

FROM LOOM TO LEGACY

VENKATAGIRI SAREES
VENKATAGIRI

DEPARTMENT OF KNITWEAR DESIGN
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY, HYDERABAD

2024

CRAFT - VENKATAGIRI SAREES

BY

Aarushi Soni
Khushi Kharya
Kotra Sri Charitha
Sakshi Arya
Tasneem Wagh
Vanisha Agrawal

FACULTY MENTORS

MR. B. VENKATESH AND DR.I.RAJITHA



DEPARTMENT OF KNITWEAR DESIGN
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY
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**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY, HYDERABAD MINISTRY OF TEXTILES,
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the below-mentioned students of semester-V Knitwear Design of the National Institute of Fashion Technology, Hyderabad have successfully documented the craft of Venkatagiri saree in Venkatagiri, Andhra Pradesh as a part of Craft Research and Documentation. The students are fortunate enough to observe and carry out a diagnostic study and detailed research at the cluster during the month of June in the year 2024.

Aarushi Soni
Khushi Kharya
Kotra Sri Charitha
Sakshi Arya
Tasneem Wagh
Vanisha Agrawal

Date:

Place:

Dr. I. Rajitha
(Mentor)





ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Craft Research and Documentation project has helped expand our horizon as designers and instilled a sense of appreciation for indigenous Indian craft practises that have stood the test of time. We wish to thank the National Institute of Fashion Technology, Hyderabad, for providing us with an opportunity to connect with the craftsmen practising Venkatagiri saree weaving at Venkatagiri.

Our sincere gratitude to the master weaver, Sri. Kuna Mallikarjun and all the weavers working under him. We would also like to thank the villagers, who welcomed us into their homes, educated us about venkatagiri sarees and showed us a great hospitality.

We would also like to express our gratitude to our mentors, Dr. I. Rajitha and Mr. B. Venkatesh, for providing assistance, guidance and feedback throughout the project and for providing valuable feedback to help compile this document to the best of our capabilities.

We also want to thank Mr. Shivanand Sharma, CIC, NIFT, HYDERABAD, for the support and guidance extended throughout the cluster research and documentation. A special thanks to Ms. Prachi Bajaj, facilitator as CC - KD, for making this visit to craft cluster as seamless as possible.

The efforts of Mr. Venkatesh are highly commendable for facilitating us for a week - arranging interactions with artisans, explaining the processes, etc and taking us around the village and production units.

PREFACE

When it comes to cultural art and craft, Indian textiles are renowned and appreciated by the world. Weavers of Andhra Pradesh have done it for ages with their creative imagination and exemplary skills. Our visit to the Handloom Saree Weaving cluster to Venkatagiri has allowed us to learn about the weavers who have been making the best of jamdani , adai and jacquard type sarees for years. In this documentation, we learned about the difficulties they face to keep up with the time to continue creating sarees with beautiful motifs and borders. These sarees have stayed in India ever since it started. And, seeing the current fast-paced world, weavers are taking the initiative to generate more and more awareness and propagating the importance of the craft. We believe that when a craft form is created, it is not just filled with shapes, colors and motifs rather, plenty of emotions feelings and respect are attached to it. The same goes for sarees. Hence, this documentation intends to pay tribute to the craft and preserve it.







Weaver on the loom

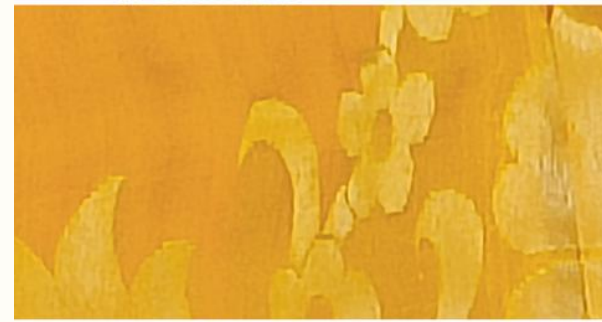
ABSTRACT

The art of Venkatagiri, the weavers who practice it and how their livelihoods revolve around affected by it was discovered. Prior to trip to Venkatagiri, secondary information was collected. The data was collected from multiple sources. This document will cover different aspects of Venkatagiri - the town, demography, Venkatagiri sarees, the history of these sarees, tools, raw materials, and equipment used, craft analysis, market - traditional and existing, design interventions, government initiatives, Antaran Tata Trust involvement and contribution, and the artisans and weavers engaged in the craft. The research includes watching the artisans and their workspaces, exploring nearby locations like markets and temples, interviewing craftsmen, and engaging with individuals at Antara Tata Trust. Once we finished gathering all primary research data, we organized it in an editorial style using Adobe software. All members of the team should be recognized for their contribution to finishing this document.



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Chapter 1 - BACKGROUND



Fig. 1.1 Picture of a bus



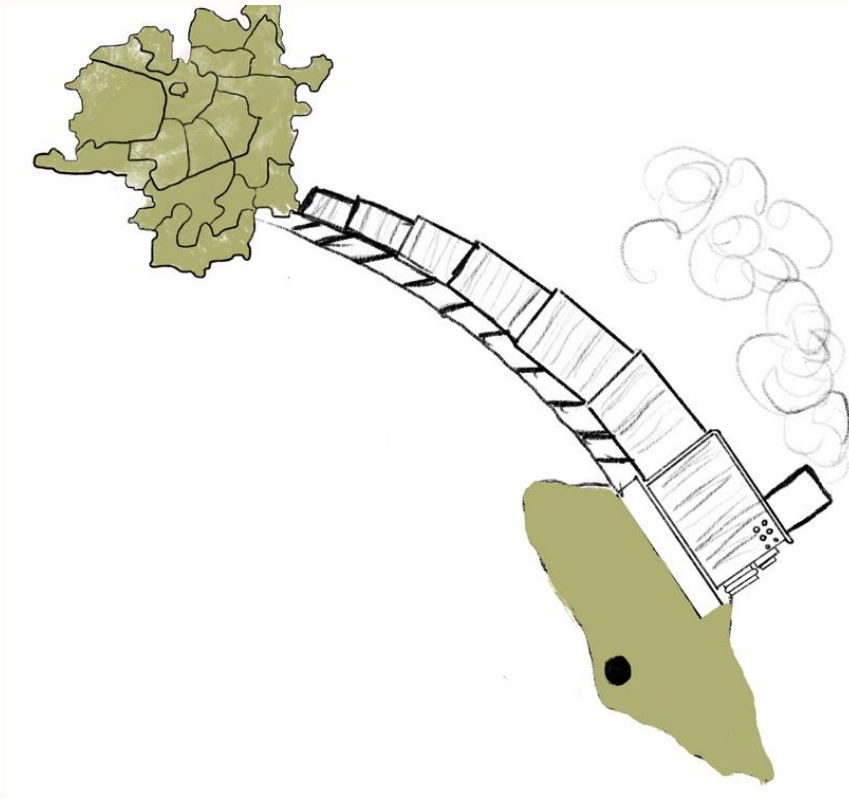


Fig. 1.2 Map from Secunderabad to Venkatagiri

1.1 HOW TO REACH VENKATAGIRI

The trip starts at the HiTech City metro station in Hyderabad, catch a metro train that travels straight to Secunderabad. Board a train that starts from Secunderabad to Gudur, Andhra Pradesh. The train goes through the stunning evolving scenery of the area. The upcoming part of the trip includes boarding a nearby bus from Gudur to Venkatagiri. The bus ride lasts for two hours, provided a beautiful sight of the village side with its lush green fields, charming villages, and the peaceful natural scenery. Upon nearing Bangarupeta in the Venkatagiri district, the rustic beauty of the region becomes visible, providing a striking difference from the urban surroundings encountered previously and could witness the community's way of living. The beautiful sights along the route only increases the excitement for the upcoming adventure at the end of the journey.



Fig. 1.3 Venkatagiri square

1.2 VENKATAGIRI

Venkatagiri is located in Tirupati district in the state of Andhra Pradesh, India. Venkatagiri is renowned for its handloom cotton and silk sarees, known as Venkatagiri sarees. It is believed that the population of Venkatagiri is approximately 70,000. The demographic makeup consists of various communities, with a notable number engaged in weaving and textile-related tasks. Venkatagiri has a large community of weavers. A significant portion of the town's population is involved in weaving and textile-related activities. Almost every weaver has learnt weaving through their ancestors. The women often assist their husbands with weaving at home. There are various jobs other than weaving that support the Venkatagiri, like farming, local shops selling groceries, government jobs, construction workers etc.



Fig. 1.4 Artisans sewing

There are mainly two local attraction, Venkatagiri Fort, an historic fort which adds historical significance and the local temples. The town has various ancient temples. Andhra Pradesh is known for its spiciness and variety. The local people of Venkatagiri prefer to have rice-based meals with various chutneys and pickles. There is a variety of option in vegetarian and non- vegetarian.



Fig. 1.5 Mandap

1.3 HISTORY OF VENKATAGIRI

Venkatagiri was established by the Velugoti dynasty in the early 17th century. The name of the town comes from the deity Venkateswara, showing high impact of religion and tradition within that location. The Velugoti rulers built Venkatagiri as an important political and cultural center. Some of them stand to date with highly secured forts, temples, and palaces among other buildings, as evidence to their architectural skills. The landmark feature of Venkatagiri Fort is its intricately carved defensive walls and magnificent design. This has been an influence for centuries that Venkatagiri is known to be a cultural and artistic center.



Fig. 1.6 Hut

The traditions of the city, from festivals to music, dances and crafts, all have been simultaneously linked to ancient traditions and at the same time are influenced by modern developments bringing a touch of fusion between them. For centuries, Venkatagiri has been recognized as a cultural and artistic center. The festivals, music, dances and crafts are deeply rooted in ancient traditions while also being influenced by modern developments, creating a unique fusion. Despite embracing modernity, Venkatagiri continues to honor its historical legacy, making it one of the most amazing destinations in southern India today.





Fig. 1.7 Top view of Venkatagiri
Courtsey : www.google.com

1.4 GEOGRAPHY OF VENKATAGIRI

The town of Venkatagiri is situated at an altitude of about sixty meters above sea level and towards the south-eastern part of the country. This place, encircled by Eastern Ghats, looks even more beautiful and bears moderate climate. Venkatagiri, on the banks of river Swarnamukhi, has vast land available for agriculture and contains so much greenery that acts as a source of water itself for irrigation. Therefore, it is a very easy place for farming. It mostly has tropical weather with warm heat in summer, moderate monsoons and cool winters. As such, it is a major center for textile and cotton industries due to its strategic location, thus influencing social patterns and economy in this region.



Fig. 1.8 People

1.5 DEMOGRAPHY OF VENKATAGIRI

Venkatagiri town's total area is 25.89 square kilometers in coverage. It has been known for its historical background and cultural heritage. It has population of about 70,000 people in which there are 2000 registered weavers. It is also famous for the cotton sarees and silk handloom sarees. The 2005 amalgamation of numerous nearby panchayats was the cause of the town gaining a III-Grade status. The rise in population in Venkatagiri has been there for quite some time. In 2011 the people were 52,688 and currently the figure is 70,000. The town is set on a 60m elevation gain above the sea level and has number of temples that are famous of which Kashi Vishwanath Temple and Prasanna Venkateswara Swami Temple are the most recognized. Venkatagiri checks in with a literacy level of nearly 67%, which is a bit on the high side of the national average. Venkatagiri sarees have got geographical indication status.

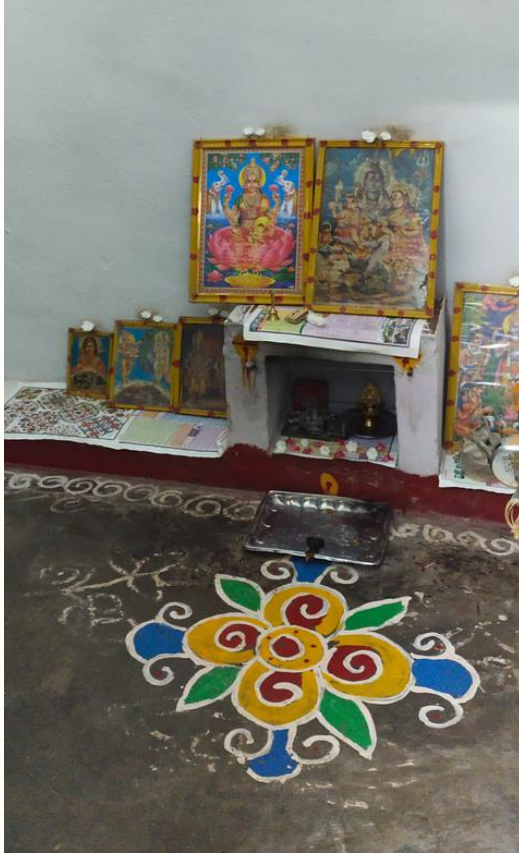


Fig. 1.9 Rangoli



Fig. 1.10 Weaver house

1.6 LIFESTYLE

Venkatagiri is known for its rich cultural heritage and historical importance. The lifestyle of the people in Venkatagiri combines centuries-old heritage and modern patterns of behavior. The local economy is strongly tied to the weaving industry, with a notable proportion of the residents being involved in the production of the Venkatagiri handloom sarees. Other occupations include rice and sugarcane production as leading agricultural activities. The local food is a hearty and resonant mix of staples, such as rice based meals .



Fig. 1.11 Lifestyle

The lentils, fresh vegetables, and different spices, with sweet treats like payasam and laddu also being very popular. The social aspect of the people of Venkatagiri is largely shared, family values are held with high regard and several family members live together in interdependent structures. There are several educational institutes in the establishment that have contributed to a greater literacy rate and an increased emphasis on getting educated.



Fig. 1.12 Dishti bomma



Fig. 1.13 Gramma devta temple

1.7 FESTIVALS

Festivals like Sankranti, Ugadi and Kolu seasons , take place with great fun and frolic including rituals, processions, and revelry inside the town's many temples. This centuries-old festival, happens once in nine years, Poleramma Jatara that takes place in Venkatagiri, the festival of local goddesses. One such Poleramma, popularly known as Venkatagiri Grama Shakti holds a special significance in the hearts of local Villagers. The master weaver educated us about the festival by saying, there is a particular group of people who feast on a buffalo after it has been put in front of goddess for the deity with songs, music for example devotional music (bhajan) adoration music.



Fig. 1.14 Poleramma temple

Poleramma Jatra

Sri Poleramma temple is famous as an esteemed Hindu shrine dedicated to the goddess Poleramma. The temple has social and religious importance for the local people. The architecture is purely traditional South Indian style with elaborate carvings and very holy but not so big space inside it. Numerous local festivals and rituals are performed in the temple, especially during the annual grand festival of Poleramma Jatara. In this jatara, there are several devotees surrounding the area. The festival has colorful processions of festivity and traditional music and dances that symbolize the cultural heritage of the local people. Worshippers ask for blessings from the goddess for things like protection, good health and prosperity. The serenity of the temple and the spiritual atmosphere here make it a part of the community. It instills unity and devotion among the worshippers.



Fig. 1.15 Venkatagiri Fort

1.8 ARCHITECTURE

Venkatagiri Palace, also called Venkatagiri Fort, is a historical and a architectural attraction. It was established in 16th century by the late Maharajah Sir Vellugoti Raja Gopala Krishna Yachendra Bahadur. It was built around 300 years back. The palace was built by the Venkatagiri royal family, who ruled the region for several centuries. The town and palace have been named after the family. This palace is built in the traditional South Indian architectural style with lots of carvings and huge courtyards. It speaks about the lifestyle of the royalty then. Venkatagiri palace is one of the very large cultural and historical sites, a sign of the rich history and heritage of the Venkatagiri Samsthanam.



Fig. 1.16 Venkatagiri Fort

It is a big tourist place for those who are keen on the history of palaces, architecture and the legacy of the royal household. The palace consists of plenty of buildings, courtyards, gardens, all designed with details and embossments. There are a number of artefacts in the palace with regard to weapons, paintings and other historical objects from the royal family. The palace and the surrounding environment are in a state of conservation, but the ways, extents or outcomes may vary significantly. Currently it is owned by 33rd generation of the family. The name of the current king is Ram Prasad Yachra. Access to certain parts of the palace was given in order to research and appreciate the historical and architectural beauty of the site.



Fig. 1.17 Iskcon temple



Fig. 1.18 Lord Krishna

1.9 OTHER PLACES OF HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE

Tirupati

Tirupati is a city known for being the administrative headquarters of the Tirupati district and home to the famous Tirupati temple. The city has rich history and cultural heritage, attracting millions of devotees and tourists every year.

ISKCON Temple

ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness) Temple located in Tirupati district is popular for its architecture and the location makes it even more attractive to the devotees. ISKCON Tirupati Charitable and Welfare Activities are: Annamrita (mid-day meals), Gauseva, Annadanam, Bhaktivedanta school, Youth Programme, Bhagavad Darshan.



Fig. 1.19 Srikalahasti temple



Fig. 1.20 Lord Shiva



Fig. 1.21 Top view of Srikalahasti

Srikalahasti

Srikalahasti is a holy town in the Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh, India, situated on the banks of the Swarnamukhi River and at the foot of the Seshachalam Hills. The town is famous for its ancient Srikalahasti Temple, as well as its natural surroundings, which attract pilgrims, tourists, and nature lovers alike.

Srikalahasti Temple

The Sri Kalahasti Temple is located in town of Srikalahasti. The name Srikalahasti comes from the Sanskrit words Sri(spider), Kala(snake), and Hasti(elephant). The temple is regarded as Rahu-Ketu kshetra and Dakshina Kailasam and is famous for its Vayu Lingam (Wind Lingam) one of the Pancha Bhuta Sthalams, representing the wind. The hand painted Kalamkari is a well known craft form of textile, Srikalahasti.





Chapter 2 - ABOUT THE CRAFT





Fig. 2.1 Saree

2.1 VENKATAGIRI SAREE WEAVING

The art of hand weaving is prominent in Venkatagiri for fine weaving using very fine silk and cotton to make complicated designs with bold colors especially in the weaving of sarees and dupattas. Besides, the textile patterns usually include intricate motifs imitating nature or reflecting cultural traditions that the weavers of Venkatagiri have adapted from their previous generations. A textured zari work is one of the significant characteristics that add value to Venkatagiri, where the fabrics are decorated with gold and silver threads. This gives an element of richness and elegance to the product.



Fig. 2.2 Weaving

The use of handlooms in such processes makes sure there is no comparison to preciseness and skillfulness with any machine-made fabric.

In the 18th century, it became an active industry under local rulers and has ever since been one significant aspect representing this region's cultural heritage up to date. Efforts have been made toward conservation as well as promotion of Venkatagiri craft despite the modern textile production that this traditional art continues to be cherished as an essential part of India's rich artistic culture.



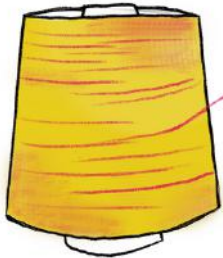
2.2 RAW MATERIALS

Combed cotton yarn



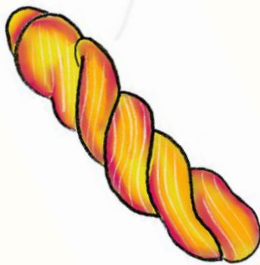
Has straight and parallel fibres, smoother, stronger and even more compressed yarns which are outstanding for weaving.

Mercerized cotton yarn



Mercerization causes the cotton fibers to swell permanently, making the yarn lustrous. Unbleached combed mercerized cotton yarn is produced in the mills. Weavers use cotton yarn of different cotton counts, which varies from 80 to 120 Ne. Generally 100 Ne cotton is used for warp and 120 Ne cotton is used for weft. Staple cotton yarns are given a NaOH (sodium hydroxide) dip and then neutralized with an acid, washed to increase its luster, strength and affinity to dye. These yarns are then given to dyeing units. 100 Ne to 120 Ne are used for cotton sarees.

Silk yarn



Dyed mulberry fine silk yarns are produced in Bengaluru. At first it is degummed to remove sericin from silk yarns to make hydrophilic and it is bleached if required. Then, it is dyed with acid dyes. Its fineness is measured in denier. Highly twisted silk yarn is used for warp and light twisted silk yarn used for weft. 2 ply and 3 ply silk yarn are used now for silk sarees.



Zari thread

Two types of zari weavers are used golden & silver. In olden days pure gold and zari was used which was replaced by silver zari. Now-a-days artificial gold zari is used mostly which is procured from Surat.



Dyes

Naphthol dyes, direct dyes and vat dyes are used for dyeing cotton yarn. Acid dyes are used for dyeing silk yarn.



Chemicals used

Hydrose - It is known as a crystalline powder, used as a whitening agent. Caustic soda - it is used in different processes like mercerizing, dyeing and scouring.

Soap - It is used in wet processes as a cleansing and lubricating product.

Washing soda - Cleaning agent for washing.

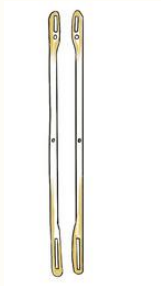
Alum(potassium aluminum sulphate) - Is used by the dyers, improves light and wash fastness and keeps color clear.

2.3 TOOLS



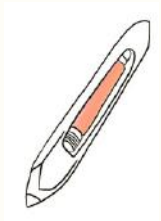
Reed

Reed (Comb) it is used to separate and space the warp threads, to guide the shuttle motion across the loom and to push the weft thread into place.



Heddle

A loom's heddle, often known as heald, is an essential component. Every warp thread travels through a heddle, which divides the warp threads to allow the weft to flow through.



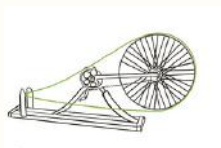
Shuttle

Shuttle (Nada) is a wooden tool, which carries the weft yarns while weaving on the loom. It is thrown or passed back between the yarn threads of the weft in order to weave.



Lease Rods

Lease Rods is used to keep the warp yarn separate and in a perfect order.



Charkha

Charka is a small, portable, hand-cranked wheel for spinning cotton and other fine short staple fibers.

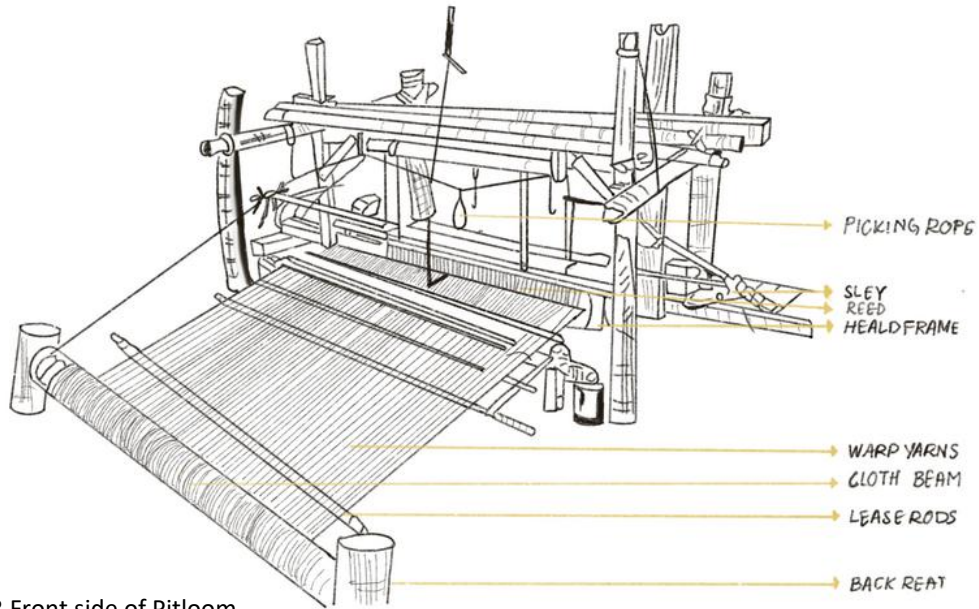


Fig. 2.3 Front side of Pitloom

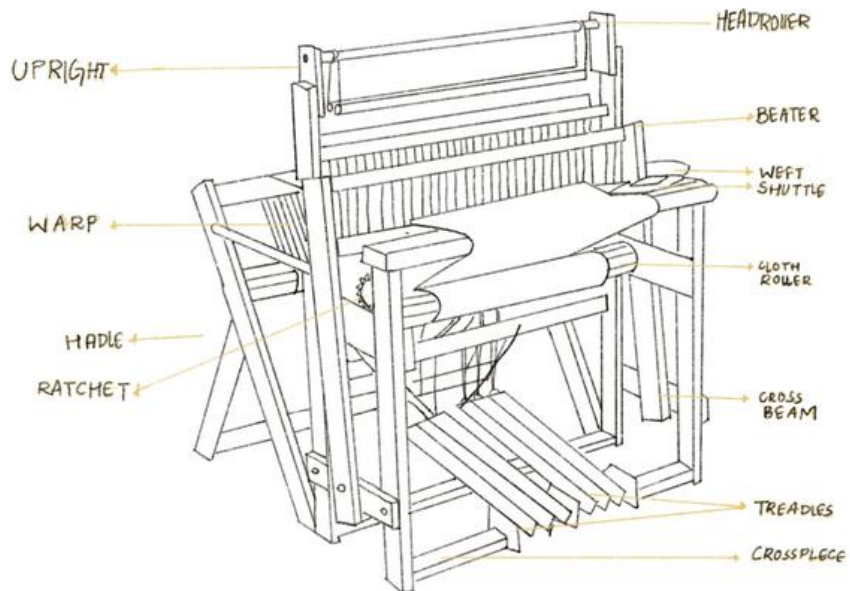


Fig. 2.4 Back side of Pitloom



Fig. 2.5 Grey yarn

2.4 PROCESS

Grey Yarn

The customary name of yarn is called 'Noolu'. Traditionally the yarn count was 100 Ne, 120 Ne, 160 Ne and 200 Ne at present the yarn count is 100s, for 80 yarn count they get 40 knots. These yarns are purchased from the mills in Coimbatore which is either dyed or gray hanks.



Fig. 2.6 Dyed yarn

Dyeing

Dyeing the yarn is known as 'rangu veyadam'. Yarn dyeing is the first step before the fabric manufacturing stage. The yarns are dyed in the form of hanks. The long yarn that runs vertically up and down in fabric room is warp and the yarn that passes horizontally across the fabric is weft dyeing warp. In the olden days the yarn dyeing process was done in Venkatagiri which includes naphthol and vat dyes. Naphthol is a two bath process. The chemicals used are base dye stuff, nitrate, hcl or sulphuric acid, acetic acid. Vat is a single bath process. The chemicals used are vat dye stuff, caustic flakes, hydrose. The quality of the yarn dyed in Venkatagiri is very unique with soft and smooth feel. Due to the difficult and challenging process now-a-days only the few people dye the yarn and most of them get ready made dyed yarns from local markets.





Fig. 2.7 Bobbins with yarn

Winding

The traditional name of winding is called chutadam. Winding is a process in which the hank is converted into bobbin form which is suitable for the following process in weaving like warping.

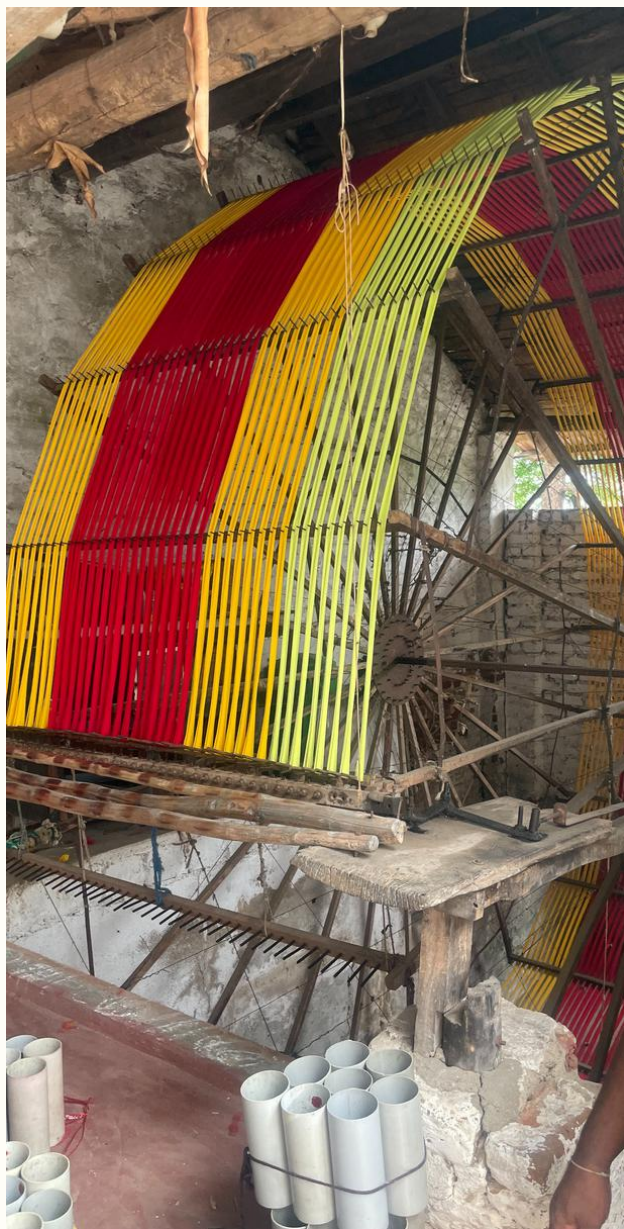


Fig. 2.8 Big wheel



Fig. 2.9 Hanks

Warping

The traditional term for warping is called 'Aasu poyadam'. The yarns are wound in the huge warping machine called aasu then the yarn is arranged in sequence according to the particular length and the design required for weaving the sticks in aasu is called as lease rods, these lease rods help the yarn to avoid entangle.

Piecing

Joining the warp ends to the previous warp where ends are left after completion of saree or fabric. They make it stronger by using Vicks.



Fig. 2.10 Piecing process



Fig. 2.11 Sizing process

Sizing

The traditional name of sizing is called 'pattidi'. Sizing is the process where the starch is applied to the yarn to strengthen the yarn and to prevent damage while weaving.



Fig. 2.12 Street warping process

Street Warping

The warp bundle is opened and tied to the two ends of the rod with a stick and is stretched. Before attaching the other ends the lease rods are inserted, this helps to prevent the entanglement of the yarn. Then they use small wooden comb to make the yarn spread equally on both sides. The starch is sprayed onto the warp with lots of pressure. This combing is done in one direction about 10 times. The whole sheet is reversed and brushed again in same direction.





Fig. 2.13 Silk beaming process

Beaming

Beaming is a process in weaving that involves winding the warp yarns onto to the weaving beam in a single operation.



Fig. 2.14 Weft winding process

Weft winding

Weft winding is also known as Pirn winding. The hank is wound to bobbin from there to charkha. The colored yarn passes through the water. If the yarn is not colored then it is dipped in rice starch for an hour and squeezed then this pirn is inserted in shuttle to carry the weft from one selvedge to another.





Fig. 2.15 Weaving process

Weaving

Weaving is interlacement of the warp and weft yarns. In Venkatagiri the weaving is done from the past 200 years. It was done using cotton yarns, the Raja of Venkatagiri introduced the silk yarns later. In Venkatagiri they use plain weave.



Fig. 2.16 Folding techniques

Folding

Venkatagiri has their unique folding technique. In olden days Venkatagiri got an award for folding the saree which fits into the match box where the yarn count was in 200 Ne.





Fig. 2.17 Raw Materials

2.5 COSTING

Costing decides depending on the price of raw materials and wages for each step in the process. They include all these wages and cost of raw materials and the labour work, they decide the final cost of the saree cost per knot is 12 rupees, warping cost per knot is 12 rupees, sizing cost for 6 knots is 275 rupees, piecing (cotton) cost per loom is 150 rupees, piecing (silk) cost per loom is 600 rupees, street warping cost for cotton 150 rupees wage per person, yarn winding costs 12 rupees for 10 hanks, sizing costs for 6 knots is 275 rupees, silk beaming costs 250 rupees.



Fig. 2.18 Sarees

Cost of sarees varies due to the material of the saree. Cotton by cotton cost ranges from ₹1,300 and ₹2,500. Cotton by silk cost ranges from ₹6,000 to ₹8,000 and silk by silk costs ₹10,000 to ₹16,000. Silk sarees costs higher than the other sarees. The information was collected from the following shops: Sree Balaji, Nakka Venkataramanaiah, APCO Stores and Bala Krishna shop. It has been discussed further more in Market Survey.





Chapter 3 – DESIGN





Fig. 3.1 Pitloom

3.1 WEAVING TECHNIQUES

Three types of techniques are used in Venkatagiri Sarees weaving -

- Adai technique
- Hand Jamdani technique
- Jacquard technique





Fig. 3.3 Weaver doing Adai technique

ADAI TECHNIQUE

Adai is an ancient and traditional technique used in the olden times. Before lifting a specific pattern design to the fabric during saree development with the Adai technique, there is a specific lifting plan for the introduction of the design. Begin by designing the pattern that is wished to place on the saree. From this, you can determine the number of warp threads required, then a sketch is outlined on inch graph paper. This is a draft basic layout of the design. The stepping processes deals with how the design will be taken for weaving into the fabric. Calculate the number of ends (vertical threads in the warp) and picks (horizontal threads in the weft) required for the design. Design a lifting plan from the analyzed design. This will show how warp threads are to be lifted in the process of weaving. Once all this is decided, the number of repeats of the design in view of the length of the saree is calculated, and required threads are tied with nylon thread according to the lifting. When the lifting plan is ready and threads are tied, the design is ready for weaving on the saree using the Adai technique. This assures that the design is woven in a manner that the fabric appears to be integrated with beauty and precision. The steps are done carefully with a lot of detail given to the saree, which brings out the richness of tradition and the skill of the hands of the weavers.



Fig. 3.4 Weaver doing Jamdani technique

JAMDANI TECHNIQUE

Transfer the pattern to a piece of paper called trace paper. This is then inserted onto the loom and under the reed or cloth beam. The design consisted of winding small bobbins also called pirns in order to load them with black thread and other color patterns were input one by ten via a manual insertion. The weaver then follows the traced design in panning and insert pirns accordingly. Up to 180 pirns can also be loaded depending upon the complexity of pattern design in creating vivid, intricate and colorful motifs on sarees. Jamdani, in contrast to the machine-aided loom weaving technology is done by a professional beggar begs on each individual flower in the motif. Boundary Surface: One of the special characteristics of Jamdani weave is that the fabric's surface is uniform on front and back. The threads are all in their places, the ones in the front and the ones in the back, because all of them get woven during the process. It is purely a handwork process, and there are no instruments or modern techniques used, so every piece is different and the weaver's skill is affirmed. The weavers work with all the threads given, with the intricate, pattern-filled cloth they create being the same on both front and back surfaces. They are not left out; also, the weft threads are not left hanging, because all of them are woven into the body. This is a purely manual process, and no machinery or modern techniques are involved, which makes each single piece unique and a testament to the skill of the weaver.



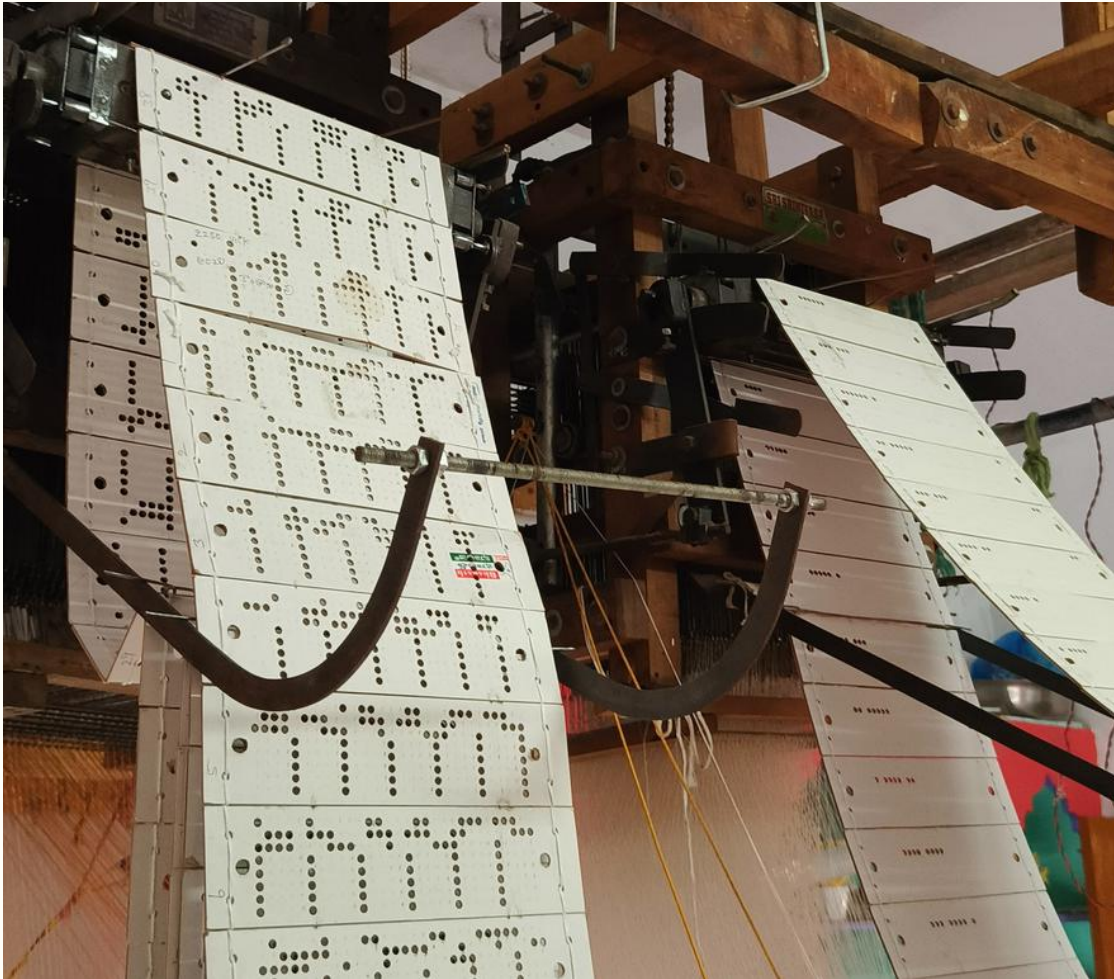


Fig. 3.5 Punchcards on a Jacquard loom

JACQUARD TECHNIQUE

Jacquard involves a bunch of stages, in the initial phase and planning of the layout. After finishing the rough sketch, the procedure comes next to spin the design off into a grid shape, which shows where each part will be woven. Experts in the field have now started to add binding marks that not only show you which threads will go where but also imply the construction of the fabrics. The first step is to decide which colors and then you can put them on the graph paper to see the final style more obvious. Once decided on the design, you can start the card punching process.



Fig. 3.6 Weaving on Jacquard Loom

The Jacquard device uses the cards as a guide for the loom's hooks and needles, which lift the right threads following the design. The cards are then fed into the machine so onto the creation of the woven item, those woven pieces that are more complex are produced. **Jacquard cards** - Jacquard card designs are marketed for 7 rupees. Hooks are used for warp umbrellas and cards are available for weft umbrellas. If the border is of 240 hooks, then this constraint can be handled by repeating the pattern. Either client or designer can make choices on colors and designs. The pattern is designed in such a way that even if the middle threads break, the pattern remains intact. The design typically takes 1-2 hours to work on the computer. They use local paper-carbon cardboard and it takes about an hour to punch 350 cards. It can be from 2500 to 6000 rupees the cost of raw cards. The card creates the profit of 2.5 rupees if threading costs an additional 0.5 per card.



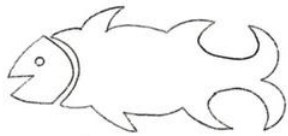
3.2 MOTIFS



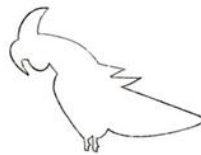
PARROTS (CHILUKALU)



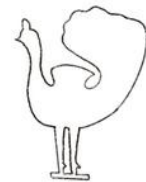
LEAF (AAKULU)



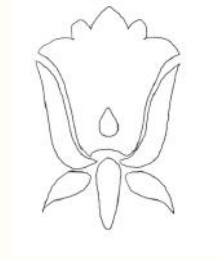
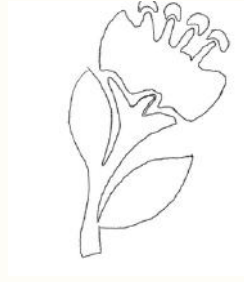
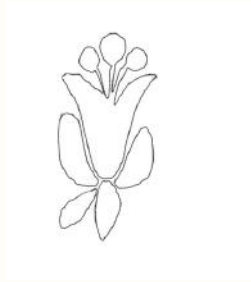
FISH (CHEPA)



PARROT (CHILUKKA)



PEACOCK (NEMALI)



FLOWERS (PUVULU)



BUD (MOGGA)



NEMALI (PEACOCK)





Fig. 3.7 Pattu border

3.3 BORDER AESTHETICS

Pattu Border

Pattu Border has massive detailed designs often and sometimes with gold or silver thread (zari) work. Whereas this kind of borders has many typical motifs including floral patterns, peacocks as well as paisley. This magnificent zari work makes it appropriate for special events such as weddings and festive seasons.



Fig. 3.8 Kadi border

Kaddi Border

Typically, there will be a “Kaddi border” which consists of solid plain border in different colors. This design is preferred for being simple and giving the saree a formal appearance. The borders also feature traditional motifs that match with the overall design of the saree.

Buguda Border

Buguda border, on the other hand, refers to a special kind of border designs which are adorned with paisleys, flowers or peacock motifs among others using gold or silver threads known as zari. The Buguda border makes the sari look elegant and rich making it ideal for special occasions like festivals.



Fig. 3.9 Buguda border





Fig. 3.10 Old design

3.4 DESIGNS THEN

Earlier only a few motif designs were used on the borders like stripes, checks, rudrakshas, asharfi buta, kalsam, benaras twill, temple aspire, film border (muttu kadi) but recently, with more developments in the design techniques, the motif collection has diversified, using Jhala, Dobby and Jacquard techniques. About ten years ago, the motifs used in the sarees were big and bold, their sizing was done keeping in mind the then trends in design which included big motifs spread across the whole saree. Mostly floral and paisley motifs, large in size were repeated all across the saree with even spacing. The motifs were also not very definitive, since the weavers lacked the technical know-how to create uniform motifs. Earlier the yarn count of cotton used to 80 NE, which made the muslin even more fine.



Fig. 3.11 New design

3.5 DESIGNS NOW

But recently, a change in the overall composition of the motifs has been observed. Keeping up with the current trends, the motifs appear more floral and geometric in nature. They are more evenly spaced out with small and intricate details and occupy more space on the saree, especially the pallu. Due to technological advancements and weavers' increased proficiency with design softwares such as Photoshop and Illustrator, some weavers are using digital tools to create motifs for the jacquard weave. These motifs are used by having the digital motif converted into a format with holes and blanks using a digital jacquard machine, which punches holes on a blank card in response to input from the machine. The yarn count is around 100s NE as of now.





Chapter 4 - MARKETS and MARKETING CHANNELS





Fig. 4.1 A market view



Fig. 4.2 Venkatagiri Dupattas

Market survey

We conducted a market survey for better understanding of the Venkatagiri sarees and what are the need and preference of the buyer. According to the survey sarees with pattu border are sold in a higher amount compared to other designs. Silk sarees are also preferred more than the other Venkatagiri sarees.

We visited different shops of Venkatagiri getting to know about different Venkatagiri sarees like silk by silk, cotton by cotton, cotton by silk. The range of the Venkatagiri sarees also depend on the fabric like silk sarees were more expensive than the cotton saree.

We visited three stores in Venkatagiri and one in Tirupati. Information about the cost, fabric, design of the saree was provided to us.



Fig. 4.3 APCO Handloom House

APCO Handloom House

The Andhra Pradesh State Handloom Weavers Cooperative Society Ltd. Established in the year 1980, APCO Handloom House is a popular destination in Tirupati for handloom products, especially cotton sarees. APCO Handloom House offers a wide range of products, including sarees, dress materials.



Fig. 4.4 Bala Krishna shop

Bala Krishna Sarees

The shop keepers sell handloom sarees online and offline, including through Instagram, YouTube, social media, malls, and exporting all over India. With a starting price range of ₹2,500 to ₹18,000, they work with a total of 131 weavers who receive a 5% margin for each saree. The best-selling sarees are the Pattu brocade border sarees, with wholesalers and retailers receiving a margin of around 30%. The process involves weavers, manufacturers, shops, malls and customers.



Fig. 4.5 Sree Balaji Shop

Sri Balaji Saree Mandir

Jamdani sarees are high in demand but they have a limited number of Jamdani weavers and collections. With 2500 weavers, each Jamdani saree has a margin of ₹500 , while silk sarees have margins ranging from ₹600 to ₹1000. The sarees are exported to Hyderabad, Chennai, Vijayawada, and Bangalore. They offer online purchases through a WhatsApp committee for both wholesalers and retailers. Wholesalers make a profit of ₹500- ₹800 with free shipping nation wide, while retailers make profits below ₹1500 including shipping costs.



Fig. 4.6 Nikka Venkataramanaiah shop

Nakka Venkataramanaiah Store

This shopkeeper sells and export the sarees all over Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Telangana and Tamil Nadu. The Price range of the sarees from ₹1800 to ₹16500. ₹1800 being the cheapest saree. Mostly cotton is for lesser price. They usually earn profit by selling in mall, and the profit goes upto 80% .



Chapter 5 – SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS





5.1 GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION

NHDC - (National handloom government cooperation) intervention in Venkatagiri, particularly for weavers, is part of broader efforts to support traditional textile industries and improve the livelihoods of artisans.

NHDP - The Pradhan Mantri Weaver MUDRA Scheme NHDP (National handloom development program) focuses on preserving traditional techniques, improving weaver livelihoods and enhancing market access for handloom products.

The Naitanya government intervention in Venkatagiri typically refers to initiatives or schemes designed to support and promote the traditional weaving industry in this region.

AAPKO Apex government intervention in Venkatagiri typically includes setting national policies, providing funding and subsidies, developing infrastructure, implementing supportive programs, and promoting Venkatagiri handloom products through branding and marketing initiatives. Weaver gets silk subsidy 1000 INR per month through the passbook. 1810 people received 10k INR each and people who cross 50 years are eligible for pension which is 3000 per month .Usually normal people get after crossing 60 years. Weavers get it by 50 years because their vision gets spoiled by then.

Weavers Mudra loans - The Weaver MUDRA scheme, initiated under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, is designed to support handloom weavers and entrepreneurs. It offers concessional credit, providing margin money assistance of 20% of the loan amount up to a maximum of ₹10,000 per weaver. 87 looms are about to be constructed and there are approximately 2000 registered weaver. The government is going to give 200 units free power to the weavers. The "17 Weaver Cooperative Societies" refers to a network of cooperatives in India aimed at promoting and supporting the handloom and weaving industry.



Fig. 5.1 Mandal Development Office

The Mandal Development Office situated in Venkatagiri, Andhra Pradesh, plays a proper part in local administration related to the application and management of developmental programs and schemes. The first goal the agency sets is to raise the living standards by using targeted initiatives in vital sectors like agriculture, education, health, and infrastructure. It allows the implementation of state policies and programs as well as foster them to the lowest administrative unit. The responsibilities not only include the harmonization with other departments, but also the execution of the projects and settlement of problems at the local level. With the aim to promote the growth of the economy and the betterment of the population's health, the Mandal Development Officer's office is committed to sustainability and efficiency service delivery.





Fig. 5.2 Antaran - TATA TRUST

5.2 NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION

The Antaran is run by Tata Trusts and is the only NGO in Venkatagiri. They help the weavers financially. From the earnings for Tata Company, 66% goes to TCS and the remaining amount is used to help the weavers.

They have done plenty of surveys to know about the Venkatagiri sarees. They put up exhibitions in cities like Hyderabad and Vijyawada to sell and promote Venkatagiri sarees.



Fig. 5.3 Anataran - TATA TRUST

Realising that there is still high demand of Hand Jamdani sarees and the number of weavers practising the same has reduced has led them to hunt more of Hand Jamdani weavers and pay more to create the sarees. But the weavers aren't usually interested in money and weave for their happiness.

The NGO also tried to recreate old sarees Venkatagiri sarees because they are more in demand.

They also have products from of different master weavers which they sell and promote.



Chapter 6 – ISSUES AND CHALLENGES





6.1 SWOT ANALYSIS

S- Strength

Exceptionally intricate hand woven design is what makes Venkatagiri sarees famous. Venkatagiri sarees are thin and pleasant material which make them suitable for any occasion. The fabric gracefully drapes thereby increasing the total elegance of the saree. Venkatagiri saree is known for its elaborate features, traditional patterns such as floral motifs or geometric designs, as well as intricate borders. Inspiration from nature coupled with cultural themes inspires these designs. Venkatagiri sarees are made from good quality cotton which makes these garments durable and soft. In addition, the cotton used is often breathable making it comfortable to wear the saree. There are many vivid and attractive colors that can be found in Venkatagiri Sarees. Use of natural dyes ensures that the colors do not fade easily and also appear rich. There has been transfer of generations regarding weaving techniques used in Venkatagiri sarees so as to maintain traditional methods and guarantee authenticity.

W - Weakness

Even though it is lightweight, the fabric can be fragile and susceptible to damage if not treated carefully. This may necessitate increased attention to upkeep in contrast to sturdier materials. Even though it is lightweight, the fabric can be fragile and susceptible to damage if not treated carefully. This can make them more difficult to locate beyond their original area. Increased prices may result from the complex hand-weaving technique and premium cotton used in comparison to machine-made sarees. This may not be the best option for buyers with limited funds. Venkatagiri sarees may have a more traditional design aesthetic when being compared to modern saree styles. This could restrict their attractiveness for individuals seeking modern or trendy designs. Maintaining the beauty of Venkatagiri sarees requires proper care and upkeep. Regular washing with care and proper storage are necessary to prevent any harm.

T- Threats

The increase of machine-made sarees, which often comes at a lower price and are manufactured in large quantities, is a big problem. These sarees can cover the market with lower price and faster production, thus competing the production of handwoven Venkatagiri sarees. These can possibly cause the artisans and sellers to generate lower profits and face difficulties. Venkatagiri sarees' popularity may cause counterfeits or imitations to prosper. These imitations are not merely affecting the credibility of authentic Venkatagiri sarees, but also confusing customers. The climatic changes and pollution can have negative effects on cotton cultivation and the supply of natural dyes, which are the main materials for Venkatagiri sarees. Thus, this may possibly result in increased costs or poor quality. The problems such as geopolitical and trade restrictions and logistical problems can cause a shortage of raw materials and the production process will also experience significant slowdowns. The fact that Venkatagiri sarees might be sold only in their traditional markets and may not be spread elsewhere by word of mouth means that the sarees could possibly be unknown outside their traditional markets. The value of the sarees and whether they are suitable for a customer is a matter that is often not known due to the lack of proper marketing and education.

O-Opportunity

Nowadays there is a real global attraction to traditional as well as artisanal clothing styles. In view of the fact that they can fit into these genres, the sarees of Venkatagiri should try to expand in the international market. In particular, if they focus on the regions where there are so many Indians living or where they produce unique textiles as well, they should have a chance to do so. The process of creating an online identity of a company through e-commerce platforms as well as through social media is a critical factor in raising the business' visibility and presence. Website creation is at the top of the list, but it also includes playing on a variety of online marketplaces and social media platforms through advertisements in the hope of drawing the maximum audience. Expanding the product mix is a means to cover other similar items such as saree blouses, dupattas, or even home textiles this way they can be more inclusive in terms of reaching a wider customer base and increasing the turnover. Creating specialty collections for festivals, weddings, or other significant occasions is a hook that is sure to get buyers interested in buying exclusive goods which people are looking for special events. Creating links between boutiques or stores that are expert in luxury and the cooperation of the saree sellers can bring the exciting possibilities of getting out of such a narrow domain as the sarees variety only.





Fig. 6.1 Steet market

5.4 OBSERVATIONS AND FINDINGS

Every home of Venkatagiri is filled with the beauty of weaving, art and knowledge. They are connected through their culture. They start their day by creating a rangoli on their doorstep. The people are warm haerted and kind. They work in a community and help each other out. They start working as early as 4 o' clock in morning and end their day by 8 o'clock in the evening. Every house has a "dishti bomma" hung on their door.

The people there have a lot of value for their history and take pride in their tradition. Government provides them with schemes to help them out financially to purchase raw materials and promote them to weave. There has been a decrease in the number of weavers as the younger generation is adopting other occupations.



Fig. 6.2 Weaver navigating



Chapter 7 – ARTISANS PROFILE



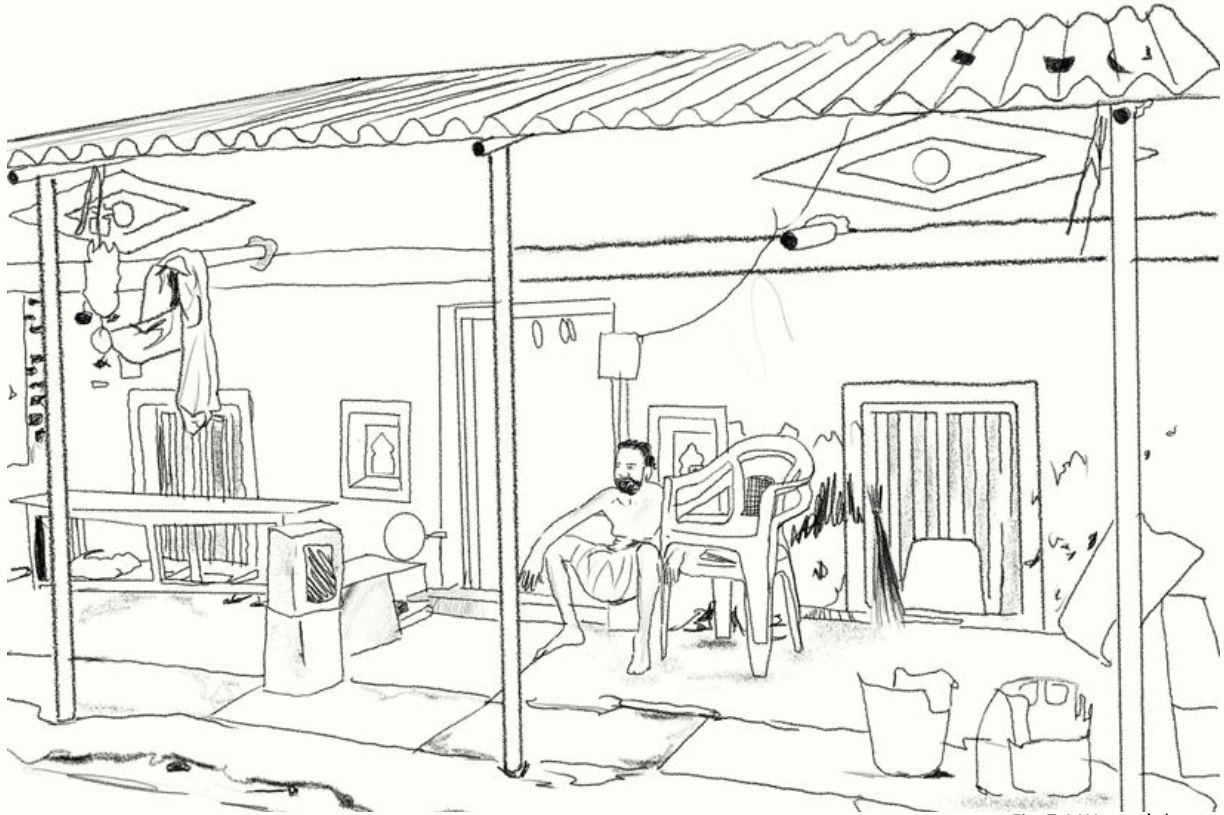


Fig. 7.1 Weaver's house

WEAVERS OF VENKATAGIRI

The weavers are an integral part of Venkatagiri, and their contribution is vital to the economy, culture and heritage of the town. High-stake artisans holding exposure to the weaver domain sometimes in their ancestors and have been working in the famous Venkatagiri saris with intricate crafts and beautiful zari work. In most of the textile-related sectors, the livelihoods of families are sustained through such households, which also become a source of employment in many related activities, such as dyeing, spinning, and trading. The weavers of Venkatagiri carry their cultural heritage forward in maintaining a tradition in techniques and designs at the same time that they work to keep up with the innovation brought about by the modern needs of the market.



Fig. 7.2 Weaver in a weaver's home

The weavers are indulging into different crafts and modernising the techniques used to weave Venkatagiri saree. The younger generation of the weavers are adapting different other crafts as well. They are expanding their knowledge in different other activities as well.



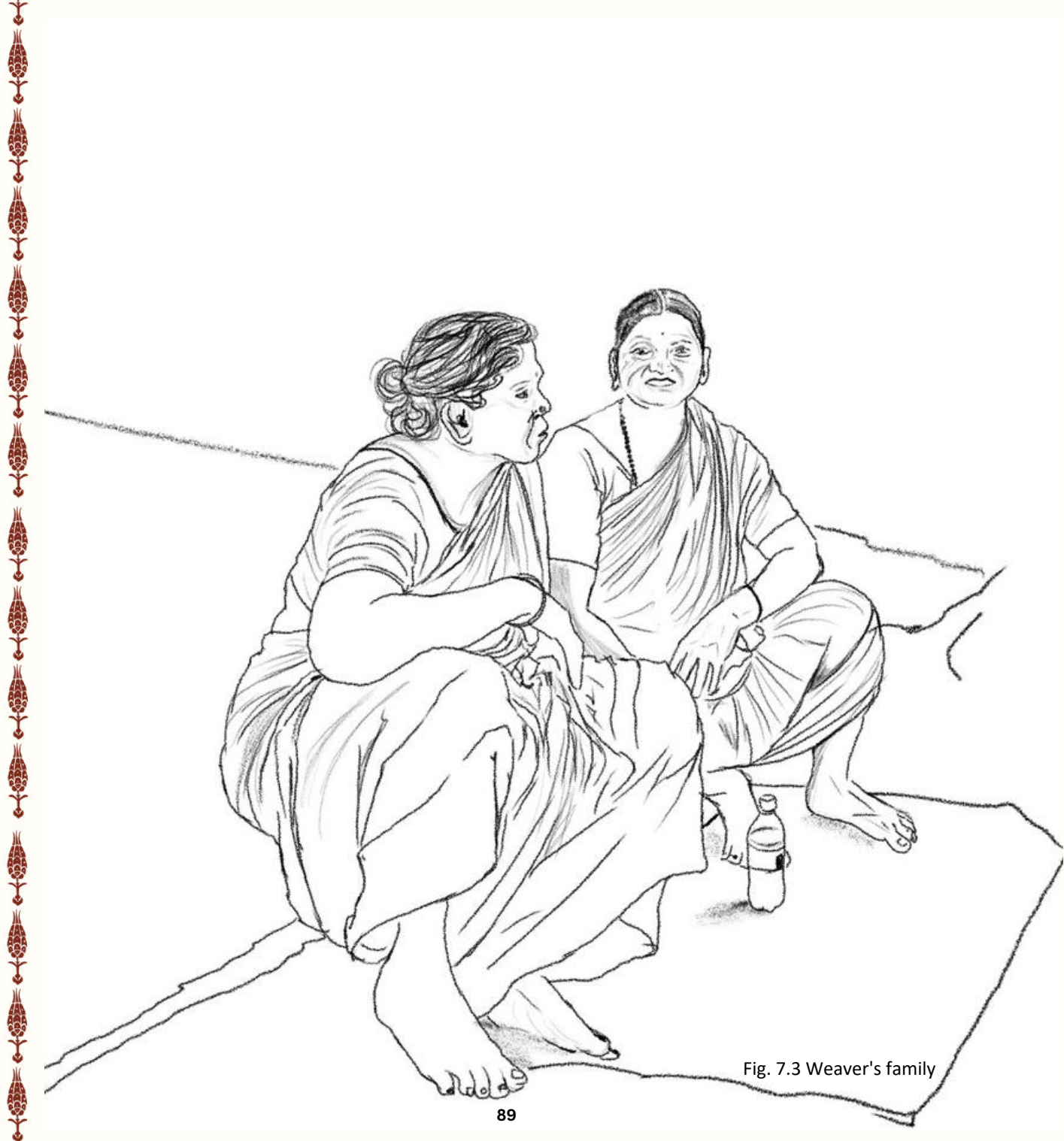


Fig. 7.3 Weaver's family

MASTER WEAVER

Sri. Kuna Mallikarjun (Master weaver)

Age - 71 years

Jamdani technique weaver

National Award Winner - Saint Kabir(2018)

Phone Number- 9908558872



Fig. 7.4 Sri Kuna Mallikarjun

He has been weaving since the age of 10 years. He has acquired the skill from his father and grandfather. He is fluent with many languages including Hindi, Telugu, English.

Address : 1-7. School Street, Bangarupeta, Venkatagiri, A.P. 524 404

Smt. Kuna Jayalakshmi
Age-54 years
Pirn winding
1-7, School Street, Bangarupeta,
Venkatagiri, A.P. 524404
Phone:8790857041

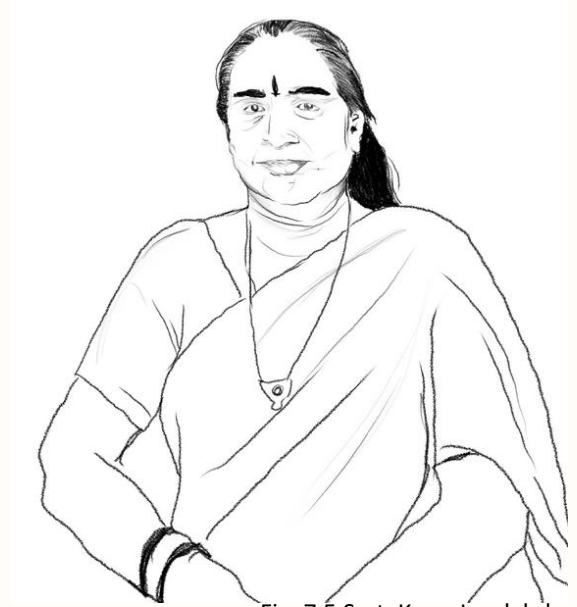


Fig. 7.5 Smt. Kuna Jayalakshmi



Fig. 7.6 Sri. Laxmaiah

Sri. Laxmaiah
Age - 43 years
Street warping weaver
Main road near Gandhi statue
Bangarupet, Venkatgiri

Sri. Subhrailu
Age - 58 years
Street warping weaver
Bangarupet, Venkatagiri
Phone : 9652795259



Fig. 7.7 Sri. Subhrailu



Fig. 7.8 Sri. Kuna Prakash

Sri. Kuna Prakash
Age - 58 years
Jacquard technique weaver
Chakali street Bangarupet, Venkatgiri
Phone : 8985839642



Sri. Shyam
Age - 35 years
Jacquard Technique weaver
Chakali street
Bangarupeta Venkatagiri



Fig. 7.9 Sri. Shyam

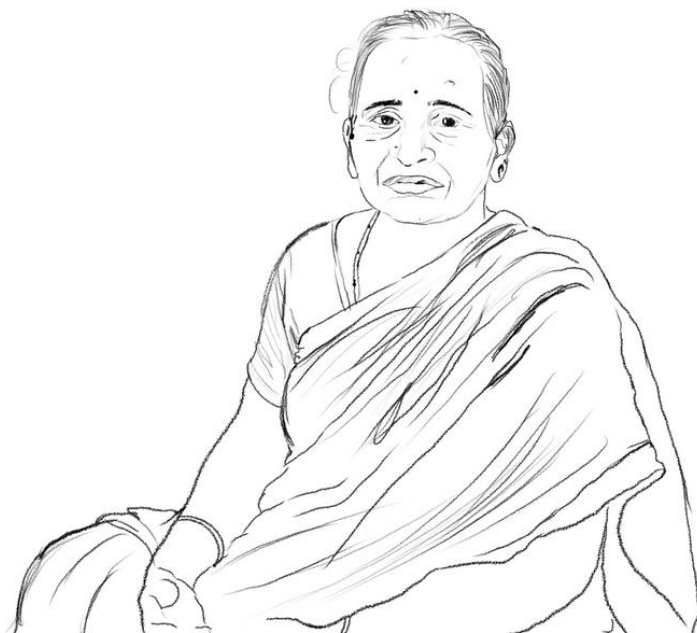


Fig. 7.10 Smt. Yarasi Swarna

Smt. Yarasi Swarna
Age - 45 years
Piecing artist
Bangarupet, Venkatagiri

Sri. Patnam Subramanyam

Age - 40 years

Master weaver

National merit certificate

Bangarupet, Venkatagiri

Phone : 9652795259



Fig. 7.11 Sri. Patnam Subramanyam



Fig. 7.12 Sri. Pasasumarthi

Sri. Pasasumarthi

Age - 62 year

Jacquard weaving

Bangarupet ,Venkatgiri



Chapter 8 – OUR EXPERIENCE



The opportunity to experience these 10 days and explore the village side had a huge impact on our daily life.

Getting to know about their lifestyle learning different crafts and meeting new people. As we arrived in Venkatagiri, the town's rich cultural heritage was immediately evident. Our first stop was master weaver home. There we experienced great hospitality and the design of the house was also vintage. From the next day we started visiting the house of different weavers the group collectively observed skilled artisans meticulously crafting these beautiful sarees. Each saree was woven with immense precision, often taking several days to complete. Some of our classmates also had the opportunity to try hand at weaving under the guidance of a master weaver.

Getting to experience the lifestyle of the weavers and having home cooked food from the master weaver house was an excellent experience. We also visited different Government NGOs and temples.

Overall, our visit to Venkatagiri was an enriching journey into the heart of India's textile heritage. The intricate craftsmanship and cultural significance of Venkatagiri sarees left a lasting impression on us and we left with a newfound appreciation for this timeless art form.



Fig. 8.1 Master weaver's family

GLOSSARY

- Aasu - Warp creel
- Jaala - Healdshafts
- Oosa - Bobbin
- Laka - Lease rods
- Kunchi - Large coconut hair brush Used during sizing
- Nada - Shuttle
- Souvalu - Aluminum rods
- Vinthu - Long frame wide teeth comb
- Nemali- The peacock
- Hamsa - The swan
- Muttupetu - The pearl ladder
- Vari aaku - The paddy
- Aakulu - The leaf
- Poovu - The flower
- Maavidi - The mango
- Gurram - The horse
- Muttu kadi - Film border
- Karikam - Half white
- Pal roza - Baby pink
- Aaku pachcha - Leaf green
- Anugu Rangu - Grey
- Daykarra - A bamboo structure stand used to keep yarns above ground
- Warping - Aasu
- Sizing - pattidi
- Piecing- Achu attakadam
- Street warping - allu





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