



Statistical overview of decay of glorious past of popular handloom weavers in Andhra Pradesh, India

Polishetty Kesari¹, Raghunadh Acharya² and Ashok Sahai³

¹Harames University, Alemaya, Ethiopia.

²Department of Statistics and Mathematics, Aurora's P. G. College, Hyderabad, India.

³Department of Mathematics & Statistics @ UWI St. Augustine Campus, Trinidad & Tobago (West Indies).

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: 5 November 2011;

Received in revised form:

28 December 2011;

Accepted: 13 January 2012;

Keywords

Chi-Square test,
Pearson's Coefficient of Correlation,
Master Weaver.

ABSTRACT

The handloom industry in Andhra Pradesh is famous for its age old weaving craft next to agriculture. Located in Andhra Pradesh Prakasham district, Chirala mandal is famous for its specialized weaving craft. Considering entire district of Prakasham 95% of total textile production comes from Chirala mandal alone stretching from Eepurupalem - Vetapalem - Pandilla palli, a stretch of 16 Kms length. In Chirala mandal itself some 300 varieties of fabrics were produced. Some of the world famous Tie and Die products are taken birth in Chirala. Chirala is known as second Mumbai. However it is observed that this traditional cottage industry is losing its attractive occupational status forcing the weavers to migrate to other occupations out of desperation. In the year 2007 around 15,000 weaver families have already migrated to other occupations, but even of course the weaver families are still continuing to hope for a bright future on day or the other. The income from these highly skilled weaver products are not able to produce an honorable living by solely depending upon this occupation resulting in migration to other occupations. The present study is under taken to understand the grievances of the weavers and also the weavers shifted to other professions.

© 2012 Elixir All rights reserved.

Introduction

Of the three basic necessities of life, food, shelter and clothing, the last one is indisputably the most basic need, because it is logical for a human being to live without food for few days, without shelter for few weeks but cannot live for a few minutes minus clothing. The craft of hand weaving shaped by the necessities of life and colored by the dreams of people is a very deep rooted and touching issue. India has had a rich cultural heritage and the process of weaving of cloth by hand forms an integral part of it. It is reflected in the cultural ethos of the people. Clothing has been the most critical need for human beings since the dawn of civilization. This basic and most felt need was satisfied from the early days of civilization by the handloom industry which is one of the oldest cottage industry spread all over the country. The industry has been in existence for over 5000 years now and weaving is done by artisans without any formal education and without any technical training too. In the second half of the 18th century the Indian sub-continent established itself as the world's largest producer of cotton textiles. The handloom industry all the time had a place of pride especially in rural economy next only to agriculture. Handloom fabrics of India established their reputation in the international markets long before the historic Industrial Revolution in the west.

In the early civilization Indian handloom fabrics were the most sorted fashion citadels of the world. However, the weavers depending on this age old industry suffer from serious problems with the average earnings far below their needs and most of them live below the poverty line. Broadly the problems of the weavers are double edged problems resulting in their poor

economic conditions. The most common and serious problem faced by the weavers of either cotton, woolen and in silk is the lack of working capital for the weaving operations this problem is compounded by the shortage of raw material especially the availability of yarn and ever increasing prices of yarn beyond the reach any type of organization especially Master weavers and cooperative societies. In this situation a small independent weaver's capacity to get over the double edged problem is unimaginable.

The fact finding committees on mills and handlooms (1942) concludes that crisis crept in handlooms mainly due to competition from mills and power looms. Shifts in the consumer tastes, changes in tariff policy and strong dependency on exploitive relationship between the weaver and the middlemen. The same situation is still continuing with a worse situation leading to suicides, leaving the weaving profession to a bleak future.

The industrial policy resolution of (1948) even though emphasized the promotion of handloom industry through establishment of cooperatives of handloom weavers. The Textile policy of 1956 was considered as the boon for handlooms as the policy adopted several recommendations of the Karve Committee report. The Abid Husain Committee specially reserved 22 items under handloom sector but subsequently that reservation was limited to only 11 items. Even in the reserved 11 items there is an encroachment of power looms. With the result the handloom sector is always exposed to problems. Adding to this is "The Liberalization Policy" has made the textile policy lean more towards higher productivity and export oriented.

As far as the organizational set up of the weaving is concerned cooperative movement had a strong base in India in general and in particular to Andhra Pradesh even in the years prior to Independence. Since more than two decades many of the cooperatives were either partly or fully nonfunctioning or running in losses. According to the information pertaining to the year 1999-2000 there were 723 active societies which has been reduced to 612 in 2008 and further decline to 540 in 2010 of course this negative pattern was not uniform among the different regions of Andhra Pradesh. The trends in terms of number of societies, number of members and number of looms and cooperative coverage during the post liberalization era indicate a decline many districts of Andhra Pradesh.

In the absence of sufficient work provided by the societies the other exploitive organizational set up is Master weavers who supply the required raw material and help the weavers to continue their weaving operations. Unlike the cooperatives the managerial cost of master weavers usually is less and they can maintain their profitability, as master weavers also being middlemen exploit the weavers by paying lower wages than societies due to weak bargaining power of the later. In the recent past as master weavers are also not in a position to provide at least minimum work for weavers due to the frequently escalating yarn prices some time up to a large percentage.

The other organizational set up is risky as the weavers have to manage their own weaving and should market by himself which is not so much remunerative. In the handloom production the major component is raw material cost which usually the weaver cannot afford it. Being suppressed from all these sources the weaver has no other option except to leave this occupation. It is also been noticed the same situation is continuing in many parts of weaving communities in Andhra Pradesh. Due to its unorganized nature of the industry the weavers in general earn a precarious living from this age old caste based occupation. This situation is making many weaving communities to shift to other alternative employment avenues out of desperate need to make the livelihood successful. Only very few aged weavers are able to continue as they do not have any other skill and even their age does not permit for other occupations. Presently due to the severity of crisis which is continuing since more than a decade in Handloom sector it seems inherently unviable continuation with the modern textile sector unless this sector also stands on the same platform like that of modern sector. Now and then there is a number of policy statements associated with a number of beneficial schemes but these benefits are not reaching to the deserved sections of the society as revealed by the sample respondents.

In view of the above stated reasons the present article is an attempt to identify the reasons for migration. Important issues in this regard includes income generation, working days, further the rationale for migrating from weaving is weavers indebtedness so as to avoid suicides. Thus this research paper focuses on the comparison between the weavers who migrated to other occupations by leaving weaving out of desperate need for livelihood and subsequent changes in their socio economic condition in comparison with those who are continuing in hand weaving and eking out their livelihood for survival.

Scope of the study: The present study is concerned with the economic conditions of cotton handloom weavers as well as the weavers who are migrated to other activities for survival in Eepurupalem area of Chirala mandal. This study mainly aims at those of the weavers who are still continuing weaving and those who have migrated from weaving.

Objectives: The general objective of this study is to analyze livelihood opportunities of weavers who are in weaving as a profession and those who are migrated from weaving for survival. In Specific:

- To study the background of the weavers in terms of general characteristics.
- To examine the economic aspects of the weavers in weaving and those who are migrated to other professions.
- To analyze the extent of indebtedness among the weavers and migrated weavers
- To study the respondents perception towards handloom weaving
- To recommend remedial measures for reducing the extent of migration

Study area: The present study is confined to Prakasham district in Andhra Pradesh keeping in view the higher concentration of existing hand loom units and also decline in loom age is highest. As per the handloom census of 1995 – 96 there are about 10 districts where the concentration of handloom weavers is above 10,000 including Prakasham district 25000. In Prakasham district there are 56 mandals, weaving craft is popular in 11 mandals. Among the 11 mandals Chirala mandal is popular in hand weaving making it selective in this study as this center represents multiplicity of cotton fabrics with varied problems in the industry. Chirala mandal is famous for its specialized weaving craft. In the entire district out of total textile production 95% comes from Chirala mandal alone stretching from Eepurupalem – Vetapalem - Pandillapalli, a stretch of 16 Kms length. In Chirala mandal itself 300 varieties of fabrics were produced. Most of the world famous Tie and Die products have taken birth in Chirala. Chirala is also known as second Mumbai. There are three villages in Chirala mandal. Among the three villages Eepurupalem had the highest concentration of weavers and largest migration of weavers in the recent past leading to a deep crisis and a large scale migration of weavers to other daily wage employment. In field survey it is noticed that in Eepurupalem during the year 2007, 1500 Head of weaving families have migrated to other occupations which was the highest in the state. Hence the present study area is restricted to Eepurupalem as large numbers of weavers have migrated to other occupations and those who are in weaving are not receiving sufficient inputs and other related raw materials for continuing weaving work. Eepurupalem is one of the most popular weaving center, having at present total population of 38000 with 32000 of it are involved in weaving itself. With 7000 families with an average size of the family appears to be 5.43 persons, presently 4000 weaving population is eking out their livelihood. Selection of the Eepurupalem village is done in consultation with the concerned officials and weaver representatives of the Chirala mandal.

Methodology and Tools: The hypotheses applied and tested in the present work is:

- Migrations of weavers from weaving to other activities for livelihood as incomes in weaving occupation are declining continuously.
- Weaving activity is practiced only by the elder weavers and the young enthusiastic weavers are no longer interested in continuing weaving as an occupation.
- Those who are continuing weaving have no regular work leading to low income generation there by resulting in to large number of weavers indebted and are exposed to low standards of living compared to those who are migrated to other occupations.

Data Collection: The study adopts both survey and non-survey methods for collection of the data. The survey method includes administering of structured household questionnaires to the randomly selected sample weaver households both who are in weaving and those who have already migrated by leaving weaving. Discussions were held with the stakeholders from the weaving community in the selected village during the month of January 2011. Primary data supported by the secondary data collected from Directorate of Handlooms and Textiles Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, Chirala Weavers cooperative society and other published and unpublished data is used in the present work. Further information is also collected from Centre for Handloom Information & Policy Advocacy (CHIP), Swadeshi Jagaran Manch, and Andhra Pradesh.

Method of analysis: In order to assess the extent of migration on the weaving craft various statistical techniques like ratios, percentages, graphs, cross tabulations, standard deviation and sampling techniques like Chi square tests, are used. In identifying the influence of other variables on income and earnings correlation analysis has been used.

Parameters of the respondents considered: The main focus in this study is to identify the reasons for migration from weaving to other occupations. Keeping this in view, the paper is organized in to four parts:

- The first part considers background of the respondent weavers Head of the House hold) profile in terms of age, education, caste, family size, ownership of looms and the extent of variations in the production woven cloth.
- The second part focuses on economic aspects of the respondent weavers in comparison with migrated weavers in terms of number of working days in a month, Nr. of Hours of work in a day, Average monthly income, expenditure especially on food and indebtedness.
- The third part analyses the social conditions of the weaver respondents like dwelling house and other house hold properties.
- The final and fourth part analyses weaver's perception about future weaving.

The analysis is based on primary data collected from the weavers' families. The data is collected, from a randomly selected village, of the district, as there are no major variations across the villages, in the selected District, simple random sampling method is used. The focus is to identify whether there is any variation in income and indebtedness among the two groups of weaving community i.e., those continuing in weaving and those who have migrated from weaving.

Part I

Personal and occupational characteristics of the weaver respondents:

Analysis of data reveals that respondents generally cut across the various age groups. There was however a preponderance of middle age weavers constitutions about 46% in the age group of 26 years to 41 years. Young age weavers below 25 years of age are only 10% in all. Out of the 100 respondents considered in this study the following statistics were obtained [Table 1.1].

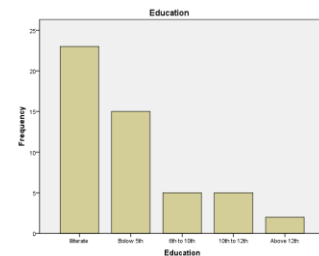
Source: Field Survey

As it can be observed from the table 1.1 that the minimum and maximum age of the respondents varies between 25 Years to 72 Years with an average age appears to be 45 years in the weaving category and in the migrated-weaver category it is 39 years.

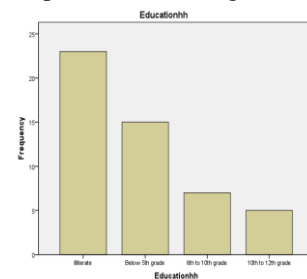
Remark: One can observe from the above table that, the shift from weaving occupation to other occupations, is irrespective of their age, which reflects the grave situation of the weaving

industry, in general, in Andhra Pradesh, as more or less all the age group people are migrating to other professions.

Education: Literacy level of the weaver households is important as it is directly related to handloom weaving because a literate weaver can make use of various facilities provided by the government or other supportive agencies and can also learn improved techniques and can modify his weaving craft as per market demand. The future of the handloom industry depends much on the extent of education of the artisans in the face of the severe competition from power looms and globally liberalized policies. As regards to literacy among the member weavers in weaving craft is, 46%, of the respondents forming a majority are illiterates with a minority of 4% above 12th grade as it is presented in the tables below.



Literacy levels of the Respondents amongst those who migrated from weaving: It is noticed that the maximum number of weavers i.e., 46% are illiterates and only a minimum of 10% are literates up to 10th to 12th grade.



Remark: From the tables and graphs it can be inferred that weaving does not require any formal education and irrespective of the literacy weavers are migrating to other occupations.

Social background of the weavers: Handloom weaving activity is not restricted to any particular community in general as there are variations in the castes pursuing weaving activity in different parts of country. However it is observed that in Andhra Pradesh traditional Padmasali community is dominant in this occupation. It is seen all weaver respondents in the study-area belong to weaving community which goes with different names in different regions like Padmasali or Devanga or Thogota in Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema and in Telangana region it is popularly referred as Sali community. In the present study 98% of respondents are belonging to Padmasali community hence it can be inferred that weaving is a traditional caste based occupation in Prakasham district.

Profile of the Head of the weaver Household: It appears from the table and graphs that majority of the sample households are headed by male members with active participation of female members at home. As presented in the table 1.1 that there is the preponderance of male headed families in weaving occupation. It has been observed in the field study that those weavers who are migrated are only the male headed families especially away from the same village, where as female headed families are migrated in the same village to other occupations.

Weaving experience: It is observed that all the respondent weavers irrespective of their age have learnt weaving from their

fore fathers. It is observed that elder population have more experience in weaving.

Family size: The basic features of these two groups of weavers are almost similar in terms of Age of the head of the households, Age dispersion, literacy levels and the size of the family members. The total members in the weaving sample are 163. In the present study dependents are considered as below 14 years of age. All those members above 14 years are considered as working members as weaving profession requires whole family members for under taking both post loom and pre loom activities. It is also observed that children below 14 years of age will help in pre loom activities during their off school hours [Table 6.1].

Remark: The average family size in both the groups of families appears to be 4.83 persons; this finding confirms that the prevalence of relatively small family in weaving craft, an average shows that respondent weavers are cautious about large size of the family. There is not much variation in the size of weaver households in these two groups. It has been noticed that in the migrated group of weavers children below 14 years of age are not participating in family earnings, whereas in weaving craft children below 14 years of age are helping their parents during off school hours, indicates that there is the existence of child labor in weaving craft.

No of looms owned by the weaver households:

No of looms owned and also working in weaving as occupation

One of the indicators for migrating from weaving as occupation to other occupations is underutilization of fixed capital. This has been explained by the use of number of looms used in present with the number of looms used five years back.

Remark: The trends in terms of usage of looms indicates that there is a decline of looms used, especially four loom users are not existing in the sample, one loom users are increased from 62% to 70%. This can be attributed mainly due to non-availability of inputs specifically yarn as the major input as raw material either from cooperative societies or from master weavers and even the weaver himself cannot continue weaving on his own because of his/her petty producers status with a high degree of dependence. In fact they are worse than any other type of organizational structure and also in the absence of a good marketing network for the sale of handloom cloth the independent weavers cannot market their products all this is resulting in to migration to other occupations as indicated in terms of table. This is also been observed in the number of meters of cloth woven has been continuously reduced during this period of time as indicated below.

As observed from the above table of 7.2 a decline in more number of meters of cloth woven is clearly seen, this is more so in 8 meter category of producers followed by 12 meter category, even though percentage of 6 meter producers remains the same.

But there is an increase in less number of meters of cloth woven as indicated in 2 meters, 3 meters and also in 4 meter cloth thus indicating that there is less number of meters of cloth producers are increasing and more number of meter cloth producers are reducing and thus influencing on less quantity of production resulting in to unemployment there by to migration. Hence it is obvious that there is a positive association between the number of looms used and the number of meters of cloth woven.

Part II

Economic conditions of the weaver households:

The study has been designed to assess the economic conditions of the weavers of two groups based on the number of working days, number of hours of work and the amount of income earned, with weavers in weaving as occupation and that of migrated weavers. In order to examine the relationship between the income and total number of hours of work frequency distribution and Karl Pearson's correlation (r) has been estimated between (a) total number of hours of work, (b) income. The findings of these estimates are as follows.

Source: Field survey.

As indicated in the table that those of the migrated weavers average number of working hours are a minimum of 4 hours to a maximum of 10 hours per day. 32% of the migrated weavers are working for only 6.67 hours per day. 92% of the respondent migrated weavers are working for normal working hours of 8 hours, whereas the weavers in weaving are working for more number of hours per day than the migrated weavers which can be observed from the following table.

It is also indicative in the table II.2 that a maximum of 40% of the weavers are working for 12 hrs in a day, almost 90% of the weavers are working for more than 8 hours against the normal working hour standards. From this it can be inferred that migrated weavers are working for less number of hours per month compared to the weavers in the weaving occupation. On the similar lines the study attempted to identify the variations in income level and the resultant migration from weaving to other occupations. The tabulated average data is presented as follows.

24% of the migrated weavers are earning an income between Rs.5501 to Rs 6500; whereas 30% of the weavers of weaving group are earning an income of Rs 1501 to Rs 2500. 50% of the migrated weavers are earning an income above Rs 5501, whereas only 2% of the non migrated weavers are earning only Rs 5501. From the above analysis it shows that the average monthly income of the weaver class is low.

Inference: So as to measure the extent of variation between two sets of weaver class statistical coefficient of correlation has been fitted. Correlated estimates are under taken with respect to total working hours in a month with the income of the weavers as indicated in the table II.5 Chi square Pearson coefficient of Correlation estimated value with respect to income of the weaver community is significant and positive correlation for both weavers as well as migrated weavers, but because of relatively smaller significant value for weaver group(.563) one can conclude that the income is not proportional to the number of hours worked in weaving as an occupation. This is specifically true to the weaver group of Epurupalem, whereas the higher value of migrated weavers i.e.,.976 which is more positive reflects that incomes of migrated group of weavers is more proportional than the number of hours put in for work. All this reflects that hours of work can be increased by facilitating input supply especially yarn, even though it is indicated in table II.2 that weavers in weaving as occupation are working for longer hours but it is not productive value added employment associated with income rather it is Disguised unemployment. Due to non-availability of work weavers are prolonging the same input yarn till they receive the next raw material which is one of the causes for lower income. Thus it can be stated that the weaver earnings are lower In spite of the weavers willingness to work for longer hours of work than the migrated group of weavers earnings which are higher clearly shows that there is shortage of essential inputs especially yarn, this is one of the factors influencing the decision to migrate to other occupations.

As from the Pearson's coefficient of correlation one can conclude that migrated weavers are earnings are proportional to the number of hours of work.

The chi square test substantiates the above result to the whole group, at 5 % level of significance; this is specifically true to the weaver group of Epurupalem. An attempt is also made to study and estimate the amount of expenditure on food by the sample weavers as an indicator of economic conditions due to the variations in income level.

It has been observed that there are large variations in the food expenditure of the two categories of weavers. Above Rs 3500 none of the weavers of weaving as occupation are able to spend expenditure on food mainly due to lower earnings, 17% of the migrated weavers are spending an amount of Rs. 3500 and above on food, these factors are influencing weavers to migrate to other occupations. Due to lower incomes of weavers of weaving are not only have to spend lower expenditure on food but also leading to higher indebtedness as presented below.

The above tabular presentation in the tables II.7 and II.8 indicated that both the weaver groups are trapped in a debt, even though the reasons for borrowing are same i.e., indebtedness is mainly for personal reasons so as to meet family maintenance, as indicated by the respondents but the weavers of weaving are unable to repay loans hence the amount is increasing from time to time. Unlike weavers of weaving, migrated weavers are borrowing and repayment is frequent due to regular income earnings resulting in to lower indebtedness. Slightly above 78% of the migrated weavers are indebted to a small amount of Rs1000 and less. 33% of the weavers of weaving are indebted to the extent of Rs12801 – 24600, 27% of the weavers are caught in a debt trap of Rs. 24601 – 36400, whereas only 2% of the migrating weavers are in this range of debt. As it is obvious that low income results into more indebtedness which has been analyzed between two sets of weaver class with the help of statistical coefficient of correlation.

From the Pearson's coefficient of correlation and chi-square test one can conclude that indebtedness is more among traditional weaving community and also an indication that , traditional weaving community are falling in to indebtedness even working for long hours as against their counter parts in other professions.

From the above analysis one can observe the following:

- Weavers of weaving group are working for longer hours of work than the migrated weavers, for their survival.
- The weavers' earnings are lower In spite of the weavers' willingness to work for longer hours of work than the migrated group of weavers.
- Weavers' food expenditure is less than the weavers of migration.
- Weavers' indebtedness is greater than the weavers of migrated group.

On the basis of above and data analysis it can be stated that the migrated weavers benefitted economically because of their higher earnings than irregular weaving craft. The better financial conditions helped the weavers to have relatively more expenditure on food, less indebtedness than weavers of weaving craft. So it can be concluded that the economic impact of the migrated weavers on non-migrated weavers have positive and significant. If the same trend continues there can be decay of handloom craft as observed in the study.

The social conditions of the weavers in both sets are presented in the table III.1. All the respondents in the weaving own a house, in non-weaving group 64% of the sample

respondents owned houses, 98% of the weavers own water facility with just only 2% of the respondents approach public taps. In the non-weaving group 86% own taps & 14% approach to public taps ,94% of the respondents in both the categories do not have proper modern sanitation facilities, 76% of the weaving respondents depend on traditional method of cooking using i.e. firewood, 24% of the respondents use LPG and almost none depend on kerosene. In the migrated respondents 64% depend on firewood, 2% on kerosene and 34% use LPG. LPG users are higher in migrated respondents which may be due to higher income. 94% of the weaver respondents own television as indicated in the table III.0. Inference: Relatively migrated weavers are in a better position in terms of social living conditions than weavers of weaving of profession.

Part IV

Weavers' perception about future weaving: All the weaver respondents in the study area are working for Master weavers and the whole family has to involve in pre or post loom activities and in some cases master weavers are also encouraging weavers to leave hand weaving as even for master weavers weaving craft has become a bleak future and in future it may not survive as expressed by the respondents in the field survey findings.

The field survey reveals that all the respondents in two categories of weavers expressed their feeling for change in different working employment than to continue weaving because without support from any organization and the independent weavers petty producers status with a high degree of dependence on middle men cannot manage weaving on his/her own. The rate of change in migration is accelerated in the post reform period (1985 to 2005), leading to the inference that reforms have been a contributory factor towards decline in hand weaving.

Because, in spite of the whole family involved in weaving activity per day income is not exceeding more than Rs.80, and often their activity is disturbed by natural calamities (Floods) where as in other activities such as construction, agriculture and other allied activities one member in the family is earning not less than Rs 250 to Rs. 300.

If the whole family is in it every day income for sure is Rs. 1000 which is enabling the weavers to meet all their basic needs in sufficient manner. All the respondents agreed that there is a lot of difference between earnings from weaving and from other occupations.

When asked for a query regarding continuation of weaving In spite of these many downfalls, Why are the weavers still continuing weaving because as they do not know any other activity other than weaving, more over they have lot of attachment towards weaving as it has been helping their survival from generations, weaving which they have learnt from their childhood and all their children have already been in other occupations and those, who are not able to migrate are due to , age of the respondent, less bargaining power, field survey revealed that weaving is a house hold craft where all the family members (women) are not interested to work as daily wage laborers in the dust and the sun (Occupational Prestige) is a clear sign that this craft may survive if supportive measures are extended and strengthened.

Testing of Hypothesis: The hypotheses tested in the light of findings of the study. Migration of weavers from weaving to other activities.

• Lower income earnings associated with less number of hours of work, lower expenditure of food, higher indebtedness as presented in part II is a major reason for migration. Also findings reveal that 6 meter producers per month remains the same in two periods which was highest percentage in the past i.e., 26%, 4 meter producers per month are forming the highest of 30% now indicating that 4 meter producers became more than 6 meter producers of the past is another indication that weaving is declining gradually, resulting in to migration to other occupations. Therefore the hypothesis is accepted.

• Even though weaving activity is practiced by all age groups, but there was however a preponderance of middle age weavers constitutions about 46% in the age group of 26 years to 41 years. Young age weavers below 25 years of age are only 10% in all. The elder weavers and the young energetic productive weavers are no longer interested in continuing weaving as an occupation. Hence the hypothesis is partially accepted

• One can observe from the above tables 1.1 that, the shift from weaving occupation to other occupation is irrespective of their age, which reflects the grave situation of the weaving industry, in general in Andhra Pradesh, as more or less all the age group people are migrating to other professions.

• Suggestions and conclusions: The present research work is based on the field survey indicates that handloom weaving has much strength and can survive under specific conditions if regular and continuous support is rendered. One of the major problem as expressed by the weavers of two categories of weavers in the study area is under utilization of looms, reduction in the meters of cloth woven irregular working conditions resulting in to lower incomes due to raw material availability especially yarn supply i.e., dynamic escalating prices of yarn. Ironically cotton farmers in Andhra Pradesh are exposed to suicidal tendencies due to non-remunerative prices of cotton and at other end weavers are complaining that yarn prices are beyond their reach.

In any case the raw material (yarn) crisis is of long standing issue starting from 1925 till 1999 all the committees at various levels expressed the same opinion for raw material crisis (yarn). As pointed in table 7.3 number of meters of cloth woven has been declining continuously may be due to yarn price rise, master weavers are not able to provide regular work. The solution for everlasting yarn crisis can be resolved by establishing small scale district level yarn depots, and are needed especially where handlooms are more concentrated. This can regulate the irregular working hours of weavers by providing full time work (Supply side constraint). The other

major threat for hand looms is power -looms as expressed by the weavers. Hand loom reservation act in 1985 has reserved 22 items for handlooms but subsequently it is reduced to 11 items. At least these 11 items must be seriously produced in handlooms only. Necessary measures have to be strictly implemented for the banning of duplication of power loom products in the name of handlooms.

In the name of rural employment guarantee schemes different schemes under special employment programs are introduced from time to time. On similar lines there have to be a special employment program dedicated for handloom sector alone.

No support from any source as responded by the sample weavers, even if it is that is for only few society weavers and not for all. In fact on roll all the sample weavers are society members, but supply of yarn is not regular. The two major institutional structures in handloom weaving are cooperative societies and master weavers are closely inter-linked. Usually master weavers follow exploitative practices which develops unhealthy competition. Hence the only secured best way for weavers' welfare is cooperative societies as they need to strengthen their activities to safe guard the interests of the small weavers.

A number of promotional schemes are extended to weavers from time to time but none of them are reaching to the beneficiaries except white card for identity. Hence there is a need for supervising the system of distribution. As it has introduced in Tamil Nadu even in Andhra Pradesh through retail price shops hand loom products can be marketed for lower income group people.

References:

- S.Mahendra Dev, S.Galab, P.Prudhvikar Reddy, Soumya Vinayan "Economics of Hand loom weaving "Economic and Political weekly" EPW May 24, 2008.
Raj Kishor Meher "The Hand loom industry and the socio economic conditions of weavers in Orissa" Journal of rural development, Vol. 14 (3) 1995 NIRD Hyderabad India
Narasinha Behera "Economic impact of weavers cooperatives on member weavers in Bargarh District, Orissa Journal of rural development, Vol. 28 (2 April – June 2009) 1995 NIRD Hyderabad India
Subramanyam G.A, "A survey of socio economic conditions of Weavers in East Godavari District, A.P
P.Kesari "Economics of Cotton Hand loom Industry in Andhra Pradesh"- A Case-study of Nalgonda District; Unpublished PhD Thesis 2000.

Handlooms in Prakasham District

| S.No. | Particulars | Prakasham District | | Chirala Mandal | | Epurupalem | |
|-------|--------------------------|--------------------|-----|----------------|--------|------------|--------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | % | 4 | % | 5 | % |
| 1 | Nr. of weaver families | 20240 | 100 | 15445 | 76% | 5960 | 29% |
| 2 | Nr. of looms | | | | | | |
| | Cooperative fold | 17822 | 100 | 6000 | 33.7% | 2000 | 11.0% |
| | Outside cooperative fold | 15362 | 100 | 5315 | 34.6% | 1985 | 12.9% |
| 3 | Nr. of looms | | | | | | |
| | Working | 27000 | 100 | 9815 | 36.35% | 3600 | 13.33% |
| | Dormant | 6184 | 100 | 1500 | 24.27% | 385 | 6.2% |

Directorate of handlooms and textiles Gov. of AP Hyderabad. January 2011

Table 1.1 Basic details of Head of the house hold in weaving group and those who had migrated to other Profession.

| Family particulars of the weavers and migrated weavers | Weaver group | Migrated Weaver group |
|--|--------------|-----------------------|
| Age of the head of the weaver household | Years | Years |
| Average age | 45.00 | 39.00 |
| Minimum age | 25.00 | 20.00 |
| Maximum age | 72.00 | 72.00 |
| Age Dispersion | Percentage | Percentage |
| <= 25 | 8.00 | 12.00 |
| 26 – 41 | 38.00 | 54.00 |
| 42 – 56 | 32.00 | 20.00 |
| 57+ | 22.00 | 14.00 |
| Total | 100.00 | 100.00 |
| Literacy level | Percentage | Percentage |
| Illiterate | 46.00 | 46.00 |
| Below 5 th | 30.00 | 30.00 |
| 6th to 10 th | 10.00 | 14.00 |
| 12th10th to | 10.00 | 10.00 |
| Above 12 th | 4.00 | -- |
| Total | 100.00 | 100.00 |
| Sex of the weaver household | Percentage | Percentage |
| Female | 12.00 | 14.00 |
| Male | 88.00 | 86.00 |
| Total | 100.00 | 100.00 |

Source: Field Survey

| No of weaver respondents | Percent |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| Illiterate | 46.0 |
| Below 5 th grade | 30.0 |
| 6th to 10th grade | 14.0 |
| 10th to 12th grade | 10.0 |
| Total | 100.0 |

Literacy levels of the Respondents in weaving craft, weaving as occupation

| No of weaver respondents | Percent |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Illiterate | 46 |
| Below 5th | 30 |
| 6th to 10th | 10 |
| 10th to 12th | 10 |
| Above 12th | 4 |
| Total | 100 |

Table 6.1 Social Conditions of the weavers of two groups.

| Family profile of the weaver respondents | Weaver respondent | Migrated weaver respondent |
|--|-------------------|----------------------------|
| | Members | Members |
| Average family size | 3.26 | 3.14 |
| Minimum members | 1 | 1 |
| Maximum members | 6 | 5 |
| Nr. of Children | Percentage | Percentage |
| One child | 46.00 | 48.00 |
| Two Children | 54.00 | 52.00 |
| Total | 100.00 | 100.00 |
| Nr. of looms owned | Percentage | Percentage |
| Zero looms | 0.00 | 6.00 |
| One loom | 70.00 | 76.00 |
| Two looms | 20.00 | 16.00 |
| Three looms | 4.00 | 2.00 |
| Four looms | 6.00 | 0.00 |
| Total | 100.00 | 100.00 |

Table 7.1 Percentage of looms used five years back and presently.

| No of looms | Looms used five years back in % | Looms used presently in % |
|-------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | 62.00 | 70.00 |
| 2 | 28.00 | 26.00 |
| 3 | 6.00 | 4.00 |
| 4 | 4.00 | -- |
| Total | 100.00 | 100.00 |

Source: Field Survey

Table 7.2 No of Meters of cloth woven

| Meters of cloth | No of meters woven Five years back in Percentage | No of Meters of cloth woven presently in Percentage |
|-----------------|--|---|
| 2 | 6.00 | 16.00 |
| 3 | 6.00 | 14.00 |
| 4 | 24.00 | 30.00 |
| 5 | 12.00 | 4.00 |
| 6 | 26.00 | 26.00 |
| 8 | 14.00 | 4.00 |
| 9 | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| 10 | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| 12 | 8.00 | 2.00 |
| Total | 100.00 | 100.00 |

Average number of hours worked by the migrated weavers per month

| Average nr. Of hrs. worked by the migrated Weavers/day | Percent |
|--|---------|
| 4.00 | 10.0 |
| 5.33 | 16.0 |
| 5.83 | 2.0 |
| 5.86 | 4.0 |
| 6.00 | 2.0 |
| 6.13 | 6.0 |
| 6.40 | 4.0 |
| 6.67 | 32.0 |
| 7.20 | 2.0 |
| 7.47 | 2.0 |
| 7.50 | 6.0 |
| 7.66 | 2.0 |
| 8.00 | 4.0 |
| 8.33 | 2.0 |
| 9.00 | 4.0 |
| 10.00 | 2.0 |

Source: Field survey

Average number of hours worked by the non-migrated weavers per month

| Per day | Average number of hours worked by the non migrated weavers | Percent |
|---------|--|---------|
| | 5.00 | 2.0 |
| | 6.00 | 4.0 |
| | 8.00 | 4.0 |
| | 10.00 | 18.0 |
| | 11.00 | 6.0 |
| | 12.00 | 40.0 |
| | 13.00 | 2.0 |
| | 14.00 | 16.0 |
| | 15.00 | 6.0 |
| | 16.00 | 2.0 |
| | Total | 100.00 |

Source: Field survey

4 Average monthly income of the Non-migrated weavers

| | Average monthly income of the Non migrated weavers | Percent |
|--|--|---------|
| | <= 1500.00 | 16.0 |
| | 1501.00 - 2500.00 | 30.0 |
| | 2501.00 - 3500.00 | 22.0 |
| | 3501.00 - 4500.00 | 20.0 |
| | 4501.00 - 5500.00 | 10.0 |
| | 5501.00+ | 2.0 |
| | Total | 100.0 |

Average monthly income of the migrated group of weavers

| Average monthly income of the migrated weavers | Percent |
|--|---------|
| <= 1500.00 | 8.0 |
| 1501.00 - 2500.00 | 4.0 |
| 2501.00 - 3500.00 | 4.0 |
| 3501.00 - 4500.00 | 16.0 |
| 4501.00 - 5500.00 | 18.0 |
| 5501.00 - 6500.00 | 24.0 |
| 6501.00 - 7500.00 | 18.0 |
| 7501.00 - 8500.00 | 2.0 |
| 10501.00 - 11500.00 | 2.0 |
| 13501.00 - 14500.00 | 2.0 |
| 14501.00+ | 2.0 |
| Total | 100.0 |

Source: Field survey.

Pearson Coefficient of correlation, to assess the relationship between numbers of hours of work and monthly income.

| | | Income |
|--|---------------------|--------|
| Weavers total working hours per month | Pearson Correlation | .563 |
| Migrated weavers total Working hours per month | Pearson Correlation | .976 |

Migrated weavers working hours with income

Chi-Square Tests

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 143.026 ^a | 136 | .323 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 78.260 | 136 | 1.000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | .397 | 1 | .529 |
| N of Valid Cases | 49 | | |

a. 162 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .02.

Table Variations in Food expenditure by the weavers of two groups

| Amount in Rs. On food expenditure | Food expenditure by weavers of weaving as occupation Percent | Food expenditure by wavers of migrated occupation Percent |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| <= 1000.00 | 4 | 5.9 |
| 1001.00 - 1500.00 | 19.6 | 3.9 |
| 1501.00 - 2000.00 | 35.3 | 13.7 |
| 2001.00 - 2500.00 | 13.7 | 9.8 |
| 2501.00 - 3000.00 | 23.5 | 27.5 |
| 3001.00 - 3500.00 | 3.9 | 21.6 |
| 3501.00 - 4000.00 | -- | 9.8 |
| 4001.00 - 4500.00 | --- | 3.9 |
| 9501.00+ | --- | 2.9 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

Migrated weavers indebtedness

| Migrated weavers indebtedness | Percent |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| <= 1000.00 | 78.3 |
| 1001.00 - 6800.00 | 7.9 |
| 6801.00 - 12600.00 | 2.0 |
| 18401.00 - 24200.00 | 9.8 |
| 24201.00+ | 2.0 |
| Total | 100.00 |

Source: Field Survey

Indebtedness of weavers in weaving as occupation

| Non Migrated weavers indebtedness | Percent |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| <= 1000 | 17.6 |
| 1001 - 12800 | 21.6 |
| 12801 - 24600 | 33.3 |
| 24601 - 36400 | 9.8 |
| 36401 - 48200 | 11.8 |
| 48201+ | 5.9 |
| Total | 100.00 |

Pearson Coefficient of correlation:

| | | Indebtedness |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Weavers Monthly income | Pearson Correlation | .004 |
| Migrated weavers Monthly income | Pearson Correlation | .035 |

Chi-Square Tests

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|------------------------------|---------------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 46.632 ^a | 75 | .996 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 30.453 | 75 | 1.000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | .738 | 1 | .390 |
| N of Valid Cases | 48 | | |

a. 94 cells (97.9%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .02.

Social conditions of weavers of two categories

| Social Conditions | | Weaver % | Migrated weaver % |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|
| House | Own | 100 | 78 |
| | Rent | -- | 22 |
| Source of Water | Own tap | 98 | 86 |
| | Public tap | 2 | 14 |
| Toilet | Own | 6 | 6 |
| | Outside | 94 | 94 |
| Cooking | LPG | 24 | 34 |
| | Firewood | 76 | 64 |
| | Kerosene | -- | 2 |
| Household Assets | Nil | 4 | 4 |
| | TV | 94 | 94 |
| | Two Wheeler | 2 | 4 |
| | Refrigerator | -- | -- |
| | TV & Refrigerator | --- | 2 |

Source: Field Survey.