CHAPTER 11
METHODOLOGY

Methodology is the scientific presentation of the procedure of whole work dealt with study particularly the objectives of the study, hypotheses, sampling, tools of data collection, interview schedule and interview process.

The present research was developed to study the patterns of age at marriage and family planning and its determinants among the handloom weavers with their caste groups, viz., Forward Castes, backward Castes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Dharmavaram town of Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh state. The central idea of the study was to examine the socio-cultural, economic and demographic characteristics that would influence their age at marriage among handloom weavers (four caste groups). Age at marriage which marks the beginning of social entry of man and woman into married life, varied significantly among different caste group in India (United Nations, 1961; Agarwala, 1962; Jorapur, 1968; Kapadia and Pillai, 1972; Mahadevan, 1979 etc., 1981; Audinarayana, 1991).

The study age at marriage and family planning in Indian context is of vital important because, various social, economic and demographic problems are associated with it. Several studies have focussed on socio-economic correlates of age at marriage as a part of demographic surveys. The present is an attempt
to provide first hand information of the age at marriage and family planning of four caste groups of handloom weavers in Dharmavaram town of Anantapur District in Andhra Pradesh.

Objective of the Study:

Arguments and suggestion of important demographers and social scientists have been considered for the study. The present study is intended to explore the following major objectives:

1. To study the socio-cultural and economic characteristics of the handloom weavers in Dharmavaram town.
2. To study the age at marriage, fertility and adoption of family planning among the four caste groups of handloom weavers.
3. To examine the knowledge, attitude and practice of family planning methods; and lastly
4. To know the opinion of respondents towards the social legislation on age at marriage and about the ideal age at marriage for their boys and girls.
Hypotheses:

On the basis of above objectives the following hypotheses have been formulated for empirical observation:

1. The socio-economic conditions of the Forward Castes would be better than the Backward, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
2. Difference in age at marriage exists significantly among the different caste viz., Forward Caste, Backward Caste, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
3. Higher the caste higher will be the age at marriage and lower the caste the lower will be the age at marriage.
4. Age at marriage will be higher among literates compared to illiterates.
5. Higher income group will marry late than the lower income group.
6. Members of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes marry early compare to forward and backward castes.
7. Joint families encourage early marriages when compared to nuclear families and extended families.
8. Lower the caste higher will be the fertility and higher the caste lower will be the fertility; and lastly
9. The social legislations regarding age at marriage has no impact on illiterate to compare with literates.
A few additional hypotheses also have been examined under the specific chapters.

**Sampling:**

Adequate care was taken to render the sample of Municipal Wards and respondents studied as representatives as possible. The study area, Dharmavaram town consists of 32 Municipal Wards within a urban setting. From each ward 5 respondents were selected for the study by opting Stratified Random. The sample frame for study is the list of eligible couples in the age group of 15 to 50 years bearing minimum three or more living children. It is also seen that only one couple is selected from each household. The sample size is fixed as 160 among Forward, Backward, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes groups. The procedure was followed to minimize the cost involved data collection and to benefit the existing rapport already established by the investigator in this area for the advantages of the study.

**Tools of Data Collection**

**Preparation of the Interview schedule:**

A relevant, appropriate and detailed interview schedule is used for the purpose of collecting necessary primary data from 160 respondents of different caste groups, in the study area. The schedule consists of 6 parts. The first part
of the schedule deals with the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. The second part covered the marriage particulars of the respondent. The third part is deal with the information of fertility levels. The fourth part is concerned with the questions related to knowledge, aptitude and practice of family planning methods. The fifth part reveals respondent's ideal age at marriage and idea on recent social legislation relating to marriageable age and the last part explain about income, expenditure and debts of respondent's households.

The schedule consists of structured statements, open-ended and multiple choice questions in order to probe deep into various socio-economic and demographic aspects covering age, education, occupation, income, expenditure, family size, number of children, age at marriage, type of family etc.,

Interview Process:

Before, starting the actual data collection, the investigator had visited the sample area, to establish good rapport with the respondents through prominent persons, such as presidents and secretaries of the handloom weavers societies and political representatives of Municipal Council, available at study area to introduce the investigator to the sample population. Moreover, the investigator had more friends and acquainted persons in the study area. This became a
easy task to build up good rapport with the respondents. The respondents were interviewed by fixing a convenient date and leisure time.

Data for the present research was collected personally from the respondents using the interview schedule. Some of the questions in the scheduled dealt with confidential information relating to women (Respondents Wife) about the age at puberty etc., The survey was completed by the researcher himself with the help of another female investigator to collect data from the wives of the respondents.

Limitations:

Due to dearth of resources like time, money etc., the investigator has to be limited in terms of area, scope and variables. It had been confined to a sample of handloom weavers in Dharmavaram town of Anantapur district, Andhra Pradesh.

Scheme of presentation: This study is presented in five chapters as follows:

Chapter I: this chapter focuses on introduction and review of literature.

Chapter II: This chapter is devoted to describe methodology where in a objectives of the study, hypotheses, sampling, interview schedule, interview process and limitations of the study and the profile of the Anantapur District.
Chapter III: This chapter furnished about the socio-economic profile of the respondents.

Chapter IV: This chapter examines the problems and prospective of age at marriage and family planning.

Chapter V: This chapter highlights the summary and conclusions with findings and suggestions.
A selected bibliography is also provided at the end.

ANANTAPUR DISTRICT PROFILE

Historical background:

Anantapur derives its name from the big irrigation tank Ananthasagaram (boundless ocean) constructed by Chikkadevaraya, the minister of Bukka-I (AD 1344 – 1377) the Vijayanagara ruler. Ananthasagaram was name after Bukka's queen. The district derives its name from Anantapur, its head quarters town. Anantapur district was formed in the year, 1882 separating from Bellary district. The district was later expanded with the addition of two new Talukas from neighbouring Cuddapah and Bellary districts.
Boundaries and Topography:

Anantapur district is situated in the western part of Deccan Plateau and forms the Southern most part of Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh. The geographical area of the district is 19,134 sq. kms. and its between 13-400 and 15-150 Northern latitude and its between 76-500 and 78-300 of Eastern longitude. Cuddapah and North Kurnool districts bound the district on the East. Its Southern and Western boundary flanks the state of Karnataka. Anantapur is the biggest districts of Andhra Pradesh accounting for 6.9 percent of total geographical area of the state.

Administration:

The district has been divided into three Revenue Divisions, viz., Anantapur, Dharmavaram and Penukonda. At present there are 63 Revenue Mandals. The district has 11 town and 965 Revenue Villages of which 24 are uninhabited. There are 2415 hamlets indicating an average of 3 hamlets for each revenue village. All villages are covered under 997 Gram Panchayats.

Industrialisation:

The district is industrially backward with lowest number of workers employed in registered factories. The industrial development is concentrated
mostly in urban areas. The district has 4987 grounded factories employing about
38,000 workers. The district industry centre has been functioning since 1978.
There are 8 industrial estates at Anantapur, Tadipatri, Kadiri, Guntakal, Gooty,
Hindupur and Dharmavaram. There are 4 mini-industrial estates to benefit the
scheduled caste beneficiaries. There 28 large and medium scale industries and
4,507 small-scale industries with investment of Rs. 12113.47 laks and Rs.
3658.04 laks respectively.

**Rainfall and Climate:**

The Anantapur district has fairly good elevation, which provides the district
with tolerable climate throughout the year. The mean sea level is about 1,100 feet
is at Tadiparti.

The geographical position of the district in the middle of the peninsula
render it. The driest part of the state and hence, agricultural conditions are more
after precarious. Monsoons also evade this part due to its fortunate location.
Being far away from the East Coast, it doesn't enjoy the benefits of North-East
monsoons and being cut-off by the high Western Ghats, the South-West
monsoons are also prevented from penetrating and quenching the thirst of these
parched soils. It is therefore seen that the district is deprived of both the
monsoons and subjected to droughts due to bad seasons. The normal rainfall of
the district is 544.0 mm by which it secures rainfall.

The rainfall is highly erratic, both temporally and spatially. During the past 33
years, the district was subjected to drought conditions in as many as 17 years.
The Anantapur district is declared to be one of the 6 districts in India affected by
severe drought frequently.

Soils:

The soils in the southern division i.e., Hindupur and Penukonda are
predominantly red in colour. In the Northern divisions the red and black soils are
almost un equal proportion red soil constitute 76 percent and black soil 245
percent of the total area in the district. The soils are shallow, poor in nutrients
with high water absorption capacity but poor in retention of moisture. 30 percent
of lands are saline and alkaline, especially under tank ayacut and riverbanks.

Agriculture:

Dry land farming continues to be the main stay of the people of the district.
Anantapur district has largest gross cropped areas the state (23 lakh acres), and
about 85 percent of the cropped area are rained. Food crops are cultivated in
29.8 percent of the cropped area. The principal crops raised in the district are groundnuts are 67.3 percent of the cropped area. The other important crops raised in the districts are Jowar in 1.21 lakh acres, Paddy in 2.05 lakh acres. In recent years the mulberry cultivation is expanding. The total area under mulberry cultivation was about 25,474 acres and the Cocoon yields was about 12,000 tonnes per annum providing a very good scope for silk industry.

The cultivated areas wells and tanks is very much dependent on the rainfall. The lands under wells and tanks will be fallow many a year on account of droughts. Thungabhadra High Level Canal is the only dependable irrigation source in the district, irrigating 365 lakh acres spreading through 152 villages. The three medium irrigation projects, Upper Pennar Project with an ayacut of 8,472 acres benefiting 13 villages, Bhyravanithippa project with an ayacut of 21,390 acres benefiting 14 villages and Chenna Rayagudi project with an ayacut of 898 acres benefiting 4 villages are useful only during the years of heavy rains.

Transport and Communication:

Anantapur district has 9,306 kms of road and 589 kms of railway line. The Railways link the district with Chennai, Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore and Hyderabad. Guntakal is one of the biggest railway junctions in the country. APSRTC provides commuting facilities in the district. There is good number of
lorries in the district supporting the movement of goods. There are 920 Post Offices, 93 Telegraph Offices and 104 Telephone Exchanges. Number of cities in the country is connected through STD facilities. Anantapur town is provided with a TV relay station with 150 kms radius of operation a FM radio station. Anantapur has also got airport at Puttaparthi.

**Literacy:**

The percentage of literacy rate is the district is 35.1. There are as any as 875 Primary Schools, 180 High Schools, 29 Junior Colleges, 14 Degree Colleges, 16 Industrial Training Institutes, 2 Polytechnics Colleges, 1 Engineering College and 2 Universities spread over the district.

**Demographic Characteristics:**

The total population of the districts was 31.83 lakh as per 1991 census. The rural population was 24.36 lakh while the urban population was 7.47 lakh. The growth rate of population of Anantapur district for three census periods is given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>% growth rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>21,15,312</td>
<td>17,39,531</td>
<td>3,75,790</td>
<td>19.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>24,43,012</td>
<td>20,17,095</td>
<td>5,30,917</td>
<td>20.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>31,83,781</td>
<td>24,36,741</td>
<td>7,47,040</td>
<td>25.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are 941 inhabitant villages out of 965 total revenue villages in size group of 500 to 1999 forms 37.6 percent of the total inhabited villages. The size group of 2000 to 4999 forms 37.6 percent and the size group of 5000 to 9999 forms 9.7 percent only out of total villages while 120 villages (12.5%) of total inhabited villages are having population less than 1000. There are 14 villages with more than 10,000 population excluding towns. There are 11 towns and 7 Municipalities, in Anantapur district as per 1991 census.

The density of population of the district was 167 per sq. km. against 241 per q. km. for the state. This district takes second place in Rayalaseema region with reference to density of population and tops in geographical area. The population of Anantapur district was predominantly rural. The proportion of rural and urban population to the total population of the district works about to 79.2 percent and 20.8 percent in 1991 census respectively. There were 947 females per 1000 males.

The percentage of total workers and non-workers in the district was 46.70 and 53.30 respectively. The main workers of the district were 9,24,016 in which 29.62 percent cultivators, 40.45 agricultural labourers, 24.27 other workers and 5.65 household workers (Census of India, 1991).
The Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population constitutes 14.19 percent and 3.49 percent respectively to the total population of the district. The percentage of total literacy rate is 35.1 in the district respectively.