

# TECHNOLOGICAL UP-GRADATION IN TAMIL NADU HANDLOOM SECTOR: A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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## ABSTRACT

Handloom weaving is an essential craft-based activity of India and comprises the largest cottage industry in the country. Indian handloom sector is struggling with various problems such as obsolete technologies, skill up-gradation, product development and diversification, unorganised production system, low productivity, and standard product range. Technology is the backbone of any manufacturing industry. Technology up-gradation has become obligatory for the survival of the industry. The technological up-gradation is a must for the new market opportunities and fulfill customer demands, which leads to improved business opportunities. The state and central governments have taken various measures to enhance production, productivity, and efficiency of the handloom sector and enhance the income and socio-economic status of the weavers. This article aims to present the government efforts through various schemes for the technological up-gradation of the handloom industry of India and Tamil Nadu in particular.

**Keyword:** - textile, handloom, loom, production, technology, technological up-gradation, government schemes, cloth

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Handloom weaving is an essential craft-based activity of India and comprises the largest cottage industry in the country. It is a part of our country's cultural heritage and symbolises the skill of weavers, who produce intricate artistic and fascinating products using handlooms. Handloom is exceptional in its flexibility and versatility, permitting experimentation and encouraging innovations. Millions of looms across the country are engaged in weaving a range of products using cotton, silk, and other fibers. There is hardly a village where weavers do not exist, each weaving out the traditional beauty of India's own precious handloom products.

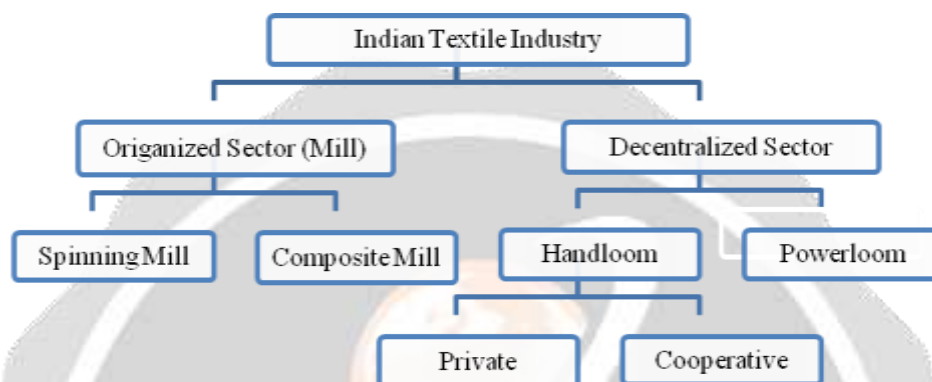
India has a long tradition of excellence in making superior quality handloom products with amazing skills and craftsmanship, which has a glorious past from the time immemorial. The available records show that the Indian handloom sector supplied the world's most exquisite and elegant clothes at very cheap rates to other countries until the middle of the 17th century. The industrial revolution which began in Britain in the 18th century and extended till the 19th century ruined the entire handloom industry of the county. In the early 1950s, the problems of Indian handloom industry worsened.

Indian handloom sector is struggling with various problems such as obsolete technologies, skill up-gradation, product development and diversification, unorganised production system, low productivity, and standard product range. Another major hurdle faced by this industry is the competition from mill and power loom sectors. The state and central governments have taken concerted efforts through various schemes and programmes to enhance production, productivity, and efficiency of the handloom sector and enhance the income and socio-economic status

of the weavers by technology up-gradation, upgrading their skills and providing infrastructural support and essential inputs. This article aims to present the government efforts through various schemes for the technological up-gradation of the handloom industry of India and Tamil Nadu in particular.

## 2. ORGANIZATION OF INDIAN TEXTILE INDUSTRY

Indian textile industry can be broadly classified into the organized sector and decentralized sector. The organized sector can be further classified into spinning mills and composite mills. The decentralized textile sector can be further classified into the handloom sector and powerloom sector. The handloom sector works in private or cooperative fold.



**Chart -1:** Organization of Indian textile industry

## 3. PRESENT SCENARIO OF HANDLOOM INDUSTRY

Indian textile industry plays a vital role in the economy of the country. The uniqueness of the industry lies in its strength both in the hand-woven sector as well as in the capital dense mill sector. This area provides the largest source of employment for millions of rural and semi-urban people. Indian textile industry manufactures versatile products suitable for both domestic and export markets. It is the 2nd largest manufacturer and exporter in the world, after China. Textile industry contributes 7% of the country's output in terms of value, 2% of GDP of India and 15% of the country's export earnings.

Indian handloom sector is one of the largest unorganized economic activities after agriculture and it is an integral part of rural and semi-rural livelihood. It is a decentralized sector and weavers are primarily from the weaker sections of the society, who weave for their domestic needs and contribute to the production in the textile sector. The weavers of this industry are struggling hard to keep the traditional craft alive. The level of artistry and depth of hands gained in handloom fabrics is unique and there are still some special weaves/designs are outside the scope of modern machines. The handloom industry is concentrated in three distinctive areas of the country the rural, classical and tribal.

Indian handloom sector contributes about 15% of the country's cloth production and adds to the country's export income. India meets the 95% hand-woven fabric requirement of the entire world. From the year 2004-05 (except the year of recession in 2008-09), it has been found that a considerable growth in production of handloom products. Production recorded a figure of 7990 million sq. meters in the year 2017-18. The export of handloom items during 2017-18 was Rs.2280.19 crore and during the year 2018-19 (up to Nov.2019) is Rs. 1554.48 crore [1].

**Table - 1:** Indian handloom export targets and achievements

Year	Target	Achievement	
		Rs. In Crores	In MUS\$
2013-14	602MUSD	2233.11	369.11

2014-15	460MUSD	2246.48	367.41
2015-16	421MUSD	2353.33	360.02
2016-17	450MUSD	2392.21	357.53
2017-18	-	2280.19	356.66
2018-19 (up to Nov. 2019)	-	1554.48	-

**Source:** Annual Report, Ministry of Textiles GoI – 2018-19

Handloom weaving is an essential craft-based activity of India. As per fourth all India handloom census, this industry provides direct and indirect employment to about 35.22 lakh weavers and affiliated workers, and it is an integral part of rural and semi-rural livelihood. Out of 30.53 lakh handloom workers, 23.56 lakh (77.2 per cent) handloom weavers work in rural areas and out of 4.68 lakh handloom works, 3.17 lakh (67.8 per cent) handloom weavers work in urban areas. Tamil Nadu handloom industry is one of the largest and most ancient among the other industries and has 2.09 lakh handloom households in the state positioning itself fourth among the other states of the country [2].

**Table - 2:** Number of handloom workers by type in India

Type of Worker	Rural	Urban	Total
Weavers	23,56,127	3,17,764	26,73,891
	77.2%	67.8%	75.9%
Allied	6,97,564	1,51,057	8,48,621
	22.8%	32.2%	24.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,53,691</b>	<b>4,68,821</b>	<b>35,22,512</b>

**Source:** Fourth all India handloom census – 2019-20: Ministry of Textiles

### 3.1 Looms

Across India, 27.01 lakhs handlooms were reported in the fourth all India handloom census, out of which 24.51 lakhs were in rural areas and 2.49 lakh were located in urban areas. Handlooms are mostly located in handloom weaver households (95.6 per cent) which signify that weaving on handlooms is primarily a household-based activity. The census report shows that out of 24.51 lakh handlooms reported in rural India, 41.1 per cent (10.07 lakh) of the looms are pit looms, 31.9 (7.81 lakh) per cent are frame looms, 15.8 per cent (3.86 lakh) are loin looms and 11.3 per cent (2.76 lakh) are of other types of looms. Further, out of 2.49 lakh handlooms reported in urban areas, 53.7 per cent (1.33 lakh) are pit looms, 28.2 per cent (0.70 lakh) are frame looms, 7.1 per cent (0.17 lakh) are loin looms, and 11.1 per cent (0.27 lakh) are other types of looms [2].

Overall, 42.2 per cent of handloom weavers own pit looms, followed by 31.5 per cent of them own frame looms. 57 per cent of non-household weavers also own pit looms and 32.5 per cent of them own frame looms. The report shows that 55 per cent of master weavers own frame looms over other types of looms. Out of all looms, 67.3 per cent pit looms and 32.6 per cent frame looms found to be fitted with doobby or jacquard mechanism. This shows the higher usage of modern technology in the handloom industry [2].

**Table - 3:** Number of looms in weaver households by type in India

Type of Looms		Rural	Urban	Total
Pit looms	Pit Loom with Dobby/Jacquard; Other Pit Looms	10,07,219	1,33,838	11,41,057
		41.1%	53.7%	42.2%
Frame	Frame Loom with Dobby/Jacquard; Other Frame	7,81,604	70,379	8,51,983

Looms	Looms	31.9%	28.2%	31.5%
Loin Looms	Loin Looms	3,86,514	17,588	4,04,102
		15.8%	7.1%	15.0%
Other	Other Looms	2,76,342	27,596	3,03,938
		11.3%	11.1%	11.3%
Total		24,51,679	2,49,401	27,01,080

**Source:** Fourth all India handloom census - 2019-20: Ministry of Textiles

Tamil Nadu accounts for 2.43 handlooms across the state. Overall, 1.35 lakh (79.8 per cent) handloom weavers and 0.34 lakh (20.2 per cent) allied workers are from rural areas. 0.61 lakh (84.4 per cent) handloom weavers and 0.11 lakh (15.6 per cent) allied workers live in urban areas. The state accounts for overall 1.97 handloom weavers. There are 55.4 per cent (1.05 lakh) other pit looms and pit looms fitted with Dobby /Jacquard mechanisms. The survey also reveal that there are 26 per cent (0.49 lakh) frame looms and frame looms fitted with Dobby / Jacquard mechanisms. The state also has 18.6 per cent (0.35 lakh) other types of looms [2].

**Table - 3:** Number of looms in weaver households by type in Tamil Nadu

Type of Looms		Rural	Urban	Total
Pit looms	Pit Loom with Dobby/Jacquard; Other Pit Looms	79,899	25,841	1,05,740
		62.3%	41.4%	55.4%
Frame Looms	Frame Loom with Dobby/Jacquard; Other Frame Looms	25,689	23,842	49,531
		20.0%	38.2%	26.0%
Other	Other Looms	22,677	12,768	35,445
		17.7%	20.4%	18.6%
Total		1,28,265	62,451	1,90,716

**Source:** Fourth all India handloom census - 2019-20: Ministry of Textiles

### 3.2 Production

Indian handloom industry produces a variety of products for its domestic and export market. 6.83 lakh (22.9 per cent) handloom worker households involved in sarees production. Tamil Nadu plays a major role with 58.7 per cent (1.06 lakh) handloom weavers involved in saree production. 5.80 lakhs (19.5 per cent) handloom worker households weave products such as angavastram, dhoti, sarong, and lungi. Tamil Nadu is a major dhoti, lungi, and angavastram producing state with 13.3 per cent (0.24 lakh) handloom worker households involved in this activity. Products such as towel, napkin, duster, and gamcha are woven by 4.91 lakh (16.5 per cent) handloom worker households in the country. 5.8 per cent (0.10 lakh) Tamil Nadu handloom worker households produce these items. Other widely produced handloom items in the country are dress material. In Tamil Nadu, 0.9 per cent (0.02 lakh) handloom worker households engaged in producing dress material. 11.3 per cent (0.20 lakh) handloom worker households produce bed sheet and furnishing items in Tamil Nadu [2].

**Table - 4:** Distribution of weaver households by the production of major fabrics in Tamil Nadu

Products	Rural	Urban	Total
Dhoti, Sarong, Lungi, Angavastram	14,318	9,717	24,035
Saree	72,028	34,402	106,430
Dress material, Suiting, Shirting, Long Cloth	999	651	1,650
Towel/Napkin, Duster/ Gamcha	6,233	4,230	10,463
Bedsheet, Furnishings, Blanket	13,318	7,110	20,428
Shawls/ Mekhla Chadder/ Loi/Stole/ Scarf/ Muffler	2,439	73	2,512



Durries, Rugs, Mats	2,263	354	2,617
Others (including Bandage)	11,795	1,280	13,075
Total	1,23,393	57,817	1,81,210

Source: Fourth all India handloom census - 2019-20: Ministry of Textiles

#### 4. IMPORTANCE OF TECHNOLOGICAL UP-GRADATION

Many factors influence the survival of the industry namely, technology innovation, new design and processes, quality, productivity, enhanced production, and service, etc. This new set of factors dictating global competition has been radically changing the role of technology. Technology is not only regarded as something coming along with new products and processes but is taken as the means and results of the communication process between different functions like R&D, production and market. Thus, technology has an important bearing on industry performance and growth [3].

Technology is the backbone of any manufacturing industry. Technology up-gradation has become obligatory for economic development, growth, more flexible responses, strategic self-reliance and sustained competitiveness of an industry. The technological up-gradation is a must for the new market opportunities and fulfill customer demands, which leads to improved business opportunities. Without continuous technology up-gradation, no enterprise can ever remain competitive and the basis of technology creation and up-gradation is research and development [4]. Adoption of technological up-gradation that enhances the competitiveness of the firms has become one of the most important responsibilities of industry [5]. Technology and its management are critical for the successful and efficient performance of an enterprise on a long term basis. Thus, technology up-gradation has become mandatory for economic development, industrial growth, improved organisation performance, enhanced industry image, more flexible responses, strategic self-reliance and also for sustained cost-effective competitiveness of an enterprise [6].

Many authors in their studies reported that the problems of the handloom industry are due to the competition from powerloom and mill sectors. They also expressed the importance of modernising handloom production techniques for the sustainability of the handloom industry [7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13]. Shailaja Naik and Padhya (1996) [14] in their study recommended that appropriate technology should be made available to handloom weavers for the revival of this sector. They believed that it would positively impact the industry and give due recognition and the state government should play an important role in assisting this industry.

Soundarapandian (2000) [15] in his occasional paper on "Growth and Prospects of Handloom Sector in India", studied the problems of the Indian handloom industry and noted that weaving is a traditional and hereditary based occupation. Weavers follow the conventional method of production and traditional designs due to lack of exposure, lack of awareness on changing technology, methods and requirements. Government policies prompted the weavers to become more dependent than to be independent entrepreneurs. He felt that the attitude of the weavers should be changed. They should be trained in their skills, knowledge and technology to ensure product quality. He proposed to set up a national level handloom research centre for conducting research, developing designs, and weaving technology, raw materials, etc. Bhavani T.A. (2002) [16] in her study mentioned that the poor adoption of technology in the industry obstructed the development of the handloom industry and forced the industry to heavily depend on human resources.

Ojha (2003) [17] outlined the technological development in the handloom industry in his article on "Technological development in the handloom sector". He specified that the major reason for technology development in the handloom sector is due to the challenges faced by the advanced technology-based power looms and mill sectors. The author recommended that for the improved productivity, quality and upliftment of the handloom industry, the technological up-gradation should be provided in the form of skill up-gradation, weaving and processing.

Bhabesh Hazarika et al. (2015) [18] opined that technological up-gradation is important for the handloom sector to tolerate competitiveness, cost-effectiveness, and quality production. The authors listed down that Among the available modern handloom technologies in India, the use of high-speed jacquard, dobby machines, pit looms, sophisticated reeling machines, network drafting, pattern weaving, new and blended raw materials, new designs, new production techniques, improved management practices, etc., are frequently used in Assam. They also noted that there is technological backwardness in the handloom industry across the country. The study focused on factors and problems related to the adoption of technology in rural, nonfarm, and informal micro-entrepreneurs in Assam.

The authors examined the role of key issues such as financial inclusion, family labour contribution and social network in technology adoption. The interaction and sharing of information through a social network are likely to promote technology adoption among the potential adopters. Financial inclusion of handloom micro-entrepreneurs through banks, non-banking credit societies, self-help groups (SHGs) may be regarded as a promoter for increasing the rate of technology adoption. Comparing to small firms, big firms have different problems like lack of resources, labour shortage, and complexity in structure. The study suggested a comprehensive policy framework for the availability of credit or capital, market linkages, and extension services to promote technology adoption among the rural micro-entrepreneurs.

Due to the abolition of multi-fibre Agreement (MFA) quota in January 2005, the textile industry was opened to free competition across countries such as China, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and others [19]. This made the handloom industry to face severe challenges from the organized textile sectors with superior technology. In a competitive market scenario, technological up-gradation and adaptation are essential for an enterprise for manufacturing products with competitive price and enhanced quality [18]. In the post-MFA system, technology and skill up-gradation in the handloom industry took on added significance as the segment have been providing revenue and employment to a large population at the lower end of income distribution in many developing countries, including India [20]. It is evident from various reports that there is a positive response from the Indian handloom industry in adopting modern weaving technologies.

## **5. GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES ON THE TECHNOLOGICAL UP-GRADATION OF HANDLOOM INDUSTRY**

The state and central governments have taken various measures to enhance production, productivity, and efficiency of the handloom sector and enhance the income and socio-economic status of the weavers. Major schemes implemented by the state and central government are given below.

### **5.1 National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP), and Comprehensive Handloom Cluster Development Scheme (CHCDS)**

Over the last few years, inadequate attention has been contributed to the up-gradation of technology and supply of low-quality yarns, lead to the gradual decline of this sector. Emphasis was laid on using better technology and improving the skill level of the vast workforce of the industry. The Government provides the necessary capital for technology replacement through various self-employment schemes, which is being implemented in the state.

The Ministry of Textiles, Government of India has implemented a Block Level Handloom Cluster (BLHC) strategy for the growth of the handloom industry. The cluster development approach focuses on the formation of weavers' groups as a visible entity so that the groups become self-sustainable. This offers integrated and holistic cluster development by applying need-based measures where weavers can easily access the facility. The handloom cluster is described as a place where there is a large concentration of handlooms, which produces handloom cloth that conforms to market demands.

Based on the guidelines of the Government of India, Tamil Nadu Government implemented the Cluster Development programme under the National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP), and Comprehensive Handloom Cluster Development Scheme (CHCDS). Under these schemes, the handloom clusters are set up at Block Level where the concentration of the looms ranges from 200 to 500. As per the need, more than one cluster could be included in the identified block. The components for the block level handloom clusters are,

- Technological up-gradation
- Common Facility Centre including Common Service Center
- Skill Upgradation
- Engagement of Designer
- Project Management Cost
- Yarn Corpus Fund
- Design Development / CATD

During 2015-16 to 2017-18, under National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP)/ Comprehensive Handloom Cluster Development Scheme (CHCDS) there are 10 Block Level Handloom Clusters (BLHC), 4 new Block Level Handloom Clusters, 22 BLHCs under Trichy Mega Handloom Cluster, and 16 BLHCs under Virudhunagar Mega Handloom Cluster was established in Tamil Nadu. Name of the Block Level Handloom Clusters is listed in Table 5.

**Table - 5:** Name of the Block Level Handloom Clusters

S. No	Name of the Block Level Handloom Cluster	No. of Beneficiaries	S. No	Name of the Block Level Handloom Cluster	No. of Beneficiaries
<b>I. 10 Block Level Handloom Cluster (BLHC)</b>			25	Musiri	71
1	West Arni	678	26	Thottiyam	423
2	Palladam	844	27	Karur – I	243
3	Kancheepuram	810	28	Karur - II	300
4	Karamadai - I	910	29	Thanthoni	272
5	Ayothiyappattinam	954	30	Aravakurichi	246
6	Chennimalai	877	31	Palani	661
7	Tiruppur Block	874	32	Dindigul - I	2273
8	Paramakudi	1189	33	Dindigul - II	2129
9	Kuruthancode	343	34	Athoor	1673
10	Pollachi North	912	35	Thoppampatti	357
<b>II. 4 New Block Level Handloom Cluster (BLHC)</b>			36	Mannargudi	669
11	Arni - I	703	<b>IV. Virudhunagar Mega Handloom Cluster (VMHC)</b>		
12	Arni - II	410	37	Aruppukottai Block - I	220
13	Nangavalli	432	38	Aruppukottai Block - II	220
14	Kancheepuram - II	412	39	Aruppukottai Block-III	220
<b>III. Trichy Mega Handloom Cluster (TMHC)</b>			40	Aruppukottai Block-IV	220
15	Thiruvaidaimarudhur - I	407	41	Srivilliputhur Block	220
16	Thiruvaidaimarudhur- II	811	42	Rajapalayam Block - I	220
17	Thiruvaidaimarudhur-III	1020	43	Rajapalayam Block - II	220
18	Thirupanandal	363	44	Watrap Block	220
19	Ammappettai	292	45	Sankarankoil Block	220
20	Jayankondam	841	46	Paramakudi Block	220
21	Andimadam	445	47	Karaikudi Block	220
22	T.Palur	239	48	Watrap - III Block	40
23	Sendurai	279	49	Aruppukottai-V Block	40
24	Thathaiyangarpettai	239	50	Watrap-II, Block	40
			51	Paramakudi Block-III	40

S. No	Name of the Block Level Handloom Cluster	No. of Beneficiaries
52	Paramakudi Block - II	40

S. No	Name of the Block Level Handloom Cluster	No. of Beneficiaries
	Total	27221

**Source:** Policy Note, Handlooms and Textiles, Govt. of Tamil Nadu – 2018-19

A total of 27,221 handloom beneficiaries are covered under this scheme. The primary focus of the scheme is to enhance productivity through technological up-gradation of the existing looms, skill up-gradation of the weavers through training, product development and diversification through design interventions, to create required infrastructure, etc. which lead to enhanced earning of the weavers. Under the technological up-gradation component of BLHC scheme, the handlooms and preparatory machineries are upgraded with the latest technology. The details of technological up-gradation components and beneficiaries under the BLHC scheme are given in table 6. There are 23274 beneficiaries covered under this scheme during 2018-19 [21].

**Table - 6:** Technological up-gradation components and beneficiaries under BLHC scheme

S. No	Component	No. of Beneficiaries
1	Motorized Jacquard	2070
2	Jacquard on Existing Loom	1864
3	Dobby on Existing Loom	449
4	Headls & Reeds	9091
5	Purchase of Frame Loom	
	a) Up to 60"	1001
	b) Above 60"	574
6	Construction of Workshed	632
7	Lighting Units	4598
8	Take-Up & Let-Off	260
9	Warp & Fabric Beam	1475
10	Multi Butti Weaving Sley	186
11	Any Other Intervention	615
12	Motorized Pirn Winding Machine	270
13	Motorized Pirn Cum Bobbin/Duba Winding Machine	79
14	Motorized Warping Machine	110
	TOTAL	23274

**Source:** Policy Note, Handlooms and Textiles, Govt. of Tamil Nadu – 2018-19

## 5.2 Hathkargha Samvardhan Sahayata Scheme (HSS)

Another significant component under National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP)/ Comprehensive Handloom Cluster Development Scheme (CHCDS) is "Hathkargha Samvardhan Sahayata (HSS)". On August 7, 2016, the plan was announced for improving quality and productivity of the handloom industry through financial assistance for the technological up-gradation. The main objectives of the Hathkargha Samvardhan Sahayata scheme are:

- To facilitate the technological up-gradation in loom units.
- To encourage development capacities, to create employment opportunities in emerging technology areas.



Under the HSS Scheme, the financial implication for the technological up-gradation between the beneficiary and the government is in the ratio of 10:90. The state government of Tamil Nadu also implemented this Scheme. The admissible technological up-gradation items under this scheme are:

- Pneumatic jacquard system for a set of 4 handlooms.
- Motorized jacquard on the existing handloom.
- Take-up & let off motions on the existing handloom.
- Multiple box motion.
- Multiple buti weaving sley.
- Twin cloth weaving mechanism.
- Jacquard with complete set including installation.
- Dobby mechanism.
- Healds reeds, bobbins, shuttles etc. (set)
- Frame Loom up to 60" and above 60".
- Asu Machine (Manual and motorized).
- Warp beam & fabric beam.
- Normal and motorized warping machine.
- Motorized Pirn Winding machine.
- Motorized Prin- cum bobbin/ dubba Winding machine.
- Street warp sizing Kit (brush, sticks, spray gun etc.).

National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP)/ Comprehensive Handloom Cluster Development Scheme (CHCDS) cover the broad spectrum of handloom sector to meet the needs of the industry. Through technical up-gradation, skill up-gradation, infrastructure development, this scheme empowers weavers to prepare a sustainable way for development and diversification in line with the trend of evolving markets [1].

### 5.3 Tamil Nadu Innovation Initiatives (TANII) Scheme

The State Government also have introduced "Tamil Nadu Innovation Initiatives (TANII) Scheme" during the year 2015-2016. The scheme was introduced under "State Innovation Fund" for upgrading handloom technology. Over a period of three years from 2015-2016 to 2017-2018, total 6000 motorized Jacquard lifting machines have been supplied at a cost of Rs. 675 lakh to handloom weavers. The following table 7 shows the details of district wise distribution of motorized Jacquard lifting machine [21].

**Table - 7:** Details of the district-wise distribution of motorized Jacquard lifting machine under TANII scheme

Sl. No.	Circle	Year		
		2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
1	Coimbatore	200	715	160
2	Dindugul	100	-	80
3	Erode	400	-	350
4	Kanchipuram	400	445	-
5	Kumbakonam	300	365	80
6	Paramakudi	100	-	80
7	Salem	100	380	200
8	Tiruppur	200	220	230
9	Tiruvannamalai	100	350	100
10	Virudhunagar	100	-	80
11	Madurai	-	5	40

12	Tiruchengode		20	100
TOTAL		2000	2500	1500

Source: Policy Note, Handlooms and Textiles, Govt. of Tamil Nadu – 2018-19

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

Indian handloom industry is constantly facing major hurdles for a long time. The weavers of this industry are struggling hard to keep the traditional craft alive. Even though there is a huge demand for the Indian handloom products, the industry is unable to meet the requirements due to various factors such as low production, decentralized in nature, obsolete technology, innovation in products, skill up-gradation, inadequate supply of raw materials, poor marketing, and quality. Technological up-gradation in the handloom industry has assumed added importance as such enterprises generate employment and income for people in the lower segment of income distribution in the developing countries. The state and central government devised a series of plans through various schemes for the upliftment of this industry. There is constant progress of these efforts through which the handloom industry is showing a positive development. It is important to elucidate the fact that, how far the handloom industry adapted to the new business environment after a decade down since phasing out of MFA. A particular point of interest in this context is the extent to which the handloom enterprises, which are typically small-scale and disadvantaged in accessing market and finance, have succeeded in standing up to the challenges of adopting and deploying modern technologies and impact the effort made. There is a need for the study in understanding the effects of the technological up-gradation and factors that affect these efforts.

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