Chapter I

Introduction
CHAPTER -1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Textile Industry in India

Textile is as old as human civilization and as diverse an Indian culture. It has been one of the basic needs of the mankind. Textiles in India speak volumes about the cultural heritage, aesthetic intentions, tastes and identifies of this ancient country. Textile, in the antique past was produced in the handloom catering to the needs of the people. Handlooms were undertaken by the people as a means of vocation and source of income for their livelihood. Inspite of the large scale industrialization, innovations and technological sophistication, the handloom sector is still functioning across the length and breadth of the country. The sector has been kept alive by skilled weavers engaged in the age old traditions of weaving. The weavers with their farcical flights of imagination create wonderful textile designs by blending myths, faiths, symbols and imagery on the fabrics which have a magical charm that cheers everyone.

The ‘incredible India’ not only satisfied the textile needs of the teeming millions but also exported the high quality cotton fabrics to all over the civilized world. Throughout the changing fortunes of India long history, the spinning wheels of India’ continued to hum their tune of prosperity and the Indian craftsman earned everlasting glory for the delicacy of their muslins - finest of textile fabrics (Tiwarin, R.T. & Sinha, R.L. 1979). There
are evidences to show that cotton was first grown and put to use in India before anywhere else in the world. Archeologists got unearthed bits of cotton cloth and twine in the excavated sites of Mohenjo-Daro about 3000 B.C. Which belong to the same botanical species as some of the wild cotton still to be found in many parts of India (Rao. K.V. & Raju. G.N. 2008). So the Indian textiles history can be traced the hoary past flourishing eternally.

Currently, Textile Industry in India contributes about 14 percent to the industrial production, 4 percent to the GDP, and 16 percent to the country’s export earnings. It provides direct employment to more than 45 million people, which includes a substantial number of SC/ST, women and the poor. Thus, the growth and overall development of this industrial sector has a direct bearing on the improvement of the economy of India. Indian textile industries are extremely varied, with the hand-spun and hand woven sector at one end of the spectrum and the capital intensive, sophisticated mill sector at the other. The major areas forming part of the textile industries include the organized cotton/man-made fiber textile mill industry, man-made fiber/filament yam industry, decentralized powerloom sector, woolen textile industry, silk industry, handloom industry, handicraft industry, jute industry, hosiery industry and textile exports.

Overall performance of the sub-sectors of the textile industry during the Tenth five year plan period is presented in table 1.1. It could be seen that the share of mill sector has shown constant of 3 percent between 2005-06 and 2009-10. During the same period the growth rate in the handloom
sector was found positive than the other sectors. Between 2005-06 and 2009-10, the increase was found to be 11 percent for the handloom sector.

Table 1.1
Performance of Textile Industries in India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mill Sector</td>
<td>1673 (3)</td>
<td>1746 (3)</td>
<td>1781 (3)</td>
<td>1796 (3)</td>
<td>1961 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Handloom Sector</td>
<td>6108 (13)</td>
<td>6535 (12)</td>
<td>6947 (13)</td>
<td>6677 (12)</td>
<td>6769 (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Powerloom Sector</td>
<td>30627 (63)</td>
<td>32904 (62)</td>
<td>34744 (63)</td>
<td>33648 (62)</td>
<td>36643 (62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hosiery Sector</td>
<td>10418 (21)</td>
<td>11504 (22)</td>
<td>11804 (21)</td>
<td>12077 (22)</td>
<td>13623 (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48826</td>
<td>52689</td>
<td>55276</td>
<td>54198</td>
<td>58966</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: www.ministryoftextiles.nic.in

Figures in bracket indicate the percentage to column total

The power loom sector recorded a constant contribution during 2005-06 to 2009-10 as 62-63 percent indicating the steady growth. Similar growth could be noticed in respect of hosiery sector which also recorded a significant surge of 30.9 percent during 2005-06 to 2009-10. Putting together all sub-sectors, the overall growth was at 14.6 percent (2005-06 to 2009-10). Of the four dominant sub-sectors of Indian Textile Industry, the lowest growth of 10.8 percent was recorded by the handloom sector against the overall growth of 14.6 percent recorded by the industry. Thus the handloom sector has not recorded the same velocity of growth as recorded by the other sectors and is lagging behind very much in the race. In this juncture, the present study has been carried out to study the current status of
the intervention of schemes implemented by both State and Central Governments of India and their impact on the standard of living of the handloom weavers over a period of time.

1.2 Handloom Sector

Handloom sector plays a key role in the growth of the textile sector and the economy of the nation. It provides both direct and indirect employment to 27.83 lakh households in India. The average family size of the household is 4.59 persons (4.63 in rural and 4.29 in the urban areas) during the year 2009-10. This sector provides on an average, 191 days employment to the weavers 181 days in the rural areas and 245 days in the urban areas. At present, India has the largest handloom sector in the world which is mainly concentrated in the decentralized sector, operating in remote and rural locations. This sector faces competition from the powerloom and the mill sectors and is constrained by its continued dependence on the cooperative delivery machinery and the financial constraints of the state level handloom agencies/apex societies. However, due to effective government intervention schemes in the form of market support, design inputs, as well as other developmental and welfare schemes, the handloom sector has been able to withstand tides of competition (Sundarsingh.K, 1979). In India, around 53 percent of the handloom weavers’ households are in commercial production, and 16 percent households follow a mix of domestic and commercial production. Thus, a
total of 72 percent of the handloom households are doing commercial production.

More than four million handlooms are engaged in weaving fabrics of nearly 23 different varieties. In India, 27.83 lakh handloom households form the single largest group of artisans in India. The sector provides direct and indirect employment to more than 33 lakh weavers in 23.77 lakh handlooms (among which 90 percent are working and 10 percent are idle). The handloom production is the second largest economic activity, next only to agriculture in India. Handloom sector contributes, 23 percent of the total cloth produced in the country. It contains 87 percent participation from rural areas and the remaining 13 percent from the urban areas (Handloom Census of India 2009-10).

India with its varied traditions and customs is popular for its cultural heritage. The calibre and efficiency of Indian Handloom weavers have been the inherent traits. “India has attained a high-watermark of excellence in the manufacture of fabrics. The traditions of handloom weaving in India have been long and glorious and the skill of the hand spinner and the handloom weaver was of very high order” (Kanakalatha Mukund, 1995).

Indian handloom fabrics have been a good foreign exchange earner from ancient periods. The report of the working group on handlooms appointed by the Government of India in 1964 has remarked about the past glory of handlooms. The Gossamer silk of Varanasi, fine Muslins of Dacca and Patolas of Baroda and other fabrics of Assam, Manipur, Orissa and
South India have been famous in different periods. Export of hand woven
clothes started in the period of Gautama Buddha. The handloom fabrics of India occupied priceless position in the early civilization of Egypt, Rome and Babylon. Indian handloom industry turned out an array of exquisite products which enjoyed worldwide reputation for their beauty, workmanship and individuality. The fantastic appeal of Indian handloom products has captured the fancy of the highly fashion-conscious consumers of the sophisticated markets of the world.

India has its own richest tradition for creative activities - from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. The weaving device - the loom - has been subject to constant hostile threats of being extinguished by highly mechanized, organized machinery-dominated textile industry for over a century and in the recent decades by the advent of the power loom. Handloom sector has survived only because of its high elastic range of adaptation in meeting people’s needs and in its ability to produce exquisite fabrics which mills cannot produce in spite of all their sophisticated technologies. For centuries, both the spinning and weaving processes were traditionally carried out by hand in the home on a cottage industry basis - weaving by men and spinning by women. Over a period of time, to cater to the market demand for most fabrics other than *khadi*, the spinning of yam changed to a machine process.
On the basis of this distinction, handloom fabrics can be broadly categorized into two types:

i) Hand spun, hand woven: **Khadi** is hand spun and hand woven fabric

ii) Machine spun, hand woven: All other handlooms fall under this category

1.3 **Handloom under Five Year Plan Periods**

Table 1.2 discusses the amount of allotment to the handloom sector under Five Year Plans. During the First Five Year Plan period, the All India Handloom Board was formed to monitor the development of the handloom sector.

A number of emporia and sales depots for handlooms, handicrafts and village industries were established during the First Plan period. During the Second Five Plan period, efforts were directed towards increasing production and sales of handloom products. During the Third Five Year Plan period, apart from strengthening the existing handloom production base, efforts were made to stimulate the export of handloom cloth. Further, expansion of Weaver’s Service Centers at Bombay, Madras, Varanasi, Calcutta and Kancheepuram was also undertaken. The two institutes of Handloom Technology were reorganized to facilitate better training of handloom weavers.

The Fourth Five Year Plan aimed to activate the Handloom Reservation Act and to strengthen the cooperative movement in handlooms.
Twenty-five Intensive Handloom Development projects were established all over India during this period to generate employment in rural areas.

Table 1.2  
Growth of Handlooms in Five-Year Plan Periods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Plan Period</th>
<th>Plan Outlay (Rs. In cr.)</th>
<th>Production in million sq.meters</th>
<th>Employment in millions</th>
<th>Value of handloom exports (Rs. In cr.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>IFYP</td>
<td>11.60</td>
<td>1700</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>IIFYP</td>
<td>59.50</td>
<td>1471</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>III FYP</td>
<td>34.50</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>IV FYP</td>
<td>39.35</td>
<td>3530</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>V FYP</td>
<td>148.00</td>
<td>4250</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>VI FYP</td>
<td>310.00</td>
<td>3600</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>VII FYP</td>
<td>344.00</td>
<td>4155</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>VIII FYP</td>
<td>1007.00</td>
<td>7000</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>IX FYP</td>
<td>1414.15</td>
<td>7250</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>3170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>X FYP</td>
<td>1350</td>
<td>6536</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>3050</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Five Year Plan Planning Commission Reports, Government of India.

Note: 1. Plan outlay for the I First Five Year Plan includes provision for Khadi Village and Small Industries

2. Figures in columns 3, 4, and 5 present performances in the last year of the Plan period.

During the Sixth Five Year Plan period, considerable efforts were made to ensure adequate raw material supply through establishment of co-operative spinning mills. Financial assistance also was provided to set up wet processing units for better marketing of handloom products. The Seventh Plan period concentrated on increasing employment generation. Measures were also taken to strengthen handloom training, research and marketing. Special attention was paid to the development of handloom in hill and tribal areas.
In the Eighth Plan period, measures were taken to ensure reasonable wages for weavers, supply of hank yam at reasonable prices, establishment of silk yam bank and export development. Efforts were directed towards strict monitoring of the implementation of the Handloom Reservation Act of 1985. Several welfare measures were undertaken for the handloom weavers.

In the IX Five Year Plan, the handloom sector faced severe competition from mill sector and powerloom sector and the following initiatives were made during this period:

a) Sustenance of Employment
b) Modernization and Upgradation of Technology
c) Input Support
d) Marketing Support
e) Publicity
f) Infrastructural Support
g) Welfare Measures
h) Integrated Cluster Development Programme
i) Development of Exportable Products and their international marketing
j) Research & Development

In Tenth Five Year Plan period, more thrust was given to textile exports for which Government had announced various incentive schemes with a view to help the textile exporting industry to overcome some
inherent disadvantages and to facilitate growth in exports of textile and textile products from the country. The central objective of most of the Schemes is to ensure availability of capital goods and raw materials to the manufacturers at globally competitive rates. The schemes are:

1. Advance Licensing Scheme
2. DEPB Scheme
3. Special Import License
4. 100% EOU/FTZ Scheme
5. Duty Drawback Scheme
6. Duty Free Import of Trimmings and Embellishments
7. Export Promotion Capital Goods Scheme (EPCG)

In Tenth Five Year Plan period the establishment of ISO 9000 Quality Management System was formulated to encourage the small and medium enterprises. By implementation of ISO 14000 Environmental Management System in the textile industry, especially in the processing units, a social responsibility was introduced during Tenth Plan.

The Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) to modernise the textile sector and the Technology Mission on Cotton (TMC) Scheme to improve cotton productivity and quality were introduced.
According to the 2009-2010 Handloom Census of India, there are 34.86 lakh handlooms in India, of which 4.13 lakh handlooms are located in Tamil Nadu, providing employment to 6.08 lakh weavers. Out of the 4.13 lakh handlooms in the State, 2.35 lakh are functioning under the co-operative fold and the remaining 1.78 lakh are functioning under the private fold. The 2.35 lakh handlooms in the co-operative sector are brought under 1103 Co-operative societies of handloom weavers. The development programmes and welfare schemes of the State and Central Governments, intended for the handloom weavers are implemented through the handloom weavers’ cooperative societies functioning in the State. All the developmental and welfare schemes of the State Government intended for the handloom weavers are being channelized through these weavers’ cooperative societies. Most of the handloom weavers’ cooperative societies exist in rural and semi-urban areas. On an average, the State produces handloom cloth worth around Rs.1,700 crore annually and this includes the production of handloom cloth worth around Rs. 700 core by the weavers’ covered under cooperative societies. The average annual sales of handloom cloth by the State is around Rs. 1,800 crore and this include the sales through export worth around Rs.875 crore. The Department has encouraged the handloom weavers’ cooperative societies to produce marketable or exportable varieties and suitable action plan has been given to the societies so as to increase the sales and also to earn profit. The Department has also...
encouraged the societies for product diversification and design development. Due to the above measures taken by the Department, the number of profitable societies has been increased to 850 during the year 2006-07 from the level of 760 in 2005-06.

1.5 Handloom Co-operatives in Tamil Nadu

At present, 1175 Handloom Weavers’ Co-operative Societies are functioning in Tamil Nadu. According to the Department of Handloom, Tamil Nadu Government, there was a reduction of 4.6 percent in the number of handloom co-operatives from 1232 societies (2005-06) to 1175 societies (2009-10). Despite several developmental efforts by Government of India and Government of Tamil Nadu for the handloom sector, there was a reduction in the total handloom societies, indicating the sliding status of the sector in Tamil Nadu.

Maw materials:

The main raw materials of the handloom weaving are cotton yam, silk yam natural fibers like wool, jute, zari, etc.
Dyes:
Various types of dyes are used as per the requirement. The different dyes used are Natural Dyes, Chemical dyes, Direct dyes, Napthol dyes and Vat dyes

Tools:
Looms: The basic weaving is done in India on handlooms. Different areas use different looms. Some of the major looms used in India are:

- The throw-shuttle loom
- The fly-shuttle loom
- The loin loom
- In India totally 26 percent are pit looms and among them, 15 percent are dobbby/jacquard looms.
- The frame loom

All these looms are slightly different from each other and work on different principles, thus producing different types of fabrics.

Pit loom: These are the looms which have been used for weaving since ancient times. In these looms, the heavy wooden loom is
installed inside a pit, which is about three feet deep. The weaver has to sit on the wall of this pit, with his legs in the pit. These looms are permanently installed in these pits and are hardly moved from their place over years.

**Jacquard:** For fine and complicated designs, the jacquard card technique is generally used, in which the pattern is punched on to a long roll of paper (cards), which turn as each line of weft gets completed.

The treadles press against the pricked holes in the pattern card and push down the required needles.

**Frame Loom:** These looms are the newer ones, which have lightweight metal frames that constitute the main body of the loom. These looms were introduced recently because of their superior performance and now a large number of weavers have adopted them. They are lightweight, thus requiring less effort to handle. These are fixed by using nuts and bolts, are easily detachable and therefore can be shifted for rearrangement etc. They have a pulley arrangement that gives better finishing.
**Charkha:** A charkha is used for making the rolls of the yarn. In case of warp, it is a big motorized one, which prepares big rolls of yarn. In case of weft, the charkha is the smaller wooden one, which prepares thin rolls called bobbins to be put inside the shuttle to form weft.

Spinning: Cotton spinning: Cotton was cultivated by the Indus Valley people from 2400 BC. Raw cotton is a round fluffy white ball which grows on a bush of about three feet high. When plucked it contains earth and seeds and has to be combed to remove the impurities and the coarse fibers. The seeds are removed by a gin with two horizontal rollers. After that the loose fibers of cotton are collected and bowed with a bow made of cans, the string made of the mid-rib of a banana leaf. The vibration of the string fluffs and loosens the cotton. It is spun on a charkha or spinning wheel to the required thickness and texture and is then ready for weaving. The techniques for handloom cotton weaving are the same as for silk.
Design: The designs are usually given by the buyers placing the order or at times are decided by the weavers themselves based on their experience of what sells more in the market.

Yarn dyeing: Dyeing is done for both cotton and silk yarn. Either it is done while they are in the hank form or after the warp is ready. Vat, Naphthol, Direct and Reactive dyes are all used.

Yarn Opening for weft as well as warp:

After dyeing, the yarn is normally received by the weavers in the form of bundles. Both in the case of the weft and the warp, the thread needs to be freed from the tangles and stretched in order to make it tighter. Then, these are taken through a process of reeling by using a charkha and thus the bundles of thread are converted into small rolls of thread. In the case of warp, a big motorized charkha is used, which converts the yarn bundles into thick thread rolls. In case of weft, a small, hand driven charkha is used, which converts bundles in small rolls called bobbins. These can fit inside the shuttle that travels across the warp during the weaving process.
Warping:

The master weaver carries out the process of warp making by using the various types of threads as per the design requirement. The warp machine used for silk thread is radically different from the one used in the case of cotton thread. The warp machine is comprised of an octagonal metal cylindrical frame, which revolves vertically on the machine axis and a metallic rack on which the thread rolls are kept. The fibers from these rolls pass through hooks fixed on the rack onto a double metallic frame that moves up and down with the motion of the machine. The threads are wound on the cylinder in a criss-cross manner that facilitates the detection of breach in the fiber, if any. This process starts from one end of the cylinder and goes on till the whole of the cylinder is covered with the thread. Once this has been achieved, the warp threads in the shape of bundles are taken to the loom where they are used as warp.

Weaving Process:

The art of weaving is governed by 3 movements - shedding, picking and beating. The shedding movement consists of pressing the treadle with one foot, which makes the opening in the warp thread. The picking movement propels the shuttle by pulling the handle to let the shuttle move across to the other side. The beating movement consists of packing the weft threads by drawing the sley with the left hand.
As the process is repeated, the weft thread passes from side to side alternately over one set of wrap threads and under another. Different textures of hand woven clothes are produced by varying the count of the warp and weft threads, the order in which the warp threads are lifted, and varying density or tension of the yarn.

Different combinations of materials like silk, cotton, wool of various specifications can be used for warp and weft, which result in the produce of different varieties of fabric. Hand weaving is therefore characterized by the following basic processes:

- The warp or taana is made prior to weaving
- The fabric is hand-woven on a non-electric, hand-operated loom

In this regards the study area was chosen to measure the impact of intervention of schemes implemented to the handloom weavers on the standard of living in Tamil Nadu.

1.6 Intervention Schemes for Handloom Weavers

The following are intervention schemes implemented by the government to enhance the livelihood status of the handloom weavers.

1.6.1. Free Supply of Dhothies and Sarees to the Poor

The Government has continued the scheme of Free Supply of Dhothies and Sarees to the poor (FDS) during the year 2011-12. Under the
scheme, 167.00 lakh dhothis and 182.00 lakh sarees were produced and distributed. These dhothis and sarees were procured by Co-optex and distributed on the eve of Pongal in January 2011.

1.6.2. Free Distribution of Uniforms for School Children

During the academic year 2011-12, the Scheme of Free Supply of Uniforms to School Children was implemented and 117.71 lakh metres of uniform cloth was produced and supplied to the Social Welfare Department for distribution to the school children studying from I standard to VIII standard under the Noon Meal Programme. Besides, during the academic year 2009-2010, a total of 130.18 lakh meters cloth was distributed, out of which 13.55 lakh metres of uniform cloth has been supplied to the Departments of Adi-Draividar and Tribal Welfare, 1.38 lakh meters for Backward Classes and Minorities, and 3.24 lakh meters were distributed to Most Backward Classes Welfare departments. The entire requirement of uniform cloth is being produced by the handloom and powerloom weavers of the co-operative societies. This scheme creates employment opportunity to the handloom weavers and it helps to increase the earnings and enhance the socio-economic status of the weavers.

1.6.3. Free Power Supply to Weavers

The Government have fulfilled the long term demand of the handloom weavers by providing free power upto 100 units bimonthly to 1,35,200 handloom weavers. Similarly, free power supply has been
provided up to 500 units bimonthly to 98,465 service connections of powerloom weavers who ran their own powerlooms. This scheme has been implemented from 1.8.2006. The Government has sanctioned an amount of Rs.62.68 crore for the year 2006-07 and Rs.74.22 crore for the year 2007-08 and Rs.78.04 crore for 2008-09 and Rs.72.24 crore for the year 2009-10 for the free power supply to weavers scheme, and the above amount is reimbursed to the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board to compensate the loss on account of the free power supply.

1.6.4. Savings and Security Scheme

The Government of Tamil Nadu has implemented the “Co-operative Handloom Weavers’ Savings and Security Scheme” from the year 1975 among handloom weavers. The Government of India is also participating in the Scheme from the year 1985-86 and contributed its share under the Central Thrift Fund Scheme till 2006-07. Central Government has withdrawn its support from 01.04.2008 onwards. Under this scheme, each Weaver of the Weavers’ Co-operative Society contributes 8 paisa per rupee of wages earned and the State Government is contributing 4 paisa per rupee under the Central Thrift Fund Scheme. Accordingly, the total subscription of 16 paisa is being deposited in the Government Account for which the State Government allows 9.5 percent interest.
### Table 1.3

**Performance of Handloom Weavers’ Savings and Security Scheme**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Members</th>
<th>Amount (Rs. in lakhs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>76024</td>
<td>371.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>78443</td>
<td>418.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>77733</td>
<td>448.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>78937</td>
<td>488.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Department of Handlooms and Textiles, Govt. of Tamil Nadu, 2009-10.*

Out of this 9.5 percent interest, 6.5 percent is being credited to the weaver member’s account and the remaining 3 percent is being utilized for implementing the Old Age Pension Scheme and the Family Pension Scheme for handloom weavers. During the year 2006-07, the State Government has sanctioned an amount of Rs. 371.55 lakh for this scheme to fulfill the needs of 76,024 registered members followed by Rs. 418.40 lakh was spend to 78,443 handloom weavers in 2007-08. In 2008-09 the State Government sanctioned Rs. 448.84 lakh for 77,733 members and in 2009-10 78,937 members got benefits worth of Rs. 488.90 lakh under the Saving and Security Scheme.

#### 1.6.5. Old Age Pension Scheme

The Government of Tamil Nadu, with effect from 1.04.1997, has been implementing Old Age Pension Scheme, and the handloom weavers have been provided with Family Pension under this Scheme.
Table 1.4

Performance of Handloom Weavers’ Old Age Pension Scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Amount (Rs. in lakh)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>12728</td>
<td>323.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>14141</td>
<td>663.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>15338</td>
<td>669.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>15872</td>
<td>804.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Department of Handlooms and Textiles, Govt. of Tamil Nadu, 2009-10.*

Under this scheme, handloom weavers who attain the age of 60 years and registered their name under Saving and Social Security Scheme are eligible to get the monthly old age pension. From 01.06.2007 onwards the monthly old age pension amount was increased to Rs.400/-. During the year 2009-10, the Tamil Nadu State Government budget sanctioned the amount of Rs.804.57 lakh to 15,872 beneficiaries for old age pension scheme for handloom weavers in Tamil Nadu.

1.6.6. Family Pension Scheme

Family Pension Scheme is being implemented by the Government of Tamil Nadu with effect from 01.01.1992. According to this scheme, in the event of the death of a handloom weaver member before attaining the age of 60 years, the nominee of the deceased weaver will be paid Family Pension for 10 years from the date of death of the weaver at Rs. 550/- per month.
Table-1.5

Performance of Handloom Weavers’ Family Pension Scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Amount (Rs. in lakh)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>866</td>
<td>45.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>1029</td>
<td>66.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>1153</td>
<td>74.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>1244</td>
<td>87.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Handlooms and Textiles, Govt, of Tamil Nadu, 2009-10.

After the revision of the scheme in 2007 the Family Pension payable to the nominees of deceased handloom weavers has been enhanced from Rs. 350/- to Rs.550/- with effect from 1.5,2007. In 2006-07 the government spent Rs. 45.67 lakh to help 866 beneficiaries, Rs.66.73 lakh in 2007-08 to 1029 beneficiaries followed by Rs.74.16 lakhs for 1153 weavers in the year 2008-09. In the year 2009-10, the government spent an amount of Rs. 87.92 lakh under the family pension scheme for handloom weavers in Tamil Nadu.

1.6.7. Health Insurance Scheme

To protect and to improve the health condition of handloom weavers, a Health Insurance Scheme has been implemented by the Government from 2005-06 through ICICI Lombard Ltd. Under this scheme, 4 members of a weaver’s family are eligible to get medical assistance upto Rs. 15,000/- annually. From the year 2006-07, the Health Insurance Scheme has been implemented for all the weavers both within the co-operative and outside.
the co-operative fold. From the year 2007-08, the Government has also extended the scheme to the ancillary handloom workers of the handloom industry.

Table-1.6

Performance of Handloom Weavers Health Insurance Scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Members</th>
<th>No. of claims received</th>
<th>Amount (Rs.in lakh)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>2,00,000</td>
<td>88377</td>
<td>964.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>2,84,646</td>
<td>137264</td>
<td>1287.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>2,89,023</td>
<td>525257</td>
<td>1523.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>3,19,023</td>
<td>563943</td>
<td>1587.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Handlooms and Textiles, Govt, of Tamil Nadu, 2009-10.

Upto 2010, totally 3,19,023 weavers are premium holders under the health insurance scheme and maximum 4 members in a family have been enjoy the benefits under the health insurance scheme. As per the modified premium pattern, the total premium to be paid to ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Ltd would be Rs. 988.30 per weaver per annum. Out of the total premium, the Government of India’s contribution is Rs.809.10/- and the State Government’s contribution is Rs. 179.20/-. The State Government has decided to bear the weavers’ contribution of Rs. 50/- annually and have sanctioned an amount of Rs. 417.39 lakh for this purpose for the year 2007-08. This scheme was continued during the year 2009-10 and more than 3 lakh weavers were covered under the scheme. A provision of Rs. 417.39 lakh was made in the Budgeted estimate for the year 2009-10.
by the State Government as its share for the increase during the recent years for this scheme.

1.6.8. Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana

Table-1.7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Earlier rate of insurance amount Rs.</th>
<th>Revised rate of Insurance amount Rs. (from 1.10.2007)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>For Natural Death</td>
<td>50000</td>
<td>60000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>For Accidental Death</td>
<td>80000</td>
<td>150000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>For Total Disability due to accident</td>
<td>50000</td>
<td>150000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>For Partial Disability due to accident</td>
<td>25000</td>
<td>75000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Department of Handlooms and Textiles, Govt, of Tamil Nadu, 2009-10.*

The Insurance Scheme called “Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana” is being implemented by the Government of Tamil Nadu for weavers from the year 2004-05 with the assistance of Government of India in collaboration with Life Insurance Corporation of India. Under this scheme the total premium to be paid to Life Insurance Corporation would be Rs.330/- per weaver per annum, with effect from 1.10.2007 as detailed below:
The scheme, which was till then beneficial to the weavers of co-operative fold, was extended by the Government to the handloom weavers outside the co-operative fold also from the year 2006-2007 onwards. In the last three years, an insurance amount to the tune of Rs.468.10 lakh has been paid to 949 families of deceased handloom weavers so far.

At present, 1,92,220 handloom weavers (1,25,054 from the co-operative fold) have been enrolled and during 2007-2008, a premium amount of Rs. 1,53,77,600/- has been paid to the Life Insurance Corporation of India by the State Government on behalf of the weavers. This Scheme was continued during the year 2008-09 and it was proposed to cover around 2, 25,000 weavers under this scheme. The State Government has made a provision of Rs.160 lakh in the Budget Estimate for the year 2008-09 towards the payment of premium on behalf of the weavers under this scheme.

**1.6.9. Rebate Subsidy Scheme**

The State Government is providing rebate subsidy to handloom for increasing the sales in the Cooperatives. Under this scheme, the State Government has permitted the primary weavers’ co-operative societies and Co-optex to allow rebate at the rate of 20% or Rs.100/- per unit whichever is less for cotton varieties and 20% or Rs.200/- per unit whichever is less for silk varieties.
The Government of India also contributes to the Rebate Scheme and provides assistance under Marketing Incentive Component of Integrated Handloom Development Scheme. As per the guidelines of the Government of India, the primary weavers’ co-operative societies are eligible to get financial assistance under Marketing Incentive at 10% of the average sales turnover of the last 3 years. As per the policy of the State Government, the excess expenditure, over and above the Government of India’s contribution under Marketing Incentive component of the Integrated Handlooms Development Scheme will be borne by the State Government.

During the year 2007-2008, the Government has permitted the primary weavers’ co-operative societies and the Co-optex to allow 10% as special rebate without ceiling in respect of sale of silk fabrics (cost exceeding Rs.2001/-) during select festivals for a period of 135 days. By availing this special rebate of 10%, silk goods worth Rs.1 19.50 crore were sold. Apart from this, on the eve of birthday of Perarignar Anna, the Government permitted the primary weavers co-operative societies and the Co-optex to allow additional 10% special rebate along with normal rebate of 20% on the sale of cotton and silk varieties with ceiling of Rs.150/- for cotton and Rs.300/- for silk for a period of 139 days i.e. from 15.9.2007 to 31.1.2008. By availing this additional 10% special rebate, handloom goods worth Rs.22.97 crore were sold.

During the year 2007-08, rebate subsidy to the extent of Rs. 118 crore has been sanctioned to the primary weavers co-operative societies and
Co-optex, of which, the Government of India has reimbursed a sum of Rs.23,79,04,597/- as Central Assistance under Marketing Incentive Component of Integrated Handloom Development Scheme. This apart, the Government of India, during the year 2007-2008, has also reimbursed a sum of Rs.4,07,02,439/- under the “Scheme for reimbursement of one time rebate @ 10% given on sale of handloom products”. The rebate subsidy scheme was continued during the year 2008-09 and a provision of Rs. 118 crore was made in the Budget Estimate for the year 2008-09.

1.6.10. Integrated Handloom Development Scheme

The Government of India has introduced a new Scheme called “Integrated Handlooms Development Scheme” for the implementation during the XI Five year Plan period for the welfare of handloom weavers and for the development of handloom sector. Under this scheme, the Government of India has merged the components of the existing schemes, namely, Deendhlayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana, Marketing Incentive and Workshed-cum-Housing Scheme.

The major 4 components of Integrated Handlooms Development Scheme are as follows:

- Cluster Development Programme
- Group approach for development of handlooms
- Assistance for Handloom organizations
• Assistance for Innovative Ideas and Publicity, Monitoring,
  Supervision, Training and Evaluation of Scheme

(A) Cluster Development Programme

The Ministry of Textiles, Government of India has recently introduced the ‘Integrated Handlooms Cluster Development Scheme’ which aims at facilitating sustainable development of handloom weavers located in identified clusters into a cohesive, self-managing and competitive socio-economic unit. Under this programme, the Government of India has selected 20 clusters in the entire nation in the first phase, amongst which Tiruvannamalai, Kurinjipadi and Tiruchirapalli were from the State of Tamil Nadu. The Government of India is providing an amount of Rs.2.00 crore per cluster for the implementation of the programme. The Co-optex has been appointed as the Implementing Agency for the cluster development programme at Kurinjipadi and Tiruvannamalai and Textiles Committee has been appointed as the Implementing Agency for Tiruchirapalli. Work under this programme in these clusters is under progress.

In the second phase, the Government of India has identified 100 clusters with 300-500 looms in the country for the implementation of Integrated Handlooms Development Scheme (IHDS). In Tamil Nadu, 25 new clusters have been identified for the implementation of the second phase of IHDS. Under this scheme, financial assistance to the tune of Rs.60.00 lakhs is being provided for each cluster over a period of three
years, for various components such as skill upgradation, purchase of new looms and accessories, setting up of dyeing units, common facility centers, opening of showrooms, conducting of exhibition fairs, publicity and providing of design inputs. This programme aims to facilitate overall development of handloom weavers located in the clusters to make them self-reliant and competitive. During the year 2007-08, the Government sanctioned a sum of Rs.4,62,28,900/- (Central share of Rs.4,02,88,700/- + State share of Rs.59,40,200/-) towards the first installment of grant component for implementation of the programme in 25 handloom clusters.

(B) Group Approach for development of handlooms

‘Group Approach’ scheme is intended for the benefit of handloom weavers not covered under the Cluster Development Scheme to produce value added products to compete with the market trends. The components of Group Approach are as follows:

• Basic input such as Margin Money, purchase of New Loom Accessories, Jacquard and Dobby has to be shared by the Central Government, State Government and by the implementing Agency/Beneficiary.

• Skill upgradation by training of weavers in batches consisting of 20 weavers each in weaving, dyeing & designing

• Construction of Workshed is being continued for the weavers who own land adjoining to their house by linking the housing scheme with the Indira Awas Yojana (IAY)
The Government of India provides entire assistance of Rs. 25,000/- in the case of weavers falling under the category of below poverty line.

(€) Financial Assistance to Handloom Organizations

i) Marketing incentive

Marketing incentive is given on the sale of handloom products to maintain price competitiveness in the market. Handloom agencies are using the Marketing Incentive amount towards activities that would attract the consumers to improve the sale of handloom goods. The assistance towards marketing incentive is available to the State Handloom Corporations, Apex Co-operative Societies, Primary Weavers Co-operative Societies, and National Handloom Organization. The quantum of financial assistance provided under Marketing Incentive Scheme shall be 10 percent of the average sales turnover of the last 3 years.

ii) Strengthening of Handloom Organizations

Under the component of Strengthening of Handloom Organizations, financial assistance is provided towards restructuring of National and State level Handloom organizations such as Handloom Corporations, Apex Handloom Co-operative Societies, etc., with a view to making them viable by enhancing their credit limit / working capital. The funding pattern under this component shall be on 50:50 sharing basis between the Government of India and the State Government.
(D) **Assistance for Innovative Ideas and Publicity, Monitoring, Supervision, Training and Evaluation of Scheme**

Under this component, upto 10% of the project cost may be utilized towards innovative ideas and 2% of the project cost may be utilized towards Publicity, Monitoring, Supervision, Training and Evaluation of Scheme.

**1.6.11. Dr. M.G.R. Handloom Weavers Welfare Trust Scholarship**

With a view to encourage the wards of the weavers by way of awarding scholarships to pursue higher studies, Dr. M.G.R. Handloom Weavers’ Welfare Trust was formed in the year 1986. The funds for this trust are raised from out of the contributions made by the Primary Weavers’ Co-operative Societies and the Co-optex from their General Fund and Common Good Fund. The collected amount was deposited as fixed deposits and the expenditure on awarding scholarships is being met out of the interest earned thereon. Scholarship is being provided to one male and one female student for their outstanding performance in higher studies in 29 disciplines and for studying in coaching classes for Civil Services examination. The scholarship amount was limited from Rs.2550/- to Rs. 3500/- depending upon the various disciplines. Besides, cash awards to the students scoring highest marks in 10th and 12th Std are also being provided at Rs. 2000/- and Rs. 2500/- respectively. A total of 87 students have been awarded scholarship under the scheme.
1.6.12, Scholarship to Students of IIHT, Salem

The wards of weavers are given priority in selection to the 3-year Diploma in Handloom Technology courses conducted by the Indian Institute of Handloom Technology, Salem. The Government of Tamil Nadu sanctions scholarships of Rs.400/- per month for the first year and the second year and Rs.500/- per month for the third year students. Apart from this, the students are also paid Book Money at the rate of Rs.60/- per month. A tour allowance of Rs.200/- per annum is also being given to the second year students. The scholarship amount is met from out of the Education Fund of the Tamil Nadu Co-operative Union.

The students of Tamil Nadu studying in the Indian Institute of Handloom Technology at Gadag (Karnataka) and Venkatagiri (Andhra Pradesh) are also paid stipend from the Education Fund of Tamil Nadu Co-operative Union. At present, 78 students are getting scholarships under this scheme. This scheme was continued during the year 2008-09.

1.6.13. Shiksha Sahayog Yojana

Under Shiksha Sahayog Yojana, scholarships are awarded to the children (restricted to 2 children) of handloom weavers who are members of the Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana.
Table-1.8

Performance of Shiksha Sahayog Yojana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Amount (Rs. in lakh)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>9473</td>
<td>85.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>14424</td>
<td>148.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>23555</td>
<td>250.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>25970</td>
<td>216.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>29545</td>
<td>387.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Handlooms and Textiles, Govt. of Tamil Nadu, 2009-10.

The scholarship is provided for the children studying in Std. IX to XII at Rs. 1,200/- per annum per child for a maximum period of 4 years or till they complete XII std., whichever is earlier.

1.6.14. Swarna Jayanthi Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)

‘Swarna Jayanthi Gram Swarozgar Yojana’ is a special project for motivating the handloom weavers, who were hitherto engaged in the production of products for Free Supply of Dhothies and Sarees Scheme, to enter into design development and product diversification for producing marketable varieties and ensure higher income.

The various components of this scheme and the details are furnished as follows:
Table-1.9

Performance of Swara Jayanthi Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Project cost (Rs in lakh)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Training and Capacity Building</td>
<td>110.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Design Development</td>
<td>163.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Skill Upgradation</td>
<td>519.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Creation of Additional Employment and Value Addition</td>
<td>107.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Infrastructure Development and Asset Creation</td>
<td>220.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Technology Upgradation</td>
<td>980.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>430.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td><strong>2530.36</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Handlooms and Textiles, Govt, of Tamil Nadu, 2009-10.

So far, under Phase I of the above scheme, the Government of India has released Rs.1085.94 lakh and the State Government has released Rs.361.98 lakh for the above scheme. The balance amount of Rs.1082.44 lakh will be released during Phase II. The achievements of the scheme are as follows:

- A separate team was appointed for design development and skill upgradation training
- 11,620 handloom weavers were trained in producing dress materials, furnishing table cloth, floor mat, shirting, sarees, kitchen linen, towels etc
- 26,237 new designs have been developed
• 2,096 new looms have been provided
• 11,620 looms have been upgraded with requisite accessories.

The products produced under the above scheme have been assigned the brand name “IZHAI” and marketed through Co-optex. The IZHAI products are also sold in the exhibitions conducted by the Rural Development Department in various parts of the country.

1.6.15. Prize Award Scheme for the Best Exporters

To encourage the export trade of handloom cloth, the Government of Tamil Nadu is implementing the scheme to award prizes to the Best Exporters in Tamil Nadu. This scheme is being implemented from 1975 onwards. Under this scheme, Trophies and Certificates to the best exporters including primary weavers’ co-operative societies are distributed.

1.6.16. Prize Award Scheme for Best Talented Weavers

To encourage handloom weavers for developing new designs, the Government is implementing prize Award Scheme every year for the best weavers who have developed new designs in cotton and silk varieties etc., and the prize for the best design are Rs.5,000/- for the first prize, Rs.3,000/- for the second prize and Rs.2,000/- for the third prize. The expenditure under this scheme is being met from the Co-operative Research and Development Fund of the Tamil Nadu Co-operative Union (TNCU).
1.7. Handlooms (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act, 1985

To protect handloom weavers and the handloom industry from the onslaught of powerlooms, the Government of India has enacted the handlooms (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act 1985 and have reserved 11 items exclusively for production in handlooms. To implement the Handlooms Reservation Act 1985 effectively, a separate enforcement machinery in Tamil Nadu has been formed with an officer incharge in the cadre of Deputy Director (Enforcement) at Chennai and 5 Assistant Enforcement Officers at Tiruppur, Erode, Salem, Tiruchengode and Madurai.

1.8. Registration of Handloom Products under Geographical Indication Act, 1999

To protect the traditional heritage of the handloom varieties, the Department has initiated steps to register handloom products such as Salem Silk, Ami Silk and Kovai Kora Cotton under the Geographical Indication Act, 1999. Necessary applications were filed before the Geographical Indication Registry. The Geographical Indication Registry has published the details of technical specifications and other details in its journal No. 23 in application No. 92, 93 & 94. The certificates will be issued by the Geographical Indication Registry after the completion of statutory period as stipulated in the Act.
1.9. Initiatives by the Department for Handloom Development

1.9.1. Design Intervention

During the year 2007-08, a Design Intervention Project at a cost of Rs. 65 lakh has been implemented by the Handlooms and Textiles Department in coordination with the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad and 1602 new designs for various products of cotton and silk fabrics have been introduced in Kurinjipadi, Tiruchirapalli, Vilandai, Thirubhuvanam, Gudiyatham, Kancneepuram, Ami, Rasipuram and Mannargudi.

The design intervention has considerably helped to improve the marketing of handloom products and to ensure continuous employment to weavers, besides enabling them to earn enhanced wages for improving their standard of living. During the year 2008-09, it was proposed to develop and introduce more number of new designs in the handloom sector, satisfying the needs of both traditional customers as well as the younger generation.

1.9.2. Exports by Weavers’ Co-operative Societies

Primary Weavers: Co-operative Societies are being encouraged to take up export oriented production. At present, 25,839 looms of 404 weavers’ co-operative societies are involved in export oriented production. During the year 2007-08, export varieties such as bed linen, bedspreads, table linen, aprons, curtains, terry towels, kitchen linen, napkins, floor mats etc., to the tune of Rs.317.77 crore have been exported. Efforts are being
made to equip the weavers’ co-operative societies to enter into direct export of their products and weavers’ co-operative societies in Erode District have been identified for this purpose. During the year 2008-09, it has been proposed to engage more number of weavers in the export oriented production for increasing the export turnover to around Rs.325 crore and help the weavers improve their earnings.

1.9.3. Conduct of Exhibitions

To promote marketing of handloom goods, the handloom department has conducted 22 district level exhibitions at various places during the year 2007-08 with the assistance of Government of India. The total sales effected during these exhibitions were to the extent of Rs.10.56 crore. Apart from this, the handloom department conducted many annual exhibitions and proposed to organize such exhibitions with new handloom varieties.

1.9.4. Implementation of “Handloom Mark”

To provide an exclusive identity to the handloom products and to improve marketing, the Department has initiated necessary steps to increase the usage of “Handloom Mark” in Tamil Nadu. To propagate the Handloom Mark, sensitization programme was organized in coordination with Textiles Committee in 6 cluster areas of the State, viz., Kancheepuram, Tiruvannamalai, Kurinijipadi, Madurai, Erode and Kumbakonam. So far, 724 primary weavers’ co-operative societies and 1324 individuals have been registered under Handloom Mark Scheme.
1.9.5. Scheme for Integrated Textile parks (SITP)

The “Scheme for Integrated Textile Parks (SITP)” has been introduced by Government of India during the year 2005-06 by merging two existing schemes namely, “Apparel Park for Exports Scheme (APES)” and “Textile Centre Infrastructure Development Scheme (TODS)”. The main purpose of the scheme is to provide the industry with world-class infrastructure facilities to meet international environmental and social standards to augment export and generate employment. Under this scheme, 7 Special Textile Projects, viz., ILT Park, Chengappalli, SIMA Processing Park, Cuddalore, Palladam Hi-Tech Weaving Park, Palladam, Komarapalayam Hi-Tech Weaving Park, Erode, Madurai Integrated Textile Park, Madurai and Karur Textile Park, Karur have been approved by the Government of India at a total project cost of Rs. 572.53 crore.

1.9.6. Handloom Export Zones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Area of the Project</th>
<th>Focused Product</th>
<th>Project Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nagercoil</td>
<td>Terry Towel</td>
<td>Phase-I 51.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Phase-II 343.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Virudhunagar</td>
<td>Place Mat</td>
<td>64.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nagapattinam</td>
<td>Silk Furnishings</td>
<td>55.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Thiruvallur</td>
<td>Home furnishings</td>
<td>89.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Handlooms and Textiles, Govt, of Tamil Nadu, 2009-10.
To encourage the export trade of handloom cloth, a Special Project is implemented to develop ‘Handloom Export Zones’ in selected handloom cluster areas like Nagercoil, Virudhunagar, Nagapattinam and Thiravallur. These Handloom Export Zones are being developed jointly by the Department of Handlooms and Textiles and the Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC). Under the project, emphasis is being laid on skill upgradation and design development for the weavers for producing export varieties and would be linked with leading exporters, helping the weavers to earn more income.

1.10. Lifting of Ban on Registration of New Weavers

Co-operative Societies

The Government, with a view to bring more number of handloom weavers in the Co-operative fold, has lifted the ban on the registration of new Handloom Weavers Co-operative Societies.

1.11. Status of Implementation of various schemes for the development/welfare of the handloom sector.

The handloom industry is one of the largest industries in the country next only to agriculture and it provides employment to around 65 lakh weaker sections. It occupies a place of eminence in preserving the country’s heritage and culture and plays a vital role in the economy of the country. This industry has the advantages of flexibility of small production quantities, openness to innovation and low investment. It is labour intensive
and adaptable to market requirement as well as at the same time, it also suffers from inherent weaknesses like low value products, cost inefficiency, lack of raw material and working capital, etc.

The overall production in the handloom sector is estimated to have increased to 6520 million square meters during 2006-07 from 5722 million square meters in 2004-05. The exports of cotton handloom fabrics and made-up has been of the order of Rs.2633.27 crore during 2002-03 registering a growth of 27.52% as compared to the year 2001-02 of Rs.2064.94 crore. The major fabrics and made up exported to different countries include Real Madras Handkerchiefs (RMHK), lungies dhotis/sarees, shirting, bed-linen, table-linen, towels, dish cloth, broad cloth, casement, denims, long cloth, shawls and scarves, poplin, bed sheets, durries, etc.

The Handloom sector has many opportunities for growth due to its inherent strengths and some of which are listed below

- Provides suitable self-employment opportunities
- No import content in assets and raw material
- Incredible array of traditional designs and products
- The products are environmental and ecological friendly
- Potential to arrest migration of weavers to urban areas
- Little or no demand for energy
- Large informal school for skill generation and transfer
It is expected that with the increasing population and prosperity, the domestic and international market size will expand and per capita consumption will increase. The handloom sector has an edge over the powerloom and mill sectors in its ability to commercially produce goods in small volumes, quick switch over to new designs and creation of exquisite designs, which cannot be made on powerlooms.

This prompted the researcher to take up a study on intervention schemes and their impact on handloom weavers standard of living in select eight districts of Tamil Nadu.
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