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## Poverty and Health conditions of handloom weavers

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### Abstract

The handloom sector in India is the largest sector next to agriculture. Handloom sector has been organized in three predominant forms of weavers such Independent weavers, co-operative system weavers and wage weavers. The most prevalent system is that of the wage weavers. Presently, most of these wage work at takes at place from home. Their work ranges from pre-loom processing to mere weaving, at different places. The handloom industry is largely household-based, carried out with labor contributed by the entire family. It is dispersed, spread across thousands of villages and towns in the country. In the present economic climate where dependency on foreign capital and know how s increasing all round, the handloom industry presents a sustainable models of economic cavity that is not energy intensive and has low capital costs, as well as an extensive skill base. Its survival in and adaptability to, a wide range of economic conditions also needs to be understood in a proper perspective, in order to underline the inherent viability of this enterprise. Therefore, an objective appraisal of the handloom industry is the need of the day.

Handloom industry is one of the most decentralized, traditional and skill oriented industries in India. Handloom industry is one of the oldest industries in India. It is cottage industry in India and It is widely spreader every corner of the country. It is occupied place both in rural and urban areas. It is major sector number of people are getting the employment opportunities after agriculture sector.

**Keywords:** Handloom weaver, poverty, income and expenditure, health

### Introduction

India is the country of villages; most of its economy derives from agriculture and the allied sectors. The handloom sector in India is the largest sector next to agriculture. Handloom sector has been organized in three predominant forms of weavers such Independent weavers, co-operative system weavers and wage weavers. The most prevalent system is that of the wage weavers. Presently, most of these wage work at takes at place from home. Their work ranges from pre-loom processing to mere weaving, at different places. The handloom industry is largely household-based, carried out with labor contributed by the entire family. It is dispersed, spread across thousands of villages and towns in the country. In the present economic climate where dependency on foreign capital and know how s increasing all round, the handloom industry presents a sustainable models of economic cavity that is not energy intensive and has low capital costs, as well as an extensive skill base. Its survival in and adaptability to, a wide range of economic conditions also needs to be understood in a proper perspective, in order to underline the inherent viability of this enterprise. Therefore, an objective appraisal of the handloom industry is the need of the day.

Handloom industry is one of the most decentralized, traditional and skill oriented industries in India. Handloom industry is one of the oldest industries in India. It is cottage industry in India and It is widely spreader every corner of the country. It is occupied place both in rural and urban areas. It is major sector number of people are getting the employment opportunities after agriculture sector. This industry providing employment to rural and urban people 43.31 laths people are getting the employment by this industry.

From total handloom workers 36.33 lacs people are living in rural areas, 6.93 lacs people are living in urban areas. In total handloom workers nearly 50 percent of the workers 21.6 lacs workers are living in southern states. In this states west Bengal 7.8 lacs, Tamil Nadu 3.5 lacs Andhra Pradesh 3.6 lacs, Uttar Pradesh 2.6 lacs. Orissa 1.1 lacs, Karnataka 0.9 lacs and other states 2.3 lacs workers are living. This sector contributes nearly 15 percent of the total cloth produced in the country and also contributed substantially to the export income of the country and 95 per cent of the world's hand woven fabric comes from India.

### **Handloom Industry in Andhra Pradesh**

Andhra Pradesh has traditionally been one of the major handloom weaving regions of India. The state has the second largest concentration of weavers in the country after neighboring state, Tamil Nadu, with 6 lakh weaver families. In Andhra Pradesh, many, either work on their own or are attached to master weavers. At present, this activity provides full and part time employment to about 40 lakh persons. Weaving is a household activity, carried on by weaver artisans with the assistance of family labor, producing for a commercial market. It is largely a rural activity and is virtually synonymous with cotton fabrics and cotton accounting for about 79 per cent of the yarn consumed in the state. Some varieties of saris produced on the handlooms in Andhra Pradesh are among the world's finest pieces and known for their immaculate warps and wafts, eye catching shades and alluring texture. About 70 per cent of the looms in Andhra Pradesh produce traditional apparel items. Although handloom weaving exists in all districts of Andhra Pradesh, there are considerable differences between various regions within the State, with regard to numbers of weavers and looms, trends therein and products made. There is also a huge regionally specific product variation. Bichat is produced mainly in Alagona district (and silk khan comes from Pochampally, close to Hyderabad). In some areas very exclusive products are made, for instance in Vetapalem (Prakasam District), where saris are produced with real gold threads woven into the-silk product. The names of the weaving centers or villages sometimes even function as a kind of brand name, because the same products are not produced elsewhere.

The state of Andhra Pradesh has three regions—Coastal Andhra, Rayalaseema and Telangana. These regions represent three homogeneous and distinct agro-climatic zones and they also share a common political history. In spite of the wide regional disparities in social and economic development, the region now covered under the state of Andhra Pradesh has historically been a major producer of cotton textiles. Traditionally, little cotton was grown in the state, though recently farmers in dry regions have been switching to cotton cultivation. Down the centuries textile production has depended on yarn brought in from other regions. Textile production is also segmented catering to three distinct and different markets – production for export, production of very specialized and high-valued textiles used by high-income groups and varieties for household use to be sold in local markets. One of the specialties of the cotton fabrics of Andhra Pradesh is the use of real zari or gold thread in borders and motifs in the body of the saris. Venkatagiri in Nellore district is best known for such saris woven with real zari and superfine cotton yarn of 100 to 120 counts. Similar saris are also woven in Pattur in Prakasam

district, Madhavaram in Kadapa district, Mangalagiri in Guntur district and Uppada, a fishing village to the north of Kakinada in East-Godavari district. Often the local varieties have their own distinguishing features like the border design or the body patterns and so on.

Another specialty is cotton saris woven with silk borders and pallus and with real zari. Gadwal in Mahabubnagar is most famous for this variety, which is also produced in the nearby weaving center, Kothkota. Further, to the north, cotton saris and dhotis with silk borders are woven in Ponduru in Srikakulam district. Armoor in Nizamabad district is famous for its silk saris, which are used to be woven in considerable quantities. In Hyderabad, Karwan is an important weaving center noted for its himroo fabrics, which are a blend of cotton and silk yarn.

Handloom weaving to a large extent, in Andhra Pradesh takes place in rural areas. It is primarily a household activity, with mainly men involved in weaving, and women and children involved in the preparatory work. More than 90 per cent of weaving households own their looms. Andhra Pradesh therefore conforms to the conventional idea that weaving is primarily an artisan and home-based activity. This is different in some other States, where a larger percentage of weavers live in urban centers and/or work as wage weavers. Most of the handloom weaving in Andhra Pradesh is cotton weaving; but there is also silk, wool and polyester weaving. The products vary from exclusive and expensive saris to coarse materials. A relatively large percentage of the Andhra Pradesh looms produce for the export market. Export products include, for instance, the world-famous ikhat fabrics. The fact that handloom weaving is a household-based activity and that most weavers own their own looms does not mean that the weavers work as independent producers. In principle, there are four types of arrangements.

### **Objectives of the study**

#### **Major objectives of the study as follows**

- To study the socio-economic conditions of handloom weavers of Guntur district.
- To analyze the working conditions of the weavers.
- To know the income, expenditure consumption pattern of the sample respondents.
- To examine health status of handloom weavers.

### **Need for the study**

Present the handloom weavers in Guntur district is facing acute problems of abject insufficient income, poverty, unemployment and illness. Majority of them are struggling hard to survive and income and expenditure are in a balance and the socio economic conditions of handloom weavers are also in a panic condition. The rapid expansion of power loom has doubled their problems. In past days handloom industry has glory in this district so many weaving families last generations and before generation families were migrated to Guntur district for handloom weaving from very long. But especially since one decade handloom industry condition is not well it was falling down. So far as the researcher's knowledge is concerned no study has been in Guntur district Handloom weaving is popular.

### **Sample**

The study has been carried out in Three Mandals viz. Mangalagiri, Battiprolu and Repalle of Guntur district of

Andhra Pradesh. The study adopted a stratified purposive sampling design for collection of data. The total sample comprises of 250 of the weavers households.

**Data collection tools**

Secondary and primary sources have been used in the present study. The secondary data comprises the government reports, official documents and other survey reports. Handloom censuses report, textile annual report 2012-2013, Directorate of Handloom, assistant Directorate of

Handloom offices Guntur relevant journals, reports and books. Primary data has been collected with a structure interview schedules.

**Tools of data analysis**

Suitable and appropriate statistical tools and mathematical devices like average, percentage, compound growth and rates and the analysis of variance, and chi-square test were employed while tabulating, analysis and interpreting the data.

**Table1:** Distribution of respondents by age groups

Age		Co-operatives	Master Weavers	Independently	Total
20-30	Count	2	9	0	11
	Row %	18.2%	81.8%	.0%	100.0%
	Column %	4.3%	4.7%	.0%	4.4%
31-40	Count	4	18	3	25
	Row %	16.0%	72.0%	12.0%	100.0%
	Column %	8.5%	9.4%	25.0%	10.0%
41-50	Count	18	49	6	73
	Row %	24.7%	67.1%	8.2%	100.0%
	Column %	38.3%	25.7%	50.0%	29.2%
51-60	Count	14	63	3	80
	Row %	17.5%	78.8%	3.8%	100.0%
	Column %	29.8%	33.0%	25.0%	32.0%
Above 60	Count	9	52	0	61
	Row %	14.8%	85.2%	.0%	100.0%
	Column %	19.1%	27.2%	.0%	24.4%
Total	Count	47	191	12	250
	Row %	18.8%	76.4%	4.8%	100.0%
	Column %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The Table 1 is about the age group of respondents, of the total respondents 32 per cent of majority respondents follow between 51-60 years age group, 29.2 per cent respondents are between 41-50 years, 24.4 percent are reported from above 60 years age group. A meager percent 4.4 of

respondents are in 20-30 years age group. The data shows that younger generation are not willing to engage in the traditional profession. The majority respondents are still working without retirement in this work.

**Table 2:** Distributions of respondents by gender

Gender		Co-operatives	Master weavers	Independently	Total
Male	Count	37	155	7	199
	Row %	18.6%	77.9%	3.5%	100.0%
	Column %	78.7%	81.2%	58.3%	79.6%
Female	Count	10	36	5	51
	Row %	19.6%	70.6%	9.8%	100.0%
	Column %	21.3%	18.8%	41.7%	20.4%
Total	Count	47	191	12	250
	Row %	18.8%	76.4%	4.8%	100.0%
	Column %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 2 reflects that 79.6 per cent respondents are males are engaging in weaving occupation only 20.4 per cent respondents are females engaging in weaving occupation the

male respondents have dominating position in industry. When compare with north states this area totally opposite in female participation.

**Table 3:** Educational status of the Respondents

District	Educational status		Co-operatives	Master weavers	Independently	Total
Guntur	Illiterate	Count	10	68	0	78
		Row %	12.8%	87.2%	.0%	100.0%
		Column %	21.3%	35.6%	.0%	31.2%
	Primary	Count	14	100	7	121
		Row %	11.6%	82.6%	5.8%	100.0%
		Column %	29.8%	52.4%	58.3%	48.4%
	High school	Count	6	9	3	18
		Row %	33.3%	50.0%	16.7%	100.0%
		Column %	12.8%	4.7%	25.0%	7.2%
	Inter	Count	9	11	1	21

	Graduation	Row %	42.9%	52.4%	4.8%	100.0%
		Column %	19.1%	5.8%	8.3%	8.4%
		Count	8	3	1	12
Total		Row %	66.7%	25.0%	8.3%	100.0%
		Column %	17.0%	1.6%	8.3%	4.8%
		Count	47	191	12	250
		Row %	18.8%	76.4%	4.8%	100.0%
		Column %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		Count	47	191	12	250

The above Table 3 depict about the educational qualifications of sample respondents. It is evident from the above table the majority respondents have primary level education with 48.4 per cent. Followed by 31.2 per cent respondents are reported from non-literate category.

Inadequate percent of respondents have graduation level education with 4.8 per cent. So the majority respondents are up to primary level education only. It is indicating the majority respondents are illiterates and semi literatures.

**Table 4:** Distribution of Respondents by Type of House

Type of house		Co-operatives	Master weavers	Independently	Total
Kutchha	Count	17	54	2	73
	Row %	23.3%	74.0%	2.7%	100.0%
	Column %	36.2%	28.3%	16.7%	29.2%
Semi pukka	Count	21	77	10	108
	Row %	19.4%	71.3%	9.3%	100.0%
	Column %	44.7%	40.3%	83.3%	43.2%
Pukka	Count	9	60	0	69
	Row %	13.0%	87.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Column %	19.1%	31.4%	.0%	27.6%
Total	Count	47	191	12	250
	Row %	18.8%	76.4%	4.8%	100.0%
	Column %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

This Table 4 is explaining about type of houses of respondents. The Majority 43.2 per cent respondents are living in semi pukka houses, 29.2 per cent respondents are

living in ketch houses and the remaining 27.6 per cent respondents are living in pukka houses.

**Table5:** Possession of ration card

Type of Ration card		Co-operatives	Master weavers	Independently	Total
White card	Count	45	171	11	227
	Row %	19.8%	75.3%	4.8%	100.0%
	Column %	95.7%	89.5%	91.7%	90.8%
Pink card	Count	0	6	0	6
	Row %	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Column %	.0%	3.1%	.0%	2.4%
No card	Count	2	14	1	17
	Row %	11.8%	82.4%	5.9%	100.0%
	Column %	4.3%	7.3%	8.3%	6.8%
Total	Count	47	191	12	250
	Row %	18.8%	76.4%	4.8%	100.0%
	Column %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

This Table 5 reflects that 90.8 per cent respondents have white ration cards, 6.8 per cent respondents are living without ration cards and only 2.4 percent respondents have

pink ration card. So the majority respondents have only white card it indicating the poverty of the handloom weavers very minute per cent weavers have pink card.

**Table6:** Distribution of Annual Income of Family (in Rupees)

Income		Co-operatives	Master weavers	Independently	Total
Up to 20000	Count	4	16	0	20
	Row %	20.0%	80.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Column %	8.5%	8.4%	.0%	8.0%
20001 – 40000	Count	16	116	0	132
	Row %	12.1%	87.9%	.0%	100.0%
	Column %	34.0%	60.7%	.0%	52.8%
40001 – 60000	Count	17	50	1	68
	Row %	25.0%	73.5%	1.5%	100.0%
	Column %	36.2%	26.2%	8.3%	27.2%
60001 – 80000	Count	7	4	8	19
	Row %	36.8%	21.1%	42.1%	100.0%
	Column %	14.9%	2.1%	66.7%	7.6%

80001 -100000	Count	1	1	1	3
	Row %	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	100.0%
	Column %	2.1%	.5%	8.3%	1.2%
above 100000	Count	2	4	2	8
	Row %	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	100.0%
	Column %	4.3%	2.1%	16.7%	3.2%
Total	Count	47	191	12	250
	Row %	18.8%	76.4%	4.8%	100.0%
	Column %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The Table 6 explains total family annual income level of the respondents. The majority 52.8 per cent respondents have total family annual income is 20001-40000, 27.2 per cent respondents have income 40001-60000 and 1.2 per cent

respondents families have annual income 80001-100000 only. The above 100000 annual income getting families are only 3.2 per cent and 100000 annual income figure crossing families are only eight.

**Table 7:** Annual Expenditure of the family (in rupees)

Expenditure		Co-operatives	Master weavers	Independently	Total
Up to 20000	Count	0	3	0	3
	Row %	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Column %	.0%	1.6%	.0%	1.2%
20001-40000	Count	12	42	4	58
	Row %	20.7%	72.4%	6.9%	100.0%
	Column %	25.5%	22.0%	33.3%	23.2%
40001-60000	Count	17	85	5	107
	Row %	15.9%	79.4%	4.7%	100.0%
	Column %	36.2%	44.5%	41.7%	42.8%
60001-80000	Count	16	43	1	60
	Row %	26.7%	71.7%	1.7%	100.0%
	Column %	34.0%	22.5%	8.3%	24.0%
80001-100000	Count	1	9	1	11
	Row %	9.1%	81.8%	9.1%	100.0%
	Column %	2.1%	4.7%	8.3%	4.4%
Above 100000	Count	1	9	1	11
	Row %	9.1%	81.8%	9.1%	100.0%
	Column %	2.1%	4.7%	8.3%	4.4%
Total	Count	47	191	12	250
	Row %	18.8%	76.4%	4.8%	100.0%
	Column %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The Table 7 portrays about the family annual expenditure of the respondents. The majority 42.8 percent of the respondents total family annual expenditure reported to be 40001-60000, as well 24 percent respondents expenditure reported 60001-80000 and 4.4 percent of the respondents

annual expenditure reported 80001-100000 only. In the similar way another 4.4 percent of the respondents' expenditure reported above one lakh. It is to be noted that the expenditure is very high among the almost all weavers than their income.

**Table 8:** Indebtedness of the Respondents

Do You Have Any Indebtedness		Co-operatives	Master weavers	Independently	Total
Yes	Count	31	142	9	182
	Row %	17.0%	78.0%	4.9%	100.0%
	Column %	66.0%	74.3%	75.0%	72.8%
No	Count	16	49	3	68
	Row %	23.5%	72.1%	4.4%	100.0%
	Column %	34.0%	25.7%	25.0%	27.2%
Total	Count	47	191	12	250
	Row %	18.8%	76.4%	4.8%	100.0%
	Column %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 8 shows about the indebted rates of the respondents. Through the above table it is come to know that majority of the respondents are struggling with indebtedness. Among respondents 72.8 percent have more indebtedness and only 27.2 percent reported no indebtedness. It is indicating the

gap between income and expenditure of respondents. So the respondents are not getting the sufficient income to full fill their minimum need that why majority respondents are depending on in debts. Nearly one by forth respondents have relaxation from indebtedness.

**Table 9: Reasons for Indebtedness**

Reason	Co-operatives				Master weavers		Independently		Total	
	Count	Row %	Column %	Count	Row %	Column %	Count	Row %	Column %	Count
For purchase of raw material	Count		0	0		3		3		3
	Row %		.0%	.0%		100.0%		100.0%		100.0%
	Column %		.0%	.0%		33.3%		1.6%		1.6%
For home needs	Count		18	104		2		124		124
	Row %		14.5%	83.9%		1.6%		100.0%		100.0%
	Column %		58.1%	73.2%		22.2%		68.1%		68.1%
For children education	Count		5	11		3		19		19
	Row %		26.3%	57.9%		15.8%		100.0%		100.0%
	Column %		16.1%	7.7%		33.3%		10.4%		10.4%
For children marriage	Count		6	20		1		27		27
	Row %		22.2%	74.1%		3.7%		100.0%		100.0%
	Column %		19.4%	14.1%		11.1%		14.8%		14.8%
For medical treatment	Count		2	7		0		9		9
	Row %		22.2%	77.8%		.0%		100.0%		100.0%
	Column %		6.5%	4.9%		.0%		4.9%		4.9%
Total	Count		31	142		9		182		182
	Row %		17.0%	78.0%		4.9%		100.0%		100.0%
	Column %		100.0%	100.0%		100.0%		100.0%		100.0%

The above Table 9 revealed the majority 68.1 per cent respondents struggling with indebtedness for full their home needs only, 14.8 per cent respondents thronging in to indebtedness for their children marriages. Income which has

been earning on the present work has not met the home need. It is very panic situation of respondents because all respondents have struggling with insufficient income.

**Table 10: Health Conditions of the respondents**

Disease	Respondents Working under Category			Total
	Co-operative	Master weaver	Independent	
Sight	34	115	6	155
Blood Pressure (B.P)	9	36	4	49
Diabetes	4	17	0	21
Asthma	11	22	0	33
Paralysis	1	2	0	3
Cancer	0	0	0	0
Hernia	17	39	7	63
Piles	14	29	4	47
Orthopedic	5	52	0	57
Cardiac	0	3	0	3

Health status of an individual certainly impacts the rest of activities. If the worker health status is in good condition it ultimately gives him a scope for more production hours. A close correlation lies between the health status of the worker and the production. The table 4.16 shows that health conditions of respondents.

Among 250 respondents, 155 respondents are suffering from eye sight problem. 63 respondents are facing problems with hernia. 57 respondents have orthopedic problems. 49 respondents are with BP 47 respondents have piles problem. 33 respondents have asthma problem. 21 respondents are suffering from diabetic. 3 respondents have paralysis and 3 respondents struggling with cardiac problems.

Among the three categories most of the respondents are living with manifold health problems.

**Findings of the study**

79.6 per cent respondents are males are engaging in weaving occupation only 20.4 per cent respondents are females engaging in weaving occupation the male respondents have dominating position in this industry.32 per cent of majority respondents are between 51-60 years age group, above 60 years age group respondents have 24.4 per cent and least percent 4.4 of respondents are in 20-30 years age group. Younger generations are not choosing this profession. The

majority respondents have primary level education with 48.4 per cent. 31.2 per cent respondents are illiterates. 90.8 per cent respondents have white ration cards, 6.8 per cent respondents are living without ration cards and only 2.4 percent respondents have pink ration card. The majority respondents have total family annual income is 20001-40000, only. The above 100000 annual income getting families are only 3.2 per cent. The majority 42.8 per cent respondents have total family annual expenditure is 40001 - 60000. The above 100000 annual expenditure families are 4 per cent and very least 1.2 per cent families' annual expenditure is up to 20000 only with compare annual income the expenditure are very high. Majority respondents are struggling with indebtedness, nearly only one by forth respondents have relaxation from indebtedness. 72.8 per cent respondents have indebtedness and only 27.2 per cent respondents have no indebtedness. So the respondents are not getting the sufficient income to full fill their minimum need that why majority respondents are depending on in debts. Most of the respondents are struggling with multiple health problems.

**Conclusion**

It is the fact that the handloom weavers had enjoyed prosperous and wealthy living conditions in the past. Due to

various structural changes in the society and the global the rich industry had lost its glory and the workers who depends on this industry has lost their livelihoods and forced to choose the other alternative livelihoods. The material cost has been increased in enormously and there is no scope left for the weavers to depend on the industry. Apart from the government subsidies have withdrawn and the government has not the adequate attentions towards the industry. Besides, the power loom industry has largely impacted handloom industry. The lackadaisical attitude of the policy makers and fund releasing towards these industry workers made them more badly. There are huge number of government policies schemes are introduced but they are in favor of the cooperative society workers, indeed this schemes to be diverted and covered towards the unorganized sector labors who work home based and under the master weavers, unless he situation of weavers cannot be expected as better than.

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