

## An insight into the traditional handloom of Kinnal, Karnataka

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The Handloom Industry plays a dominant role in the economic development of the rural mass. Handlooms are scattered in the rural and semi-urban areas. The Handloom Industry is an important sector in providing large-scale employment and result in the upliftment of the rural mass development. Handloom is perhaps one of the oldest industries. Even the tribal people scattered throughout the country, produce their own cloths with the elegant designs, unique colour combinations and lasting texture. Traditional handloom industry of Kinnal village of northern district of Karnataka has been discussed.

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Clothing, the basic human need ranking next to food and shelter in importance, today occupies the top most priority. Till nineteenth century the handloom industry was the only supplier of clothing for the entire population of our country. Hand weaving was the basic activity of human society in which utility and aesthetics were blended. The handloom industry in this country operates under three distinctive sectors, namely independent weavers, master weavers and in co-operative societies. Irrespective of the category and place of weaving, the weavers produce variegated handloom products, viz. sarees of cotton, silk, art silk, and their blends, bed linens, blankets, wool floor coverings dress materials, furnishing materials and towels<sup>1-4</sup>. An effort has been made to study the origin of Kinnal Handloom Co-operative weavers' society and products manufactured there.

### Observations

Kinnal, a tiny village with a total population of 7506 is about 11km away from Koppal northern district of Karnataka state. The villages Hosalli, Bevinhalli, Shahpur and Igalkeri surround the village. Around 400 people have taken up weaving as their livelihood. Besides, carpentry being their second major occupation, marvelous wooden art pieces, articles and toys are produced. The Kinnal handloom weaver co-operative society was established with two throw shuttle pit looms, with the main objective to provide employment to the weavers. The working

capital was shared within the members of the society and a part of profit was reserved for the procurement of raw material and the remaining portion was distributed among the society members. In the initial years, weavers produced *Gadi dhadi* cotton sarees and *Khanas*. Weavers later brought diversification in simple cotton sarees and started producing *Ilkal* type sarees with cotton as warp and weft, rayon in *Pallav* (the part of the saree used to cover the head) and also *Janata* sarees. *Janata* sarees were woven with 60s and 40s count cotton in warp and weft, respectively. Borders as well as *Pallav* of these *Janata* sarees comprised of series of bands in different colours. Later, they started producing bedspreads and *Jamkhanas* (floor coverings) of various sizes.

Types of loom and variegated handloom products manufactured at Kinnal co-operative society have been depicted (Table 1). *Gadi dhadi* (*rani phool*) saree and *khanas* (blouse pieces) were woven on throw shuttle pit looms. Every preparatory process involved in weaving *Gadi dhadi* saree and *khanas* were carried out manually especially by women (Figs.1&2). Much of the cloth was interwoven on throw shuttle pit loom, where it basically consisted of a pit measuring 9× 9× 7.5 cm (length× width× depth). The treadles were located in the pit and were operated by foot. Two sturdy wooden pillars on either sides of the pit were posted in ground to support the upper portion of the loom. The shuttle then used was of primitive type carried only certain or limited length of filling yarn. The weavers threw the shuttle by hand across the loom from right and caught by left hand.

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Table 1—Types of loom and products manufactured

S No	Products	Types of loom employed
1	<i>Gadi dhadi</i> saree and Khana (Blouse material)	Throw shuttle pit loom
2	<i>Ilkal</i> type sarees	Fly shuttle pit loom
3	<i>Janata</i> sarees	Frame loom
4	<i>Lungi</i>	Frame loom
5	Bed spreads	Frame loom
6	<i>Jamkhans</i>	Frame loom

On beating the pick and changing the shed, threw back the shuttle from left and was caught by right hand indeed a very expensive picking.

The weaver sits in a position so that his feet rest on the treadles. By pressing one treadle with his foot, one of the harnesses is raised and other is lowered. This leads to the formation of shed, in front of the reed and opening will be found large, provided the loom is gated properly; a pick is released as the shuttle moves through the shed across the width of the cloth. The freshly inserted pick is beaten to the fell of the fabric by batten and immediately the other treadle is pressed to change the shed. This prevents the newly laid weft from springing out of position. While catching the shuttle after the second and following shoots the weaver gives a slight pull to it. With the introduction of fly shuttle pit looms, weaving of *Ilkal* type saree begin from *Pallav*. The woven pattern in the *Pallav* is known as *Tope teni* or *Teni-seragu*, which is the main feature of these sarees (Fig. 3). *Teni* in the regional (Kannada) language means cob, the cob of *sorghum*, which is the main staple food. The red *Pallav* has the pattern of *Teni* resembling the *Temple effect*, woven always with white.

Usually there are three groups of *Tope teni* alternately with the bands of plain weave within the *Pallav* and each group has either four or five bands of white *Tope teni*. The *temple effect Teni* is either of rayon or silk background. The *Tope teni* effect is brought about by throwing the pick across the width of the cloth using three shuttles (approximately 15 cm long). It requires two persons to handle the working of these three shuttles. The *Pallav* commences with a red band of plain weave, where the big shuttle releases the pick from selvedge to selvedge. After weaving certain length of plain band, *Tope teni* design is produced. While weaving *Tope teni* part, the pirn with red coloured filling yarn in the big shuttle is replaced by another pirn with white coloured yarn. The *Tope teni* pattern tapers at its two extreme sides,

Table 2—Fabric information of the made-ups manufactured

S No	Products	Length (m)	Width (m)	
			Body	Border
1	<i>Gadi dhadi</i> sarees	5.70	1.0	0.09
2	<i>Khanas</i>	0.80	0.60	0.15
3	<i>Ilkal</i> type sarees	5.70	1.0	0.09
4	<i>Janata</i> sarees	5.70	1.0	0.09
5	<i>Lungis</i>	2.50	1.0	--

across the width, precisely at the juncture of the border and *Pallav*. This pattern does not enter the border. At the point of *temple effect*, the red coloured weft yarn from the small shuttle interlocks with the white yarn from the bigger shuttle after completion of the *Tope teni* band of plain weave.

As the weaving progresses, the cloth beam is turned time to time in order to wind the newly made cloth. This is done by a short, strong peg, which can be loosened and tightened after winding. The peg is fitted in the cloth beam on the right hand side, free to move up right and have the support of ground, while weaving the take up motion is done manually. This shows that the weavers were expert in creating new designs and adapted in weaving *Ilkal* type sarees. Lately, fly shuttle loom came into existence, where the shuttle is arranged to move in the box at a much greater speed than hand operated loom. Pulling of string facilitates the movement of the shuttle. By the introduction of frame looms, co-operative weavers started weaving *Janata* sarees and *Lungis*. Frame looms with large width were introduced later to weave extra size *Jamkhans* (floor coverings) and bedspreads (Figs.4-5).

The fabric information of various made-ups has been presented (Table 2). The dimensions of *Gadi dhadi* saree, *Ilkal* type saree were 5.70 m in length and 1 m in width. Of which, the border comprised of 9 cm each on either sides. Usually, 100s and 60s cotton were used as warp and weft, respectively. Rayon was incorporated in *Pallav* as weft to form number of horizontal bands. *Khan* is the typical extra warp figured material from which knotted type *Choli*, jacket, and blouse were sewn. *Khanas* were woven on pit looms, having no warp beam. The width of *Khan* material usually used to be 30 inches, with maroon coloured border of each 13-20 cm on both sides and rest of the entire body is woven with extra warp figures may be floral, bird or geometrical. The length of the *Janata* saree was 5.70 m with width of 10 cm including 1 m body and 9 cm border. The dimensions of *Lungis* were 2.50 m in length and 1 m in width



Fig. 1 Preparatory processes done by women

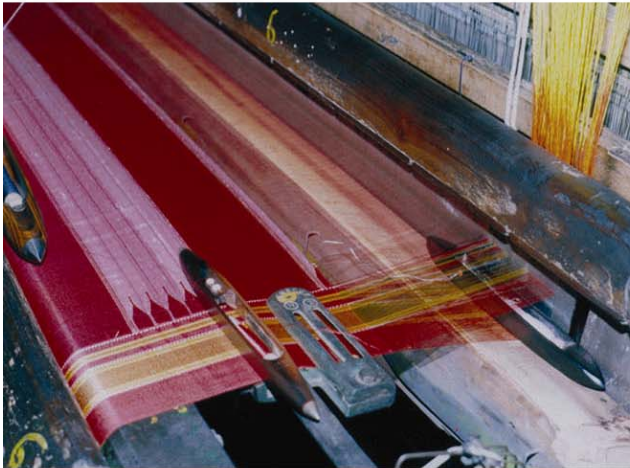


Fig. 2 Spinning of yarn by women



Fig. 3 Weaving the Tope teni pallav



Fig. 4 Weaving Jamkhana on Fly shuttle pit loom



Fig. 5 Bedspreads and Jamakhans

Table 3—Dimensions of the furnishing material produced

S No	Products	Length (m)	Width (m)	Fiber content		Counts	
				Warp	Weft	Warp	Weft
1	Bedspreads						
	Type 1	2.00	1.00	Cotton	Cotton	2/20s	10s
	Type 2	2.25	1.25	Cotton	Cotton	2/20s	10s
2	<i>Jamkhans</i> (floor coverings)						
	Type 1	2.00	1.00	Cotton	Cotton	2/20s	10s
	Type 2	2.10	1.25	Cotton	Cotton	2/20s	10s
	Type 3	2.80	1.85	Cotton	Cotton	2/20s	10s

having 2/80s count and 40s count cotton in warp and weft, respectively.

Dimensions of the furnishing materials have been presented in Table 3. Bedspreads of two different sizes, viz. 2×1 m, and 2.25× 1.25 m were produced and marketed. With unusually large sized *Jamkhans* (2.00×1.00 m, 2.10× 1.25 m, 2.80× 1.85 m) in bright multicoloured stripes are manufactured. Usually, the fibre content of both bedspreads and *Jamkhans* was cotton of count 2/20s in warp and 10s in weft. The problem of marketing handloom goods is mainly due to lack of demand, low productivity, lack of financial facilities, competition from power looms, etc. There is

a great need to improve and expand the marketing facilities of the handloom products.

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