INTRODUCTION

Handloom weaving is an ancient industry. The textile cottage industry includes cotton, silk, and bleaching, dying, finishing, hosiery, lace embroidery, silk reeling, silk twisting. It is the chief means of livelihood to people who entirely depend upon it. Handloom sector plays an important role in state economy. Weaving is the basic process among the various manufacturing stages of handloom clothes. It is defined as a frame for weaving equipped with some wooden devices. The sound of the handloom is the music of rural home. In the process of weaving the handloom weavers achieve harmony of motion and rhythms in Karimnagar.

Telangana is one of the important States in the Handloom Industry. Handloom industry has providing employment in directly 2.41 lakhs and indirectly 6 lakhs. There are about 82,435 handloom weavers in cooperative fold and 1, 58,902 in outside cooperative fold. There are 475 Weavers Cooperative Societies in the State consisting of Cotton-253, Silk-50, and Wool-44.
Besides this, there are 128-Tailor and other societies. There is one Apex society i.e. TSCO for marketing the handloom products.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To study the progress of handloom industry.
2. To analyse the socio-economic condition of handloom weavers.
3. To give the suitable suggestions to develop the handloom industry

NEED OF THE STUDY: The handloom industry has facing many problems such as scarcity of raw materials, marketing, finance and the most important being high incidence of mammals offered to officials. In view of this, there is an imperative need to undertaking a comprehensive study of the “Socio economic condition of handloom weavers in Telangana” covering aspects such as, the impact of socio economic conditions of weavers, structure of handloom weavers living conditions. Karimnagar district has been chosen for an intensive and detailed study since the district stands first in production and first in respect of membership in societies in the state.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY: The study broadly examines the Socio-economic conditions of handloom weaver in Karimnagar district from 2005-2015. i.e, 10 years period.

SOURCE OF DATA: The study is based on primary data as well as secondary data.

Primary Data: The main source of the data are the weavers themselves and executive members of the society the elicit the proper information from the weavers a structured questionnaire was served to the weavers who were working in the societies. A part from this, personal interview group discussion and observation methods were used in collecting the first hand information

Secondary Data: Secondary data for the study has been collected using published reports by the government, departments, offices Centre’s consequently with the industry, published research papers in the reputed journals, books, thesis and dissertation and listing websites relating to the presented research.

SAMPLE SIZE: Sample of 200 weavers selected from the Karimnagar District.
AREA OF STUDY: This study was confined to handloom weavers of Karimnagar District.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY: These are the limitations of the present research study. The study is essentially a micro level study. The information through the questionnaires may not have covered correct figures social, economic condition. The opinions and expressions of weavers are based on the personal experience with the societies the secondary data are taken as reported in the records however, the primary data is added to know the present conditions of weavers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Dharmaraju P. (2006) In his paper “Marketing in Handloom Co-operatives”, Dharmaraju has expressed his view that, over the decades, the experience of handloom co-operatives has been a mixed one. The arbitrary mergers, excessive control by master weavers and local power groups, politicization and bureaucratization and mismanagement of funds, are some factors that have obstructed the efficient functioning of co-operatives.

D. Narasimha Reddy (2008) Is of the opinion that, it is time that, government recognized the value of the handloom sector in achieving sustainable development of the country. Despite the adverse conditions, due to larger support from consumers and being a livelihood option for millions of weavers, Handloom sector has been surviving and has the potential to be so. Government has to ensure a ‘level playing field’ for this sector towards competition among the different sub-sector of textile industry.

Sehgal H. K. (2009) has examined that as far as the garment export sector is concerned, there have been mixed signals: continuing world economic downturn; some late recovery, however temporary and for some people; recent Rupee appreciation and with a new Government, expected to be stable, assuming charge.

Prachi (2010) has observed that Indian handloom is growing in its popularity not only among the people in India, but also among the people admiring Indian handloom and Indian handicrafts from around the globe. In spite of having distinct styles and ways of weaving, there is a lot of exchange of styles that happened among the diverse Indian handloom styles.

IANS (2011) has noted that Indian consumers need to change the thinking; they need to think 'swadeshi' rather than 'videshi’. The greatest tragedy weavers’ face is being ignored not just by people but by designers as well. The fashion industry is a very powerful platform to convey the
message across the masses that fashion is more than chic dressing; there has to be an essence to it.

**Dr. Srinivasa Rao Kasisomayajula (2012)** presented a paper basing on field work Socio-economic analysis of handloom industry in Andhra Pradesh A Study on selected districts. he was studied in the socio economic analysis of handloom industry in Andhra Pradesh a study on Selected district(East Godavari, Prakasam, Kurnool, Nalgonda).

**A. Kumudha, M. Rizwana (2013)** in her paper Problems faced by handloom industry-A study with handloom weavers co-operative societies in erode district the paper focus on problems of handloom industry and problems of handloom co-operative society weavers.

**Venkateswaran, A (2014)** in his paper A Socio Economic Conditions of Handloom Weaving: A field study in Kallidaikurichi of Tiruneveli District this paper studied in the A Socio Economic Conditions of Handloom weavers and problem facing on handloom weavers.

**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

The data are collected from 100 sample respondents by supplying the questionnaires, the data are analyzed by using simple tables on the basis of age wise, type of dwelling unit, type of ration card, annual income of the weaver, handloom weaver household by type.

**AN AGE-WISE DISTRIBUTION:** reveals that adult (aged 18 years and above) handloom weavers account for 89 per cent of the workforce, while under-age weavers (aged less than 18 years) account for 11 per cent of the workforce.

The total workforce engaged in handloom related activity across all ages is 43.32 lakh. An age-wise distribution of these 43.32 lakh strong workforce indicated that:

1. 38.47 lakh (88.8%) of the total workforce are adult handloom weavers (aged 18 and above) and thus eligible for the issuance of photo identity cards.

2. A little over a tenth (11.2%) of the total workforce is in the age group of less than 18 years.

The caste distribution of handloom weaver households has shown that Other Backward Castes (OBCs) form the majority group (45.2%) and SC households are the minority group (10.1%).
LEVEL OF EDUCATION:

Education is one of the principal means of breaking the vicious cycle of poverty. The educational levels of handloom weavers are presented in Table 3 given below:

TABLE 3:

DISTRIBUTION OF ADULT (18 YEARS AND ABOVE) HANDLOOM WEAVERS BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level Of Education Number</th>
<th>Number (Lakh)</th>
<th>Distribution By Education (%)</th>
<th>Rural Share (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never attended school</td>
<td>11.30</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>82.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below primary</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>82.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>7.02</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>81.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>8.83</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>88.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECONDARY</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>83.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher secondary</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate &amp; above</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>80.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>63.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38.47</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>84.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A distribution of handloom adult weavers by their level of educational attainment reveals that:

1. About 29.4 per cent of weavers engaged in handloom activities have never attended school

2. However, more than two out of every five workers reported having completed at least middle-level education.

3. The share of rural weavers is found to be increasing with the increase in level of education, which indicates that the handloom weavers in rural areas are slightly better educated than their urban counterparts.
HEALTH: The health conditions of handloom weavers are on moderate. The workers suffer from various work related diseases such as pain in different parts of the body (hand, neck, head and eye sore, legs etc.), anemia, suffocation, rheumatic complaints due to long hours of working in a particular position. Most of the handloom workers get ill due to excessive hard work, lack of proper nutritious diet, lack of knowledge about health care etc.

HOUSING: One of the basic requirements for human well-being is to have a roof over one’s head, either owned or rented. The type of dwelling units of handloom house-holds is represented in Table given below:

TABLE 4:

DISTRIBUTION OF HANDLOOM WEAVER HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE OF DWELLING UNIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type Of Dwelling Unit</th>
<th>Number Of Households</th>
<th>Percent Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuchha</td>
<td>1,441,473</td>
<td>77,159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-pucca</td>
<td>6,78,024</td>
<td>1,77,554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pucca</td>
<td>3,01,620</td>
<td>107,441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,421,117</td>
<td>362,154</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table given above shows that more than half the handloom households stay in kuchha dwellings and theremaining stay mostly in semi-pucca dwellings.

1. 54.6 per cent households live in kuchha dwellings, of which 59.5 percent are in rural areas and 21.3 percent are in urban areas.

2. 30.7 per cent households live in semi-pucca dwellings, of which 28.0 per cent are in rural areas and 49.0 per cent are in urban areas.

3. 14.7 per cent households live in pucca dwellings, of which 12.5 percent are in rural areas and 29.7 percent are in urban areas.
Irrespective of the type of dwelling they reside in, most households have owning their own dwellings (90.9%). The rest stay in rented (5.2%) or other kinds of accommodation arrangements (3.9%).

**POVERTY:** One of the major development issue of Indian Economy is the level of poverty. The Handloom Census (2009-10) has captured valuable information on the poverty levels of the handloom weavers by asking a few simple questions relating to the type of ration cards they possessed. The relevant information is summarised in the following table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type Of Ration Card</th>
<th>Households(Lakh)</th>
<th>Distribution Of Households (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antodaya anna yojana (AAY) card</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below poverty line (BPL) card</td>
<td>10.27</td>
<td>36.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above poverty line (APL) card</td>
<td>9.59</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ration card</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27.83</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen from Table-5 9.7% of the handloom weavers belong to the poorest of the poor category and 36.9% belong to the BPL category. Only 34.5 % of the workers hold APL cards. A sizeable number of the handloom weavers (18.9%) do not hold any ration card. It is evident from the higher rates of incidence of poverty among handloom weavers that though it generates some additional income for the households, handloom production is not sufficiently remunerative to lift the households out of poverty.

**AVERAGE INCOME:** Average Incomes of handloom households from all sources as per the 1996-97 and 2009-10 Censuses are given in table 6 given below:
### TABLE-6

**AVERAGE INCOMES OF HANDLOOM HOUSEHOLDS FROM ALL SOURCES (RS.)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Average Annual Earning Of Handloom Households From All Sources (Rs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1995-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All India</td>
<td>17,496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>N.A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>N.A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen from the table, though the average earnings of handloom households have doubled in nominal terms since 1995-96. However, in real terms, the average earnings have come down. Assuming an annual inflation of 6.5 per cent per year since 1995-96, the average annual income of handloom households should have grown to Rs. 42,250 in 2009-10 to keep parity with the real income levels of 1996-97. The real income has thus actually declined. There are wide inter-state variations in the earnings of handloom households.

### TABLE 7

**DISTRIBUTION OF HANDLOOM WEAVER HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type Of Households</th>
<th>Households (Lakh)</th>
<th>Distribution Of Households(%)</th>
<th>Rural Share (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weaver households</td>
<td>22.68</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allied weaver households</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>80.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idle loom households</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>96.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (households with no adult weaver)</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>96.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27.83</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>87.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Third Handloom Census2009-10, NCAER, New Delhi.*
Most handloom worker households are weaver households and only less than a sixth of the total households pursue only allied work. Weaver households form the majority of handloom weavers households located in rural India. This follows the pattern of most weaver households being found in villages (Table 7). A distribution is as follows:

1. Weaver households: 22.68 lakh household units (81.5%).
2. Allied households: 3.91 lakh household units (14.1%).
3. Weaver households located in rural areas: 87.5%.
4. Allied households located in rural areas: 80.8%.

Regional distribution of handloom weaver households by type gives two categories. The first category is of states where handloom weaver households are mostly weaver households, as in the case of the North-Eastern states. The second category of states includes all states of India outside the North-East, with West Bengal showing a particularly high proportion of households into allied handloom work.

POLICY OPTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE WELFARE OF THE HANDLOOM WEAVERS:

1. Government should provide free health insurance, health checkups, education for children, training & capacity building, interest free loans etc..
2. There is also a need for scaling up and intensifying both the Central and State Government’s interventions in the handloom sector.
3. Collectivization of handloom weavers and service providers to take up input procurement, production, marketing and other support activities.
4. Provision of common infrastructure and services in a viable format in the cluster.
5. Creation of environment of empowered and participative decision making among weavers.
6. Apart from providing the weaver with a regular income, design innovation has brought many skilled artisans together to conceptualize & create new products.

7. The urgent need is to strengthen the co-operative institutions in the handloom sector. There is great potential in this sector to absorb new weavers.

8. Government should encourage new investments and entrepreneurs in handloom sector by providing better sops like any other new economy industry. The sops can be loans with low interests, cluster development, training and information. Priority can be given to the members of the weaver’s families.

9. Training and development to enhance the skills of weavers in manufacturing and marketing aspects in changing business environment.

10. There should be a long-term plan from the government side to develop the clusters according to the domestic and international market needs and requirements.

11. The government should extend all benefits to handloom products, which are enjoyed by handicrafts like tax benefits and other subsidies.

12. To improve the raw material facilities the government should allocate and adequate spend resources to the weavers welfare programmes.

13. The Government should open more branches in States and give rebate on the Handloom cloth and improve the Handloom markets.

14. For enhancing marketing of Handloom Garments, Government should afford promotional programme like trade fairs, public relations, sales promotion and advertising etc.

15. The Government should follow price stabilization scheme like minimum support price regarding raw materials of handloom sectors’.

**CONCLUSION:**

The handloom sector or the non-farm sector has been slowly deteriorating over the years and there has been a steady decline in the industry over the years. Handloom weavers are facing severe livelihood crisis because of adverse government policies, globalization and change in
socio-economic condition. Suicides are on the rise. Ineffective implementation of the schemes, increased unfair competition from the power loom and mill sectors are responsible for the crisis. Handloom is unparalleled in its flexibility and versatility, permitting experimentation and encouraging innovations. The strength of Handloom lies in the introducing innovative designs, which cannot be replicated by the Power loom sector. Thus, Handloom forms a part of the heritage of India and exemplifies the richness and diversity of our country and the artisary of the weavers. Concerted efforts are being made through the schemes and programme to enhance production, productivity, and efficiency of the handloom sector and enhance the income and socio-economic status of the weavers.

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