavers. They should also get the daily needs in minimum price, which should be available in ration shops.

10. Weavers should be given minimum needs during slacks seasons. Such as raw materials, dyes, etc.

11. Government should help the weavers to purchase the power looms and give them training.

12. If the weavers are not getting the value of their products during that period the government should have a rebate scheme.

13. The handloom co-operative societies should be completely freed from the hands of master weavers.

14. Weavers should be supplied free boarding and see that they should not face any problems in rainy seasons. Worksheds should be constructed for them and also weaving rooms. It should have sufficient light.

15. Government should see that there should be no lack of raw materials. For this the Government should established “Yarn Distribution Shops”. This will help handloom activities run regularly.

16. Electricity Anganawadi centers, school, Borewells and Health Centers should be established in weavers colonies.
17. The Government should eradicate child labour, child marriage, child bounded labour system among weaker weavers.

The above suggestions given in order to improve the socio-economic conditions of poor handloom weaver. The condition of many weavers is very pitiable. The quality of life of weavers should be improved. The Co-operative society movement should ensure that cotton cloth becomes popular in the market in order to ensure a steady income for the weavers who are otherwise unable to compete with textile conditions and synthetic cloth. It is only thus that this ancient cottage industry can be saved.