CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
SILK IN INDIA:

The origin of silk is very ancient and believed to be originated from China. Through the silk practice was imported to India in ancient times, silk has now become an inseparable part of Indian culture and tradition.

Mulberry and non-mulberry varieties of silk are found in India. About 86 per cent of all the silk produced in the country is mulberry silk. The non-mulberry silks include Tasar, Eri and Muga.

India is the second largest silk producing country in the world providing employment to over five and half million people. The country accounts for 14 per cent of the total world raw silk production. Due to measures initiated by Government, the production of silk has recorded substantial increase in India during the planning era.

Silk fabrics, ready-made garments, carpets made of silk and silk waste are the main items of silk export. The Indian Silk Export Promotion Council was established by the Government of India in 1983. After the establishment of this body, the silk export increased substantially. The export earnings which
stood at Rs. 0.53 crores during 1951-52 has increased to Rs. 440.53 crores during 1990-91.

Sericulture makes a long chain of interdependent specialised operations which provides means of livelihood to a large section of the population involving, cocoon producer, reeler, twister, weaver and trader. About 51.5 per cent of the earnings go to cocoon producer. The reeler, twister, weaver and trader receives 6.2, 8.2, 14.5 and 19.5 per cent of the income respectively.

Silk weaving is one of the important agro-based occupation in India. The importance of silk weaving in an developing economy like India can be measured only by assessing the contribution of it to income and employment generation. Most of the silk in India comes from mulberry cultivation. The raising of sericulture is highly labour intensive. The rate of employment generation is more than four times in sericulture raising, when compared to groundnut, three times to sugarcane. The income generation is also much higher as compared to other crops. For example, it is estimated that, the net return per acre is Rs. 6,770/- for sericulture as compared to Rs. 657/- for
groundnut, Rs. 383/- for paddy and Rs. 2168/- for sugar-cane. Apart from these, it provides indirect employment also.

Mulberry cultivation provides cocoons, which provides that sophisticated and beautiful thread for weaving. Silk weaving is one of the most labour intensive household activity. Silk weaving provides income and employment opportunities in a significant way. The entire family can be involved in silk weaving. The men do weaving, women and children of the household do the preliminary work in weaving.

SILK WEAVING IN ANDHRA PRADESH:

In Andhra Pradesh, the main concentration of silk industry was confined to Rayalaseema region. The cultivation of mulberry started on a very insignificant note in Andhra Pradesh in 1953. By 1981, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has set-up a separate department for the promotion of silk industry. A phenomenal increase took place in the area under mulberry cultivation during 1970-71 and 1986-87 in Andhra Pradesh. Government of Andhra Pradesh has taken a master programme for the development of sericulture in the state. Andhra Pradesh Textiles
Development Corporation was established in 1975. Under Drought Prone Area Programme and Integrated Rural Development Programme also several measures were taken to promote silk industry. The Handloom Co-operative Societies have been established by the Government. There are about 162 co-operative societies for silk producers in 1987-88 with a membership of 18,176. As many as 5,26,554 looms are there in Andhra Pradesh.

ANANTAPUR DISTRICT:

Anantapur district is the most driest part of the country with average rainfall of 544 mm. It is a drought prone region. Dry land farming continues to be the mainstay of the people of the district. About 85 per cent of the cropped area is rainfed. Food crops are cultivated in 29.8 per cent of the total cropped area. Groundnut is the main crop of the district. The total area under mulberry cultivation was about 25,474 acres and the cocoon yield was about 12,000 tonnes per annum.

The district has a population of 31.79 lakhs. Of which 76.49 per cent constitute rural population. For every 1000 males, there are 947
females. The density of population is 166 per sq.km. Of the total work force, 29.62 per cent are cultivators, 40.45 are agricultural labourers, 24.27 per cent other workers and 5.65 per cent household workers. The percentage literacy in the district was about 35.66.

SILK WEAVING IN ANANTAPUR DISTRICT:

In Anantapur district, the silk industry has the ancient roots. Silk weaving is spread under different names, such as saree weaving, pocket weaving etc. For the development of silk industry in the district, a silk weaver's co-operative society was started in 1956. Khadi and Village Industries Commission has also taken keen interest in spreading the silk industry. Apart from silk weaving, the district is also known for cotton weaving, wool weaving.

There are about 22,415 looms in the district. As many as 121 co-operative societies are there in the district. The silk weaver's co-operatives number is 72, cotton accounts for 34, and the wool for 15. The silk handloom weaver's number about 6,000 in the district.
The weaving activity was mainly confined to Thogota, Pattu sale, Devanga, Padmasale castes; the weaving castes in the district. The participation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in weaving are minimum in the district.

Most of the women, men and children of the weaving households involve in weaving, men are dominant participants in weaving and women and children do the pre-looming participation.

The weavers can be classified into different categories based on the status. The categories of weavers in the district are individual weavers, master weavers, co-operative weavers, Textile Development Corporation Weavers (TDC), Khadi and Village Industries Board weavers and private weavers.

The average monthly income of weaving households in Anantapur district, as per 1988 handloom and textile census, was Rs. 507.48. The monthly income levels are higher for urban weaving households as compared to rural weaving households.

For the purpose of the study, Anantapur district in Andhra Pradesh is selected. For intensive and close study, three villages from Hindupur
taluk are chosen. A sample of 100 households were chosen on random sampling basis. For the collection of primary data, schedules have been canvassed at household level.

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To study the socio-economic conditions of silk weavers;
2. to find out the problems and prospects of weaving;
3. to analyse the employment levels in silk weaving;
4. to study the impact of silk weaving industry on weavers income; and
5. to examine the main trends with regard to raw material availability, cost of production and marketing facilities for finished products.

Two of the three chosen sample villages are big and the third is very small one. Agriculture and weaving are the main occupations of the sample villages. Mulberry crop raising has become an important occupation in recent years.
In all the sample villages, males outnumber females. In Peddireddi Palli and Cholasamudram, 12.2 per cent of the population of each village belong to Scheduled Caste. In Muddireddi Palli, only 2.5 per cent belong to Scheduled Caste. There is no Scheduled Tribe population in the sample villages.

The rate of literacy is very poor in all the sample villages. The educational and medical facilities are poor in the sample villages. No safe drinking water is available in any of the sample villages. The big two villages have been connected with pucca roads. The third village is connected with kutcha road. However, all the three sample villages are electrified and got postal facilities.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC FEATURES OF SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS:

Of the total sample of 100 weaving households, 56 belong to individual weavers category and the rest 44 to the labour weavers households. The mungada system of weaving was also practised in the sample villages. Master weavers are also very dominant in the area. Co-operative sector has spread its benefits to some extent in this villages.
As many as the 81 per cent of the sample are from weaving community. Other than weaving community from among the backward caste account for 11 per cent of the population. The open community was represented by 8 per cent of the total sample. However, the sample is not represented by Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe communities.

All the sample households selected have weaving as their primary occupation. Of the total sample, 13 per cent have got agriculture as the secondary occupation. The percentage of labour weavers are very high from among other backward community sample households (78.7 per cent) as compared to either the weaving community (42 per cent) or the open community (25 per cent).

The percentage of labour weavers are more among illiterates compared to among literate weavers. The sample respondents are fairly distributed into different age groups. Nearly, 90 per cent of the sample are in the age group of 30-50 years. The percentage of individual weavers are more upto the age of 30 years and percentage of labour weavers are more in the age group of 30-40 years.
Different sizes of families were found in our sample households. Smaller households are observed among labour weavers and the bigger households in individual weavers. The practice of employing labourers for weaving and related activities was more among the smaller households.

About 90 per cent of the sample are landless. Among landless, the percentage of labour weavers are more as compared to individual weavers.

About 9 per cent of the sample do not have any debt at all and as many as 28 per cent of the sample households have debt of Rs. 10,000/- and above. The individual labours are having more debts as compared to labour weavers.

IMPACT OF SILK WEAVING ON INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT - EMPIRICAL RESULTS:

The total of 100 sample households own 210 looms. Fifty of the sample households have two looms each and 29 households have got one loom. The remaining households have more than two looms. The distribution of looms is unequal between individual weavers and labour weavers. The individual weavers have looms at a rate of 3.75 looms per household. In the case
of labour weavers, they have at an average rate of 1.75 looms per household. Weaving community has higher number looms per household (2.14 looms) than the other communities.

For making of a six metre saree it takes on an average nine days per individual, at a rate of eight hours per day. In these nine days, three days are sufficient for weaving purpose. In the rest six days, he has to do the preliminary work. This preliminary work includes, dyeing (one day) warping (two days) and spinning (three days).

For the purpose of dyeing ₹ 10/- are paid per labourer. For warping labourers are paid ₹ 10/- per day. Spinning labourers get ₹ 15/- per day.

The dyeing and weaving are generally done by men in the household. The warping and spinning are done by women and children of the household. For weaving of one average saree, three days are required for a labourer. The payment made per average saree ranges from ₹ 90/- to ₹ 150/- for weaver depending on the quality of work and number of days of work.
Weaving occupation provides better employment opportunities as compared to agriculture. On an average, each of our sample respondents are employed for about 18.4 days per month. About 45 per cent of the sample respondents are employed for 20 days and above. Another 44 per cent of the respondents are employed between 10 to 20 days. Only 11 per cent are employed below 10 days. The average number of days of employment available for individual weaver respondents was 17 days in a month. For labour weaver respondents, 20.2 days of employment was available.

It was observed that, 46 per cent of the total sample respondents are working for more than ten hours a day. The rest 54 per cent are working between 5 to 10 hours a day as long as employment is available. The individual weavers are working more hours per day as compared to labour weavers.

Women and children of labour weaver households involve more vigorously in weaving when compared to individual weaver households. From among the individual weaver households, 54.7 per cent of the women are involved in weaving. In the case of labour weaver households, as many as 93.6 per cent of the women are employed in weaving.
Children continue to work in these weaving households, though there are several laws against children employment. From among the children of the individual weaver households, 27 per cent are being involved in the weaving activity. Such percentage is higher at 44.7 per cent among the children of labour weaver households.

The total annual average income per household works out to ₹. 12,192/- for the sample households. For the sample households, 94.7 per cent of the average annual income is coming from weaving alone. The per household average annual income for individual weaver was ₹. 13,211/- as compared to ₹. 10,962/- for labour weaver households.

The weaving occupation has been motivated by different sources. Parents were the main motivating factor for the sample respondents (47 per cent). The other influences on respondents are friends (25 per cent) and other (12 per cent). Only very few are influenced by the master weaver.

PROBLEMS OF WEAVERS:

The problems faced by individual weavers and labour weavers are not the same. About 82 per cent...
of the total respondents expressed financial difficulties. Their other problems expressed in the order of priority are lack of looms, fluctuations in output prices, low wages, low returns and the lack of marketing facilities. The individual labourers main problems was fluctuations in the output prices. As many as 75 per cent of the individual weavers expressed the financial difficulties in procuring raw material. As many as 60.7 per cent of the respondents of the individual weavers category expressed the problems of low returns. Marketing facilities are the other pressing problem expressed by them.

The labour weavers mainly expressed their anguish over low wages compared to the number of hours of work they do, the earnings are very low. Lack of looms was the other problem expressed by them.

SUGGESTIONS:

1. Standardisation of raw silk prices to avoid price fluctuation in order to keep up steady income to the artisan.

2. Creation of marketing facilities.

3. Starting of co-operative societies and ensuring proper functioning of them.
4. Easy financing facilities through commercial banks, A.P.S.F.C. etc.

5. Identification of cluster villages and cluster development under DRDA, DWCRA, APSFC, TRYSEM, NABARD, and other Rural Development programmes.

6. Providing of housing facilities to the weaker sections of the society.

7. Facilities to weavers should be provided on a 'Single Window' scheme.