

Trichy Report

Musiri, Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu

1. Introduction

Tiruchirappalli (Trichy) is governed by Municipal Corporation which comes under Tiruchirappalli Metropolitan Region. The Tiruchirappalli is located in Tamil Nadu state of India. As per Census of India 2011, population of Tiruchirappalli was 847,387; of which male and female were 418,400 and 428,987 respectively. Hinduism was majority religion in Tiruchirappalli city with 74.07 % followers¹.

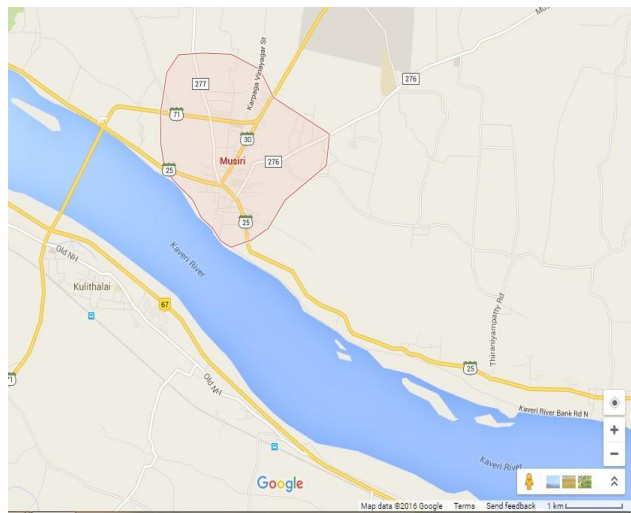


Figure 1: Geographical Map of Musiri Block

For the study, Musiri block of Tiruchirappalli was selected. The Musiri had population of 28,727 of which 14,094 were males while 14,633 were females as per Census India 2011. Literacy rate of Musiri city was 86.28 %.

Handloom is an ancient industry in India and has come to be associated with excellence in India's artistry in fabrics. The features of this sector vary across the country. In some parts of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Assam and Orissa, it has attained the status of a mature industry, and in other parts, it is still an enterprise confined to the needs of the household.

The district has a rich and varied cultural heritage. It is also known for its exquisite handicrafts, castings and South Indian musical instruments. The

economy of this district mainly agrarian but the role of textile industry cannot overlook. Tamil Nadu occupies a place of pride in having large number of handlooms within the country. Handloom weaving is one of the largest economic activities in Tamil Nadu. It is holding the fourth place in case of handlooms (1.55 lakh) and handloom weavers with allied workers (3.52 lakh) in in India (3rd Handloom Census, 2009-10).

2. Methodology

The selection of location for the study was purposive. For selecting the respondents, random sampling technique was used; and the survey questionnaire was created in Open Data Kit, which is an open source data collection tool that runs on Android devices. In the baseline survey done in Musiri block of Tiruchirappalli district, Tamil Nadu, 253 households were surveyed and from each household one weaver was taken as a sample. It is evident from Table 1 that almost equal numbers of respondents were sampled from selected five villages- Mangalam Puthur, Kodyampalayam, Paithan Paarai, Natraj Nagar and Thathayya Nagar Pettai.

¹ Census of India (2011). Retrieved from <http://www.census2011.co.in/census/city/478-tiruchirappalli.html> accessed on 14 June 2016

Geographical Distribution	Numbers	Percentage
Mangalam Puthur	46	18.2
Kodiyampalayam	50	19.8
Paithan Paarai	50	19.8
Natraj Nagar	53	20.9
Thathayya Nagar Pettai	54	21.3

Table 1: Geographical Distribution of Respondents

3. Results of the Survey

3.1 Demographic Details

An overwhelming majority (70 percent) of respondents were males whereas only about 30 percent were found to be females (Refer Annexure-I). In terms of age of weavers it’s evident from Table 2 that respondents were more or less equally distributed among all age groups. Majority (17.4 %) of the respondents were aged above 50 years followed by 16.2% of respondents in the age group of (21-25) years.

Age (in Years)	Number	Percentage
Under 20	35	13.8
21-25	41	16.2
26-30	27	10.7
31-35	23	9.1
36-40	21	8.3
41-45	23	9.1
46-50	19	7.5
51-55	16	6.3
Above 50	44	17.4
No response	4	1.6%

Table 2: Age of Weavers

In terms of the marital status, 66.4% of respondents were married and remaining 33.6% were unmarried (Refer Annexure-II). Since 30% of the respondents were less than 26 years of age so they didn’t feel mature enough to get marry and shoulder the responsibility of household. Understanding of the respondent’s religion, the findings revealed that 99.2% of the respondents were Hindus and remaining didn’t respond (Refer Annexure-III). Overwhelming majority of the respondents (99.2%) were from ‘Other Backward Class (OBC)’ category, 0.4% belonged to Schedule Caste (SC) and remaining didn’t respond (refer Annexure-IV).

In terms of the language proficiency, it's clear from Figure 2 that almost all respondents were able to speak their local language-Tamil; among them only 247 were able to write and 245 were able to read the language whereas negligible numbers of respondents were able to read, write and speak English language.

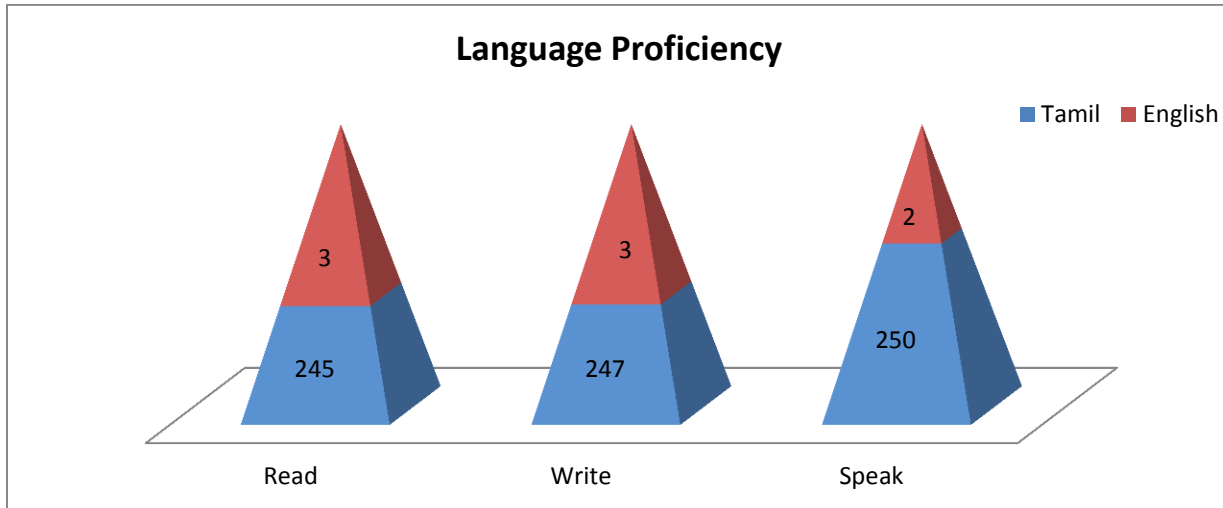


Figure 2: Language Proficiency

3.2 Education

Education plays an important role in shaping the quality of life of an individual. Figure 3 clearly shows that only few numbers of respondents were illiterate. Considering the quartiles, near about one-fourth of the respondents had attained the education up to middle level. Another 10.3% percentage of respondents were educated up to graduation level and the percentage of respondents who had attained post-graduate was very less; and only 4.7 percentages of respondents had received the technical education.

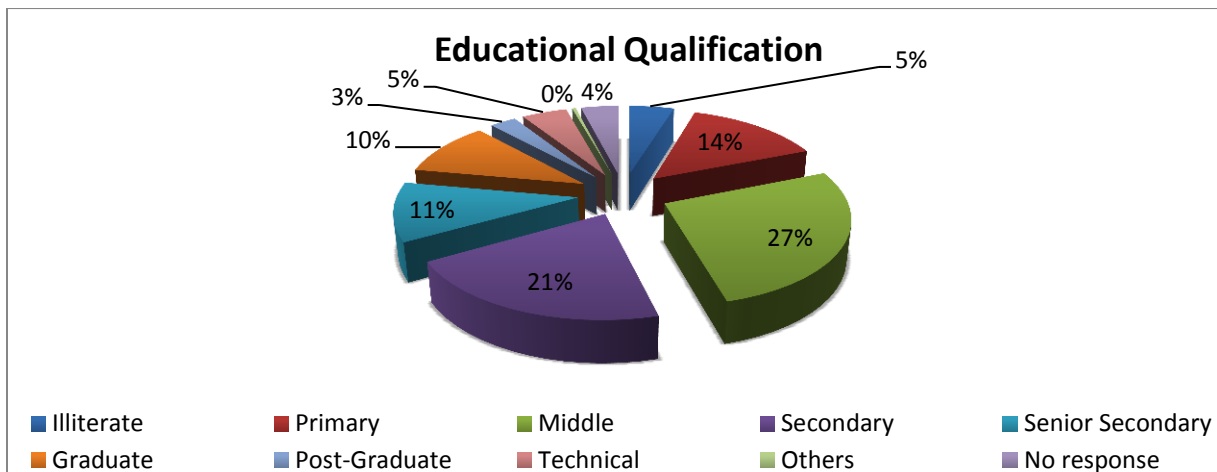


Figure 3: Educational Qualification of Weavers

3.3 Income and Employment

Indian weaving Industry has been the largest sector of huge employment after the agriculture. In study, it was found that all the respondents were weaving fabric as their primary occupation. The data showed that the monthly income and family income of the weaver was same as it's evident from the figure 3 that the majority of respondents (210) had monthly income of less than Rs 5000, only 14 respondents had monthly income of Rs 5,000- Rs 10,000 and 29 didn't respond.

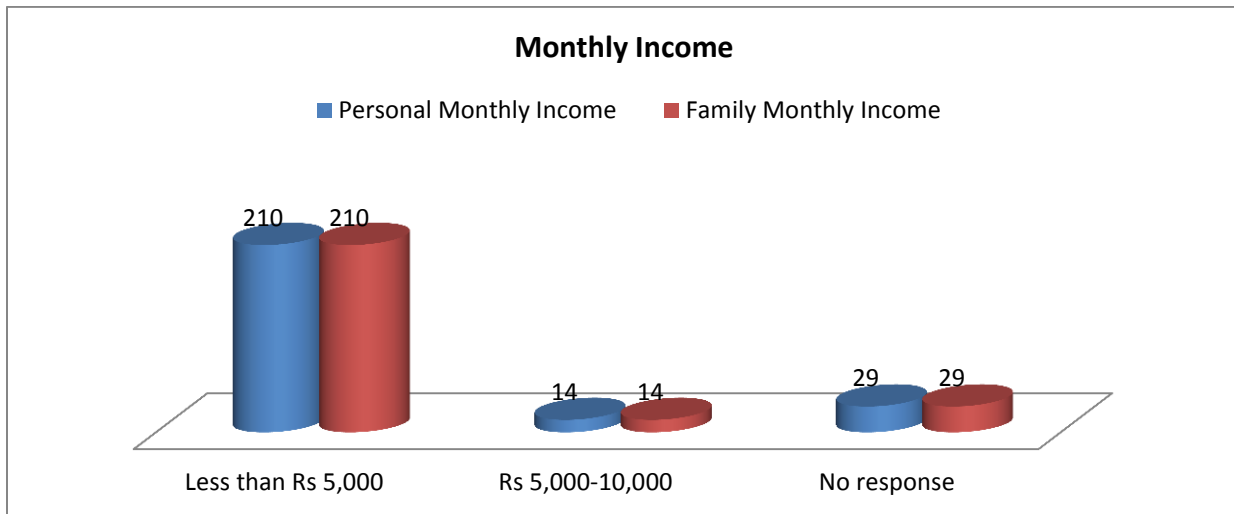


Figure 4: Monthly Income of Weavers (in numbers)

3.4 Weaving Information

In the study, it was found 81% of respondents had women weavers in their family (Refer Annexure-V). It can be said that women constituted a major workforce in the handloom sector. In India, Handloom sector is the only manufacturing sector wherein one finds large number of women producing products which are worn by large number of women. The enquiry on number of women weavers in a family revealed that 119 weaver's family had more than two female weavers in their family (Refer Annexure-VI).

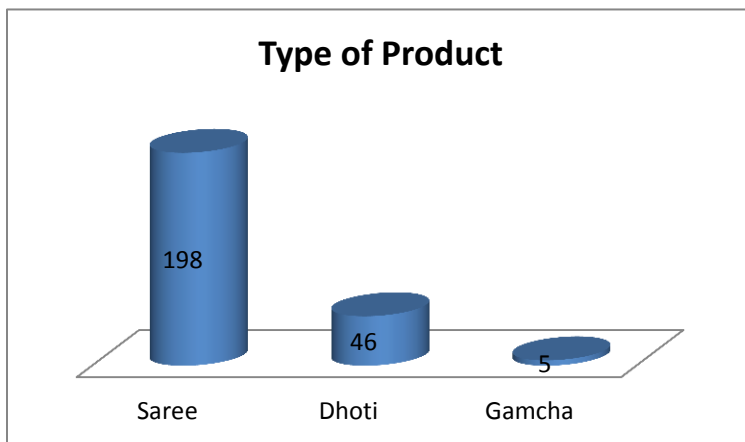
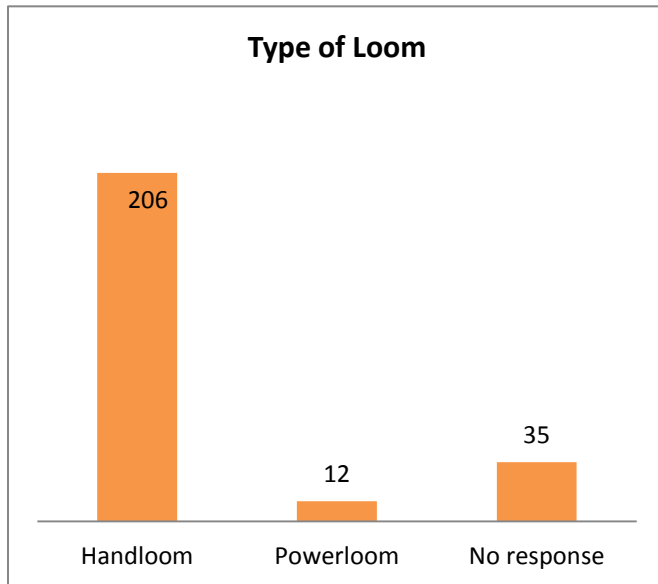


Figure 5: Type of Weaver's Product

Almost all respondents were the weavers and none of them were the master weavers (Refer Annexure-VII). The traditional handloom weavers of these villages made different products by crossing two sets of threads (warp and weft) over and under each other. It can be seen from Figure 5 that majority of the weavers i.e. 198 weavers were expert in making Saree as it is the glamorous all-time wear for women. Another 46 weavers were expert in

weaving *Dhoti* and very few respondents were expert in weaving *Ghamcha*.

It is evident from Figure 6 that overwhelming majority (206) of respondents used handloom and



negligible number of respondents used power loom for weaving the sarees, dhoti and ghamcha. There could be the various reasons for not having the power looms. The first reason might be the cost of power loom- as the weavers of the selected locale didn't belong to the upper ring of economic ladders so; they can't afford the power loom. The second reasons might be that many handloom motifs and patterns can't be replicated on the power loom. The most important reason could be that use of power loom for weaving fabrics can result in massive job losses as handloom requires at least six workers from start to finish, including dyeing, starching, spooling, weaving, ironing and tying up loose ends whereas power loom needs one worker to operate the loom.

Figure 6: Type of Loom

An overwhelming majority of weavers were linked to the master weavers (Refer Figure 7). The master weaver helped them in production and marketing of products. Master weavers used to provide the design pattern to the weavers and the main product was made by these weavers at home and then helped them in marketing their products. All the weavers in the study followed the design given by the master weaver. The simple designs were explained orally to the weaver. On the other hand, complex designs were provided on a graph paper.

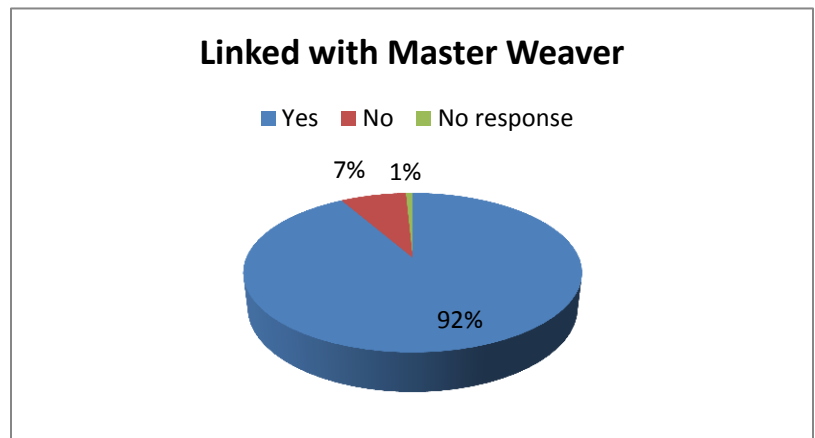


Figure 7: Linked with Master Weavers

None of the weavers was linked with the government handloom initiative and they were not getting any government support (Refer Annexure-VIII). Surprisingly, none of the weavers had any knowledge on the initiatives and insurance schemes like Integrated Handloom Development Scheme (IHDS), Handloom Weavers Comprehensive Welfare Scheme (HWCWS) etc. that are implemented by government for development of handlooms and welfare of weavers and providing need based interventions for holistic and sustainable development of the handloom sector and to improve the condition of the weavers.

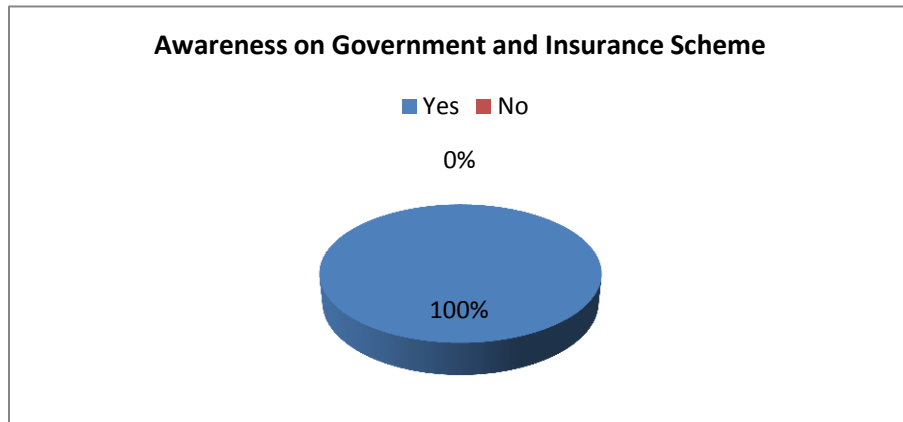


Figure 8: Awareness on Government and Insurance Scheme

Marketing the products at a good price is the major challenge that Indian’s weaver face in India. In the study, majority of the weavers (174) marketed their product through the community whereas negligible number of respondents (6) marketed their product directly to the product and they were able to get the right price. Weavers also followed some other methods like selling the products directly to the owner of weaver’s industry and society (Refer Figure 9).

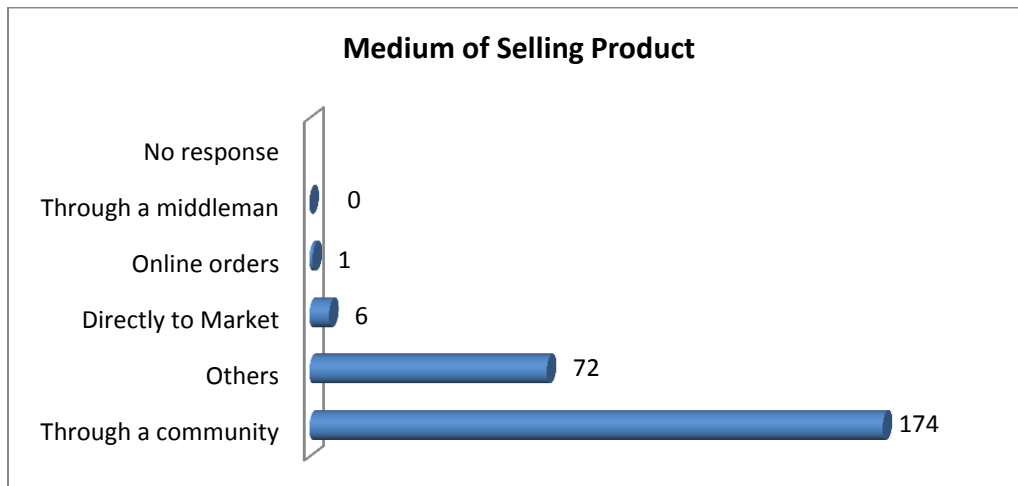


Figure 9: Medium of Selling Product

The weavers had to face various challenges to earn livelihood. Considering the quartile, around 28.5% of weavers reported that in less income is generated in weaving occupation as none of them was the master weaver whereas one-fourth of weavers said that weaving didn't provide full time employment to them. For 16.6% of weavers, thread's unavailability was another challenge (Refer Table 3).

Challenges	Numbers	Percentage
Thread's Unavailability	42	16.6
No Full-time Work	65	25.7
Unavailability of Main Element	26	10.3
No work in Rainy Season	10	4.0
Less Income	72	28.5
Hard Work	20	7.9
No response	16	6.3

Table 3: Challenges faced by Weavers

None of the weavers had participated in any handloom expo/festival organized by private/ government which was the another challenge faced by weavers as they were not able to market their products through trade fairs and get the right price.

Average Cost of Product	Number	Percentage
Less than Rs 100	20	7.9
Rs 100- 200	100	39.5
Rs 201- Rs 300	41	16.2
Rs 301-400	11	4.3
Rs 401- 500	15	5.9
More than Rs 500	62	24.5
No response	4	1.6

Table 4: Average Cost of Product

It is evident from Table 5 that majority of the weavers (39.5%) made the products with the average cost of INR 100- 200 whereas near around one-fourth of weavers priced their product for more than INR 500. Lack of access to trade fairs and direct market forced these weavers to price their woven products very less.

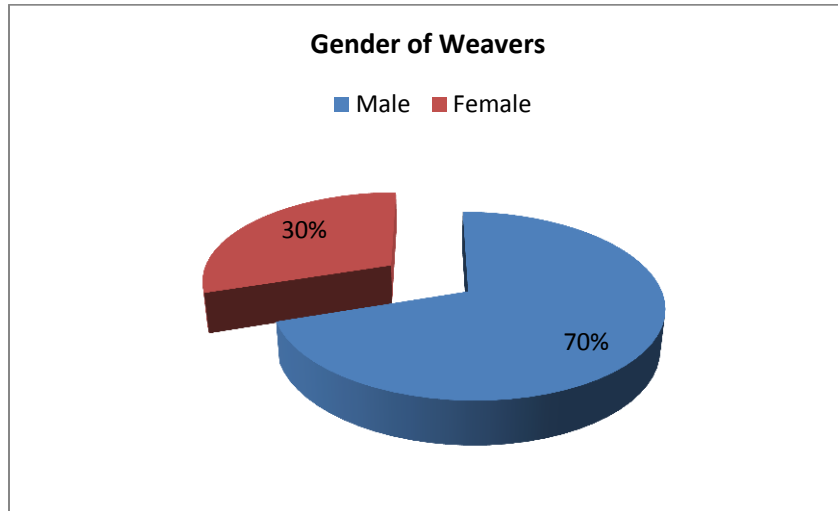
Conclusion

The weavers of Musiri block of Tiruchirappalli were engaged in traditional handloom activity as their primary occupation. They all belonged to the lower ring of economic ladder as none of the respondents was the master weaver; and they all were managed by the master weavers in the production and marketing of the product. The weavers of this block had to face lots of challenges in terms of unavailability of raw material, no work in rainy season and low income. Interestingly, the majority of the weaver's family had women weavers which complement the unique feature of handloom sector where a woman is producing for women.

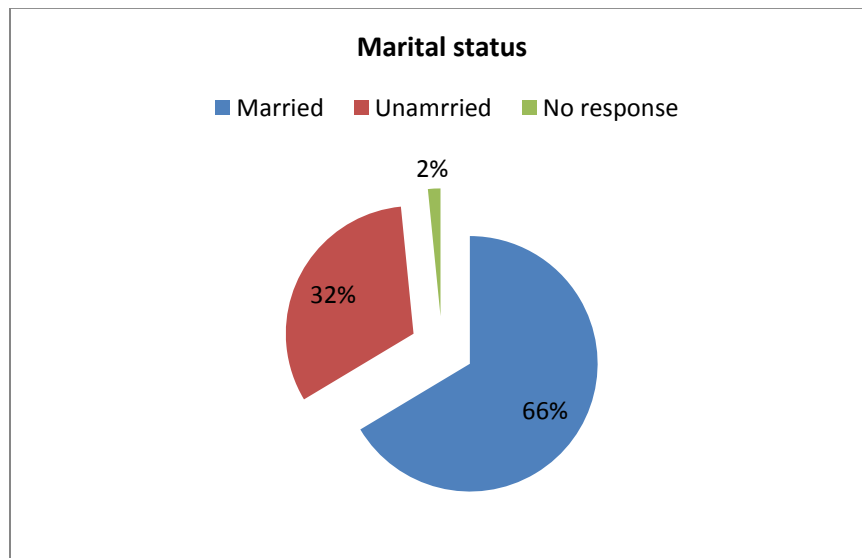
As majority of the master weavers were involved in traditional products namely saree, dhoti and ghamcha; they should be exposed to diversified training programme into scarves, stoles, dress materials etc. for earning higher profits as well as making way for the weavers to get higher wages. None of the weavers had participated in any trade/festival/expo because of which they didn't get right price of their product. Therefore, the government should motivate weavers to participate in consortium/groups so that weavers not only get the opportunity to participate in different handloom exhibitions but can also get orders from reputed handloom business houses. Lack of information to weavers regarding various government schemes and policies that are implemented for their development and welfare; the different traditional and electronic media should be used by the government to generate awareness on health insurance schemes so that maximum number of weaver's health can be insured; and weavers don't face the dismal situation of their livelihood.

Annexures

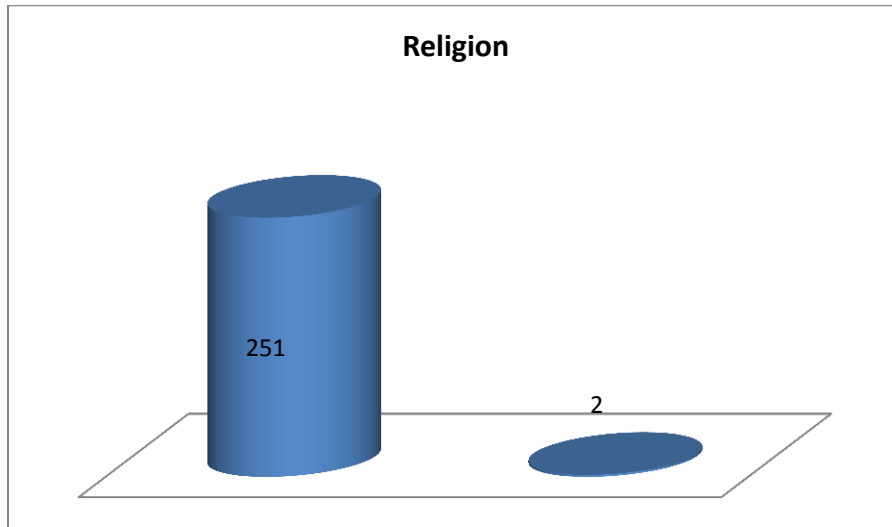
Annexure-I: Gender Composition of Respondents



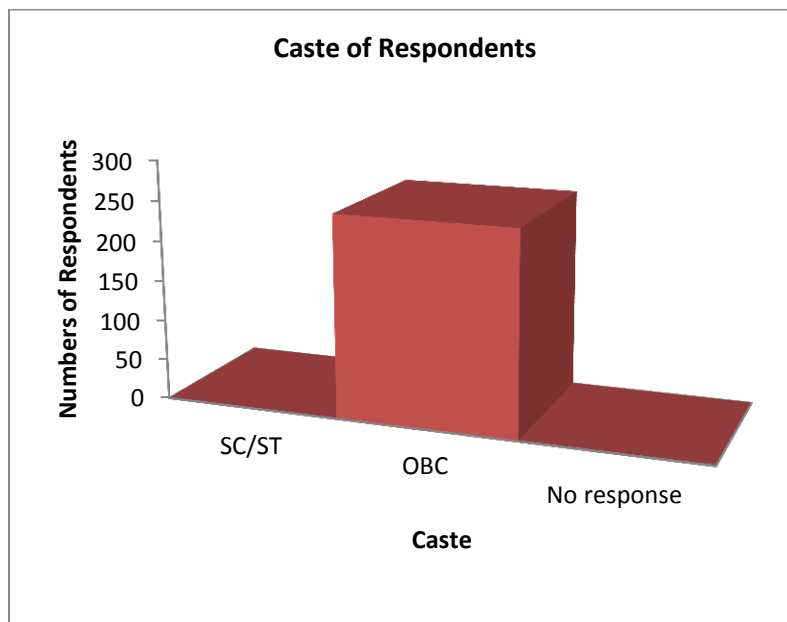
Annexure-II: Marital Status of Respondents



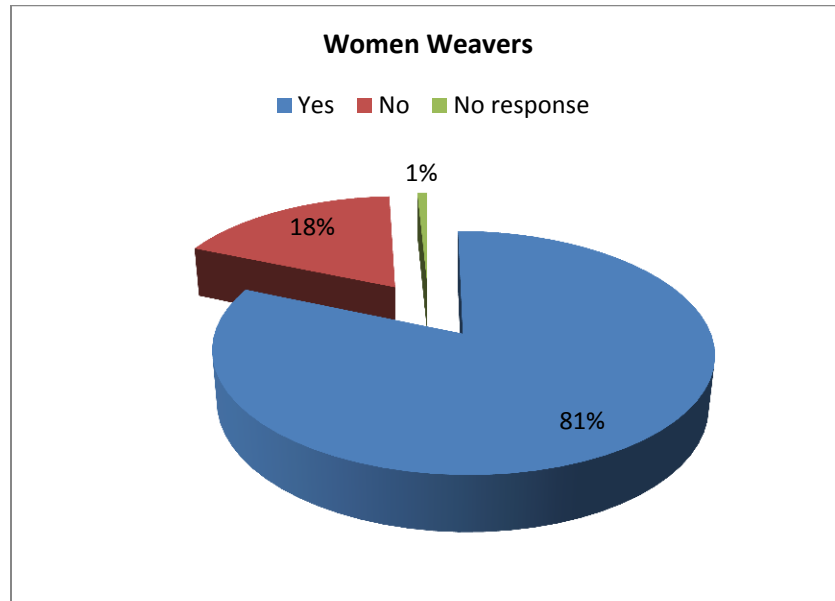
Annexure-III: Religion of Respondents



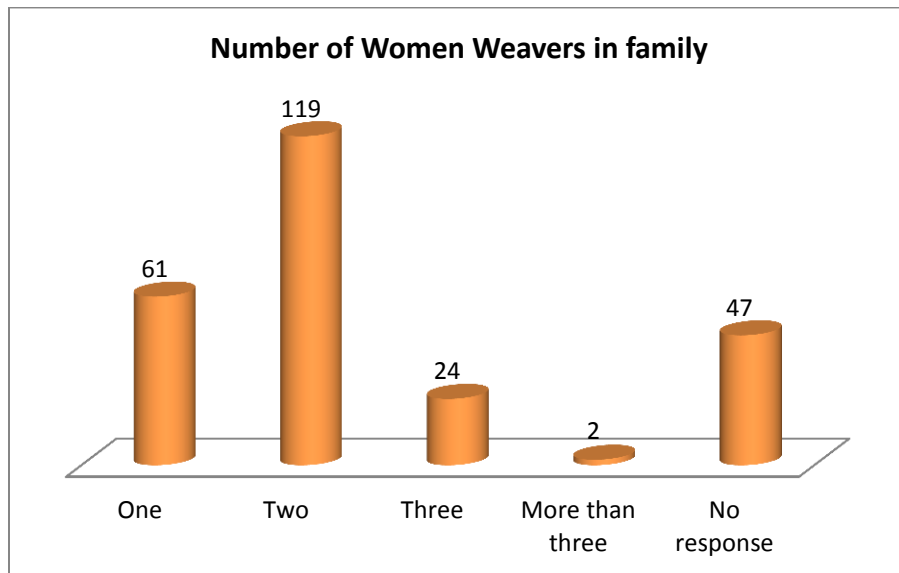
Annexure-IV: Caste of Respondents



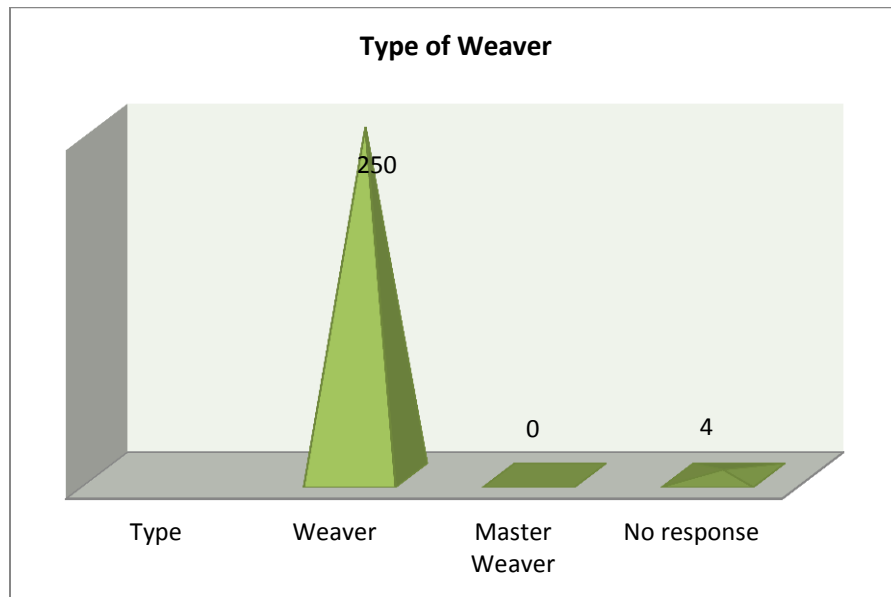
Annexure-V: Women weavers in family



Annexure-VI: Number of Women weavers in Family



Annexure-VII: Type of Weaver



Annexure-VIII: Government Support to Weavers

