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HANDICRAFT SURVEY REPORT

Carpet Craft of Obra Village

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FOREWORD

The Indian handicrafts are known the world over for their rich variety, grace, elegance and skilled craftsmanship. Nevertheless, a number of handicrafts because of their stiff competition with factory made products, non-availability of raw materials, exhorbitant increase in the manufacturing cost, lack of proper marketing facilities for finished products or due to a variety of other reasons have either become extinct or have reached the moribund stage. After independence, however, a number of schemes were introduced by different government agencies for their growth and development but still this sudden impetus have helped only a few crafts to flourish and thereby become spinners of foreign exchange for the country.

Despite the unique position being enjoyed by the handicafts especially, in the realm of national economy, the general awareness among the people in the country about our craft and craftsmen had been deplorably poor. Nothing was practically known about the commoditie produced, techniques employed for the manufacture of different objects, raw materials used their availability, methods adopted for the sale of finished products, etc. An attempt was therefor made in connection with the 1961 Census to study about 150 crafts from diffetrent parts of the country with a view to provide basic information on those crafts which were selected for the study.

At the 1971 Census, the study on handicrafts was not taken up but this was again revived in connection with the 1981 Census. There has been, however, some difference between the studies taken up in connection with the Censuses of 1961 and 1981. While the 1961 studies have covered both rural and urban crafts, the 1981 studies have focussed their attention only on traditional rural based crafts. That apart, the 1981 studies besides touching upon those aspects which were covered under the 1961 series, have laid emphasis on matters that are vital for the revival of rural crafts and thereby for the rejuvenation of the economy of the region particularly the villages. This is in consonance with the policy of the government to give due importance to the rural sector with focus on employment intensive strategy of development in which next to agriculture, the small scale industries and handicrafts play a significant role.

The formats required for undertaking the study were formulated by Dr. K.P. Ittaman under the able guidance of Dr. N. G. Nag, the then Deputy Registrar General, Social Studies Division. Dr. Ittaman who succeeded Dr. Nag as Deputy Registrar General, Social Studies Division co-ordinated the study undertaken in different States/Union Territories by the Directorates of Census Operations. The reports received from the Directorates were examined by Sri M. K. Jain, Senior Research Officer with the help of Smt. Suman Prashar, Assistant Director of Census Operations. I am grateful to all of them for organising this study.

The present report is the outcome of a study undertaken on carpet by the Directorate of Census Operations, Bihar, Patna. I have immense pleasure in acknolwledging the services rendered by Shri V.K. Bhargava, Deputy Director and his colleagues in the Census Directorate for bringing out this publication.

New Delhi :
the 1st June, 1988

V. S. VERMA
Registrar General, India

PREFACE

The present report is a micro level socio-economic study of carpet craft located at Obra village in Aurangabad district of Bihar State. This aims to highlight the present problems and impediments associated with the craft and suggests measures to revive the past glory of this traditional based handicraft of Bihar. While drafting the report an attempt has been made to portray a vivid picture of the craftsmen and their carpet weaving skill under social and rural setting. It also reflects the life of villagers who were practising the craft and their role in village economy. In order to make the report more useful valuable information on carpet weaving was also gathered from other agencies such as the office of the Handicraft and Handloom Corporation, Obra, Aurangabad and export Corporation, Bihar, Patna. The co-operation rendered by the management of Rajesh Textile, Danapur, Patna, a private carpet manufacturing firm for providing technical details of carpet production is worth mentioning.

For carrying out this job four types of schedules namely (A) craft schedule (B) village schedule (C) Household schedule for practising craftsmen and (D) Household schedule for non-practising craftsmen were canvassed. Craft schedule contained basic data of the craft relating to the state. Village schedule sought to take an account of basic demographic details relating to village besides traditional and non-traditional handicrafts practising in the village. The other schedules, *viz.*, the household schedule contained information for the household pertaining to practising and non-practising craftsmen.

The field investigation organised during February-March, 1987 was undertaken by the staff of this Directorate comprising S/Shri Late Sudama Chaudhary, Statistical Assistant, U. C. Lal, Statistical Assistant, Mathura Prasad Sah Bibhuti, Jeyendra Prasad and Anil Kumar Singh all computors under the able guidance of Shri B.K. Varma, Investigator. Shri Varma had also drafted the basic report with the assistance of Shri U. C. Lal, Statistical Assistant. Shri S.K. Sinha, Assistant Director provided suitable suggestions to improve upon the draft while Shri S. C. Saxena, Deputy Director apart from guiding the conduct of the survey, had edited the entire report and made it press-worthy. The district map showing the location of village under study was prepared by the map section under the supervision of Shri R. P. Singh, Research Officer (Map), S/Shri Md. Hasan Azad, Stenographer and M.A. Hoda, L.D.C. typed the report Shri G.C. Mishra, Assistant Director, Shri B.K. Srivastava, Printing Inspector assisted by S/Shri K.K. Prasad, D. B. Singh and B. K. Sinha all computors have helped in getting the volume printed. I am thankful to all of them.

The photographic coverage has been partly done by me and rest have been covered by S/Shri Sanjay Kumar Sinha and Anil Kumar Sinha, operators of this Directorate. I am thankful to Shri Kapildeo Prasad, Incharge, Sales Emporium, Bihar State Handloom and Handicraft Corporation, Obra, Aurangabad who took keen interest and spared his valuable time in convincing the female workers to give their snaps during preparation of *Kabuli* and working on Chakrhi.

Shri V.S. Varma, the Registrar General, India was the guiding force behind this project and I am deeply indebted to him. My thanks also goes to Dr. N. G. Nag, the then Deputy Registrar General and Dr. K. P. Ittaman who succeeded Dr. Nag for co-ordinating the presnt study. I am grateful to Shri M. K. Jain, Senior Research Officer and Smt. Suman Prashar, Assistant Director belonging to S.S. Division of Registrar General, India's office who have taken much pains in scrutinizing the report and furnishing valuable suggestions for improving the quality of the report. I am thankful to Shri B. P. Jain, Assistant Director, Printing. Office of the Registrar General India and the Manager, Government of India Press, Minto Road, New Delhi, who have helped in bringing out this publication.

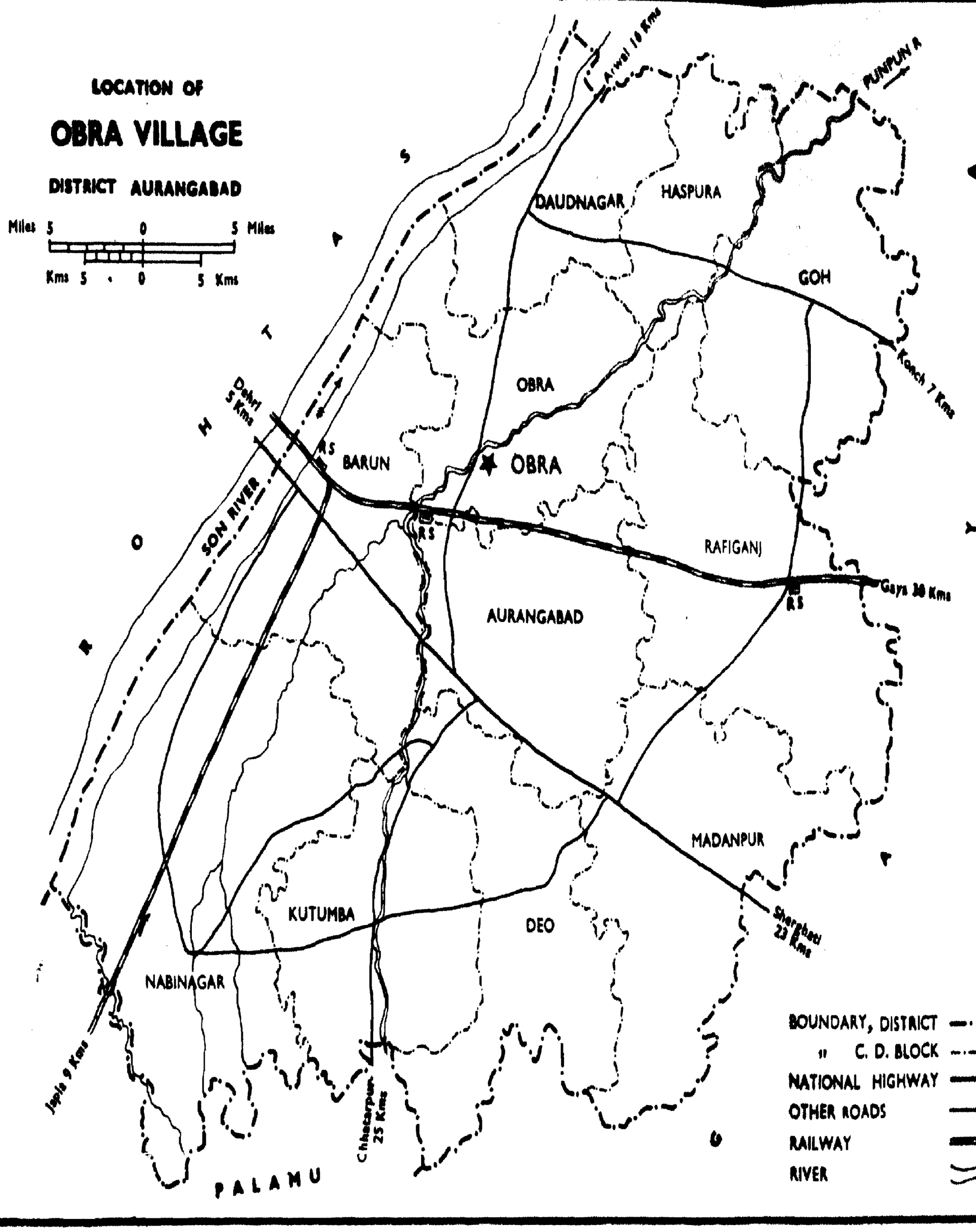
PATNA :
the 26th Sept., 1988

V. K. BHARGAVA
Deputy Director of Census Operations, Bihar.

LOCATION OF

OBRA VILLAGE

DISTRICT AURANGABAD



CHAPTER I

HISTORY OF ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CRAFT

Craft is men's first technology of the hand. It develops out of man's need to satisfy necessary wants of daily use and also the aesthetic taste. In the same process present day carpet craft is an outcome of very long saga of human evolution and perfection depending upon untiring zeal. Pre-historic men lived in great hardships under primitive conditions dominated by elements of physical forces. They ceaselessly toiled to ameliorate their conditions. They dwelt in caves. Leaves and grasses formed their beddings and furs and skins of animals were their clothes to protect against the rigours of weather. The skins of deer, tigers or leopards might have provided them models for carpets. They lived in groups like nomadic tribes. From hunter and food gatherer human being developed to herder and cultivator or even up to civilized community. In the process of development human being invented many crafts, but it is very difficult to say that what craft has precedence over others. However there is complete lack of recorded evidence on the basis of which one can precisely say with definite exactness how, when, where and by whom carpet was first knotted, Only further excavations may answer, which of the crafts, rug weaving, pottery making and metal smelting began earlier. It is hoped that excavations may alter the picture of ancient world again and again about these intriguing questions.

In the absence of recorded history one has to bank upon excavations and stray references found in literature and art which throws sufficient light on the appearance of oriental carpets in the early history of civilization. Pieces other than glaciated carpets have natural limit of its existence, for the carpets are formed of perishable commodities. Many earlier carpets would have vanished from world arena before forming archaeological evidence. Authorities on carpets are not unanimous on the point of origin of pile carpets. Sir George Birdwood has extended his theory about the origin of carpets in his famous treatise 'Oriental Carpets' that carpets have originated as early as 5000 B.C. during the Greek civilization.[1]

The earliest specimen of carpet, Pazyryk pile carpet, was discovered in 1947—49 by the Russian archaeologist S.I. Rudenko in Scythian burial sites at Pazyryk in a valley of the Gomi Altai range of south Siberia near outer Mongolian border. It was a well preserved rug in a grave mound belonging to Prince of Altai. This rug was radio carbon dated to between 5th and 3rd century B.C. Only chance has preserved this very carpet in such a good condition. It is assumed that the grave-mound was not uncovered since long till it was visited by grave-robbers. They only stole metals and precious stones. Later on, water gushed up through the orifice made and filled in burial-chamber which was frozen into ice. Thus we are able to get frozen rug with its colours wonderfully preserved. This Altai rug was exhibited in the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad. It measures 6'x6'6" (i.e. 1.83m x 2.00m). Its design is a combination of floral, faunal and riders on horse back scenes.[2] The knotting is very symmetrical having a large geometrical centre composed of squares and framed by a couple of main borders. In one row warriors on horse back while in other deer are depicted. Stylistically it corresponds most closely to Achamenid Persia. The rug represents aesthetic taste of the people and high water-mark achieved in the craftsmanship of carpet making more than 2500 years ago. A slightly older specimen of carpet fragment than Pazyryk was found in Bashadar, 150 miles to the west without any readable designs and symmetric knotting.

The date of origin of Pazyryk carpet is nearly an agreed matter while its place of origin was differed. It was related to Altai in the East to Asia Minor in the West. The most probable place of origin rested on Rudenko's own theory pertaining to Achaemenian territory, based on the close relationship of the horses in the carpet's outer main border and the griffins or winged bulls in the cartouches of the minor border to Achaemenian ornamentry.

Robert Pinner, writes: "The Pazyryk carpet is now well known but, not surprisingly, no coherent new theory has emerged since its discovery to account for it in the history of pile rugs. This unexpected Siberian gift to carpet scholarship of uncertain origin but probably made two thousand miles away, was not only woven with the same Turkish knots as the Seljuk carpets, but, although it antedated the latter by at least fifteen centuries, it was obviously superior to them. Using the familiar technique, the Pazyryk carpets, weaver had drawn animal figures which were not only so technically perfect that they depicted the decorations on twenty-eight horse covers in intricate detail, but were of an artistic excellence which in some ways surpassed the great creations of the Safavid and Mughal court designers two thousand years later. It was a towering peak in the panorama of carpets, but isolated by too many centuries, it was virtually impossible to assimilate it into their history".[2]

On the basis of discoveries of Pazyryk rug Ignaz Schlosser wrote in his famous treatise 'European and Oriental Rugs and Carpets', "The history of carpets spans more than 2000 years from its beginning in Southern Siberia *via* the Golden Age of the Safavid dynasty in the 16th and 17th centuries to the carpets of today."

Such a fine carpet like Pazyryk rug may not be a sudden appearance on craft spectrum. It must be a result of continuous refinement and intermingling of ideas of neighbouring cultures. There is still controversy over the first weaving of carpet either by nomads or by agricultural villagers or by emergent town dwellers. *Riegl* opined that prehistoric nomads were first rug weavers. While I.N. Khlopin on the basis of his excavations extended the theory that the first rug weavers were prehistoric villagers and emergent town dwellers of Turkmenia and Northern Iran during the Chalcolithic and Bronze Ages.

Robert Pinner is of the opinion, "After the discovery of the Pazyryk carpet, we are less likely, for example, to see the carpet art of the Safavid courts as Erdmann did, as a cul-de-sac branch of the Turkish tradition, but rather as descending from a court art tradition which had evolved over perhaps three thousand years in the near East, and which throughout this period had not only learned from and influenced the art of trade-linked cultures, but also inspired and was inspired by the coexisting traditional folk-art of villagers and nomads. Although we need not assume today that west and Central Asia learend carpet making from the Turkic nomads, this does not lessen the importance of the decorative design tradition brought west ward by the great Turkic and proto-Turkic migrations which changed and unified carpet design as profoundly as they did the language of the area."[4]

Dr. Khlopin, a member of the Institute of Archaeology of the Academy of Science of the U.S.S.R. led extensive excavations of the late Bronze Age burial grounds around the Kara-Kala settlement in the valley of the river Sumbar in Southern Turkmenia which have yielded rich and varied materials pertaining to the ancient population. Having excavated women's grave in southern Turkmenia he found in 1972 knives which were later on recognised as pile cutting knives of carpets. He describes the knives as below:

> "Careful inspection of the cutting instruments found in the graves revealed that they correspond in every way to contemporary carpet knives, differing only in the material from which they are made. The hole at one end indicates that the blades were loosely fix in their handles by means of a wooden tack; the handles might have been of wood or covered with ceramic. The latter type has an indented surface, with incisions (straight, slanting or waved) to give a firm grip on the instrument and prevent it from spinning in the hand. The workmanship and perfected design of the Bronze Age carpet knife indicate that it was by no means a new invention, but that it already had a long tradition behind it. From this, one may conclude that the origins of carpet making in Central Asia may be considerably older than these earliest surviving traces from the last centuries of the second millennium B.C."[5]

S. M. Dudin the first systematic writer on carpets of Central Asia wrote: "The fact alone that the manufacture of carpets is a phenomenon common to all the countries of the so-called Muslim East, whose borders exactly coincide with the lands populated by the nomadic herdsman tribes in the present and not very distant past, support the supposition that *carpets are the product of a nomadic herdsman's existence*"[6]. This theory is based on the fact that the original life style of the Central Asian people

was nomadic and that the settled communities were formed when a proportion of the people took up an agricultural existence whilst retaining many features of their earlier nomadic life.

On the basis of similarities between decorative designs on potteries belonging to southern Turkmenia pertaining to 3rd millennium B.C. and those on some 19th century rugs belonging to same area khlopin propounded a theory that pile carpets were woven in prehistoric Turkmania. This theory can not be taken as conclusive. But it is not improper to believe that pile carpets were woven long before the Pazyryk carpet dated 5th to 3rd century B.C.

There was a cultural mingling of one community with other and the art of carpet making spread in entire eastern world, e.g,. India, Pakistan, China, Burma, Russia. Turkey, Syria, Afghanistan, etc. In every region it acquired some local traits of design, colour and textures. Two kinds of knotting system is in vogue. Of the two kinds knotting system Ghordes (Turkish) and Senneh (Persian or Iranian) which is older one, none can say with definiteness. But Senneh knot has edge over Ghordes knots. An oriental carpet (i.e., eastern carpet) is said to be a genuine carpet because it is hand knotted. Tying of knots by hand is such an intricate process that machines invented till date can not do with matching precision. Oriental carpets remained very popular and it always satisfied the aesthetic taste of elites and aristocracy. It is said that the floor of King Haroun Al-Rashid's palace was covered by twenty two thousand well woven carpets.

The arrival and use of the carpet in Europe, finally to America earned an international repute. The first carpet reached Europe during the thirteenth century and since then carpet acquired great popularity. Oriental carpet attained such a high repute and popularity that it became one of the ingredients of aesthetic awareness in the house of European people.

The beauty of Persian hand knotted carpets was described by Charles Jacobson in the following words:

> "If you look into a Persian rug, you will discern that each figure is bounded by a line of another colour, sometimes so fine, as to be almost imperceptible. Yet this inconspicuous outline has an extraordinary effect on the field of colour it encloses. The same shade will have an entirely different look, or shade into different directions of the spectrum, according to the colour of its outline,. No machine made carpet can achieve this effect"[7]

Shyam Sunder opines, "Though the carpet may have had its birth in the tent, oriental floor coverings subsequently came to cover a big sweep from the humble tent or hut to opulent places. But the forward steps in technical or design evolution have not necessarily meant the replacement of older products every where. In several regions the two continue to be produced side by side, the rural weavers making for their own use, while urban factories cater to the richer clientele and export to other countries. This form of co-existence has also in a way contributed to the survival of carpets. For while dynasties have been toppled and capitals have faced invasions and conquests, resulting in the collapse of carpet factories, the tent dwellers and village peasants have carried on with their vocation, keeping the precious art of carpet weaving alive".[8]

The history of carpet industry in India is shrouded into obscurity. There are two schools of thought prevalent about the origin of carpet industry in India, Some writers are in favour of indegenous origin while balance of opinion swindles in favour of alien introduction. Sir George Birdwood says, "The manufacture of pile carpets was probably first introduced into India by the Saracens". Rustam J. Mehta writes, "It is now believed that the art of manufacture of pile-carpets was introduced into India by the Saracens as they did into Europe. Yet it must have been persia—from Kurdistan, Khorassan, Kirman—that they themselves must have derived the art."[9] In support of the argument in favour of Persian derivation of the craft it has been pointed out that almost all the patterns on carpets can be traced back to Persian origin. But Shanti Swarup does not uphold the idea. He writes "It was once believed that India learnt carpet-weaving from Persia, but the methods and designs of the carpet weavers in our country are so peculiarly indegenous and so distinctly recognisable from those of other countries that now this theory has been abandoned".[10]

The ruins of Indus valley civilization are unable to tell us whether carpet weaving was known to Indus people or not. But it will be improper to reject the idea that carpets were unknown to Indus people,

who were highly sophisticated, art loving and well to do. It is believed that the carpet weaving was an established art in India as far back as 1300 B.C. We find a reference of a carpet in 320 B.C. Selukas, a General of Alexander and father-in-law of Chandragupta Maurya took a carpet to Greece as a gift from Chandragupta Maurya. This industry then developed in Iran, Asia Minor, Syria, Babylon and Kandahar. However, this industry lost in oblivion for a long period which is peculiar to be imagined.

Fabrics made of wool has a special significance. In old mythological books wool has been shown as semisacred. On the basis of the old traditions, the rural people have firm belief that wool is one of the four items created pure by the Brahma. Wool was used as the material for making the sacred threads to be used in rituals. Woollen shawls are mentioned in Kautilya's Arthshashtra. In the Budhist literature reference is made to Kachilindika which is described as a sott stuff. It is believed that the Persian word Kalin is corrupted and abbreviated form of Kachilindika—a Sanskrit word.

The theory of native origin to some extent is also supported by Hindu scriptures. The use of wool for weaving of cloth is said to date back to the Vedic era. The Rig Veda mentions, "The woollen strainer is placed on a vessel and fingers repeatedly stir the same Soma which sends down sweet stream into the vessel". (IX66).

During medieval period an epoch making event occurred in the history of Indian pile carpet industry. Amin Shah, the grand Vazir of Udaina Deva, slained him and assumed the regal power of Kashmir in 1338 A.D. under the title of Shams-ud-Din and thus Kashmir came under the pale of Islam. Belonging to the line of Shams-ud-Din, Sultan Sikandar wanted to purchase peace from Taimurlang who invaded and ravaged India in 1398 A.D. by paying tribute through his son Shahi Khan. But instead of agreeing upon the assured alliance Taimurlang played treachery and detained Shahi Khan in Samarqand as his hostage.

The young Prince was forced to remain in Samarqand for seven years but he was allowed to move freely there as per his wishes. Samarqand was made abode of finest artists and craftsmen brought from all the nook and corner of the territory won by Taimur. None of the artists and craftsmen were allowed to leave the city without proper authorisation. Prince Shahi Khan closely watched the craftsmen and being impressed he invited some of them to accompany him to Kashmir. After the death of his father Shahi Khan assumed the power under the title of Zain-ul-Abedin *alias* Badsah (1422—1474). He introduced many crafts in Kashmir, such as, papier-mache, tapestry, carpet weaving, etc. In the midst of beauty and colour those crafts flourished in Kashmir. Introduction of the mulberry tree and silk worm by him was additional gift to Kashmir carpet industry. The proto-type of carpets were first brought from Persia to Kashmir by in-migrated weavers.

Babur was a man of rare gifts. He was founder of Mughal Empire though he could give only a gaseous shape to it. He was steeped in Persian culture. E. Gans Ruedin (London 1986) is of the opinion that art of the carpet was impianted in India through Babur.

The recorded history of the Indian pile carpet, however, seems to begin in the sixteenth century around 1580 A.D. when the Mughal Emperor Akbar brought some Persian carpet weavers from Persia to India. He set up the royal workshop in his own palace and commissioned them to produce carpets equal in quality to those of their own country. This is generally taken as the birth of the Indian pile carpet. Thus the Indian carpet began to take shape. The princes and elites who were the chief patrons of the art at that time maintained skilled artisans in their palaces and homes. They were provided salary, daily rations and allowed to do this work with great care and devotion leisurely so that they could develop new designs and patterns for this artistic piece of beauty.

We find a reference in the records of East India Company about a batch of Persian weavers settling in Masulipatam and thereafter moving to Elum in the middle of sixteenth century. Many of the bewitching specimens of the carpets produced in this royal workshop now beautifies the walls of several museums in the west. One of the earliest and most noted among them was given as a gift from one Robert Bell to the Girdlers Company, London, in 1634 when he was master of that company

No doubt the tradition of pile carpet weaving in silk and finest wool having floral, animal and bird designs was introduced by Akbar which was maintained by his successors, Jahangir and great connoisseur like Shahjahan. During their reigns carpets made in royal palaces earned an international repute. Specimens of these can be seen in Jaipur Museum while best ones are preserved in Victoria

and Albert Museum and in other museums of Europe and America.

Royal looms were set up in Agra, Delhi, Lahore, etc. Since original weavers were of Persian origin it was natural that carpets woven under royal patronage had close resemblance in style and design with that of Persian. Hence traditional designs were confined to Kirman, Kashan, Herati, Isfahan, etc.

Ain-i-Akbari authored by Abul Fazal, one of the nine gems of Akbar, gives a vivid description of the royal carpet industry. Abul Fazal says, "His Majesty has caused carpet to be made of wonderful varieties and charming textures; he has appointed experienced workmen who have produced many masterpieces. The carpets of Iran and Turan are no more thought of.....All kinds of carpet weavers are settled here and derive a flourishing trade. These are found in every town but especially in Agra, Fatehpur and Lahore".[11]

Arthur Upham Lope is of the opinion that carpets of Indian origin have been mistaken for Persian and Portugese. To him former includes some long known as Indo-Feraghans (also called Herati), Indo-Isfahans, etc. By passage of time Indo was obliterated leaving only Isfahan, Herati, etc. Fineness of these carpets was described by Charles Jacobson in the following words, "The Indo-Feraghan and Indo-Isfahan were very choice rugs. I bought two large ones of the so-called Indo-Feraghan, which were the most beautiful rugs of any type (including all the Persian types) that I have seen in many years".[12]

Charles Grant Ellis observed on the basis of numerous carpet fragments pertaining to sixteenth century preserved in various museums ranging from Paris to Detroit, Boston to San Fransisco, "Of all the rugs from the peninsula that we have examined, these fragments may well be the most peculiarly Indian".[13]

Jasleen Dhamija compared very succinctly the characteristics of Indian and Persian carpets in the following words.

"The use of varying flower motifs with an eye to detail and realism, is typically Indian. In the Persian carpets the natural objects are crystallised into idealised formula. In the Indian carpets natural objects were studied for themselves and the vitality of natural objects was retained. It was this interest in reality which brought about the transmutation from the highly stylised Persian forms of objects—which has taken the original shape and transformed it into decorative designs, to the more naturalistic form of designing.[14]

Many simple geometrical patterns were introduced during Mughal period. Carpets had garden scenes, court scenes, hunting scenes, floral designs, etc. But with the close of Mughal rule and in effect by the decline of royal patronage the high quality carpet production declined. Decline was again furthered by conspicuous absence of inspiring specimens of good quality old carpets, which were adoring the European and American museums and houses. The long period of decline was reversed by the export of the Indian carpet to foreign markets, especially to Europe and America. Interest in Indian carpet was roused to foreigners by great London Exhibition of 1851 which generated a stir in the mind of buyers, manufacturers and traders. It proved a boon to Indian carpet industry and was a turning point. Export of carpets revolutionized the industry both in quality and quantity. It led to phenomenal growth of industry and brought about major changes in colours and designs due to change in consumer's preference and taste. Foreign manufacturers being impressed by prospect of carpet industry set up factories in India. This changed the slow and haphazard process of weaving into fast and uniform pattern. This was a great landmark in carpet industry and proved to be beginning of modern carpet industry in India. During post independence period carpet industry occupied a sizeable and significant place in Indian economy and at present it is an important export oriented industry.

Majority of the weavers during survey showed their ignorance of the knowledge regarding the rise and fall in the growth of the craft but a few of them replied that the industry was lucrative in past till the existence of *Zamindari* system and rayal patronage. To them that time was an ideal one which provided security of job. Hereditary occupation is nature and enough time for creative work resulted in the improvement of this industry.

Carpet Weaving in Bihar

The State of Bihar is not only rich in various minerals but also has a great potential for carpet industry in its fold having artisans in the field with no lesser proficiency. Although the art of carpet industry has always been fluctuating but has preserved the most evidences of a continuing search for the beauty and excellence which is ever alive. The rapid development of social and economic infrastructure in the State of Bihar has helped to increase and develop the handicraft. The carpet weaving is an art

practised as cottage industry in rural Bihar, and has ample market potentiality both in country as well as in international market. Shrimati Kamla Devi Chattopadhayay in her Indian Carpets and Floor coverings writes, "The origin of carpet weaving in Bihar is very ancient and can be traced back to the Buddhist and Mauryan times. But what was woven was the *durrie* or suttranji for which there is an old tradition in this country. The pile carpet, however, began to be manufactured only after the industry was established and encouraged by the Mughals and began to spread to all parts of the country."

"It is claimed that during the reign of Sher Shah, a *nawab* by the name of Dandi came to this region bringing with him some pile carpet weavers. These carpets were patronised by the the rulers, *Maharajas Rajas, Nawabs, Jagirdars* and all classes of aristocracy and naturally the industry grew and flourished. At least a dozen places with something like 30,000 weavers attained fame for their fine carpets. It is said that some of the weavers who got inducted into the pile carpet industry came from ancient weaver communities. Though the style and technique changed with the advent of the pile, the continuity in carpet weaving tradition was maintained. It is, however, difficult to vouch for this".

"With the abolition of the *Zamindari* and other feudal forms, the change in the country's economy, the rising accent on industry and the radical social shift, the traditional patrons of the great craft declined and with them the pile carpets".[15]

The Persian artists brought by Dandi were rich in their art and it improved with the change in generations and civilization. The main reason behind these artisan's fondness in making carpets with dedication was due to their own interest of decorating their homes irrespective of standard of living which changed into their profession for levelihood.

The details of places where the looms are located in Bihar are as follows:

1. *North Bihar*—The move to establish a full-fledged carpet industry in North Bihar picked up the momentum in last decade. In 1978 a Central Government Monitoring Cell Team with the assistance of association of voluntary agencies for rural development (AVARD) carried out a survey of North Bihar. The team recommended the setting up of carpet industry all over North Bihar. The District Industry Departments were also involved in the process of identifying such spots which were considered favourable for setting up of carpet industry.

The team selected 56 sites, out of a list of 100 in the initial phase, where training centres could be established.

The main factors which appear to have influenced the decision was the fact that the carpet industry could run without electricity, a factor which could be considered vital, taking into the account the condition of power supply in North Bihar. The other contributing factor to instal units in North Bihar also stemmed from the fact that man power resource was adequate and these industries offered scope for employment.

The Central Government was also of the opinion that carpet industry would fetch good foreign exchange. Under the auspices of All India Handicraft Board, the office of the Assistant Director, Handicrafts was set up in Muzaffarpur in 1980 and a subsidiary office of the Handicraft Board was established in Madhubani at the same time.

Plans were also affot for the establishment of a dyeing and finishing plant catering to the need of North Bihar carpet industry. A woollen yarn manufacturing plant was set up in Hajipur. Of the 56 sites selected for training, 22 were concentrated in and around Muzaffarpur.

With the establishment of training centres in North Bihar, the existence of carpet industry in this area has taken a new shape. It is expected that there are about 300 looms existing in different places of Darbhanga, Samastipur, Madhubani, Purnia, Saharsa, Muzaffarpur, Sitamarhi and Vaishali districts. Considering the number of trained weavers by the training centres and other places of North Bihar, it is presumed that the area is going to occupy an important place in carpet producing areas of Bihar.

The exporters from Mirzapur and Bhadohi in Uttar Pradesh have started exploiting the opportunities of getting supplies of worth exporting carpets from these areas.

2. *South Bihar Plateau*—Though the production of hand knotted woollen carpets is not at large in South Bihar Plateau, however, there are still about 150 looms located at Daltonganj, Ranchi, Jamshedpur, Khunti, Kudaridih, Chakulia, Barwadih and Nadwan. The exporters of U.P. State are guiding the artisans of Nadwan village to prepare carpets meant for export. The reason for slow development of carpet industry in this area could be ascribed to high industrialization at these places.

3. *Aurangabad and its surrounding areas*—The carpet producing at Obra has been an oldest in Bihar. Obra is a village and Community Development Block headquarters in Aurangabad District. The weavers at this place have been making carpets basically for the local requirements. They were not exposed to the demands of international markets. But for the last 6 to 7 years they have also started weaving the carpets for foreign markets by changing over from hand spun yarn to mill spun yarn. Presently Gaya and Aurangabad districts and their surroundings have about more than 300 looms.

4. *Patna*—There are more than 150 looms existing in Patna district. The All India Handicrafts Board has established 6 carpet weaving centres in Patna district. The existence of training centres has encouraged the enterpreneurs in establishing more and more looms in Patna district. All the manufacturers are mainly engaged in export quality production of carpets. The majority of the looms situated in Patna district are at Danapur, Patliputra Colony, Fatwah, Daudpur, Usri Amhara, Sherpur, Bakhtiarpur, Harnaut, Punpun, Lodipur, Dariapur (Manpura), etc.

CARPET TRAINING CENTRES IN BIHAR

There are 40 training centres functioning in Bihar. The list of existing training centres with their district headquarters are given below:

Sl.No	Name of Centres	District headquarters
1	2	3
1	Araria (Basantpur)	Purnia
2	Jainagar	Madhubani
3	Rajnagar	Ditto
4	Tulapatganj	Ditto
5	Rahika	Ditto
6	Pandaul	Ditto
7	Madhepur	Ditto
8	Jhanjharpur	Ditto
9	Bhavara	Ditto
10	Nirmali	Saharsa
11	Bharwara	Darbhanga
12	Chandanpatti	Ditto
13	Ekmighat	Ditto
14	Runisaidpur	Sitamarhi
15	Singhia Ghat	Samastipur
16	Dalsinghsarai	Ditto
17	Dardha	Muzaffarpur
18	Rohua	Ditto
19	Kanhauli	Ditto
20	Golpokhar	Ditto
21	Jamalabad	Ditto
22	Narauli Kalyan	Ditto
23	Aurai	Ditto
24	Kurhani	Ditto
25	Jaintpur	Ditto
26	Baniagaon	Ditto
27	Laxmipur Arar	Ditto
28	Partaptand	Vaishali
29	R.K. Nagar (Patna)	Patna
30	Fatwah	Do
31	Daudpur	Do
32	Beapur	Do
33	Maner	Do
34	Masaurhi	Do
35	Bihar Sharif	Nalanda
36	Jehanabad	Gaya
37	Manpur	Do
38	Jamhaur	Aurangabad
39	Narayanpur	Ditto
40	Obra	Ditto

CARPET INDUSTRY IN INDIA

The carpet industry in India has a large production base. About 60,000 looms are operating which employ more than 200,000 weavers. About 90 per cent of the production is exported. The carpet industry is largely concentrated in districts of Varanasi, Mirzapur, Jaunpur and Allahabad (eastern UP) Agra (western UP), Jaipur (Rajasthan), Srinagar (Jammu and Kashmir), Amritsar (Punjab), Gwalior (MP), Elura (Andhra Pradesh), Salem and North Arcot (Tamil Nadu), West Kameng (Arunachal Pradesh), North, East, South and West (Sikkim).

Bhadohi and Mirzapur account for 80 per cent of the carpet looms. Tibetan carpets are also produced in Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Sikkim and West Bengal. Srinagar is notable for medium and excellent quality of carpets including silk carpets.

CARPET WEAVERS OF BIHAR

It has already been mentioned earlier that mostly the weavers of Muslim community were associated with the carpet weaving in the past because Persian weavers who had specialisation in carpet weaving were brought to India by the royal persons. The new entrants in the arena of carpet weaving are Hindus comprising of mostly tribals, scheduled castes, other weaker castes and even persons of higher castes of low economic status with aptitude to do this intricate nature of job. The main reasons, as per knowledgeable source, to adopt the craft are facility of employment at door steps, low installation cost and persons having less educational attainment may also pull on their livelihood with dignity. Even women folk can easily be associated with different processes of production. On the spot visit of a few prominent carpet weaving centres of the state it has been observed that children below 14 years who could not go for schooling were found working suitably to earn for the upkeep of their families. In Bihar approximately 700 families are engaged in carpet weaving. The caste|community-wise break up of these families are Muslims (450), tribals (50), scheduled castes (50) and other Hindus (150).

It is estimated that 1,500 looms are actively working in the state employing 3,000—4,000 workers. The expected annual turn over of these looms is approximately worth Rs. 4 crores to Rs. 4.5 crores. The consumption of different finished products within the state is negligible. On enquiry from the knowledgeable sources it has been observed that only 5 per cent of the finished products are sold within the state through different sale centres of Handloom Corporation and other agencies. 95 per cent of the products are supplied to the reputed firms of Bhadohi by the exporters agents or sold by private parties for sale in international market. The margin of profits in carpets vary according to design and quality of carpets. It ranges between 20 to 40 per cent of the actual cost of production. Many weavers are supplied raw materails by different agencies and in turn they return the finished products to them and get only labour charges. There are not any fixed terms and conditions of procurement of finished products from the craftsmen by different agencies. Although the weavers are paid wages on the basis of knots per square inch and quality of carpets but wage cut on flimsy grounds is always prevalent on the discretion of paying agencies. Hence craftsmen are displeased with them and want to get rid of them. They fully understand that working through these agencies are generally subject to curtailment of their wages. These agencies thrive on the labour of the poor craftsmen.

Agencies engaged in the Development of the Craft

Bihar State Export Corporation

Woollen Carpet Industry in the state could not establish its identity in international market due to lack of exporters in this state. After establishment of Bihar State Export Corporation Limited, in November 1974 having its registered office at Patna, efforts were made to promote the export of woollen carpets through this government undertaking. The efforts for export were initiated during the year 1976-77. It was decided that the corporation should take up this item for export on the basis of supplies from Bhadohi and Mirzapur. The Corporation got success in exporting this item and then the corporation encouraged the enterpreneurs to develop and improve this item in Bihar.

The Corporation has been able to feed the manufacturers with ideas about quality, designs, colour combinations, etc., as per choice of the foreign buyers. The Corporation also invites the foreign buyers at Patna so that they may personally meet the manufacturers and get the desired quality of the finished goods.

The Corporation has not only been helping the nation in earning foreign exchange but has also been makig profits for the last several years. The year-wise value of carpet exported by Bihar State Export Corporation is given below:

Year	Amount (Rs. in lakhs)
1976-77	2·44
1977-78	14·65
1978-79	4·50
1979-80	7·30
1980-81	6·09
1981-82	4·04
1982-83	6.29
1983-84	6·14
1984-85	6·51
1985-86	4·88
1986-87	0·42

Export of carpets to International Markets

Being a highly labour oriented product, the carpets are more in demand in developed countries than the developing ones. West Europe and America provide major marketing facilities comparing to Australia, Japan and Newzealand, etc. Labour being very expensive in the developed countries, hand knotted woollen carpets are almost ruled out to be woven in these countries. Besides carpets have not only the artistic value but also utility value, therefore, a developed country can only afford to import these carpets.

At present U.S.A., West Germany, Australia, Switzerland and Belgium, etc., are the major buyers of Bihar carpets. Inspite of the fact that Australia, U.S.A., West Germany and Belgium have started manufacturing machine made carpets on the pattern of Persian designs, they are not able to compete with the Indian carpets, though the machine made carpets are cheaper in price than hand-knotted carpets. The reason being that the design are made on machines and hence these are not as thick as hand-knotteed carpets. Secondly, the basic raw material of machine made carpets is synthetic fibres which is not liked by the affluent buyers.

The Indian carpet industry suffered a set back during 1979 to 1983. The West Germany being one of the biggest importers of Indian carpets had economic imbalance resulting in the devaluation of Deutche Mark. As against rate of Rs. 4.40 per D.M. has gone down to Rs. 3.50 per D.M. with the result that the German buyers were supposed to pay 20 to 25 per cent more than what they were actually paying. The ultimate pressure came on Indian Carpet Industry as Germany decided to reduce its demand.

Carpet industry now-a-days is fetching very good price because of increase in demand in foreign countries. The quality carpets made in Bihar suits the taste of foreign buyers. It is expected that there will not be any change in the present situation at least for next 5 years and as such it is anticipated that the carpet industry in Bihar is bound to flourish.

The Corporation has been able to export carpets manufactured in Bihar to the following countries:

1. *West Germany*—West Germany is one of the largest export markets in the hand knotted woollen carpets. The Corporation started its export to one of the buyers in Hemberg in quality of density of 50 knots per square inch in design Heris-II and Tabriz. For quite some time the Corporation was exporting these two designs. Many times Corporation also received stray orders in different qualities and in assorted designs. The Corporation has also been receiving orders from a non-profitable organisation in Karlsruhe in West Germany which is buying Tibetan design carpets and woollen *durries*. This organisation has also been sending bonus for distribution to weavers. During the year 1986-87 the corporation has supplied woollen carpets to two reputed firms of Germany for Rs. 38,937.00.

2. *Belgium*—The Corporation has appointed an agent in Brushells who has been responsible for bringing many contracts from Belgium to the corporation. Many times the said agent used to bring the buyers alongwith him at Patna.

3. *Switzerland*—A buyer was contacted through personal visit of the officials of corporation who has been buying carpets for the last 3-4 years. This buyer has been basically interested in Sharook Mir designs in the quality 50 knots per square inch. The corporation has sold carpets through this buyer in various designs and qualities.

4. *U.S.A.*—The Corporation has recently started its export to the United States of America. The appointed buyers are buying goods on programme production basis. Under this system the orders are placed for longer period so as to enable weavers to get acquainted with the design and quality and as such they are able to weave the carpets more swiftly as well as neatly. The Corporation is exporting carpets through three buyers in designs—Sarapi, Joshagan, Kashan, etc. During 1986-87 the Corporation has exported carpets worth Rs. 3062.50.

5. *Canada*—The Corporation has not concentrated much on Canadian market although there is a lot of potential. However, in the year 1983-84 corporation received orders from Canada for export of carpets depicting 'Aeroplane' in quality of 50 knots, 90 knots and 130 knots per square inch.

The Export Corporation has not exported carpet to Japan so far. The Corporation has sent very small consignment to Australia since its inception.

The corporation locates the buyers in foreign countries through personal visits of higher officials, trade delegations, correspondence, participation in international fairs and advertisement in foreign journals.

The process of procurement of carpets by the Bihar State Export Corporation is commendable as they directly take the carpets from manufacturers leaving

aside the possibilities of exploitation by other middle agencies. By this system both the manufacturers and the Corporation are benefited by saving middlemen's commission. The mediators earn tremendous profit by exploiting weavers to sell their products as early as possible to fetch money.

The Bihar State Export Corporation get approval of the samples from the buyers and then orders are placed to make particular quality of carpets. It is also most important aspect that the Bihar State Export Corporation inspects the manufactured carpets before shipment and if they are found to be inferior in any respect the manufacturers are asked to make rectification according to specifications already provided to them. The payments are made to manufacturers on the basis of the supply made and rate decided mutually taking into consideration the price quoted and accepted by foreign buyers.

The Industry Department of the government of Bihar is taking sincere interest in development of this industry and working capital loans are liberally granted to the carpet weavers, besides implementing various types of other schemes meant for promotion of this industry.

Co-operative Societies

The weavers contacted during survey in the village Obra and other important centres of Bihar State showed their bitter experience regarding the functioning of co-operative societies because these societies are not catering to their needs for which they are meant. Loans are not distributed among the weavers in time and the societies are also not in a position to purchase, procure and take back the entire products.

Details of the co-operative societies and their names in the state associated with carpet weaving could not be collected. Knowledgeable sources could reveal the names of only four societies, one in North Bihar, one in Patna district and two in Aurangabad district. The names of these four societies associated with carpet weaving are given below:-

1. Gangoi Area Small Farmers Association (Regd.) (GASFA), Gangoi, Lakshmipur Arar, P.O. Bakhra, District Muzaffarpur.
2. Bhagwat Nandlal Seva Ashram (Regd. No. 404) (1981-82) China Bela, Punpun, Patna.
3. Obra Carpet Primary Weavers Co-operative Society (Regd. 1956)-P.O. Obra, District Aurangabad.
4. Mahafil-e-Kalin Obra Primary Weavers Co-operative Society (Regd. No. 12 dated 5.3.86).

Co-operative Societies of Gangoi Area Small Farmers' Association and Bhagwat Nandlal Seva Ashram receive all the raw materials from Rajesh Textiles, Gandhi nagar, P.O. Digha, Patna-800012, a reputed carpet manufacturer of Danapur, District Patna. The above two societies get carpet prepared by their members and return the finished products to Rajesh Textiles for marketing. The proprietor of Rajesh Textiles provides technical assistance to both these societies. The details of working of *Obra Carpet Primary Weavers Co-operative Society*, and *Mahafil-e-Kalin* will be discussed at appropriate place.

Training-cum-Production Centres

Only five Training-cum-Production Centres of the Industry Department are functioning in Bihar. They are located in the districts of Samastipur, Palamu, Rohtas, Aurangabad and Patna to impart training to those engaged in carpet weaving.

Particulars of Training-*cum*-Production centres in Bihar are shown below:

Sl. No.	Name of centres	Location	District	No. of Instructors including skilled artisans	No. of trainees in a session
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Gram Silpi Prashikshan Kendra . . .	Daltonganj	Palamu	2	25
2	Gram Silpi Prashikshan Kendra	Samastipur	Samastipur	2	22
3	Gram Silpi Prashikshan Kendra	Daudnagar	Aurangabad	2	25
4	Gram Silpi Prashikshan Kendra	Dehri-on-Sone	Rohtas	2	25
5	Upendra Maharathi Silpi Anusandhan Sansthan . .	Digha	Patna	2	25

In Training-*cum*-Production Centres preference is given to sons and wards of craftsmen. They are given training in all processes involved in carpet weaving. During training period each trainee gets a monthly stipend of Rs. 150/- and the duration of training is of one year. After training period artisans are encouraged to take up the craft as their vocation. A few trainees after training have also got employment as Instructor in Training-*cum*-Production Centres. But these centres are not functioning properly because the trainees are not supplied the weaving materials regularly. Each centre is staffed with one Instructor, one Skilled Artisan and one Chowkidar-*cum*-peon.

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CHAPTER II

CRAFTSMEN IN THEIR RURAL SETTING

Craft is one of the oldest technology in the country developed under rural background. Our country has been renowned for Village Craft for last few centuries as hand woven shawls, carpets, etc., were sent to other countries and had respectable market. Keeping in view its glorious past and to keep track of the same it was decided to study the craft in Bihar also. One of the important crafts reflecting the old culture and tradition is the carpet weaving. Obra village is one of the biggest carpet weaving centres in the state. The primary objective of the study is to portray a vivid picture of the craftsmen and their carpet weaving skill under social and rural setting. It attempts to record the extent to which the winds of change have affected them and their skill, the extent to which they are mobile and to assess the conditions of production, marketing, credit, their new contact and designs which guide their trade. It further aims to assess the producer-customer and patron-client relationship in which they are still bound to operate and how far they are able and ready to pierce their own caste-community and socio-economic cocoon. It also aims to study their keenness to have a break-through to new vistas opened by the national government.

Introducing the Village

Obra is situated on the panoramic confluence of river Punpun and rivulet Adri. It is at a distance of 8 kms. from Anugraha Narain Road Railway Station and is headquarters of Community Development Block as well as Police Station of the same name. The village is located at a distance of 17 kms. from its district headquarters—Aurangabad on the Aurangabad-Patna road and about 140 Kms. from the State capital, Patna. The nearest town from Obra is Jamhaur (N) at a distance of 7 Kms. Obra is bounded (on the three directions) by river Punpun in North and West and by rivulet Adri in East while southern direction of the village is bounded by Dekuli and Ukurmhi villages. Of the 152 villages of Obra Community Development Block, Obra is the biggest in population (6,565:1981 Census). The area of the village is 198.29 hectares.

The village lies on both sides (East and West) of the black topped all seasons motorable road which links it with the State capital, Patna as well as the district headquarters Aurangabad. All the buses plying through Obra have their stoppage there and a traveller desirous of visiting this village can take any of the buses regularly plying between Aurangabad and Patna. Internal roads of the village are either *kutcha* or gravel-walk.

There are four primary schools in this village—two controlled by Education department of the State Government while 2 are managed by private committees. Similarly of the five middle schools functioning in the village two are run by state Education Department (one for boys and another for girls) and 3 are managed by private agencies. The village also has the privilege of running two high schools (an meant for boys and another for girls) both managed and controlled by State Government. To cater the need of medical facility there exists a primary health centre in the village. Twenty registered medical practitioners are practising at Obra proper, of them 10 (including 3 working in PHC) are Allopathic, 9 Homeopathic and 1 Ayurvedic. The village enjoys the facility of banking, electricity, post and telegraph office and telephone as well. The village has its own permanent shopping centre which provides all the materials of daily usages. In addition to this bi-weekly *hats* are regularly held on Friday and Tuesday.

Owing to district re-organisation, Aurangabad district was carved out from its parent district Gaya upgrading old Aurangabad Subdivision into Aurangabad district with effect from 19th January, 1973. Aurangabad district has only one sub division, i.e., Aurangabad. Aurangabad town is both district as well as subdivisional headquarters and is nerve centre of the district and has a considerable impact on the carpet weaving cottage industry of the Obra village.

Obra being within riparian of Punpun and Adri is very suitable for agriculture as well as carpet industry. Rivers lend great help in washing of wool, etc., used in carpet industry. Perhaps Obra is corrupted from of Urbra or fertile. Hindus seem to be original settlers of the village. In-migrant fore-fathers of Kalinwaf of Muslim Sheikh carpet weavers settled here during medieval period of Indian history and since then carried on this vocation despite occasional odds and adversities. Most of the weavers do



A view of thana (Police Station) of Obra Village

not work in agricultural fields due to their social stigma which considers the work of agricultural labours as of below dignity. In addition to this most of them do not possess cultivable land and hence they have been compelled to stick to their traditional profession.

As per 1981 Census out of 1,884 villages of Aurangabad district, Obra (6,565) is fourth largest in population size coming after Umga (10,619), Ketaki (8,890) and Deo (8,250). The density of population is 3,311 persons per square kilometre as against a density of population of 374 for district and 402 for state as a whole. The high density of population of this village may be attributed to urban characteristics prevailing there. The village has good facility of education, medical care and other infrastructure which is generally found in urban units. The village is also important from the point of view of business and trade as large quantity of finished products are exported to different parts of the state as also other parts of the country. So far communication facility is concerned we have seen in foregoing discussion that the village is directly connected with the district headquarters (17 Kms.) and state headquarters (140 Kms.) by good metalled road. The other notable features of the village is that the inhabitants of this village have rarely moved out for employment purpose or for any other purposes since long. They generally get employment in their traditional business of carpet weaving adopted by their forefathers and other vocations within the village itself. The people belonging to neighbouring villages also visit Obra to avail of various amenities and facilities existing in the village. In short the village is a nodal point of the area and due to its pull factor many persons from neighbouring villages have also settled there. The sex ratio (as per 1981 Census) of the village is 895 which is lower to C.D. Block (959), district (956) as well as State (946) sex ratios.

The decadal variations in population size and its other componants have been shown below:

TABLE II. 1—Demographic profile of village Obra for last three decades

Census year	Number of households	Total Population			Literates		Workers		Non-Workers	
		Persons	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1961 . . .	754	3,809	1,967	1,842	946	197	1,097	230	870	1,612
1971 . . .	884	5,301	2,791	2,510	1,451	450	1,347	84	1,444	2,426
1981 . . .	985	6,565	3,464	3,101	2,184	986	1,769	214	1,695	2,887

It transpires that there has been a considerable increase in number of households from 1971 Census (884) to 1981 Census (985). The net increase in the number of households is 101 and the percentage increase is 10.25 per cent. 1987 survey returned total number of households as 1,059 showing 7.51 per cent increase over 1981 Census return.

The growth rate of the population of the village during the decade 1971—81 works out to be 23.84 per cent which is slightly less than the State average of 24.06 per cent but more than the growth rate of the district which stands at 21.75 per cent. The growth rate of population for 1971 over 1961 was 39.17 per cent which lowered to 23.84 per cent for 1981 over 1971. The growth rate for 1987 survey over 1981 census is 16.53 per cent which shows apparently a decline. But it has shown an improvement over growth rate for 1981 over 1971 (23.84 per cent). When we change the computation for 6 years into 10 years taking the view that growth rate will exhibit a similar trend, then projected growth rate will be 27.55 per cent instead of 16.53 per cent.

When one is tempted to compare sex ratios of the village for three censuses, i.e., 1961, 1971 and 1981 with that of 1987 survey data, one notices that from 1961 Census to 1981 Census sex ratio (1961 sex ratio is 936, 1971 sex ratio is 899 and 1981 sex ratio is 895) declined whereas 1987 survey has shown a marked improvement in sex ratio which is 937 and very close to 1961 sex ratio (936) of the village.

The percentage of literacy among the total population of village as returned in 1981 Census is 48.29 per cent comprising 33.27 per cent males and 15.02 per cent that of females as against 35.86 per cent, 27.37, per cent and 8.49 per cent respectively for persons, males and females for 1971. As per 1981 Census the percentage of literacy for the entire district

is only 28.49 per cent comprising 42.50 per cent for males and 13.83 per cent for females against 21.77 per cent, 34.65 per cent and 8.41 per cent for persons, males and females respectively for 1971 Census (of Aurangabad subdivision which became district in 1973). The above facts and figures show that the literacy in the village is comparatively higher due to the fact that the village has a good number of educational institutions and hints about developing educational consciousness. In comparison to male counterparts female literacy is lower in the village.

As per 1971 Census, out of the total population of 5,301, there were 1,431 workers forming 26.99 per cent. The increase in the number of workers from 1,431 in 1971 to 1,983 (including marginal workers) in 1981 commensurates with the increase in the population. The variation in the percentage of workers from 1971 to 1981 is 38.57 per cent which is considerable. In 1971 Census, the male workers constituted 25.41 per cent and in 1981 Census they formed 26.95 per cent (including marginal workers) with a net increase of 1.54 per cent. The variation in absolute number of female workers from 1971(84) to 1981 (214 including marginal workers) is upto the extent of 130 accounting to 154.36 per cent increase. This shows that more and more females are participating in work force. Still work participation of females is low due to the fact that most of females within the age group 15—59 are engaged in household duties only.

Ethnic Composition

People are found to have concentrated in certain localities of pockets of the village by religious community groups. Yet, there are no well defined tolas of significant size which are exclusively inhabited by the people of a particular religion and caste. It is found, in general, that there are some pockets within the tolas of the village where people belonging to the same community clustere together. Though different castes and communities are numerically predominant in different tolas, the village as a whole cannot be divided into different segments with reference to concentration of castes and communities. This type of pattern of inter-penetration of different communities is sociologically significant. It is likely to smoothen the inter-tola rivalry and help to the growth of a unified community life for the village as a whole which is the key note of secularism.

Ethnically village is a mosaic of different castes either belonging to Hindu community or Muslim. Preset Survey (conducted during February and March 1987) reveals that the village is inhabited by 7,650 persons including 3,950 males and 3,700 females. The village is predominantly a Hindu village comprising 6,316 Hindus (82.56 per cent) and 1,334 Muslims (17.44 per cent). The village is multi-ethnic in composition. Among Hindus, Raunıar (Vaishya) outnumbers all other castes whereas among Muslims Sheikh outnumbers all other castes. The Hindu community of village can broadly be divided into two categories, scheduled castes and others. Among other numerically stronger castes are Rauniar (814), Sonar (774), Rawani Kahar (476), Koiri (377), Yadavas/Gwalas (258), Suri (241), Brahmin or Goswami (236), Kumhar or Prajapati (216), Kandu (204) and rest others which have numerical strength of less than 200 persons and constitute 33.82 per cent of the other Hindus.

The distribution of scheduled castes, which is 13.96 per cent of the Hindu community and 11.53 per cent of the total population is Chamar (304), Pasi (191), Dabgar (86), Bhuiyan (81), Dom (55), Musahar (51), Nat (34), Dusadh (30), Dhobi (23), Rajwar (14) and Mehtar (13).

Traditional and non-traditional occupations

Out of 1,059 households, 72 households are carpet weavers' families, of them 45 are traditional carpet weavers' families of Muslim community and are mainly concentrated on north-western bank of the rivulet Adri while remaining non-traditional carpet weavers' families mostly belonging to Hindu community are sparsed in different tolas. Traditional carpet weavers belong to Sheikh family of Muslims. Almost all traditional carpet weavers' families are living in dirty and filthy areas.

When we observe occupational structure we find that most of the castes are still engaged in cultivation. The castes which are not engaged in cultivation are Halwai, Teli, Lohar, Sonar, Rauniar (Vaishya), Tamoli, Nai (Hajam), Kumhar, Kahar, Agarwal, Mallah, Gareri, Kalwar, Chamar, Mehtar, Dom, Pasi, Dabgar, Dhobi, Nat, Dusadh and Rajwar. It is noticeable that among scheduled castes only Musahars are engaged in cultivation as agricultural labours.

The handicrafts which are practised in the village are carpet making, blacksmithy, goldsmithy, earthen pottery, basketry, blanket weaving, shoe making, Maurigarland making and *Bidi* making.

Following statement gives the castewise and house- holdwise classification of villagers engaged in handicrafts as traditional and non-traditional occupation:

Table 11·2—Traditional and Non-traditional (handicrafts in the village by castes and number of households).

Name of castes	Name of traditional handicrafts	No. of households engaged in traditional handicrafts	Name of non-traditional handicrafts	No. of households engaged in non-traditional handicrafts
1	2	3	4	5
Lohar	Blacksmithy	3	..	..
Sonar	Goldsmithy	5	Carpet	1
Rauniar	..	..	Carpet	1
Yadava/Gwala	..	..	Carpet	1
Kandu	..	..	Carpet	7
Nai/Hajam	..	..	Carpet	2
Kumhar	Earthen pottery	23	Carpet	1
Kahar	..	..	1) Bidi making	2
			2) Carpet	6
Koeri	..	..	Carpet	1
Mali	Maur/Garland making	13	..	..
Barhi	Carpentary	10	..	..
Gareri	Blanket weaving	4	Carpet	1
Muslim	1) Carpet	45		
	2) Shoe making	1	..	..
Chamar (S. C.)	Shoe making	8	Carpet	3
Mehtar (S.C.)	..	..	Carpet	2
Dom (S.C.)	Basketry	9	..	..
Dabgar (S.C.)	..	..	Leather work	4
Nat (S.C.)	..	..	Carpet	1

It transpires from the statement that 121 households (11.43 per cent) are engaged in handicrafts as tradtional occupation while 33 households (3.12 per cent) are engaged in handicrafts as non-traditional occupation which reflects their occupational mobility. Among families traditionally engaged in handicrafts, carpet weavers are most numerous followed by earthen potters. The economic conditions of carpet weavers as well as persons engaged in other handicrafts are not appreciable. They do not get the reward for the hard labour put in for odd hours by all the family members. Invisible hands such as labour put in by women and children of carpet weavers provide succour to stick to carpet weaving. Yet, many of the traditional carpet weavers' families switched over to other petty jobs.

Economic and Social status

The standard of living of carpet weavers is very low. They live, generally, in 1-2 rooms houses having mud walls and tiled or thatched roofs. Very few of them have brick walls and cement concrete roofs. Workshop-*cum*-residence is the general pattern. The family lives inside the house and loom is,

generally. located on the verandah or in outer room of the house. The houses are small, ill ventilated and insanitary. It is tragic that the conditions in which the craftsmen are. generally, forced to live and work are completely disproportionate to the quality and extent of their achievement.

Many reasons can be attributed to their low economic condition such as, extremely labour intensive job, weaver's inability to cope with varying demands, lack of capital to purchase raw materials themselves and try innovations, lack of awareness about national as well as international markets. Lastly their attitude towards life of eat, drink and be marry contributes to their plight. Weaving is a perennial job, yet, it is presently lacking the potentiality to ameliorate general millieu of workers.

As pointed out by the craftsmen during the survey that their social status is not looked down in the village by the other communities. rather some of them had been assigned a prestigious position in the village administration. The weavers community of the village have free access to the temple|mosque, wells and other common places of meeting. Their touch with other communities do not entail pollution. They co-operate fully in village festivals, social ceremonies and participate equally in all fan and fairs and they do not suffer from any social stigma. Hindus and Muslims of the village are living in complete harmony.

Demographic profile of Craftsmen

The demographic profile of craftsmen engaged in the craft and of those who have given up this vocation are discussed hereafter: The sample taken for the study constitutes 60 households practising and 15 households who were earlier engaged in this craft but now have given up. The distributtion of the sample population, based on 60 households where the head of the household practises the craft, classified by age, sex and marital status is furnished hereunder:

TABLE II.3—**Distribution of population classified by age, sex and marital status.**

Age-group	Never married			Married			Widowed			Total Population		
	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
0—4	75	35	40	..	..	..	..	..	..	75	35	40
5—9	74	36	38	..	..	..	..	..	..	74	36	38
10—14	56	30	26	..	..	..	..	..	..	56	30	26
15—19	32	24	8	21	4	17	..	..	..	53	28	25
20—24	6	6	..	51	21	30	..	..	..	57	27	30
25—29	2	2	..	46	28	18	1	1	..	49	31	18
30—34	..	..	..	26	16	10	..	..	..	26	16	10
35—44	..	..	..	31	17	14	..	..	..	31	17	14
45—54	..	..	..	25	14	11	3	1	2	28	15	13
55—69	..	..	..	26	14	12	4	1	3	30	15	15
70+	..	..	..	8	5	3	..	..	..	8	5	3
TOTAL	245	133	112	234	119	115	8	3	5	487	255	232

Out of the total sample population of 487 there are 245 never married and the rest are either married or widowed. In other words, the never married persons constitute 50.31 per cent, the married constitute 48.05 per cent and the widowed constitute only 1.64 per cent of the surveyed population. Further never married males constitute 52.16 per cent of the total male population and the corresponding figure for never married females is 48.28 per cent. Up-to the age of 14 years all the males and females are

never married. Child marriage in this age-group is apparently absent. Generally it is observed that boys and girls are married after attaining the age of 15 years. There are 119 married males and 115 married females out of 255 males and 232 females. It is apparent from the table that the average age of marriage in case of both males and females is 15—29 and 95 per cent of the boys and girls are married in this age group. Among the illiterate and economically weaker sections marriage of girls are arranged in quite earlier age.

There are 25 married males and 47 married females, out of 55 males and 55 females in the age group 15—24. The married females are more in this age group as their partners may come under the next age-group 25—54. It is a fact that the female partners will always be younger in age than their male counterparts. In the age-group 25—54 there are 75 married males, 53 married females, 2 widowers and 2 widows out of the total 79 males and 55 females. In the age-group 55 and above, out of 20 males and 18 females, there are 19 married males and 15 married females, 1 widower and 3 widows. This table reflects that weavers are maintaining a congenial married life since there is not a single divorced or separated person.

It is observed that the termination of marital life in case of only one male occurred in the age group 25—29, 3 in the age group 45—54 in case of 1 male and 2 females and 4 in the age-group 55—69 in case of 1 male and 3 females due to the death of either of the spouse.

The table II.4 depicts distribution of population classified by age, sex and educational level.

Table II.4—Distribution of population classified by age, sex and educational level

Age-Group	Total Population			Illiterate		Literate without educational Level		EDUCATIONAL LEVEL									
								Primary or Junior Basic		Middle		Matriculation or Higher Secondary		Technical diploma or Certificate not equal to degree		Graduate and above	
	P	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
All ages	487	255	232	102	181	78	31	30	16	33	3	8	1	1	..	3	..
0—4	75	35	40	35	40	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
5—9	74	36	38	21	20	11	16	4	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
10—14	56	30	26	4	15	16	6	6	5	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
15—19	53	28	25	5	17	7	4	4	3	9	1	3	..	..	..	..	..
20—24	57	27	30	7	22	11	3	2	3	4	1	1	1	..	..	..	..
25—34	75	47	28	14	24	12	1	8	3	11	..	1	..	..	..	1	..
35+	97	52	45	16	43	21	1	6	..	5	1	3	..	1	..	..	..

With the growth in the number of educational institutions, liberalisation of facilities like scholarships, interest free loans from government, growing awareness of masses about the literacy, the literacy rate has increased. There has been considerable development in the field of education. The table shows that there are 204 literate and educated persons and 283 illiterates. Thus giving 41.89 per cent of the literacy comprising 31.42 per cent among males and 10.47 per cent among females in the sample population. Out of 204 literates, males and females are 153 (75 per cent) and 51 (25 per cent) respectively. The persons up to Middle standard numbering 191 consisting of 141 males and 50 females formed the majority of the educated persons. There is only one female who is matriculate. There are 25 males and 35 females in the age-group 5—14 who have never attended schools and the most common reasons are lack of interest (of both guardians and wards) and poverty. The literacy among the males and females starts from the age group 5—9, which means the public have started realising the importance of education in life. Out of the sample population, there are 8 males who have passed Matriculation or Higher Secondary standard, 1 male is technical diploma holder and only 3 males are graduate and above. A probe into the table reveals that wide base of Primary education is narrowing down at middle standard especially in case of females. After primary level the rate of drop outs in case of females is much higher than the males.

The details regarding number of households, religion, caste|tribe|community and mother-tongue of head of the household are given in the table below:

Table II.5—**Distribution of households classified by religion, caste/tribe/community and mother-tongue of head of the household.**

Religion	Name of Caste/Tribe/ Community	Number of households where mother tongue of head of the household is		
		MAGAHI	URDU	Total
1	2	3	4	5
Hindus . .	Chamar (SC) .	3	..	3
	Gareri . . .	1	..	1
	Kahar (Rawani). .	6	..	6
	Kandu . . .	7	..	7
	Kumhar . . .	1	..	1
	Nai/Hajam . .	2	..	2
	Noniar Bania . .	1	..	1
	Sonar . . .	1	..	1
	Yadava/Gwala . .	1	..	1
Muslims . .	Muslim . . .	35	2	37
Total . .		58	2	60

Of the 60 households 37 households, (61.67 per cent) are Muslims and 23 households (38.33 per cent) are Hindus. This shows that carpet weaving is still dominated by Muslims. Except two Muslim heads of the household (3.33 per cent) who returned their mother-tongue as Urdu all the remaining 58 households (96.67 per cent) belonging to both Muslim and Hindu religions returned their mother-tongue as Magahi which is lingua franca of the area.

The number of households and the religion, caste/tribe|community, sex and educational level of head of the household has been shown in the Table II.6.

Table II.6—Distribution of households classified by religion, caste/tribe/community, sex and educational level of head of the household

Religion	Name of Caste/ Tribe/Community	Number of households by Sex of head of household	Number of Household by educational level of head of the household.					
			Illiterate	Literate without educational level	Educational Level			
					Primary or Junior Basic	Middle	Matriculation or Higher Secondary	Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree
		M/F						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Hindus	Chamar (SC)	M (3)	1	1	1	..	..	..
		F (—)	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Gareri	M (1)	1	..	..	..	..	..
		F (—)	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Kahar (Rawani)	M (6)	3	1	1	1	..	..
		F (—)	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Kumhar	M (1)	..	1	..	..	..	..
		F (—)	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Kandu	M (7)	1	4	..	2	..	..
		F (—)	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Nai/Hajam	M (2)	1	..	1	..	..	..
		F (—)	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Noniar Bania	M (1)	..	..	..	1	..	..
		F (—)	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Sonar	M (1)	..	1	..	..	..	..
		F (—)	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Yadava/Gwala	M (1)	..	..	..	1	..	..
		F (—)	..	..	..	..	..	..
Muslims	Muslim	M (37)	13	17	2	2	2	1
		F (—)	..	..	..	..	..	..

It is seen from the table that all the head of households are males of which 20 (33.33 per cent) are illiterates and 40 (66.67 per cent) are literates. Of the 40 literates heads, 25 are simply literate having no educational attainment, 5 have passed Primary or Junior Basic, 7 are Middle. 2 are Matriculate or Higher Secondary and only one head is a Technical Diploma holder which is not equal to degree. Among the literate heads of households none is a degree holder.

The caste-wise details shows that illiterate head of households are comprised of 1 each of Nai|Hajam, Chamar (S.C.) Gareri and Kandu, 3 of Kahar (Rawani) and 13 of Muslim community.

Among the literates, the 25 (62.50 per cent) head of households who have attained no educational level, 1 each belongs to Chamar (S.C.), Kahar (Rawani), Kumhar and Sonar, 4 belong to Kandu and 17 to Muslim community. The 5 (12.50 per cent) who have passed Primary or Junior Basic level are comprised of 1 each of Nai/Hajam, Chamar (S.C.), Kahar (Rawani) and 2 of Muslims. Of the 7 (17.50 per cent) who have read upto middle standard, 1 each belongs to Kahar (Rawani), Noniar Bania and Yadava|Gwala and 2 each belong to Kandu and Muslim communities. The remaining 3 head of households belong to Muslim Community of which 2 (5.00 per cent) are Matriculation or Higher Secondary pass and 1 (2.50 per cent) is a Diploma holder.

The Table II.7 provides an idea regarding age and sex of the heads and members of the households.

Table II.7—Distribution of households classified by age and Sex of head of the household and number of members

Age of head of household	Number of house-holds by sex of head of the household	Number of households having members							
		2	3	4	5	6—7	8—9	10—12	13 & above
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Below 20	M (1)	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
	F (—)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
20—29	M (12)	1	3	1	1	3	..	2	1
	F (—)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
30—39	M (14)	1	1	1	2	7	..	1	1
	F (—)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
40—49	M (12)	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	..
	F (—)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
50—59	M (9)	1	..	1	..	..	2	3	2
	F (—)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
60 and above	M (12)	..	1	1	1	3	1	..	5
	F (—)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
TOTAL	M (60)	4	6	5	5	15	7	9	9
	F (—)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

It is obvious from the table that out of the 60 head of households, 14(23.33 per cent) belong to age-group 30—39, 12(20.00 per cent) each belong to age groups 20—29, 40—49 and 60 and above, 9(15.00 per cent) to 50—59 and only 1(1.67 per cent) belongs to younger generation of below 20 years.

As regards to number of households having members, a maximum of 15(25.00 per cent) households are comprised of 6-7 members each while the minimum number of 4(6.67 per cent) households are comprised of only 2 members each. On the side of households having largest number of members, 9 households each are comprised of 10—12 and 13 and more persons each.

The table placed below provides an insight into the migration status and reasons thereof with reference to place of birth of head of the households.

Table II-8.— **Distribution of household and classified by migration status with reference to place of birth and reasons for migration in relation to head of household**

Migration status with reference to place of birth of head of the household	Number of households	Number of households which have migrated due to			
		Shifting to maternal house after death of his father	Shifting to father-in-laws house after marriage	Paternal property	Business of Carpet weaving
1	2	3	4	5	6
A. Non-migrant (Born in the Village) .	55	..	..	..	..
B. Migrant					
I. Born outside the village but in the same district					
Rural . . .	3	2	1	..	..
II. Born outside the district but within the state					
District—GAYA					
Rural . . .	1	..	..	1	..
District—PALAMAU					
Urban . . .	1	..	..	..	1
Total . . .	**60**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**1**

Of the 60 households, 55 heads (91.67 per cent) are non-migrant while 5(8.33 per cent) only are in-migrants. 3 in-migrants heads are born outside the village but within the precincts of the same district, of whom 2 came from their respective villages to maternal houses after the death of their fathers and 1 head settled in the house of his father-in-law after marriage. One in-migrant belonging to Gaya district settled here to thrive upon his paternal property while the another one came from Palamu district to take up the business of carpet weaving.

The details of migrant head of households and the duration of their stay in the village have been snown in the table II.9.

Table II. 9—Distribution of household classified by migration status and duration of stay in the village with reference to head of the households

Migration status with reference to place of birth of head of the household	Number of households	Number of households where duration of stay in the village of the head of the household is			
		Non-migrant	Migrant		
			6-10 Years	11-20 Years	21+ Years
1	2	3	4	5	6
A. Non-migrant (Born in the village)	55	55	..	..	..
B. Migrant					
I. Born outside the village but in the same district					
Rural	3	..	1	..	2
II. Born outside the district but within the state					
District—GAYA					
Rural	1	..	..	1	..
District—PALAMAU					
Urban	1	..	..	1	..
Total	60	55	1	2	2

It is seen from the table that 1 in-migrant head of the households has been residing in the village for 6—10 years while 2 in-migrant head of the households, 1 each from Gaya and Palamu districts have been residing in the village for 11—20 years and 2 in-migrant head of households have been residing in the village for 21 years and more.

The details regarding traditional occupation, religion, caste/tribe and community of head of the households are given in the table II.10.

Table II.10—Distribution of households classified by traditional occupation, religion and Caste/Tribe/Community of head of the household

Name of Religion	Name of Caste/Tribe/ Community	Number of households	Number of households where traditional occupation of head of the household is								
			Carpet weaving	Mason	Hair cutting	Earthen Pot-making	Vegetable seller	General Labour	Leather work	Cultivation	Utensils hawker
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Hindus	Chamar (S.C.)	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	..
	Gareri	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
	Kahar (Rawani)	6	..	4	..	..	..	2	..	..	..
	Kandu	7	..	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Kumhar	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
	Nai/hajam	2	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Noniar Bania	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Sonar	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
	Yadava/Gwala	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Muslims	Muslim	37	37	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Total	**60**	**37**	**12**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**1**	**1**

Of the 60 households, 37 households (61.67 per cent) are Muslims and are traditional carpet weavers. Only 23 households (38.33 per cent) belong to the different Hindus commu nities had different types of traditional occupations. The traditional occupation of 12 of them was of Mason, 2 each were barbers and general labours, 1 each had traditional occupation of Earthen potter, vegetable seller, cultivator and utensil hawker, and 3 were leather workers.

The detailed information regarding sex, age-group and subsidiary occupation of the head of the households are presented in the table II.11

Table II. 11—Households classified by sex, broad age-group and subsidiary occupation in relation to head of household

Age-group	Sex	Number of households	Number of households having no subsidiary occupation	Number of households having subsidiary occupation																
				Cloth merchant	Watch repair	Cloth Hawker	Shoe repair	Hair Cutter	Tailor	Mason	General, Labourer	Earthen pot making	Allopath medical Practice	Ready made Garment seller	Vegetable seller	Teaching	Bidi making	Leather work	Unani medical shop	shoes & box shopes
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
0–14	M	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	F	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
15–34	M	21	17	1	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	F	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
35–59	M	27	9	..	..	2	..	2	1	3	3	1	1	1	1	..	1	..	1	1
	F	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
60+	M	12	4	..	..	2	..	..	..	2	1	..	..	..	..	1	1	1	..	..
	F	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**M**	**60**	**30**	**1**	**1**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**5**	**4**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**1**
	F	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

It is evident from the table that 30 heads (50 per cent), 17 in the age-group 15—34, 9 in the age-group 35—59 and 4 in the age group 60 and above are solely engaged in carpet weaving and have no subsidiary occupation.

The remaining 30 heads (50 per cent) are engaged in subsidiary occupations to relieve their family from tight economic pressures. The maximum concentration of the head of the households doing subsidiary occupations are in the age group 35—59, where 18 heads out of 27 are doing subsidiary works. Of 18 heads engaged in subsidiary occupations, 5 heads each are engaged as masons and cloth hawkers, 4 are working as general labour and 2 each are engaged in hair cutting and *bidi* making Among the remaining 12 head of the households 1 each is engaged in subsidiary occupation of retail trade of cloth, watch repairing, shoe repairing, earthen pottery, Allopathic medical practice, ready-made garment selling, vegetable selling, teaching, leather work, Unani medical practice, shoe and box selling and tailoring.

Distribution of workers and non-workers by sex, caste/tribe/community and age-group is placed in table II.12.

Table II.12—Distribution of Workers and Non-Workers classified by Sex, Caste/Tribe/Community and broad age-group

Name of Caste/Tribe/ Community	Total Population			Number of Workers and non-workers by age group																												
				All ages						0—14 Years						15—34 Years						35—59 Years						60+years					
				Workers			Non-workers			Workers			Non-workers			Workers			Non-workers			Workers			Non-workers			Workers			Non-workers		
	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
Chamar (S.C.)	23	12	11	11	10	1	12	2	10	..	..	..	2	1	1	8	8	..	8	1	7	1	1	..	2	..	2	2	1	1	..	..	..
Gareri	12	8	4	3	3	..	9	5	4	1	1	..	4	3	1	1	1	..	3	1	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	1	1
Kaher (Rawani)	62	28	34	25	18	7	37	10	27	1	..	1	25	10	15	16	12	4	8	..	8	6	4	2	4	..	4	2	2	..	..	..	..
Kandu	54	27	27	19	14	5	35	13	22	..	..	..	24	10	14	13	10	3	7	2	5	5	3	2	3	..	3	1	1	..	1	1	..
Kumhar	10	7	3	7	4	3	3	3	..	1	1	..	3	3	..	4	2	2	..	..	..	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Nai/Hajam	19	9	10	7	6	1	12	3	9	..	..	..	7	3	4	4	4	..	4	..	4	3	2	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Noniar (Bania)	18	9	9	5	4	1	13	5	8	..	..	..	8	4	4	2	2	..	3	1	2	2	2	..	2	.	2	1	..	1	..	..	..
Sonar	8	6	2	3	3	..	5	3	2	1	1	..	4	3	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yadava/Gwala	6	4	2	1	1	..	5	3	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	3	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	1	1
Muslim	275	145	130	132	83	49	143	62	81	7	4	3	117	57	60	83	50	33	16	4	12	31	21	10	7	..	7	11	8	3	3	1	2
Total	**487**	**255**	**232**	**213**	**146**	**67**	**274**	**109**	**165**	**11**	**7**	**4**	**194**	**94**	**100**	**133**	**91**	**42**	**52**	**11**	**41**	**52**	**36**	**16**	**20**	..	**20**	**17**	**12**	**5**	**8**	**4**	**4**

Of the 487 family members 213 persons (43.74 per cent) are workers, while the remaining 274 persons (56.26 per cent) are non-workers. Taken by sex, among the 255 males, 146 (57.25 per cent) are workers, whereas out of 232 females only 67 (28.88 per cent) are workers. 62.44 per cent of workers are in the age group 15—34, 24.41 per cent in the age group 35—59 years, 5.16 per cent and 7.99 per cent of workers are in the age groups 0—14 and 60+ years respectively. Working force is mainly constituted of male workers and it is nearly double to its female counterpart.

Of the 213 workers, Muslims are 132 (61.97 per cent) and Hindus are 81 (38.03 per cent) only. Out of 274 non-working population, 194 (70.80 per cent) are in the age-group O-14, where as in the age groups, viz., 15—34, 35—59 and 60+ years the number of non-workers are 52 (18.98 per cent), 20 (7.30 per cent) and 8(2.92 per cent) respectively. Muslims constitute major working force in carpet industry while Yadavas/Gwalas rank lowest.

The information regarding workers and non-workers and their sex and educational level have been provided in the table below:

Table II. 13—Distribution of Workers and Non-Workers classified by Sex and Educational level.

Educational Level	Total Population			Number of					
				Workers			Non-Workers		
	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Illiterate	283	102	181	100	43	57	183	59	124
2. Literate without educational Level	109	78	31	57	53	4	52	25	27
3. Primary or Junior Basic	46	30	16	21	17	4	25	13	12
4. Middle	36	33	3	28	26	2	8	7	1
5. Matriculation or Higher Secondary	9	8	1	4	4	..	5	4	1
6 Technical diploma or Certificate not equal to degree	1	1	..	1	1	..	..	..	..
7. Graduate and above	3	3	..	2	2	..	1	1	..

It is obvious from the table that out of 213 workers, 100 (46.95 per cent) are illiterate and 113 (53.05 per cent) are literates. The 274 non-workers are consisted of 183 (66.79 per cent) illiterates and 91 (33.21 per cent) literates.

Amongst male workers, only 43(29.45 per cent) are illiterates and the remaining 103 (70.55 per cent) are literates of which 36.40 per cent are literate without educational level, 11.64 per cent Primary or Junior Basic, 17.81 per cent Middle, 2.74 per cent Matriculation or Higher Secondary, 0.69 per cent Technical Diploma and 1.37 per cent are Graduate degree holders.

Of the 67 female wokers a majority of 57(85.07 per cet) are illiterates and only 10 (14.93 per cent) are literate of which 5.97 per cent each are literate without educational level and Primary or Junior Basic and 2.99 per cent are Middle pass. No female worker is matriculate and above.

So far the literacy among non-workers is concerned, out of 109 males, 59 (54.13 per cent) are illiterates and 50 (45.87 per cent) are literates of which a majority of 22.94 per cent are literates without educational level, 11.92 per cent Primary or Junior Basic, 6.42 per cent Middle, 3.67 per cent Matriculation or Higher Secondary and 0.92 per cent are graduates.

As far literacy in female non-workers, out of a total of 165, 124 (75.15 per cent) are illiterates and only 41 (24.85 per cent) are literates of which a majority of 16.36 per cent are literates without educational level, 7.27 per cent Primary or Junior Basic and 0.61 per cent each are Middle and Matriculate. An insight, in the table reveals that with the ascendance in the educational level there is descendance in the proportions of pursuers of both the sexes but there being more drop outs in case of females.

The table II.14 provides an idea about the traditional and present occupation of workers alongwith their sex and age.

Table II. 14—Distribution of Workers classified by traditional and present occupations

Traditional Occupation	Sex	Total number of Workers	Number of Workers									
			0—14 years where present Occupation is				15—34 years where present					
			Same as in Colmn. 1	If different (Name of Occupation)			Same as in Colmn. 1	If different (Name				
				Teker Khalasi	Carpet weaver	Tailoring		Cloth merchant	General labourer	Carpet weaver	Tailoring	
1		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Carpet Weaver	M	85	2	..	..	2	43	1	1	..	3	
	F	45	3	..	..	..	30	..	..	..	..	
Earthen Pot Making	M	6	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	2	..	
	F	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	
General Labourer	M	10	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	
	F	7	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	4	..	
Vegetable Selle	M	3	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	
	F	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Leather Work	M	9	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	6	..	
	F	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Hair Cutter	M	6	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	2	1	
	F	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Cultivation	M	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	
	F	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Mason	M	21	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13	..	
	F	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	
Bidi Maker	M	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	F	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	
Clerk (Munshi)	M	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	F	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	
Purchun Shop	M	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	F	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Utensile Hawkers	M	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	
	F	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Total	**M**	**146**	**2**	**1**	**2**	**2**	**45**	**1**	**2**	**32**	**4**	
	F	**67**	**3**	..	**1**	..	**30**	..	..	**12**	..	

Sex and broad age-group	by age group	Occupation is							35—39 years where present Occupation is		60 +years where present Occupation is	
		of occupation							Same as in Colmn. 1	If different (Name of Occupation is	Same as in Colmn. 1	If different (Name of Occupation)
		Cloth hawker	Parchun shop (Retail)	Private Tuition	peon	Vegetable seller	Clerk (Munshi)	Mason		Carpet weaver / Rickshaw puller		Carpet weaver / Nursing
13		14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
1		1	1	..	..	..	..	22	..	..	8	..	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	9	..	..	3	..	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	1	1	1	..	..	1	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
..			..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
..		..	..	1	1	1	..	..	3	..	..	2	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	1	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
1		1	1	1	1	1	1	26	9	1	8	4	..
..		..	..	..	..	..	..	10	6	..	3	1	1

It is obvious from the table that there has been a very little change in traditional occupation of workers as out of 130 workers who were traditionally engaged in carpet weaving there are 120 such workers who have not shown any shift in the occupation. Only 10 male workers have shifted from their traditional occupation of carpet weaving to different occupations of whom 5 are presently engaged in tailoring and one each is engaged in retail selling of cloth, general labour work, selling of cloth as hawker, *Parchun* selling on retail basis and doing private tuitions.

The next important traditional occupation in the surveyed households is of mason comprising of 27 workers. Of them 24 persons are presently engaged in carpet weaving and the remaining 3 persons are peon, vegetable sellers and clerk (Munshi). As is evident from the table in the remaining 10 traditional occupations there is tendency of occupational mobility amongst few workers.

So far non-workers are concerned the details regarding sex, age and type of their activities are indicated in the table placed below:

TABLE II.15—Distribution of Non-Workers by Sex, Age and Type of Activity.

Age group	Total number of non-workers			Number of non-workers by type of activity and Sex											
				Infant		Full time Student		Household duty		Seeking Employment		Dependent			
	Person	Male	Female	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		
0—14	194	94	100	7	9	31	25	..	6	1	..	55	60		
15—19	21	9	12	..	..	6	..	..	12	1	..	2	..		
20—24	14	2	12	..	..	1	..	..	12	1	..	..	..		
25—29	12	..	12	..	..	..	..	..	12	..	..	..	..		
30—39	10	..	10	..	..	..	..	..	10	..	..	..	..		
40—49	9	..	9	..	..	..	..	..	8	..	..	..	1		
50—59	6	..	6	..	..	..	..	..	5	..	..	..	1		
60+	8	4	4	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	4	2		
Total	**274**	**109**	**165**	**7**	**9**	**38**	**25**	..	**67**	**3**	..	**61**	**64**		

Out of 274 non-workers, 109 are males (39.78 per cent) and 165 are females (60.22 per cent). The ratio of male non-workers to female non-workers is 1:1.5. Female non-workers are predominately engaged in household duties. While there is no male in this category, The percentage of female non-workers engaged in household duties is found to be as high as 40.61 per cent. The percentage of male students to total male non-workers worked out to 34.86 per cent as against 15.15 per cent in respect of females. The percentage of dependants to total non-workers is found to be 22.26 per cent and 23.86 per cent respectively for males and females. 16 persons (0.58 per cent) are infants, i.e., children below 1 year comprising 7 males and 9 females. 3 males are seeking employment. The age group 0—14 consists of 70.80 per cent of the total non-working population.

Non Practising Craftsmen

To study the life style of non-fractising craftsmen, 15 households were selected from such households who have left the job of carpet weaving due to certain exigencies and a separate schedule was canvassed for this purpose among these selected households. While selecting the households care has been taken to select only those households where there were either male or female workers of craftsmen community. Information such as religion, caste/tribe, traditional occupation of the head as also the sex and broad age groups of workers who have left the job of carpet weaving alongwith the reasons was also gathered during survey in order to study the general and demographic particulars of non-practising craftsmen.

The Table II.16 shows the details of households regarding traditional occupation, religion and caste/tribe/community of the non-practising head of the households.

TableII.16—Distribution of households classified by traditiona occupation and Religion, Caste/Tribe/Community of head of the household.

Name of Religion	Name of Caste/Tribe/Community	Number of households	Number of households where traditional occupation of head of the household is						
			Carpet weaving	Mason (Rajmistri)	Gold-smithy	Barber/ Hair Cutter	General labourer	Toddy-tapping/ Selling	Cultivation
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Hindus	Kandu	2	..	2	..	..	..	..	..
	Kocri	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
	Nai/Hajam	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
	Pasi	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
	Sonar	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
Muslims	Muslim	9	8	..	..	..	1	..	..

Of the 15 households 8 households (63.33 per cent) following Muslim religion are traditional carpet weavers and one is general labour who are at present engaged in other profession. The remaining 7 households (46.67 per cent) all belonging to Hindu community were casual entrants in the arena of carpet weaving and their traditional occupations were mason work, goldsmithy, hair cutting, toddy tapping/selling and cultivation.

The informations regarding workers and their traditional and present occupations, sex and age-groups of non-practising craftsmen are given in table below:

Table II.17—Distribution of workers classified by traditional and present occupation, Sex and braod age group.

Traditional Occupation	Sex of the head of the house holds	Total number of Workers	Number of Workers by age Group														
			0—14 years where present occupation if		15—34 years where present Occupation is							35—59 years where present Occupation is					60+ years where present Occupation is Same as in Col. 1
			Same as in Col. 1	Same as in Col. 1	If different (name of Occupation)							Same as in Col. 1	If different (name of Occupation				
					Bidi making	Retail Co-shop-keeper	Retail shop-keeper	Tailoring	Plastic shop keeper	Cycle mechanic		Tailoring	Cycle mechanic	Retail shop-keeper	Loader		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
Carpet Weaving	M	10	..	..	1	1	..	2	2	1	..	1	1	1	..	..	
	F	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Mason	M	4	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	F	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	
Goldsmithy	M	3	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	
	F	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Nai/Hajam	M	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	
	F	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
General labourer	M	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	F	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Toddy-tapping/ Selling	M	2	..	1	..	..	..	.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	
	F	1	..	..	..	..	..	.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	
Cultivation	M	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	
	F	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	.	.	..	..	..	..	..	
Total	M	22		6	1		2	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	
	F	4	1	1	..		..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	

It is seen from the table that out of 22 non-practising male workers, the traditional occupation of 10 was carpet weaving, 3 goldsmithy, 1 hair cutting, 2 each toddytapping|selling and cultivation and 4 was Mason. Of the 4 non-practising female workers, the traditional occupation of 1 each was Mason and toddy tapping/selling and 2 was general labour. It is evident that mason workers, hair cutters, general labourers, toddy tappers/sellers and cultivators have returned to their traditional jobs leaving aside the work of carpet weaving. 10 traditional carpet weavers, 7 in the age group 15—34 and 3 in the age group 35—59 are presently doing the job of *Bidi* making, retail selling of cloths, tailoring, retail selling of plastic shoes & cycle repairing. The 3 goldsmithy traditional workers, 2 in the age group 15—34 and 1 in the age group 35—59 are presently doing the job of betel selling and as loader in Bharat Coking Coal Limited (B.C.C.L).

The details regarding traditional and present occupations of non-practising workers, their sex and age-groups and the reasons for leaving the traditional occupation is given in table below:

Table II. 18—Distribution of Workers classified by traditional and present occupation, sex, and broad age-group and the reason for leaving the traditional occupation.

Traditional occupation of the head of the households	Sex of the head of the house holds	Total number of Workers	Number of Workers by age-group											
			0—14 years where present occupation is	15—34 years where present occupation is				35—59 years where present occupation				60+ years where present occupation is		
				Same as in Col. 1	If different the reason for leaving the traditional Occupation			Same as in Col. 1	If different the reason for leaving the traditional Occupation			Same as in Col. 1	If different reason for leaving the traditional Occupation
					Profit not sufficient to maintain livelihood	Lack of finance	Low Wages		Profit not sufficient to maintain livelihood	Lack of finance & service in BCCL	Low Wages		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Carpet Weaving	M	10	..	..	3	..	4	..	1	..	2	..	..
	F	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mason	M	4	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	F	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Goldsmithy	M	3	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
	F	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Nai/Hajam	M	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
	F	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
General Labourer	M	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	F	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Toddy-tapping/Selling	M	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
	F	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Cultivation	M	2	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
	F	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	M	22	..	6	3	2	4	2	1	1	2	1	..
	F	4	1	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..

It shows that the 10 traditional carpet weavers who are not carrying on the job of carpet weaving at present ascribe two reasons for leaving this craft, viz., (1) profit not sufficient to maintain livelihood and (2) low wages in the job.

The 3 goldsmithy workers who have left their traditional work as well as carpet weaving ascribed the cause of leaving their traditional occupation and carpet weaving as lack of finance and problems in raising finance. Really goldsmithy needs, like carpet, even more sound financial establishment besides being deft hand. The other non-practising craftsmen have also ascribed more or less the same reasons.

History of growth and development of the Craft

There is no documentary evidence to substantiate when and by whom carpet weaving started at Obra. It is certain that the carpet weaving in the village was introduced by Sheikh sect of Muslim community. Sheikhs are traditional carpet weavers. They preserved and protected this art braving many vicissitude. They feel proud to be associated with this craft because it is not a mere means of livelihood to them but a source of aesthetic inspiration and a substance of connoisseurs value.

About origin of carpet industry at Obra nearly similar reasons were revealed by two very old deft hands. Mr. Bechu Mian recounted that their forefathers left Nizamabad (Hyderabad) owing to strife with Nizam himself and settled in different parts of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. A batch of migrant Sheikhs settled at Obra, a riparian of river Poonpoon and rivulet Adri. During their wanderings they learnt the art of carpet weaving to make their livelihood worth. Thus carpet weaving introduced by these in-migrants at Obra continued from generation to generation. Mr. Mohammed Ali Mian recounted, probably more reliable story that their forefathers were apt hand in carpet weaving in Nizamabad itself and owing to strife with Nizam they migrated and few of them settled at Obra. Both agreed that their forefathers were reputed and respected for their art.

There are no traces with respect to origin which can be termed evolutionary in character. The industry with its technique already developed in Persia appears to have been introduced in Obra for no other reason but the availability of the cheep raw materials, viz., wool from the local shephards and from the neighbouring villages and the demand for pile carpets from luxury loving Nawabs and Zamindars of the area.

The preparatory treatment of wool such as grading, washing, carding and spinning are chief processes carried out at Obra. The shephards give skinned wool as well as clipped wool from live sheep.

Till 1972 carpet craft was a monopoly of Sheikhs only. As soon as first batch of trainees numbering 20 belonging to Hindu as well as Muslim communities passed the training they adopted this craft as their occupation which shattered the monopoly of Sheikhs. This was a turning point in the history of growth of carpet industry at Obra which made a breakthrough bringing other castes and community in the arena of carpet weaving. Many other Hindus as well as non-traditional Muslims adopted this trade as their vocation. Many trained carpet weavers are carrying on this vocation successfully and earning reputation, of them name of Mohammad Mister can be mentioned safely.

Services available to Craftsmen in the village

Carpet Weaving Training Centre, Obra

As a mark of recognition to Obra carpet and first step to standardise the carpet weaving and also to give initial knowhow, Carpet Weaving Training Centre at Obra was started under the auspices of All India Handicrafts Board, New Delhi. This centre is a culmination of the personal efforts made by towering personalities like Shri Upendra Maharathi, a reputed artist and Shri N. Hariharan, Asstt. Development Officer (Wool), All India Handicrafts Board, *Ministry of Foreign Trade.*

The first session of this centre was started on 28th September 1970 with 13 trainees under the able guidance of Shri P. C. Yadava, the then Junior Field Officer and by the end of December 1971 as many as 20 trainees successfully came out with flying colours. The curriculum of training was for one year. This was an initial training. In the beginning a stipend of Rs. 40/-(Forty) per month was paid to the trainees which was later on increased to Rs. 200/- only. The maximum number of trainees in a batch was limited to 50 only and was imparted only so children of below 16 years of age.

This training was successful but as it was of primary nature, trained personal before starting their vocation had to work on Master craftsmen's looms within the village for one or two years. During this period these youngsters were paid wages on knot basis. As a leap towards the furtherance of the standard of carpet weaving and imparting higher working skill this training centre was upgraded into advance training centre. In advance training centre maximum number of trainees for a batch was restricted to 25 only. The period of training was fixed for one year and stipend was enhanced to Rs. 200/- (two hundred) per month. The maximum age for trainees was fixed at 16 years. Due to petty local politics, hooliganism caused by trainees such as tearing of woven carpets, threatening to master craftsmen and other such ill behaviours this training centre could not run for even one year and hence it could not produce a single trained personnel. By the end of July 1986 this training centre was closed.

Co-operative Societies

The history of co-operative societies is very old in the village. Of the two co-operative societies running in the village, *Obra Carpet Primary Weavers Co-operative Society* is the oldest one and was started by Shri Bechu Mian in the year 1956. The area of operation of the society is whole Obra Block except Babhandiha, Kara, Koraipur and West of Obra market. Presently 61 members are its beneficiaries. The eligibility to become a member was restricted to the people who reside within its jurisdiction and possesses knowledge of carpet weaving. The honorary Secretary of Co-operative Society is Mr. Fateh Mohammed who is a Matriculate. The services rendered by the society are the production and supply of woollen pile carpets in the open market. In the financial year 1985-86 only 30 beneficiaries were paid Rs.3000—(three thousand) each in the form of loans as working capital with 33 per cent subsidy. As per audit report pertaining to business account dated 30-6-86 co-operative earned a profit of Rs. 9.820/- which is an outcome of the transaction of Rs.2,66,100.50. The society is facing many problems, viz., (i) the honorary secretary is not keen to develop the society. (ii) He remains busy in his personal works and often remains outside the village for longer periods. The members are not in constant touch with the secretary and as such their difficulties are not readily redressed. (iii) Regular meetings of the society are not held. (iv) The regular supply of raw materials is not secured by the society and as such the members have to purchase it from Bhadohi (U.P.) or Patna City. (v) The members show their interest in the society only when they get regular work and payment of wages. Irregularity of payment is an impediment (vi) Workers face hardship regarding marketing of finished goods as Co-operative society at present is forced to serve the cause of exporters only. (vii) In nearby wood processing plant, the occasional failure of electricity hinders washing, carding, etc., activities. The society is unable to take up this work independently. (viii) society is not capable to provide training and tools to its members.

Most of the members feel that a regular paid manager should be posted who will be responsible for the proper management of the society. Recently Reserve Bank of India has sanctioned a "cash credit" to meet the demand of the 38 members which will certainly cover all the members next year. All the members of the society are working on their own looms, only the office-*cum*-shop of the society is housed in rented building.

The other society *Mahfil-e-kalin, Obra, Primary Weavers Co-operative Society*, was started in the year 1986 by untiring zeal of Shri Kashi Nath Ram, Senior Inspector, Weavers Society and other district level officers. The area of operation of this society is limited to Babhandiha, Kara, Koraipur and West of Obra market. There are 75 members in the society. The eligibility to become a member of the society is knowledge of carpet weaving. As the society is new one, only initial spade work has been done so far, such as project report for development of quality of carpet and improve workers' condition, erection of a *pucca* building, etc. The project report has been prepared by the district administration. Bihar Government is extending all possible helps so that this cooperative could provide advance training to workers and be capable to produce export quality carpet. At present a nominated board is functioning under the Chairmanship of Deputy Development Commissioner, Aurangabad. A *pucca* hall has been constructed with store and office room by the District Rural Development Authority, Aurangabad for work Shade-*cum*-Training Centre. Aurangabad Central Cooperative Bank has sanctioned a loan of Rs. 4.50,000/- as working capital to the Society. Bihar Government has already sanctioned construction of workers' hostel and finishing plant. The training to entrepreneurs will be started just after installation of 30 looms of varying sizes which is under process. Society has not started as yet its actual functioning. It is hoped that this society will be an asset to workers since there is programme for marketing, washing and clipping, etc., and cater the long cherished needs of the weavers.



Outer view of Mahfil-e-Kalin Kendra, Obra

CHAPTER—III

PROCESS OF LEARNING

Learning is a process of acquiring aptness and ability to the zenith of craftsmenship. Aptness attained by a craftsman depends upon mode and level of training, subject matter of syllabus and curriculum, ability of trainer, sincerity and intellect of trainees, etc. Two methods of training were prevalent in the village (a) Domestic training and (b) training imparted by carpet weaving training centre functioning under the auspices of Govt. of India.

Domestic training is prevalent in the traditional carpet weavers' families of Muslim (Sheikh) community where the craft is passed on from generation to generation with inheritance of skill. It is an automatic transference of excellence which protects, preserves and ennobles the traditional heritage. This type of training provides natural environs for the trainees and at the same time it links the curriculum of training to the family affairs. Every care is taken to discipline young members. The head of the family has an anxiety to enliven this valuable gem of craft by his son or ward so that his family name and fame may be glorified or at least maintained. Domestic training has an advantage that fatherly admonition are easily borne. From the very tender age the young craftsman is brought up and trained on the loom in the family workshop, under the guidance of his father, uncle or elder brother, etc., whosoever may happen to be the actual guide. The art of carpet weaving is mostly learnt by seeing and practising. Generally a person attains proficiency in the art after training of 1-2 years but mostly it depends upon the ability of the person concerned who can learn the technique even in a shorter period. The period of training differs from individual to individual. Only the hard labour and desire to learn count much. One can pick up the work of tying knots within a week and take hardly two to three months to complete the course, while others may have to continue the training for more than six months to learn the art. The setting up of the warp on the loom and other technical precise works take a much longer time and a weaver becomes the master of the art within a period of 1-2 years. Some times weavers visit their friends or close relatives' houses who are master weavers and gain further deep and specialised knowledge.

In the bosom of the family workshop the techniques are taught in their entirty and in direct relation to basic production, primarily by practice. The young craftsman learns to tie knots on the basis of graph paper which always remains hanging in front of each loom. Excellence of design and form, and sense of colour have been valued from father to son, both as a skill to be inherited and the achievement depend upon sustained application. The value of labour lies in its fulfilment and beauty is the result. Initiation and instructions are the core of training. The children take to weaving as fishes take to water They are born and reared amidst looms and in an atmosphere of wool and cotton filaments and take up carpet weaving as a natural and regular occupation.

As they grow up in age and realise the importance of money for better living they want to increase their income for which they try to learn more details of the craft. It is a self employment scheme and the young craftsman picks up the job without any hesitation. The youngsters start assisting their elders in all respect. Extension and training play a pivotal ro'e in the development of the craft. Training brings home the advancement and specialisation made in different techniques whereas the extension takes them further into the field of operation to show their applications in actual job.

There is no fixed course of domestic training. It is an informal training and varies from family to family. The trainees require a diverse kind of lessons, like handling of raw materials, full display of complete set of tools and its applications in different stages of carpet weaving alongwith the highest artistic and technical skill of the weavers and master weavers. During training, the trainees have to work with skilled and semi-skilled workers, who are engaged in various processes of work such as sorting, carding and spinning. In the actual manufacturing process there are trained weavers only.

Training is an essential prerequisite for most of the processes of carpet manufacturing. A specialised and regular training on the part of the workers is

most essential for an efficient working. In this process the young craftsman learns the techniques involved, the true value of things, metaphysics, aesthetic realisation and in short culture. A young child in the household where carpet weaving is done, from his very infancy, absorbs the texture, the colours and the forms taking shape of carpet. The child learns that beautiful results are obtained through exact and careful workmanship. The craft in due course becomes an integral part of his life.

The establishment of training centre at Obra was a step forward to meet the repeated demand of the people to uplift the condition of the workers by improving the quality of the carpets. Training imparted by the carpet weaving training centre, Obra from September 1970 to December 1985 proved successful and this centre has a privilege to produce many weavers of repute. The syllabus adopted by the training centre for massive training of carpet weaving is as under :

TABLE III.1—The stages quality, designs and duration of training

Stages	Quality	Designs	Ply	Average size	Duration
1	2	3	4	5	6
Ist	5/30	Plain	4	(a) (200×300) Cm (b) (120×210) Cm.	3 months
2nd	7/62	Indo-Kirman	3	(200×300) Cm.	4 months
3rd	8/60	Hirates	2	6.3 × 9.6'	5 months

The above syllabus was subject to change as per situation. This was a formal training of one year as per syllabus prescribed by Govt. of India for beginners. In the first stage the trainees were taught to prepare carpet of 5/30 quality in plain design. The duration of this training was three months. In the second stage they normally wove 7/62 quality of Indo-Kirman design for a period of 4 months. In the last stage they moved to the quality 8/60 of Hirates design for a period of 5 months. Later on India Govt. converted this centre into Advanced Training Centre which was first and only one of this type in Bihar. In advance training also, training was imparted in three phases. In the first stage the trainee used to prepare carpet of 9/60 quality and in the last stage due to proficiency gained in the craft they used to weave carpet of 10/52 quality. This training centre was intended to provide very high skill of carpet weaving. But unfortunately, the training centre could not function even for one session and was closed due to unworthy behaviour of the trainees.

The table III.2 deals with the number of persons and their relationship with the head of the household and with the persons who imparted training alongwith the period engaged in the craft.

TABLE III.2—Distribution of persons classified by relationship with the head, the person Imparted training and the period engaged in the Craft

Period engaged in the craft	Number of persons engaged in the craft	Number of persons engaged in the craft who are related to head as																														
		Self (Head of the household) who received training from							Wife, who received training from							Son, who received training from			Brother who received training from		Sons's wife, who received training			Daughter who received training from			Son's Son who received training from		Mother who received training from		Brother's wife who received training from	
		Father	Brother	Son	Father-in-law	Carpet weaving training centre	Maternal uncle		Husband	Mother-in law	Mother	Son	Father	Neighbour		Father	Brother	Carpet weaving training centre	Father	Carpet weaving training centre	Mother	Mother-in-law	Husband	Father	Father-in-law	Mother	Brother	Father	Grand father	Carpet weaving training centre	Husband	Son	Husband	Mother-in-law
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13	14		15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33
Less than 5 years	23	..	..	..	..	1	..		..	..	..	2	..	..		2	2	3	..	2	..	1	2	..	1	4	1	..	1	1	..	..	..	..
5—9 years	52	2	2	4	..	..	..		2	..	..	2	2	1		1	..	13	1	2	2	5	2	1	..	3	1	1	..	3	..	1	..	1
10—19 years	80	11	3	7	1	12	..		4	1	1	..	4	..		5	..	18	..	5	..	2	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..
20+ years	32	15	1	..	..	..	1		3	..	2	..	7	..		2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Total	187	28	6	11	1	13	1		9	1	3	4	13	1		10	2	34	1	9	2	8	7	2	1	7	2	1	1	5	1	1	1	1

Of the 187 persons engaged in carpet weaving belonging to 60 selected households, 60 are head of households, 31 wives, 46 sons, 10 brothers, 20 son's wives, 10 daughters, 6 son's son, 2 mothers and 2 brother's wives reflecting wide range of relationships.

The trainees and the instructors may be broadly categorised as related or unrelated. It is evident that 125 persons (66.84 per cent) received training from their relatives while 62 persons (33.16 per cent) received training from unrelated persons. Of all the 125 trainees who received training from their relatives, 55 (44.00 per cent) were trained by their fathers, 18 females (14.40 per cent) were trained by their husbands, 16 (12.80 per cent) were trained by sons and 12 (9.60 per cent) have been trained by their mothers. 10 workers each were trained by their mother-in-laws and brothers while 2 persons were trained by their father-in-laws. 1 person each was trained by his grand father and maternal uncle.

It is interesting that 11 heads of the households, 4 wives of heads of the households and one mother received training from their sons.

Of the 62 unrelated trainees 61 (32.62 per cent) working for different duration have received training from carpet weaving training centre and only one person received training from his neighbour.

A fresh incumbent after getting training for a year from carpet weaving training centre becomes fulfleged weaver when he completes practical training on village looms for 2 years.

It may be further glanced from the table that only 32 workers trained by their fathers, brothers, maternal uncle, mothers and husbands are practising the craft for more than 20 years, whereas most of the trained persons who received training from the relatives and carpet weaving training centre are engaged in the craft from 10—19 years.

Table III.3 shows the persons engaged in the craft, their relationship with the head, nature of work performed and the person imparted training.

TABLE III. 3—Distribution of persons engaged in the craft classified by relationship with the Head. Nature of work

Relationship with the head	Number of persons engaged in the craft	Number of persons engaged in the craft Carpet weaving where the relation noted at col-1 received training from									
		Father	Grand father	Brother	Son	Maternal Uncle	Father-in-law	Mother	Husband	Mother-in-law	Carpet weaving training centre
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Self (Head of the household)	60	24	..	2	1	1	1	..	..	..	13
Wife	31	12	..	..	..	..	..	1	8	..	..
Son	46	9	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	34
Brother	10	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
Son's wife	20	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	3	2	..
Daughter	10	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Son's son	6	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Mother	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Brother's wife	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
Total	187	48	1	5	1	1	2	1	13	3	60

It is seen from the table that all the 187 workers engaged in carpet weaving, though divided in three categories such as carpet weaving, supervision and maintaining liaison and preparation of Gola, Lachchi, ect., are well versed in carpet weaving.

Majority of the workers—135 (72.19 per cent) are mainly engaged in actual work of carpet weaving. Of them considerable number—60 (32.09 per cent) are trained by carpet weaving training centre followed by trained persons—48 (25.67 per cent) by their fathers. 10 out of 20 persons who supervise and do liaison work have been trained by their sons.

performed and the person Imparted training.

by nature of work performed Supervision of carpet weaving work including receipt of raw materials from the exporters and disposal of finished products where the relation noted at col. 1 received training from			Preparation of Gola, Lacchi and Kabuli for carpet weaving where the relation noted at col.-1 received training from							
Father	Brother	Son	Carpet weaving training Centre	Father	Brother	Son	Mother	Mother in-law	Husband	Neighbour
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
4	4	10	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
..	..	..	..	1	..	4	2	1	1	1
1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
..	..	..	..	1	..	..	2	6	4	..
..	..	..	..	..	1	..	7	..	..	..
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
5	4	10	1	2	1	5	11	7	5	1

Of the 32 (17.11 per cent) female workers who are mainly engaged in preparation of Gola, Lachchi and Kabuli for carpet weaving, 11—nearly one third, have been trained by their mothers.

Table III.4 gives an idea regarding craftsmen, their relationship with the head, the person imparted training period of training and remuneration.

TABLE III. 4—Distribution of persons engaged in the Craft classsified by relationship with the Head,

Relationship with the head	Number of persons engaged in the Craft													
		Father for the period		Brother for the period		Son for the period			Father-in-law for the period		Maternal uncle for the period		Husband	
		6 months to 1 year and paid remuneration.	2+years and paid remuneration.	Less than 6 months and paid remuneration.	6 months to 1 year and paid remuneration.	2+years and paid remuneration.	Less than 6 months and paid remuneration.	6 months to 1 year and paid remuneration.	2+years and paid remuneration.	6 months to 1 year and paid remuneration.	2+years and paid remuneration.	2+years and paid remuneration.	Less than 6 months and paid remuneration.
		Obligatory	Obligatory	Obligatory	Obligatory	Obligatory	Obligatory	Obligatory	Obligatory	Obligatory	Obligatory	Obligatory	Obligatory
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Self (Head of the household)	60	13	15	3	3	..	..	9	2	1	..	1	..
Wife	31	3	10	..	..	..	3	1	..	..	..	..	2
Son	46	5	5	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brother	10	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Son's wife	20	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	4
Daughter	10	1	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Son's son	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mother	2	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
Brother's wife	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Total	187	23	32	5	4	1	4	10	2	1	1	1	8

the imparted training, period of training and remuneration

who received training from														
for the period	Mother for the period		Mother-in-law for the period		Grand father for the period	Neighbour, for the period	Carpet Weaving Training Centre Qbra for the period							
6 months to 1 year and paid remuneration.	Obligatory	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	5	1	1	1
2+years and paid remuneration.	Obligatory	3	4	3	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Less than 6 months and paid remuneration.	Obligatory	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	23	1	2	2
6 months to 1 year and paid remuneration.	Obligatory	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	7	..	1	..
2+years and paid remuneration.	Obligatory	1	2	1	1	..	6	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Less than 6 months and paid remuneration.	Obligatory	..	..	3	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
2..years and paid remuneration.	Obligatory	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..		..	..	..
Less than 6 months and paid remuneration.	Obligatory	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	.
Less than 6 months and paid remuneration.	Obligatory	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Rs. 40·00/- month		4	6	7	3	2	8	2	1	1	12	40	2	4	3
Rs. 60·00/- month															
Rs. 80·00/- month															
Rs. 100·00/- month															
Rs. 200·00/- month															

Of the 55 trainees who have received training from their fathers, none was trained within six months. 23 persons were trained in one year while 32 persons spent more than 2 years on training. Of the 10 persons trained by brothers, 5 were quick to grasp and were trained within six months while 4 persons were trained within one year but a lone trainee needed more than 2 years for training. Of the 16 persons, trained by their sons, 4 received training within a short period of six months; 10 within one year while 2 had to spend more than 2 years on training. Of the 2 trained by their father-in-laws, one received training within one year while another had to learn for over 2 years. A lone person trained by maternal uncle received training for more than 2 years.

In case of 18 women workers trained by their husbands, 8 were quick to pick-up training within six months, 4 were trained within one year while 6 women having slower pick-up received training for more than 2 years. Of the 12 persons trained by their mothers, 7 were trained within six months, 3 were trained within 1 year and 2 had a training for more than 2 years. Of the 10 persons who received training from their mother-in-laws, 8 received training within 6 months while 2 were trained for more than 2 years. Of the rest 2 one each receiving training from his grand father and neighbour respectively was trained within a short period of 6 months.

As all the persons were relatives or neighbour none of them has taken any remuneration either in cash or in kind for imparting training. It was obligatory for the elders to impart training to youngers and vice-versa. There was no term and condition for imparting the training.

61 persons who have received training from Carpet Weaving Training Centre and are at present actively engaged in the craft have received a monthly stipend of Rs. 40/- to Rs. 200/- only. The number of trainees, stipend received by them and duration of training are given in the table below:

Table III. 5—Year-wise break-up of trainees, amount of stipend recieved and duration of training.

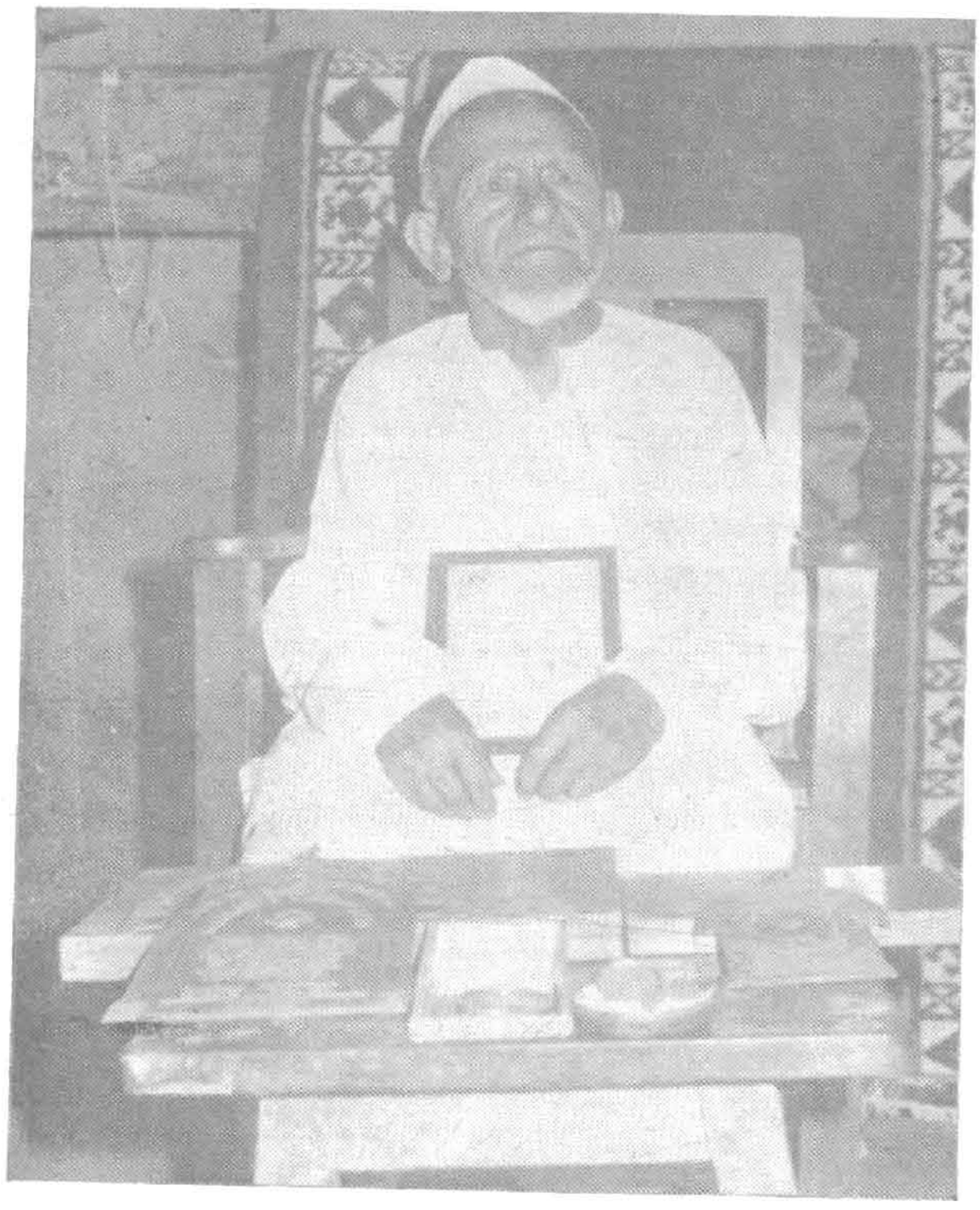
Year	No. of trainees	Amount of stipend received per month	Duration of training
1971-73	12	Rs. 40.00	1 year]
1974-80	40	Rs. 60.00	1 year]
1981-82	2	Rs. 80.00	1 year } Massive
1983-84	4	Rs. 100.00	1 year]
1985	3	Rs. 200 00	1 year Advance

The three persons who received stipend @Rs. 200/- per month could not complete their course of advance training due to closure of the centre within its first session but they were already trained persons of massive training centre for one year.

An assessment regarding adequacy of training received as related to the period, availability of better training facility and intention to receive the same have been provided in the table below :

Table III. 6—Assessment of Training received by the persons as related to the period engaged in the Craft, availability of better training facility and intention to receive better training

Period engaged in the Craft	Number of persons engaged in the Craft	Number who consider the training received is				Number reporting availability of better training facilities		Number in favour of		
		Adequate	Inadequate			Extensive training is imparted for Clipping, Washing and Gultaras at Bhadohi (U.P.)	Receiving better training	Not receiving better training		
			Death of Qualified trainer	More stress on theory only, in Carpet Weaving Training Centre	Short duration of training			Female members can not, go out side the village	Satisfied with the local training received	Can not afford expenditure on better training
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Less than 5 years	23	20	..	2	1	1	1	22	..	..
5—9 years . .	52	50	2	..	..	3	..	50	2	..
10—19 years .	80	78	1	..	1	10	..	79	..	1
20+years . .	32	32	..	..	..	7	..	32	..	..
Total	**187**	**180**	**3**	**2**	**21**	**2**	**1**	**183**	**2**	**1**



Shree Bechu Mian — Master craftsman with all his awards

It transpires from the table that out of 187 persons who received training from different sources, 180 (96.26 per cent) felt that the training was adequate. Only 7 persons reported that it was inadequate. As for reasons of inadequacy, 3 felt dearth of qualified craft teachers, 2 felt that the duration of training was short and the remaining 2 shared the view that stress was given more on the theoretical aspect than on practical in the Carpet Weaving Training Centre.

It also reflects from the table that 21 workers (11.23 per cent) are aware of the availability of better training facility. They opined that extensive training is imparted for clipping and washing, etc., at Bhadohi. Out of 187 workers only one worker is willing to receive better training, 2 workers are satisfied with the local training and one worker has reported that he can not afford expenditure of better training which is imparted outside the village. 183 workers were found not in favour of sending female workers outside the village for receiving better training.

None of the households reported restriction for imparting training to others. Even the persons belonging to non-traditional communities were imparted training without having any jealous attitude. They got proficiency in the art and had set up their own business. Not only this, the traditional weavers who were earning their livelihood by weaving carpets, Ashnis and Janemaz were also allowed to sit with them and discuss the intricacies of the craft.

The industry in past though enjoyed considerable reputation and the artisans had apparently earned wages sufficient to maintain their livelihood, it suffered a great set-back after the fall of Zamindari system and disintegration of Nawab families. With the passage of time the plight of the workers became more pitiable and consequently a few of them had to shift to alternative occupations. The Handloom Corporation and other government agencies in the recent past have made efforts to revive the industry yet the condition of the workers does not appear to reach an expected standard. The following case study reflects the present day plight of the carpet workers and their points of view.

Case study—I

Shri Bechu Mian (86 years old) is an expert carpet craftsman. He is son of Late Shri Doma Mian. He has three sons and two daughters, all married. His elder son read up to higher secondary level is working as an Accountant in Carpet Weaving Training Centre at Gaya. The second son is a Bachelor degree holder and is working as Bank Manager in the Land Mortgage Bank at Bettiah. The third one has read up to B.Sc. standard, who besides doing the work of traditional carpet weaving, has started a retail cloth-shop as his side business. Shri Bechu Mian a Sheikh Muslim has the profound knowledge of carpet weaving. He is a practical expert in execution of the various processes of carpet production. He is literate and can read and write both in Hindi and Urdu. He has attended Maktab only to gain some working knowledge and could not go to high school due to some family reasons. He began to learn carpet weaving under the guidance of his father since his childhood. He used to watch as boy, his father and other craftsmen working on his family looms with tools and picked up gradually the work in a short span of one and a half years. His father taught him weaving, washing, colouring, installation of looms, etc. At the age of 14 years he became a full-fledged worker and soon he became expert artisan. He has knowledge to prepare designs and patterns from the very beginning. There are three looms of varying sizes in his dwelling at present and eight persons including four hired labours are engaged in his workshop. He is always busy in giving them instructions and supervising their activities. Besides doing the work for exporters he also prepares carpet, Ashni and Janemaaz for private parties. He purchases all the raw materials required for production of goods for private parties from whole-sellers directly at Bhadohi and Patna City.

Shri Bechu Mian now is a man with no desire left. Even at his advance age, he is working as much as he can for promoting its prospects. He has the credit of weaving carpet of exotic beauty in natural colours for the Maharaja of Surguja. The carpet presented to Maharaja was faultless in character and excellent in appearance. The carpet had a magical influence on the viewer.

Shri Bechu Mian has received five awards for excellent workmanship in carpet weaving. He is a single person to have such a large number of awards. In 1922, the 37th Indian National Congress Exhibition was held at Gaya, which awarded him 'Gold Medal' for carpet weaving and conferred upon him the title of Bahadur Bechu of Obra. Gaya District Board Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition 1926-27 awarded him Silver medal for *Qalin* (carpet) weaving. All India Handicraft exhibition, Bihar, Patna, 1969 conferred upon him silver medal.

Director of industries Bihar, Patna, on behalf of Bihar Government has honoured him twice by offering Tamra-patra (1971 and 1973) recognising him as excellent craftsman (Shreshtha Shilpee) of Bihar.

He is of the opinion that carpet weaving craft is excellent and the knowledge and the workmanship are valuable but the prospects of workers engaged in it are not bright. The production capacity is limited owing either to restricted market or lack of sufficient capital investment.

For the benefit of carpet weavers he started Obra Weavers' Co-operative Society in the village which is still functioning. He earns Rs. 1,200—1,500 per month. His house, thatched one, is situated in Obra west. It is his ancestral house where his father worked on carpets. As a carpet weaver he has faced many vicissitudes in the industry. Female members of his family do spinning and hanking. He is of the opinion that no worker can earn more than 15 to 20 rupees per day in this industry and this scanty amount can hardly provide one with even the essentialities of life.

Case Study-II

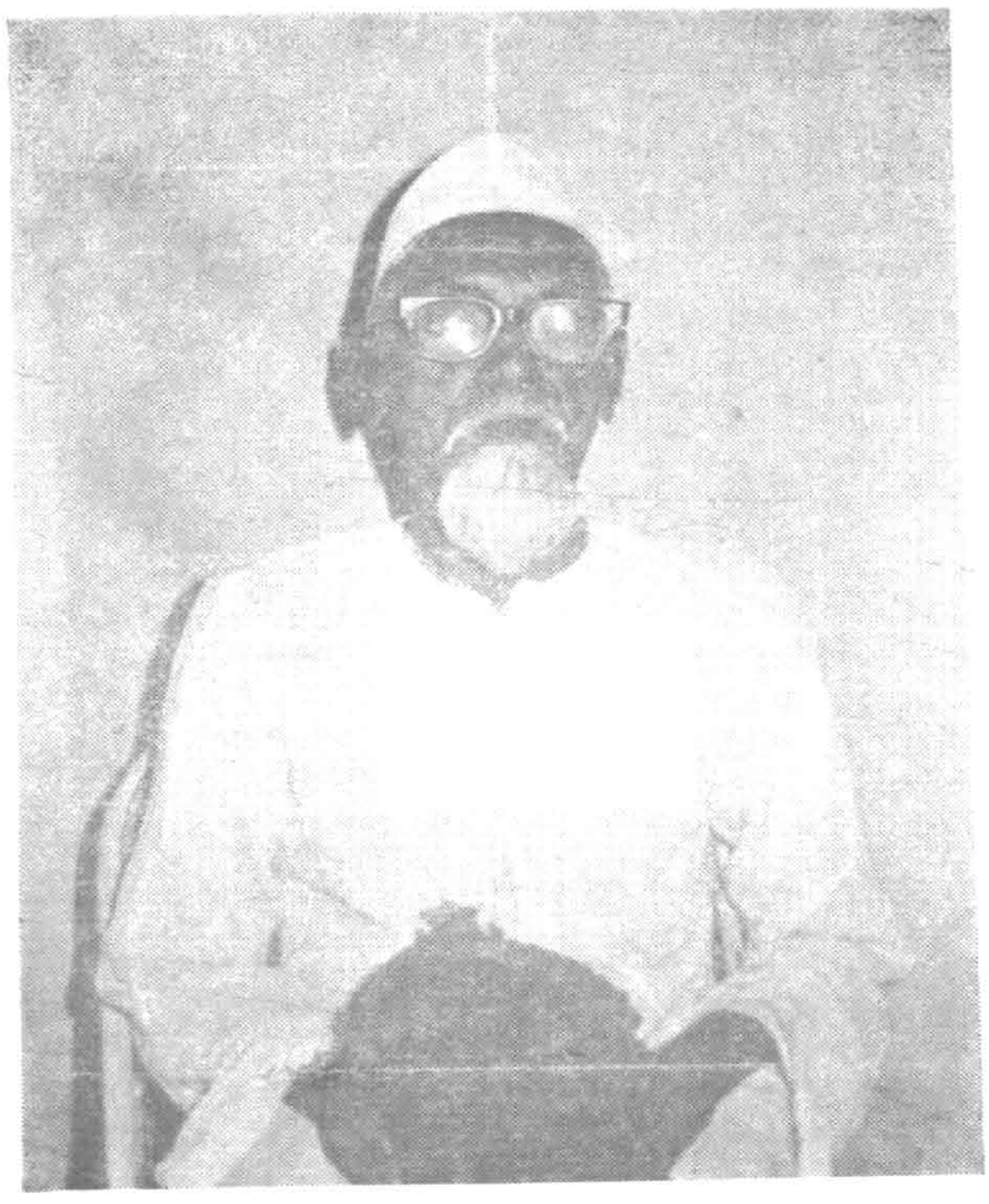
Shri Ahmad Ali Mian is a deft hand in carpet weaving. He is the son of Late Shri Tufani Mian, a traditional carpet weaver. He was born in western tola of Obra village in the year 1901. He has six sons, two daughters and a chain of grand sons and grand daughters. He is unlettered but can sign in Hindi only. He could not go for schooling because his father had no intention to educate him or divert him in any other profession than the carpet weaving. He got training from his facther when he was a young boy of 10-11 years. Besides eight family members he has employed two hired labours on daily wages also. There are three looms of varying sizes in his house. He and his family members also work on piece rate contract basis. The raw materials, such as wool and cotton are obtained from the exporter's agents and finished carpets are delivered back at the pre-agreed rate. The rate per square yard differs according to quality and knots. A proportion of the estimated wages is also paid in advance to him. The quantity of raw materials given to him are noted against his name. The exporter's agents at the time of delivery of goods also check whether the materials have been fully utilised by him and the advance paid is deducted from the wages to which he is entitled and the balance is paid. This is a general practice adopted by the exporter's agents for all the weavers who weave carpet for the exporters. But the weavers as reported by Shri Ahmad Ali Mian, is subjected to exploitation by the exporter's agents because they deduct a lum-sum amount from the hard earned wages of the weavers, showing minor mistake which can be ignored easily.

Shri Ahmad Ali Mian is critic of the working of carpet weaving training centre. He feels that the training imparted at the centre was not fullfledged. The students of training centre require further training for a minimum period of six months in a workshop of the master weavers. He is of the opinion that the home based training is best one. Father or the guardian of the family has an anxiety to train his son or ward, with all sincerity, so that name and fame of the family may be maintained. The Government training is mere a formality and source of getting stipend and certificate only.

During pre-independence period the number of weavers and their families engaged in the craft was considerably less. The Zamindars and the Nawabs had a charm for this decorative piece of article which is durable in nature. Hence carpets were sold easily in those days and the weavers of Obra gained high reputation far and wide. Shri Ahmad Ali Mian and his family members command a good reputation in this trade since pre-independence period. Even the Ashni prepared by him and his family members had much demand in Calcutta. According to him after the abolition of Zamindari system there has been significant fall in the market of this industry and as a result the weavers could not stand by themselves and they fell in the clutches of exporter's agents.

Shri Ahmad Ali Mian, an expert weaver, has trained many weavers of repute. By his honest endeavour and sincere efforts he has attained the pinacle of the glory in the realm of carpet weaving and is recipient of the National Award in the year 1972 in the All India Handicraft Week Celebration. This was for the eighth time that national awards for master craftsmen were given to the winner craftsmen in the country in recognition of their excellence in craftsmanship and invaluable contribution to Indian Handicrafts.

Aimed at giving an incentive to the traditional craftsmen of the country and inspiring them greater zeal and artistic perfection, the All India Handicraft Board since 1965 has started presenting annual national awards to master Craftsmen of exceptional skill. Under this scheme Shri Ahmad Ali Mian besides the national award was presented with a plaque, an



Shree Ahmad Ali Mian — Receipient of National award

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Shree Nanilal Prasad—A new entrant in carpet weaving

angvashtra (ceremonial shawl) and Rs. 2,500|- by the President of India. Since then he is getting Rs. 300/- per month from the office of the Development Commissioner (Handicraft), Ministry of Commerce, Government of India. The National Award presented to him is the most significant incedence of his life. The design of the carpet which fetched national award was prepared by Shri Upendra Maharathi, a noted artist of Bihar. Carpet woven by him was natural in colours with beautiful shades and of 7'x4' in size.

At the time of survey Shri Ahmed Ali Mian was found busy in guiding his family members working on the looms who were busy in preparing the carpets for exporters and other dignitaries. Some times the customers also supply their own designs for their carpets which are earsily woven in his workshop.

The wool purchased by Shri Ahmad Ali Mian for preparing carpets of private parties is scoured and dyed with the dye stuffs and chemicals under his guidance. There is one vat and furnace in the backyard of his house for this purpose. He is of the opinion that an ordinary weaver can operate the loom covering a width of 2 feet. The tools and implements purchased by him long back are in use even now.

The financial condition of his family is not sound due to its large size. His average monthly income from this industry is Rs. 2,000 to 2,500 per month. On further enquiry he says that he and his family members have charm in this industry because the whole family members can stay at home and work indoors. He has a sort of satisfaction that he is doing an independent job. He is of the opinion that Obra carpet is best in quality but they are sold in international market having a label of Bhadohi because the reputed firms of Bhadohi have links in international market. It is his conviction that exporters get major share of earnings and tne actual craftsmen who work hard to produce it get much less than what they deserve.

Case study—III

Shri Nand Lal Prasad 16 years, is a craftsman of less than one year standing in carpet weaving. He belongs to Sonar community. He lives at western tola of Obra market. He has read up to IIIrd standard and due to pitiable economic condition of his family members, he started assisting his father from the age of 12 years in selling copper and brass utensils as a hawker. He and his brother Rajesh Prasad finding no alternative employment got training in carpet weaving training centre on a monthly stipend of Rs. 100/-. His family members consist of wife, four unmarried brothers, one unmarried sister, father and mother. Seeing the meagre income of his family, he set up his own loom of 5'x6' size in the inner verandah of his small thatched house. Weaving was never an occupation of his family. He and his brother worked on the loom usually from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. with an interval of one hour for lunch. The total area of the place of work is 11.15 sq. metres. His income from this industry is Rs. 500—600 per month. No asset can be acquired out of the meagre income of the family. Only hard work of these two young boys and selling of utensils by his father make both ends meet. In a very short period he has picked up the work and can weave any design, howsoever intricate or difficult it may be. He gets raw materials from the exporter's agents and receives wages only in lieu of his hard labour. He is in search of finance so that he can purchase raw materials from Bhadohi or Patna City.

Shri Nand Lal Prasad belongs to the younger generation of carpet weavers. There are others also of his age group, who have become experts in this trade and are dependent on it for their livelihood. He is of the view that he can make his living independent through this art and dexterity of his skill in a dignified manner. He can keep his head high in the society. It is his privilege to be able to do so. He opined that if there is increase in demand and the raw materials are supplied by the government and the finished products are sold through government agencies, there will be better days for the craft and for the workers who knew this art and crave to depend on it for their livelihood.

Case study—IV

Shri Mohammad Mister, 30 years, is a traditional craftsman of carpet. He is the son of Late Shri Suleman Mian. He belongs to Sheikh sect of Muslim community. His family consists of three members—wife, daughter and self. He is literate having no educational standard. He could not attend school due to poor pecuniary condition of his family. He lives in the eastern tola of Obra market. He got training of carpet weaving in Carpet Weaving Training Centre in the year 1970-71. Due to hard and strenuous labour he stood first in the first batch and got Rs. 1500/- as financial asistance for the development of carpet industry by the Secretary, Indus-

try Department, Bihar, Patna on the recommendation of Carpet Weaving Training Centre. He maintains two looms of varying sizes in his house and employees three labours also. He and his wife both work on the looms. The total area of place of work is 19.23 sq. metres. The monthly income of his family from this industry is Rs. 900—1,000.

Shri Mohammed Mister prepares carpets for exporters and Handloom Corporation who supply raw materials to him. In lieu of his work he gets wages only, which, in his opinion, is the curse on the carpet weavers. In his opinion, to uplift the craft and the lot of craftsmen also, government interference is essential. He maintains that government should start workshop with looms where craftsmen could work on reasonable wages fixed by the government depending on the quality of carpets.

The above biographical sketches reveal that village Obra has presented two real and invaluable gems to the world of carpet weaving—Sri Bechu Mian and Sri Ahmad Ali Mian.



Shree Md. Mister—1st student of the 1st batch of carpet training centre

CHAPTER IV

MANUFACTURING PROCESS

Place of work of craftsmen engaged in the craft

Carpet manufacturing at Obra is purely a cottage industry with a family operating on one or two looms. The looms are kept fairly very busy. Traditionally, carpet manufacturing is mostly done in the house of weavers where looms are installed by weavers themselves. Generally, the weaver's workshop is a part of the dwelling house. The looms are mainly located in the verandah of the ground floor of the house and in a very rare case they are found inside a room. Verandah is supposed to be the best place to instal looms as it is always exposed to light. In cases where more than one looms are located care is always taken for the provision of light and air for an easy operation of the looms. The location of looms in a part of the dwellings helps the craftsmen to attend the duties of households in case of exigencies. The female members of the households attend to kitchen duties while preparing *Gola, Lachhi* and *Kabuli* for warping and wefting. There is no separate arrangement for work for the family members and the entire family workers sit at a place remain engaged with the various processes of the work assigned to them for quick completion of weaving so that the finished products may be supplied to the order suppliers at an early date. When the weaver is at work, one can see a well set up loom with warp threads stretched on it.

The table given here under provides a glimpse of number of households and persons engaged in the craft as related to the place of work :

Table IV. 1—Distribution of households and persons engaged in the craft as related to place of work.

Place of work of the head of the household	Number of households where place of work of the head of the households (as noted in Col. 1)	Place of work of persons other then the household is
1	2	3
1. Part of the dwelling house	57(176)	176
2. Workshop		
(a) Owned by the household	3(11)	11
(b) Owned by others	..	..
Total	6(187)	187

Out of 187 persons, 176 persons (94.12 per cent) are inmates of the 57 households who work in place which are part of the dwelling houses of the heads of the households. The remaining 11 workers (5.88 per cent) are inmates of 3 households who own 3 workshops. Of these 3 workshops, 2 workshops are located in rented buildings and one workshop has been constructed by the head of the household for weaving carpet.

The table IV.2 provides some hints regarding distribution of households, age groups, place and duration of work in relation to head of the household and other members.

Table IV. 2—Household classified by broad age-group, place of work and duration of work in the Handicraft in relation to head of the household and other members.

Age-group	Duration of work in the handicraft	Number of head of household engaged in the handicraft	Number of persons other than the head of household engaged in the handicraft	Place of work: Part of the dwelling house where: Number of head of household engaged	Place of work: Part of the dwelling house where: Number of persons other than head of the household engaged	Place of work: Workshop: Owned by the Household where: Number of head of the household engaged	Place of work: Workshop: Owned by the Household where: Number of persons other than head of the household engaged
		M F	M F	M F	M F	M F	M F
1	2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 10	11 12	13 14
0—14	Less than 5 years .	.. ..	4 4	.. ..	3 4	.. .	1 ..
15—34	Less than 5 years .	1 ..	7 6	1 ..	6 6	.. ..	1 ..
	5—9 years .	2 ..	20 20	2 ..	18 17	. ..	2 3
	10—19 years . .	18 ..	27 17	17 ..	26 17	1 ..	1 ..
	20+years . .	.. ..	.. 1	.. ..	.. 1	.. ..	.. ..
35—59	Less than 5 years .	.. ..	.. 1	.. ..	.. 1	.. ..	.. ..
	5—9 years . .	5 ..	.. 3	4 ..	.. 3	1 ..	.. ..
	10—19 years . .	13 ..	2 ..	12 ..	2 ..	1 ..	.. ..
	20 + years . .	10 ..	2 9	10 ..	2 9	.. ..	.. ..
60+	5—9 years . .	1 ..	.. 1	1 ..	.. 1	.. ..	.. ..
	10—19 years . .	3 ..	.. ..	3 ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..
	20+years . .	7 ..	.. 3	7 ..	.. 3	.. ..	.. ..
	Total	**60 ..**	**62 65**	**57 ..**	**57 62**	**3 ..**	**5 3**

It is seen from the table that the 8 persons other than the heads belong to the age group 0—14 years have duration of work in the handicraft for less than 5 years. Of these, 7 works in the workshop located at their dwelling places and one work in the workshop owned by the household.

In the age group 15—34 years, 111 workers including 20 heads having working experience of different duration in the craft, work in their dwelling houses at their dwelling places and one work in the workshop owned by the household.

Likewise in the age group 35—59 years, 43 workers including 26 heads with working length of 5 years or more work within the permises of their dwelling house, while 2 heads work outside.

The number of workers in the age group 60 years and more comprise of 15 members including 11 heads having working experience of 5 years and more work in the part of the dwelling house

Out of 187 workers, 176 (94.11 per cent) work in the part of the dwelling houses and the remaining 11 persons (5.89 per cent) who work in the workshop owned by the household attend their duties on foot and the distance from the house to the place of work is less than 1 Km. Bus services, Rickshaw and

Trekker services, etc. are always available to the craftsmen for going outside the village in connection with works related to the crafts.

The table placed below shows place of work of persons engaged in the craft and area occupied by them:

Table IV. 3—Place of work of persons engaged in craft classified by area occupied and number of persons working there in

Place of work	Number of persons engaged in the craft	Occupied area of the place of work: 3-5 sq. mts. and number of persons working at the place of work noted in Col. 1	6-10 sq. mts. and number of persons working at the place of work noted in Col. 1			11-16 sq. mts. and number of persons working at the place of work noted in Col .1			17-24 sq. mts. and number of persons working at the place of work noted in Col. 1		25 + sq. mts and number of persons working at the place of work noted in Co. 1		
		Single	Single	2-5	6-10	Single	2-5	6-10	2-5	6-10	Single	2-5	6-10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1 Part of the dwelling house	207	1	1	37	7	1	39	7	56	13	1	2	42
2 Workshop													
(a) Owned by the household	11	..	..	2	..	..	3	6	..	..	..	..	..
(b) Owned by others	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**218**	**1**	**1**	**39**	**7**	**1**	**42**	**13**	**56**	**13**	**1**	**2**	**42**

Among 218 persons including 31 hired workers, 207 persons (94.95 per cent) of the total workers work in the part of dwelling houses. The remaining 11 persons (5.05 per cent) work in the workshop owned by the households. As regards occupied area of the place of work of 207 persons, working in the part of the dwelling houses, it was observed during survey that 1 person has spread over his activity of work in 3—5 sq. metres, 45 persons in 6—10 sq. metres, 47 persons in 11—16 sq. metres, 69 persons in 17—24 sq. metres and 45 persons in 25—sq. metres. The occupied area of the place of work of 11 persons working in the workshops are 6—10 sq. metres in respect of 2 persons while 11—16 sq. metres for 9 persons.

The problems faced in relation to the area occupied at place of work can be seen in the table IV.4.

Table IV. 4—Place of work of persons engaged in the craft classified by area occupied and

Place or work	Number of persons engaged in the craft	Occupied area of the 3—5 sq. mts.		6—10 sq, mts.			11—16 sq, mts.		
		Adequate	Adequate	Inadequate		Adequate	Inadequate		
				No. separate Block for loom and sleeping	Small size of room hinders weaving		Looms fitted in between the passage hinders movement	No separate space for loom and sleeping
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Part of dwelling house	207	1	35	8	2	41	2	4
2. Workshop								
(a) Owned by the household	11	..	2	..	..	9	..	..
(b) Owned by others	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	218	1	37	8	2	50	2	4

Note : 207 persons include 31 persons as hired labour.

problems relating to the place of work

place of work							Number of persons reported having other problems relating to the place of work			
17—24 sq. mts.				25 + sq. mts.						
Adequate	Inadequate			Adequate	Inadequate					
	Looms are fitted in between the passage which hinders movement	Tung touches the low roof	No separate space for loom and sleeping		No separate space for loom and sleeping	lack of ventilation and light	Small working room becomes extremely dark during rainy days	Danger of flood from river Adri	Roof tiled/ thatched leaks during rainy days and hinders weaving	Looms fitted in verandah are disturbed during rainy days
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
56	3	6	4	35	10	13	17	19	11	10
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
56	**3**	**6**	**4**	**35**	**10**	**13**	**17**	**19**	**11**	**10**

Out of 207 persons whose place of work is part of dwelling houses, 168 persons (81.16 per cent) working within different ranges of areas varying from 3--5 sq. metres to 25+ sq. metres have reported that the area of the place of work is adequate. Only 39 persons (18.84 per cent) have reported their problems with regard to area of work. Out of 10 persons working in the area of 6—10 sq. metres, 8 persons have reported that they have no separate space for looms as the space available to them is utilised for the purpose of sleeping as well. While the remaining 2 persons are of the opinion that small size of rooms hinders weaving. Of the 6 persons working in 11—16 sq. metres, 2 persons have reported that looms are fitted in between the passage which hinder movement and 4 persons have reported that they have no separate space for looms and sleeping. Among the 13 persons working in 17—24 sq. metres, 3 persons have reported that looms are fitted in between the passage that hinders movement, 6 persons feel difficulty in weaving because tung touches the low roof and 4 persons have no separate space for looms and sleeping. Similarly 10 persons working in 25+ sq. metres have reported that they have no exclusive space for looms as the space provided is used for sleeping purpose also.

It is evident that majority of workers are satisfied with the area of place of work. Only a few of them have reported problems regarding the area of the place of work. Apart from the difficulties stated above the other problems described by the weavers are (i) lack of ventilation and light, (ii) small working rooms become very dark during rainy days, (iii) tiled and thatched roofs which is most common, leak during rainy days and hinder weaving, (iv) looms fitted in verandah are disturbed during rainy days and (v) danger of flood from rivulet Adri. A few weavers also told that tani work is done in open space which can not be done in rainy season due to muddy place outside the houses.

The table provided here under gives an idea about the availability of the place of work in relation to number of workers and area occupied by them.

Table IV. 5—**Households owning place of work classified by area occupied and number of persons working therein**

Place of work owned by the household	Number of households owning place of work noted in col. 1	Number of households having occupied area											
		3—5 sq. mts. and number of persons engaged there in	6—10 sq. mts. and number of persons engaged there in			11—16 sq. mts. and number of persons engaged there in			17—24 sq. mts. and number of persons engaged there in		25+ sq. mts. and number of persons engaged therein		
		Single	Single	2—5	6—10	Single	2—5	6—10	2—5	6—10	Single	2—5	6—10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Part of dwelling house .	57(207)	1(1)	1(1)	12(37)	1(7)	1(1)	15(39)	1(7)	16(56)	2(13)	1(1)	1(2)	5(42)
2. Workshop													
(a) Owned by the household . .	3(11)	..	..	1(2)	..	..	1(3)	1(6)	..	..	..	..	..
(b) Owned by others .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total . .	**60(218)**	**1(1)**	**1(1)**	**13(39)**	**1(7)**	**1(1)**	**16(42)**	**2(13)**	**16(56)**	**2(13)**	**1(1)**	**1(2)**	**5(42)**

Note: Figures written in the parenthesis stand for number of persons engaged in the craft

In 57 households comprising 207 workers, 1 household with 1 member works in the occupied area of 3—5 sq. metres, 45 persons of 14 households work in the occupied area of 6—10 sq. metres. 47 persons belonging to 17 households work in the occupied area of 11—16 sq. metres, 69 persons relating to 18 households work in the occupied area of 17—24 sq. metres and 45 persons of 7 households work in the occupied area of 25+ sq. metres. The remaining 3 households comprising 11 persons work in the workshops. Of them 1 family of 2 members work in the occupied area of 6—10 sq. metres while 2 households of 9 persons work in the occupied area of 11—16 sq. metres.

Social status of carpet weavers

There is no purity or pollution associated with the craft. The craftsmen are of the opinion that the job of carpet weaving does not impair their social, cultural as well as religious belief and sanctity. They are not looked down upon by the society and they feel proud that they are preparing items of aesthetic beauty. They enjoy all social privileges and have the same status like their co-villagers. All the social ceremonies and village festivals are commonly enjoyed by them in full cooperation with non- weaving communities living in proximity or in other tolas of the village. Even the local fairs are visited unitedly by them. During survey it was found that persons of non-weaving communities were sitting comfortably at workshop of weavers seeing minutely the work attended by the weavers community not with an intention to learn the intricacies of the craft but due to attraction of the fine art involved in the process of production. They talk with each other and also relish a cup of tea offered by the craftsmen as a social courtesy.

Though matrimonial bondages are restricted among the so called accepted section of the communities, the non-weavers communities attend the ceremonies and gladly accept the food served at the occasion.

Handicraft objects made by households

The details of handicraft items manufactured by different households and their uses in relation to the educational level of the head of the family are provided in the Table IV.6.

Table JV. 6—**Distribution of household manufacturing handicraft item for purpose as related to educational level of the house of the household**

Educational level of the head of the household	Name of handicraft items manufactured	Number of household manufacturing handicraft items	Number reporting purpose for which the particular item is used						
			Ashani			Janemaz	Carpet		
			For sitting on the ground while worshiping	For sitting on the ground while taking meals	As chair cushion	For sitting on the ground while reciting Namaj	As floor covering in drawing room, cinema hall, Hotel, etc.	For sitting and sleeping of special guests on ceremonial occasions	As palang cushion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Illiterate . .	Carpet	11	..	..	..	..	9	2	6
	Carpet . Ashani	8	7	3	2	..	7	3	4
	Carpet Ashani, Janemaz	1	1	..	..	1	1	1	..
2. Literate without Educational level . .	Carpet	11	..	..	..	..	10	6	5
	Carpet, Ashani	12	11	1	8	..	12	3	7
	Carpet, Ashani, Janemaz	2	2	..	2	2	2	.	2
3. Primary or Junior Basic	Carpet	3	..	..	..	..	3	1	..
	Carpet, Ashani	2	2	..	1	..	2	1	2
4. Middle . .	Carpet	4	..	..	..	..	4	..	2
	Carpet, Ashani	3	3	1	3	..	3	2	1
5. Matriculation or Higher secondary . .	Carpet, Ashani	1	1	1	..	..	1	..	..
	Carpet, Ashani, Janemaz	1	1	..	..	1	1		
6. Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree .	Carpet, Ashani,	1	1	..	1	..	1	1	..
	Total .	**60**	**29**	**6**	**17**	**4**	**56**	**20**	**29**

Note : (i) Figures in column 3 do not tally with figures in Columns 4—10 because some families have reported more than one use of items prepared in the household.

(ii) Uses of carpet have been shown in columns 8—10 where as uses of Ashani and Janemas have been shown in Columns 4—6 & 7 respectively.

(iii) Figures in Column 3 of each literacy group written in more than one line indicate clearly number of households preparing single, double and triple items.

Three items carpet, Ashni and Janemaz are prepared at Obra. There is little influence of literacy in preparation of these items hence literacy-wise variation in the production is not worth describing. It is the hard labour and minute skill of weavers which count much in the preparation of these items. The families engaged in the handicraft have reported more than one reason for the purpose for which a particular item is used. 29 families (48.33 per cent) have reported that Ashni is used for sitting on the ground while worshipping. 6 families (10.00 per cent) have assigned the purpose of Ashni for sitting on the ground while taking meals and devoting oneself in study and 17 families (28.33 per cent) are of the opinion that it is used as chair-cushion. Janemaz contains the design of mosque and its use as reported by 4 families (6.67 per cent) is for sitting on the ground while reciting Namaz. 56 households (93.33 per cent) have reported that carpets are used as floor coverings in drawing-rooms, cinema halls. hotels, etc. 20 households (33.33 per cent) have reported that carpets are provided for sitting and sleeping purpose to special guests on ceremonial occasions, while 29 households (48.33 per cent) are of the opinion that carpets are used as palang-cushion (luxury cot).

The number of items maufactured by different households in a month and their seasonal variation as related to the educational level of the head of the household is given the table IV.7.

Table IV. 7—**Distribution of households manufacturing handicraft object by number of items manufactured in a month and seasonal variation in the production of the item as related to educational level of the head of the household.**

Educational Level	Name of handicraft items manufactured	Number of households manufacturing handicraft items	Number reporting number of items manufactured in a month	Number of households reported having seasonal variation in the production of the items					
				Number of households	Low production in summer season due to excessive heat/less demand of the product	Low production in rainy season due to muddy open space/Less light during cloudy days/Agricultural season	Low production due to Ramjan (fasting) and other ceremonial and social function	High production during winter season due to favourable weather for work and high demand of the product	Low production during winter season due to shorter days and excessive cold
			Less than 10						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Illiterate	Carpet	11	11	11	5	3	5	5	..
	Carpet, Ashani	8	8	8	4	4	2	2	1
	Carpet, Ashani, Janemaz	1	1	1	..	..	1	..	..
2. Literate without Educational level	Carpet	11	11	9	3	5	3	5	..
	Carpet, Ashani	12	12	10	3	6	7	4	1
	Carpet, Ashani, Janemaz	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	..
3. Primary or Junior Basic	Carpet	3	3	3	2	1	1	1	..
	Carpet Ashani	2	2	2	1	2	1	..	..
4. Middle	Carpet	4	4	4	2	2	..	2	..
	Carpet, Ashani	3	3	3	2	..	2	1	..
5. Matriculation or Higher Secondary	Carpet, Ashani	1	1	1	1	..	1	..	..
	Carpet, Ashani, Janemaz	1	1	1	1	..	..	1	..
6. Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	Carpet, Ashani	1	1	1	1	..	1	..	..
	Total	**60**	**60**	**56**	**26**	**24**	**25**	**22**	**2**

NOTE : (i) Out of 60 households 4 households of Literate without Educational level have reported no seasonal variation.

(ii) More than one reason is reported by one household for variation in production of items, hence vertical total of column 5 dose not tally with column 6—10.

Out of 60 households, 29 households (48.33 per cent) prepare one items (carpet), 27 households (45.00 per cent) prepares two items (carpet-Ashni) and only 4 households (6.67 per cent) prepare three items (Carpet-Ashni Janemaj) the average number of each item manufactured in a month by a house-hold is less than 10 because the preparation of each is labour intensive and a very small portion is woven in a day.

56 households (93.33 per cent) have reported seasonal variation in production of items and 4 (6.67 per cent) households whose heads are literate without educational level have negated seasonal variation of products. 26 families (43.33 per cent) have reported that low production in summer season is due to excessive heat and less demand of the product. 24 families (40.00 per cent) are of the opinion that low production in rainy season is due to lack of mud free open space, disturbance due to rains, inadequate light due to cloudy weather and agricultural operation causing hired labour problem. 25 families (41.67 per cent) have reported that there is low production during Ramzan period and other ceremonial occasions. 22 families (36.67 per cent) have reported that in winter they can work with comfort for long hours and there is a rise of demand in the products due to warmth giving quality of carpets and matrimonial and ceremonial occasions while 2 families (3.33 per cent) have extended diametrically opposite view that the production in winter season is less due to shorter days.

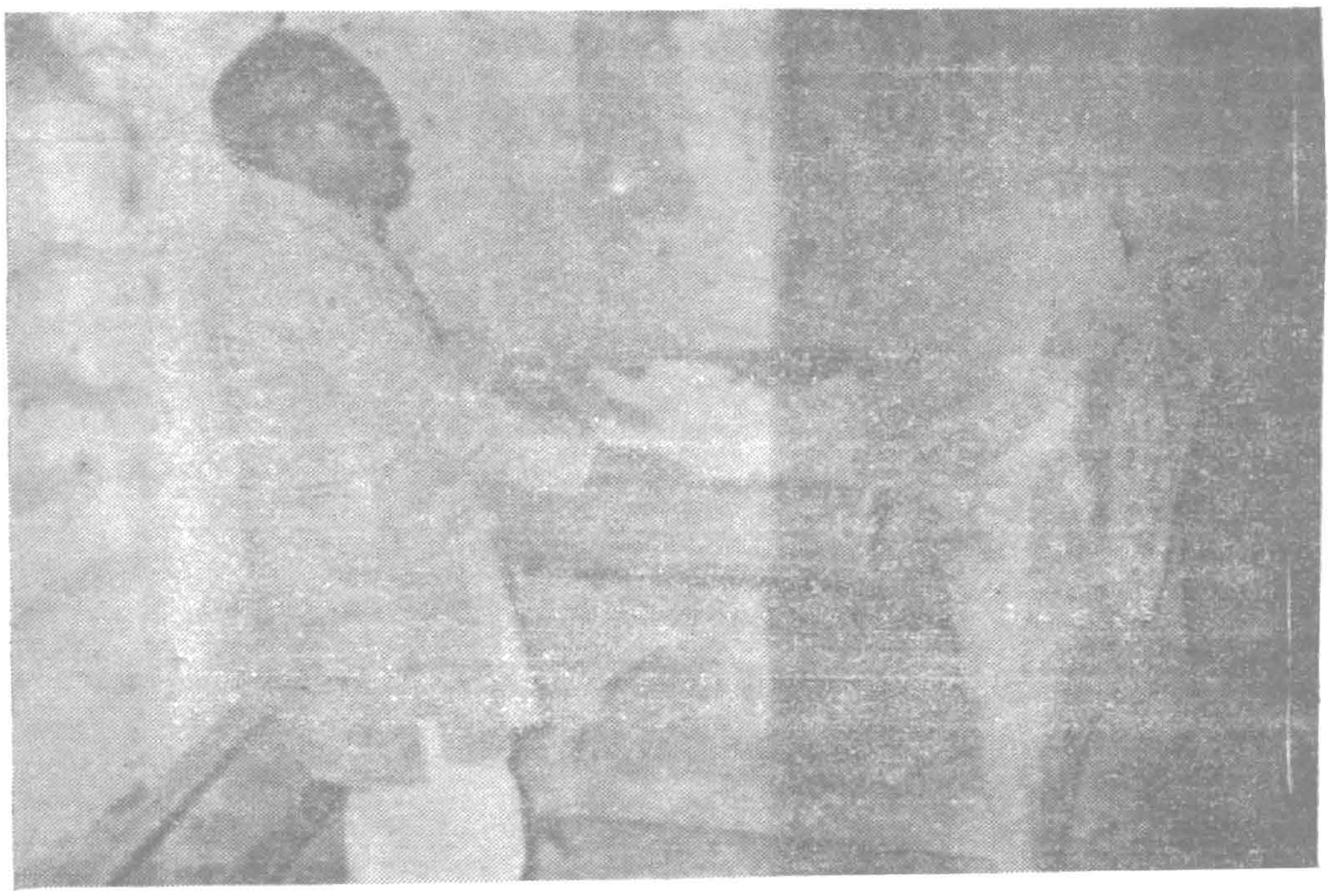
Raw Materials

The main raw materials in the manufacture of carpet, Ashni and Janemaz at Obra are wool, cotton yarn and different varieties of colours and chemicals. Wool and cotton yarn are used in twisted or untwisted form. Cotton yarn forms the surface of the items to be prepared. The yarn is dyed in different shades of colour before it is used for weaving. Fuel and other auxiliary materials are also required as raw materials.

1. *Woollen yarn*—Woollen yarn is the most important of all raw materials and it constitutes the pile of the carpet. Yarn made of wool is the ideal material for carpets because wool is capable of being spun easily into yarn of any required count or thickness and it can be suitably dyed in any shade of colour. The hand spun yarn is not of superior quality and does not take good colours. The mill spun yarn is evenly spun and give better finish. Besides the Mill spun yarn, the weavers at Obra also use hand spun yarn. They purchase wool for hand spun yarn at their doorstep brought by shepherds of neighbouring villages viz. Shankarpur, Dhanawan, Paraiya, etc. during crop season of wool. The crop season of wool are **Phalgun** (Feb-March), **Asharh** (June-July) and **Kartik** (Oct.-Nov.). The wool of **Phalgun** (spring season), when the sheep is free from dust and water is considered to be the best. The Kartik wool is, generally, yellowish in colour and heavy in weight. Asharhi wool is said to be the worst wool, as fleece are dirty and heavy due to rain and mud. The neighbouring villagers who rear sheep had only indigenous breed of sheep. The sheep breeders do not lay stress on the breeding of white sheep flocks, the wool of which are thin and light in appearance and as such their sheep are generally of mixed colours having white, black, fawn and grey colours. They are unable to supply better quality of wool. Wool thus gathered is first cleaned by hands and foreign materials are removed. The carding of wool in the saw blade carding machine is done by Handloom Corporation on payment of 0.75 paise per Kg. After the wool is carded it is spun into yarn by the female members when they are free from household duties. They spun 2 Kilograms of woollen yarn in about 8 hours. The spun woollen yarn is cleaned in *reetha* (soap nut). The seeds of *reetha* are removed and its skin is only used for washing yarn. Water with *reetha* skin is shaken well and foam is prepared. It is poured into drum. Ratio between water and yarn to be washed is kept between 6:1 to 9:1. The yarn hanks are put into water for half an hour. Thereafter, the yarn hanks are picked up by the washers one by one with their ends and are shaken well in the foamy water. When they are cleaned and rinsed well they are taken out from the foamy water and put into the clean water. After this they are taken out of water and spread in sun on any suitable substance for being dried. Normally Ashni and Janemaz are prepared from hand spun yarn.

With the advent of mill made yarn and the supply of the same to weavers by the Handloom Corporation, Exporter's agents and Cooperative Society located at Obra, there has been a change in the status of weavers and organisation of the industry. The independence of weavers disappeared. The exporters purchase wool from Panipat in Haryana, Bikaner in Rajasthan, Jodhpur, etc., and the same is supplied to local weavers through their agents. They also supply Newzealands wool for manufacture of better quality of carpets.

2. **Cotton yarn**—The cotton yarn is mainly used as warp and weft thread. Two types of mill spun cotton yarn are generally used. The most commonly used is the hand twisted mill spun cotton yarn but some



A view of carding of wool at wool processing plant

carpet weavers also use mill twisted yarn. Hand twisted yarn is cheaper but it is inferior in strength and gives rise to inferior and uneven finish. Cotton yarn of six count is normally used in the manufacture of carpet. This yarn is used as Tani and thick yarn of cotton waste is used as Tharri.

3. *Dye Staff*—The graphed design of the carpets required to be produced is prepared and different colours are filled in the graph itself to judge the beauty of the carpet which would be ready after the weaving. The preparation of graph is basically for weavers, however, it also indicates the colour combinations of various colours required in the carpet. Therefore, it is important that the dyeing of the yarns should perfactly match the colours required in the map failing which the whole idea of getting the particular carpet will be flopped.

The dye stuffs have their own importance because the beauty and effectiveness of all the designs and patterns depend on the subtle effects of light and shades produced by suitable arrangement of colours. Different dyes are required for wool and cotton. Wool being animal substance can not be dyed with alchoholic dyes and cotton can not be dyed with acid colours and so wool is dyed in acid colours while colouring of cotton yarn is done by alchoholic or direct colours.

The vegetable dyes of Indian origin are fast and lighter than synthetic colours but are known only to deft craftsmen. They are of the opinion that the vegetable dyes are not uniformly strong in all seasons. It is almost impossible to lay down an exact formula for a particular shade of vegetable dyes as is possible in case of synthetic dyes. Again it is almost impossible to reproduce the same shades with vegetable dyes. When many items have to be made of the same design and colours vegetable dyes cause variation in shades to such an extent that no two items from the same batch are exactly alike. The vegetable dyes are not a healthy commercial proportion for carpet industry. Synthetic dyes provide the dyers with a large range of shades and colours to choose from. They are easier to be used and more reliable.

Sulphuric acid and sodium sulphate with other salts are other important chemicals used for securing clearness, evenness and deep penetration of the colours in the yarn. In order to give more lustre to the yarn it is washed by another process known as chrome dyeing. The carpets of chrome dyed yarn are washable and the colour does not bleach even after washing. This makes the life carpet longer. The acid dyed carpets are inferior in quality, hence they are not suitable for export whereas chrome dyed carpets are suitable for export.

The following items are required for dyeing 5 Kgs. of woollen yarn:

1. Colour—450 gms. to 500 gms.
2. Sulphuric acid—1 Kg. 400 gms.

Colour and sulphuric acid are procured at Obra from Jamhaur(N) which is about 7 Kms. from the village. The retail price of colour is Rs. 180/- to Rs. 190/- per Kg. The cost of sulphuric acid is Rs. 8|-to Rs. 9|- per bottle.

Cool dyeing, though most economical and traditional method, is not resorted to because it does not produce good quality of colour. The colours fade easily because the yarn is not boiled.

The colours used for the manufacture of pile carpets should essentially be fast and hence bake dyeing is followed in dyeing woollen yarn. Big oven made of bricks are used in this system. The dye stuff (colour and sulphuric acid) is first dissolved in cold water and then added to the dye bath. The temperature of water in the dye bath normally remains 100C and dissolved dye stuffs are added to the dye bath and the dyer mixes it with a piece of wood or bamboo stick. The woollen yarn is put in and boiled in the boiling vat for 2 to 2.5 hours. The yarn hanks are kept up and down constantly with the help of long wooden stick. After this process the yarn is taken out and thoroughly rinsed in cold water and spread in sun for drying. The yarn is suitable only in the form of hanks for dyeing otherwise inner threads of the balls would not absorb the colour compound. *Lacchi* is suitable in rinsing in water and drying in sun.

There is no dyeing plant at Obra. It is through experience that the dyer is able to judge the proportion of colours and acid required to be mixed in water. In the absence of any scientific method the chance of an error is always lurking there. Chemical dyes are preferred because it is free from moth attack.

The hanks of woollen yarn for preparing carpets in different colours are supplied to the weavers who prepare carpets for exporters, Handloom Corporation and Co-operative Society. The weavers dye woollen yarn in different colours only when they prepare items of private parties.

The weavers first of all turn into knops (locally balled *Kabuli*) the hanks of woollen yarn. The yarn of 3-4 coil (locally called *Lachhi*) is wound together on 1.5 feet long stick. This work is done by the female members of the family. Ordinarily one woman can open coil of 10 Kgs. yarn and prepare, knops out of it in 4 hours.

The process of dyeing cotton yarn is simple. Requisite quantity of colour is mixed in cold water. The yarn is dipped into cold water normally in the night and taken out next morning. It is also made to dry in the sun. The dyed yarn is prepared into '8' shaped coil by a young boy who sits and opens the coils. This cotton yarn is utilised for wefting.

Cotton yarn of 6 counts for warp are wounded in the shape of ball called Gola. The yarn is normally twisted in six ply yarn on *Charkhi* by female members of the family. The preparation of warp is one of the most important operations in weaving. Every care is taken while preparing the warp because even the slightest mistake made in warping affects the whole process of weaving. The warp thread must have a tighter twist than the weft thread so that it may not break while tightening. The carpet makers also get twisted yarn and are able straightway to prepare the warp thus being also spared of the labour of twisting the stand themselves.

The figures regarding average monthly consumption of raw materials in different seasons required to produce different items of handicraft in relation to educational attainment of the head of the family are incorporated in the table IV.8.



The turning of woollen yarn into Knops, locally called *kabuli*, by female members



Twisting of yarn on *Charkhi* **by female members**

Table IV. 8—Average monthly consumptio n of raw materials by seasonal variation for manufacturing different items of handicraft classified by educational level of the head of the household

Educational level of head of the household	Number of handicraft items Manufactured	Number of households Manufacturing handicraft items	Average monthly consumption of each raw materials				Number of reported seasonal variation in the consumption of raw materials						
			Tani in Kg.	Tharri in Kg.	Lachhi in Kg.	Wool in Kg.	Number of households	Tani/Tharri/Lachhi/Wool					
								High consumption in winter season due to high production	Low consumption in winter season due to shorter day length resulting in low production	Low consumption in summer season due to unfavourable working condition	Low consumption due to Ramjan (fasting) and other ceremonial and social function	Low consumption during rainy season due to disturbing weather condition for work
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Illiterate	Single	11	16	56	9	118	11	5	..	5	5	3
	Double	8	28	110	17	197	8	2	1	4	2	4
	Triple	1	2	11	2	20	1	..	..	..	1	..
2. Literate without Educational level	Single	11	17	62	10	116	9	5	..	3	3	5
	Double	12	32	110	19	237	10	4	1	3	7	6
	Triple	2	9	9	5	66	2	1	..	1	1	1
3. Primary or Junior Basic	Single	3	3	13	2	3	3	1	..	2	1	1
	Double	2	6	27	4	5	2	..	..	1	1	2
4. Middle	Single	4	5	22	3	42	4	2	..	2	..	2
	Double	3	4	15	3	33	3	1	..	2	2	..
5. Matriculation or Higher Secondary	Double	1	2	7	1	15	1	..	..	1	1	..
	Triple	1	2	11	2	20	1	1	..	1	..	..
6. Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	Double	1	3	14	2	26	1	..	..	1	1	..

Note : 1. Out of 60 households 4 households of Literate without Educational Level have reported no seasonal variation for consumption of raw materials.

2. Column 8 does not tally with column 9—13 because one household has reported more than one reason of seasonal variations.

3. Only 10 families use dye and sulphuric acid in a very small quantity. Hence its monthly average consumption has not been shown.

29 households (48.33 per cent) preparing single item (carpet) consume 41 Kgs. of *Tani*, 153 Kgs. of **Tharri**, 24 Kgs. of **Lachhi** and 279 Kgs. of wool. 27 households (45.00 per cent) preparing double items (carpet-Ashni) consume 75 Kgs. of *Tani*, 283 Kgs. of **Tharri**, 46 Kgs. of **Lachhi** and 513 Kgs. of wool and 4 households (6.67 per cent) preparing all the three items (carpet-Ashni-Janemaz) consume 13 Kgs. of **Tani**, 31 Kgs. of **Tharri**, 9 Kgs. of **Lachhi** and 106 Kgs. of wool in a month. The consumption of each raw material depends on the type, quality, design and size of the carpet. The number of knots per square inch, count of yarn and the wool used in carpet weaving is also important factor in determining the consumption of raw materials. The quality of wool will vary according to the quality of carpet to be prepared. During survey the head of the households have reported more than one reason of seasonal variation for manufacturing different items of handicrafts. 22 households (36.67 per cent) have reported that the consumption of raw materials are high in winter season due to high production whereas 2 households (3.33 per cent) have given the opposite view that the consumption of raw materials are less in winter due to shorter days. 26 families (43.33 per cent) have reported low consumption of raw materials in summer season due to unfavourable working condition. 25 families (41.67 per cent) have assigned reason of low consumption of raw materials during Ramzan due to long fasting and other ceremonial occasions; whereas 24 households (40.00 per cent) are of the opinion that the low consumption during rainy season is due to lack of adequate open space.

The table IV.9 provides an idea of raw materials used in production of various items of handicraft, the place of procurement, the mode of transportation and the problems associated with it.

Table IV. 9—Raw materials used for the manufacture of different items of craft classified by area from where procured by mode of transport and problem faced

Name of raw materials used for making the handicraft items	Number of households using the raw materials	Number of households which have procured raw materials from								Number of households reported having faced problem for procuring the raw materials	
		Locally and brought to site by means of		Bhadohi (U.P.) and brought to site by means of		Jamhaur (N) and brought to site by means of		Patna-City and brought to site by means of		Sometimes Local unavailability of certain colour of wool which runs short during weaving work hampers the work as exporting agency Hand-loom corporation, etc. have to fetch it from their godown located away	Raw materials brought to site by train are not booked, so occasionally weavers have to face difficulties
		Head load	Bi-cycle	Taxi/Bus	Train	Taxi/Bus	Train	Taxi/Bus	Train		
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Tani	60	54	6	10	10	..	..	..	..	8	4
Tharri or Anga	60	54	6	10	10	..	..	..	..	8	4
Lachhi	60	54	6	10	10	..	..	..	..	8	4
Wool	60	54	6	10	10	..	..	..	..	8	4
Dye	10	..	..	..	..	10	10	10	10	..	..
Sulphuric acid	10	..	..	..	..	10	10	10	10	..	..

Note : 1. All households use Tani, Tharri, Lachhi and Wool. Amongst them 10 households often dye, wool/cotton and use dye, and sulphuric acid for colouring.

2. Some households use more than one mode for carrying the raw materials to the site, hence horizontal total of households from column 3—10 does not tally with column 2.

Of the 60 households who prepare carpet, Ashni and Janemaz for exporters, Handloom Corporation and Co-operative Society, 54 households (90.00%) have reported that *Tani, Tharri, Lachhi* and wool are brought by them from these units as head load, whereas 6 households (10.00 per cent) bring these raw materials on cycle. 10 families (16.67 per cent) also prepare items for private parties. Knowledgeable craftsmen have reported the cost of the woollen yarn and cotton yarn to be used in different process of carpet weaving as follows:

Sl. No.	Name of raw materials	Cost per Kg.	Remarks
1	Coarse wool	Rs. 50·00 to Rs. 52·00	
2	Medium wool .	Rs. 55·00 to Rs. 60·00	
3	Fine wool .	Rs. 60·00 to Rs. 65.00	
4	Newzealand wool	Rs. 65·00 to Rs. 70·00	
5	Tharri cotton .	Rs. 10·00 to Rs. 12·00	
6	Lachhi Cotton (6/2)	Rs. 22·00 to Rs. 25·00	
7	Tar cotton .	Rs. 18·00 to Rs. 20·00 (of Jayashree Mill)	

The craftsmen who work for private parties feel some difficulties in the procurement of raw materials used in carpet. Warp threads (cotton yarn) and weft threads (wools of different colours) are not locally available. Even for petty items like colours, acids, etc., they have to depend on the shops outside the village. In many cases they have to either go to Patna City or Bhadohi for purchase of raw materials. They bring the raw materials either by taxi/bus or train. Since raw materials are not readily available at the weavers door-step they have to bear unnecessary expenditure and spare at least one full day in purchase of these raw materials. Even the co-operative Society located in the village is unable to supply them the required raw materials on payment basis for undertaking the work of private parties. Owing to lack of organised marketing facility majority of the skilled and willing weavers hesitate to take up the work of private parties. Generally, the work of private parties are taken up by the weavers of sound economic status because the sum advanced by these private parties are meagre and the entire process of carpet weaving work cannot be completed with that scanty amount. On the other hand those who work for exporters and co-operative society have not to face procurement problem because required raw materials are supplied to them either by exporters agents or co-operative society. Moreover those who work for handloom Corporation also some-time face problem of ready supply of the raw materials. Besides the above problems 8 households have faced problems in procuring raw materials. They have reported that some times non-availability of certain colour wool which run short during weaving hampers their work because the agencies for whom items are being prepared have to fetch it from their godown located out side the village. Of these, four families have also reported that the raw materials purchased for preparing carpet-Ashni-Janemaz of private parties are not booked in train and hence difficulties are faced in transportation.

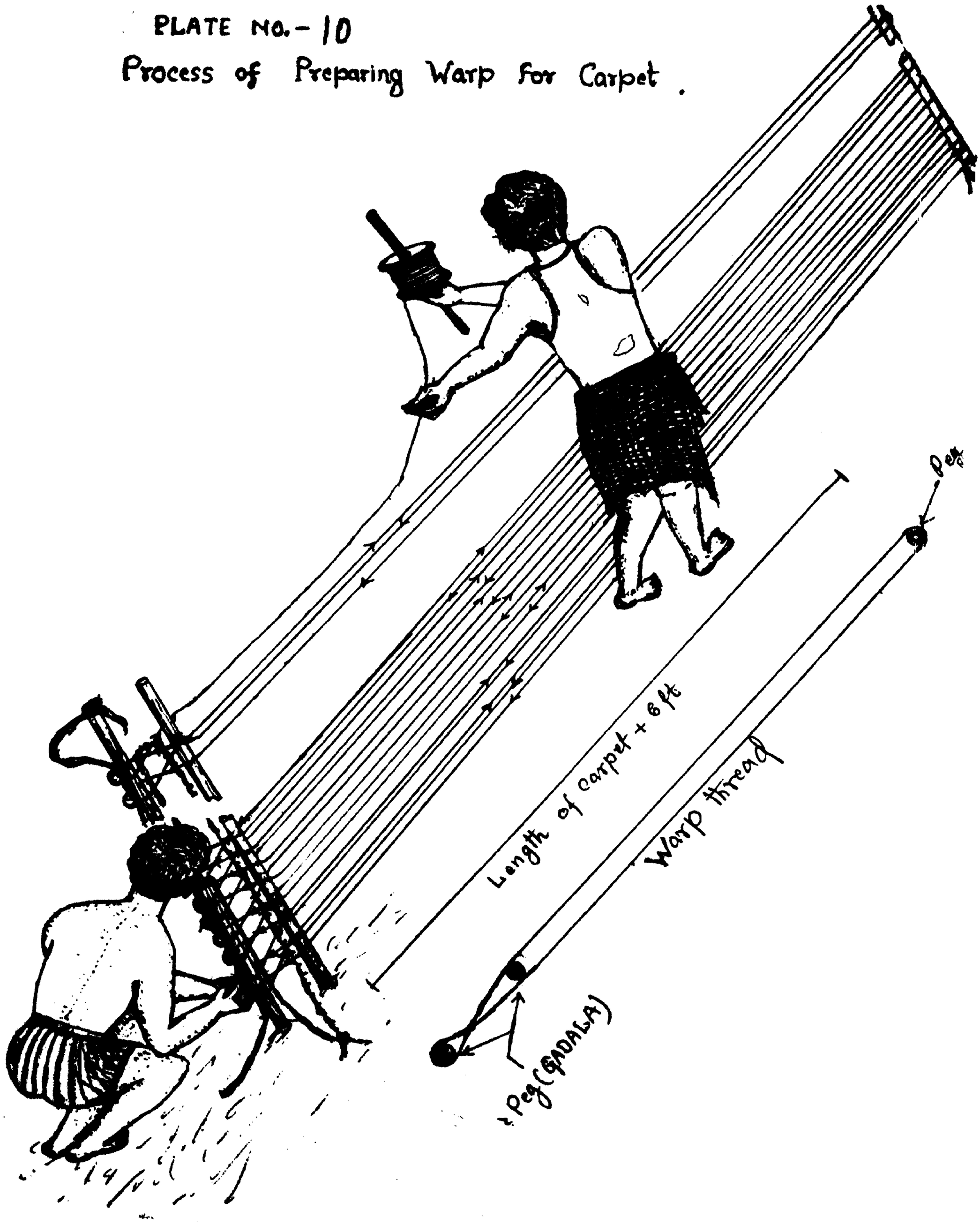
During discussion with the apt craftsmen of the village it came to light that normally, raw materials required for weaving one yard of carpet of different qualities are as per table given below:

Table IV 10—Requirement of raw materials for preparation of different qualities of carpets per yard

Quality	Quantity of wool in kg.	Count and ply of wool	Quantity of Tharri or Anga in Kg.	Quantity of Lachhi in gms.	Count/ply of Lachhi	Quantity of Tar (warp thread in gms.	Count/ply of warp thread
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
5/40	2.5	60/3	1·5	200	6/2	300	6/6
6/40	2.8	60/3	1·4	200	6/2	350	6/6
6/60	3.0	60/2	1·0	250	6/2	350	6/6
7/40	3.0	60/3	1·2	250	6/2	400	6/6
7/50	2.8	60/2	1·4	250	6/2	400	6/6
7/60	3.0	60/2	1·4	250	6/2	400	6/6
9/60	3.5	60/2	1·2	250	6/2	350	12/20

PLATE NO.- 10

Process of Preparing Warp for Carpet.



Again the following table shows the consumption of woollen yarn and cotton thread per square feet supplied to carpet weavers by the Handloom Corporation office as raw materials for different qualities of carpet to be woven:

Table IV.11—Consumption of woollen yarn and cotton threads as raw materials for preparation of different qualities of carpets per square feet.

Stitch/Quality	Quantity of Mill spun woollen yarn in gms.	25 cotton yarn in gms.	65 cotton yarn in gms.	6/6 cotton yarn for warp thread in gms.
1	2	3	4	5
5x5 (stitch)	228	135	18.9	3.6
6x6 (stitch)	275	162	21.5	43.5
6/40 (Quality)	335 of 60/62 counts	162	41.5	41.5

There are two processes of denoting quality of carpets as per knottage. In one process knottages are denoted in terms of stitches or knots per square inch but this process is only adopted by Handloom Corporation. In one square inch of a carpet there may be a number of stitches or knots. Increase of stitch (knot) increases the quality of carpets and finally increases the price of carpets because it takes a lot of time and labour to weave the texture closely.

"The exact meaning of stitch is just a passing of dyed woollen yarn and knotting with an ordinary knot around the warp thread in a figure of ∞ (flat eight) and cutting the dyed woollen weft thread with a sharp knife."[1]

The number of knots woven per square inch is the criterian to judge the quality of carpets. Weavers at Obra produce carpets in a variety of quality ranges. The quality of the wool, colour, design and stitches per square inch makes the carpet costly, durable and lovely.

"The quality is expressed as a product of two figures signifying that a carpet of this quality contains knots per square inch equal to the result of multiplication."[2] Thus the quality 6/6 (stitch) with reference to a carpet indicates 36 knots per square inch. In other words, one inch length and breadth of a carpet contains 6 knots both ways.

Apart from above, there is another process of denotion introduced by exporters. This process of measurement is convenient to villagers as well as to exporters and covers higher number of knottage. In this process knottages are denoted in terms of knots per square yard in the manner—5|40, 6|40, 9|60, etc.

By the term 6|40 quality only a conversant person can know the knots per square yard. 6 stands for a definite number of knots in weft side and 40 indicates a definite number of knots in warp side. 6 indicates 6x20 double knots (240 knots) in one yard in weft side whereas 40 stands for 40 double knots in 9 inches (locally known as pawgaji) in warp side or 40x2x4 knots (320 knots) in one yard.

Thus by 6/40 quality we mean there will be 240x320 knots-76,800 knots per square yard.

Techniques employed in the manufacture

Preparation of warp—The type of cotton yarn used as warp determines the quality of the carpet. The first stage consists of the tying of the required warp. Three pegs of about 4 feet to 4.5 feet height locally called **'Gadala'** which may be ordinarily iron crow bars are driven into the ground in line. The distance between the first and the third pegs should be 5 or 6 feet more than the length of the carpet. The second peg is struck between the two outer ones but quite close to the 3rd one and the distance between the second and the third peg should be about 2 feet. The purpose of the second peg is to keep the crossing intact. The cotton yarn is wound round these three pegs in an alternate fashion. For this purpose ordinarily two persons are required. One is skilled worker and the other is unskilled one. First of all one end of the thread is tied with the

first *Gadala*. The unskilled worked, normally, boy, having a yarn ball in his hand lays thread on pegs in such a manner that a double loop having the shape of ∞ (flat eight) at right angle is formed. For preventing the end threads of the warp from getting entangled with each other, each pair of threads on the first and third *'Gadala'* are tied by skilled worker in a movable knot by passing a thick string locally called *'Dori'*. This process of tying Tani threads is called doing *'Durchun'* or *'Chunan'*. This operation is continued till the predetermined number of warp threads are run round the pegs, the breadth of the carpet determining the number.

Number of threads in warp depends on the quality of carpet. Suppose a carpet of 6 feet in breadth with 5/40 quality is to be prepared. Number of threads will be 800. This is calculated as follows:

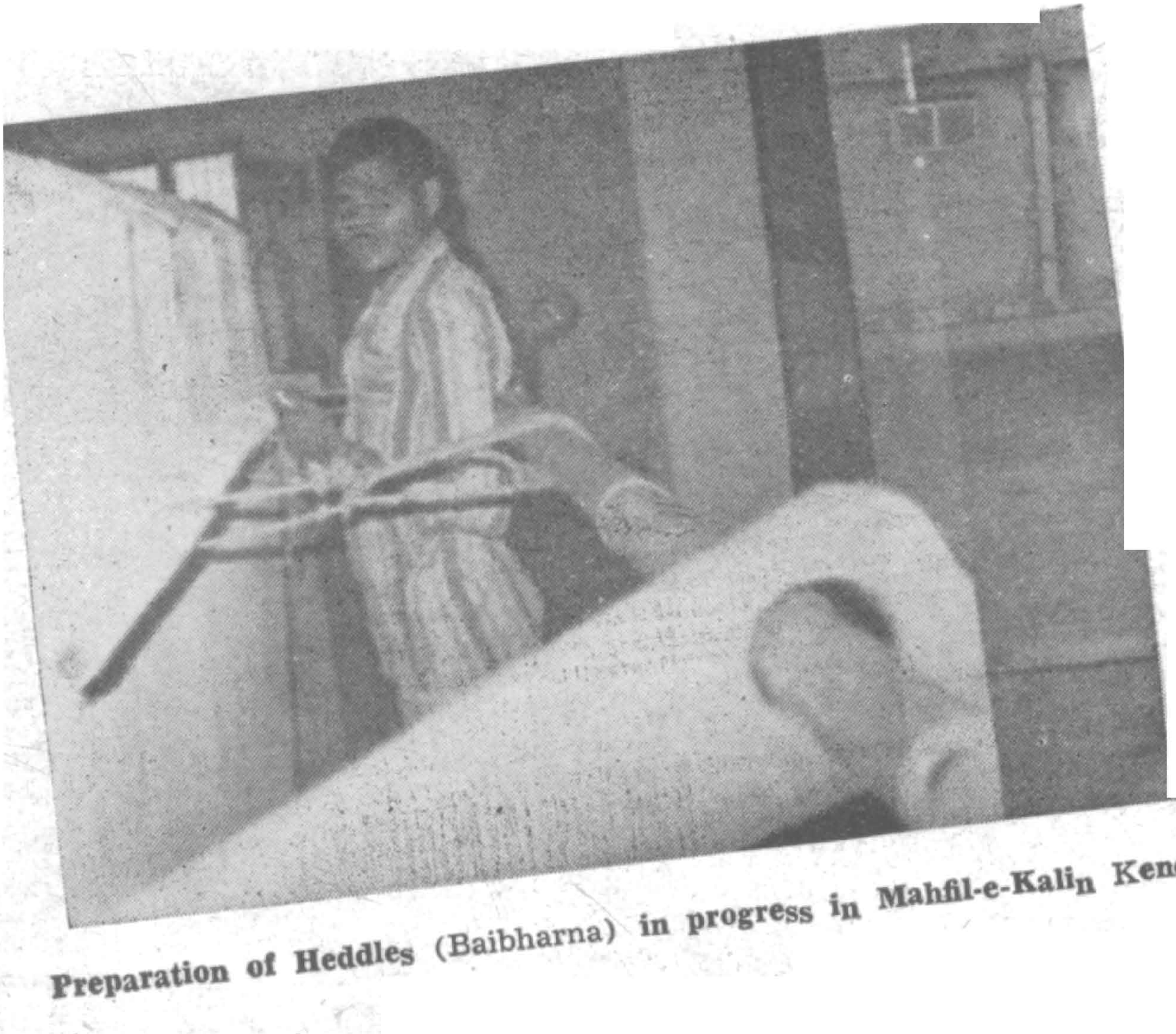
Weft 5x20 double knots (Butan/yard), i.e., 5x20x2 =200 knots per yard.

In one knot there are two threads. So in 200 knots there will be 400 threads in 1 yard or 3 feet. In 6 feet carpet there will be 400x2=800 threads. For ascertaining the correctness of number of threads weavers count number of *butans* on first or third peg. This is done by tying two warp loops in one place. This process is repeated for all the pairs of warp loops. All the individual warp loop pairs are counted which indicates number of *butans*. In 5|40 quality carpet of 6 feet there will be 200 butans or 800 threads. Now *Chara|Lachhi* thread is passed through the crossing of ∞ (flat eight) shaped loop of warp thread and both ends of *chara* are tied together so that cross shape is maintained. The *Chara/Lachhi* thread is made by twisting twice or tetra times the warp thread. The length of *Chara/Lachhi* shou'd be more than twice the breadth of the carpet to be prepared. For 6 ft. width carpet, the length of the *Chara/Lachhi* should not be less than 12.5 feet.

Mounting of the warp thread on the loom—After ascertaining the desired number of warp threads they are removed from the pegs (*Gadala*). This is done by inserting two iron crow-bars, the length of which should be more than the breadth of the warp and which replaces the pegs of both the ends. i.e. first and third. The yarn are slipped on to these two iron crow bars in an arranged order. Both sides of the warp threads are protected with a thick string locally known as *'Kanni'* thread. The *Kanni* thread remains in vertical position and both the ends of *Kanni* thread are tied with two side end of iron crow bars. The length of the *Kanni* thread should be more than the length of the warp. The warp is rolled upon one of the iron crow bars and brought to the loom, which is upright in form, consisting of two strong wooden beams connected by two vertical wooden posts to make a steady frame. First of all one of the iron rods is mounted on the upper beam of the loom and it is either tied with string passing through the holes locally called *'Nathi'* made in the beam itself or the iron rod crow bar is inserted in the hooks made of iron, fixed in the groves of the beam as per construction of the loom. At the time of mounting the warp on loom beam a precaution is taken that the *Chara|Lachhi* thread must be in the lower portion of the warp thread near the lower beam. The warp thread is rolled upon the upper beam so that the length of the warp may only be slightly more than the distance between the two beams of the loom. The other iron crow bar is fixed in the lower beam like upper beam.

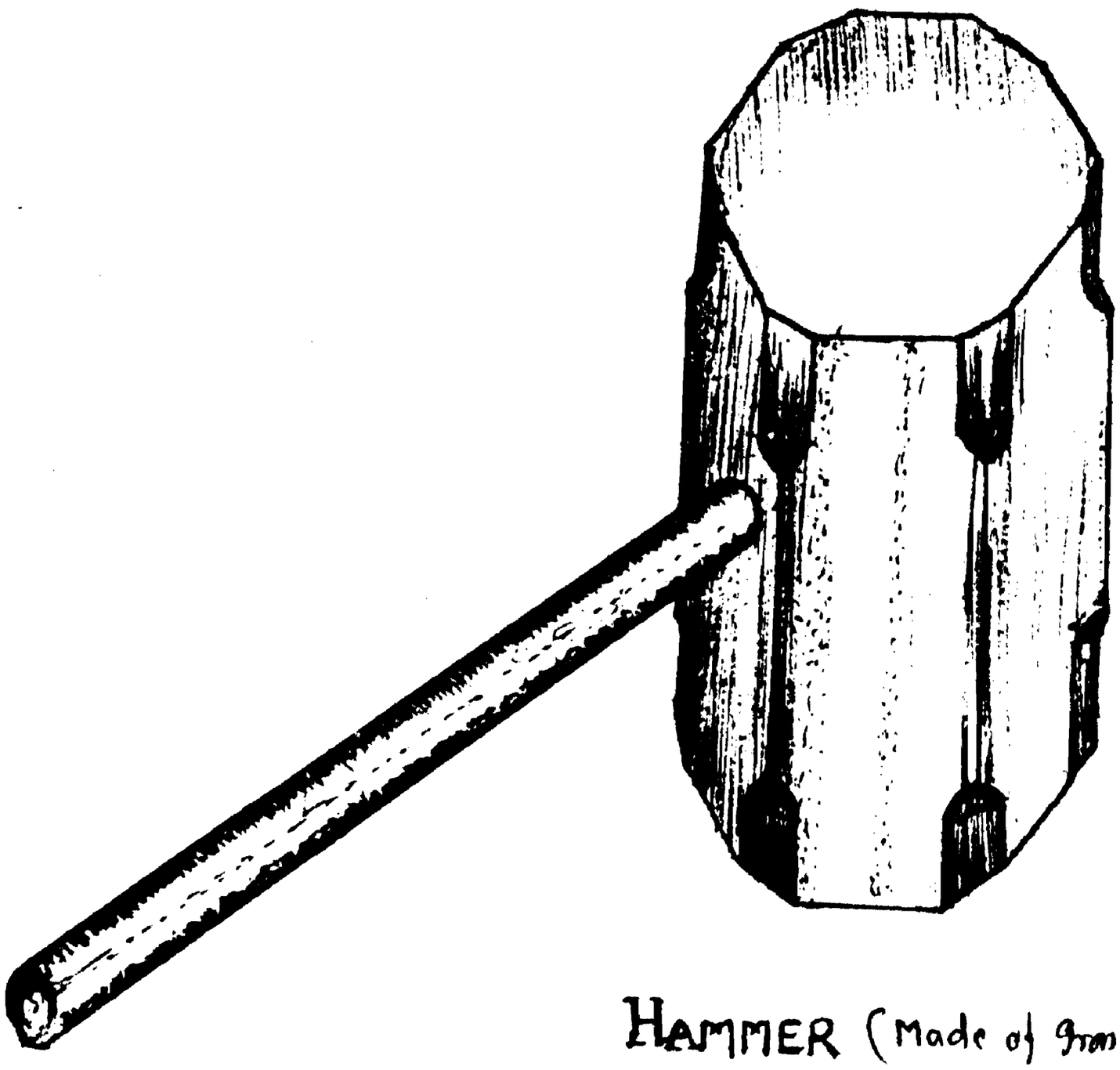
Arranging the warp on loom and tightening—About 40 threads (20 frontal warp and 20 rear warp) are taken up from the upper beam and twisted and fixed with the warp of upper beam. All the warp threads are arranged, tightened and twisted in the similar fashion. Thereafter *Chara|Lacchi* threads are slowly slided up to the upper beam and both the ends of *Chara/Lachhi* are tied with the ends of upright poles (*Sastun*). Now the threads of the warp are adjusted to form required number of knots per inch. For this purpose tape is used. Again, warp threads are tightened as per requirement putting the *tung* in the hole of upper beam. The holes are made in both the ends of the beam. The position of the holes is transverse. The holes are specially made in transverse position to facilitate full rotation of the beam to produce equal tension in all the warp threads which is obtained by tieing the *tung* in the lower beam with a very strong rope.

Preparation of Heddles (Baibharna)—There are two rows of warp threads forming front and rear layers. Preparation of Heddles is needed to pull or push the tightened warp thread for filling weft threads at the time of carpet weaving. For the preparation of Heddles, first of all a long stout cotton thick thread is prepared which is generally 4 times thicker than warp thread. One end of the *Gulla* made of a stout piece of bamboo, about 1-1/2 inch in diameter is tied very stoutly with one end of this thread and another end of the *Gulla is tied* with the other end of the same thread. The remaining portion of the thead is used for preparation of Heddles. For this a strong iron rod locally known as *'Sariya'* of about 1|4 inch in diameter having normally more

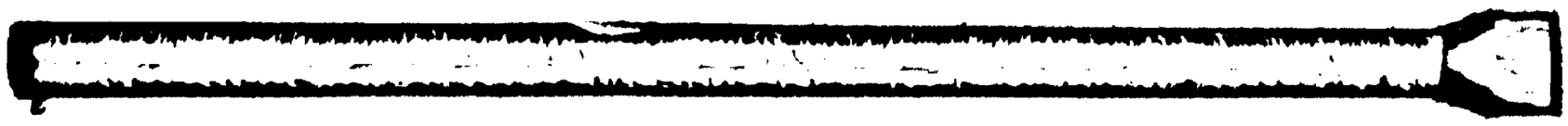


Preparation of Heddles (Baibharna) **in progress in Mahfil-e-Kalin Kendra**

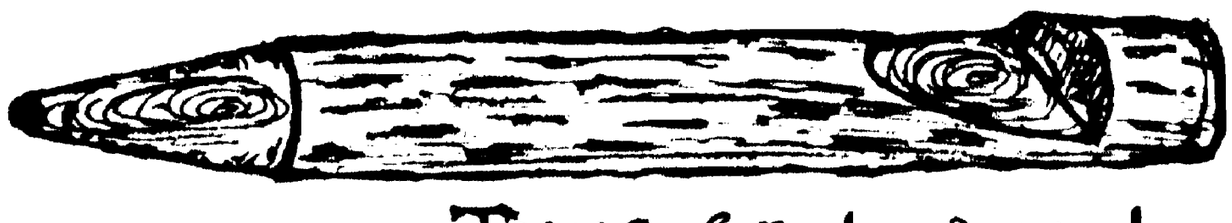
Tools used at the time of arranging warp on the Loom and tightening.



HAMMER (Made of Iron)



GADALA (Made of Iron)



TUNG (Made of wooden log)

length than the breadth of the carpet is inserted in between the frontal and rear warp thread separating clearly both rows of the threads. Both the ends of the *Gulla* are tied with '*Pashband*' and '*Sariya*' is tied with *Gulla* which are untied after preparation of Heddle. *Gulla* and *Sariya* remain at a similar height of *Pashband*. The Heddle preparation is done by weavers in standing position. The number of *Gulla* may vary as per breadth of the carpet. First of all front row of each warp thread is tied with a loop from the remaining thread left out from one end of the *Gulla*, warping the *Gulla* and *Sariya*. Each loop is nearly 2.5 inches in diameter. Starting from first warp thread of left side of the warp each loop of the thread is invariably loosely tied with the thread running over *Gulla*.. Entire warp threads in the side of the length of the *Gulla* are tied by loops of the thread and in the end the right end of the *Gulla* is strongly tied with the thread. The left out thread is then cut off and the '*Sariya*' rod is pulled out from the warp thread. In this manner Heddle of front row completes. Now each warp thread of rear row is pulled forward which intersects the front warp thread forming scissors like shape. The *Sariya* rod is inserted above the crosses and the warp threads of rear row are heddled in similar fashion with another *Gulla*. The position of the *Gulla* in which the rear warp is heddled remains parallel and above the *Gulla* of the front row. Now the *Gulla* which are fastened with *Pashband* are untied. For one weaver two *Gullas* and one *Kamana* are needed. The lower *Gulla* is tied with the lower end of the *Kamana* and upper *Gulla* is tied with the upper end of the *Kamana*. The *Kamana* is tied with a thick string (*Dori*) and the *Kamana* itself is fitted on *Pashband*. The purpose of the *Kamana* is to keep the frontal warp and rear warp tight and it also makes the movement of the warp threads forward and backward.

Weaving—After the above process is over the warp thread stands tightly in vertical position in between the upper and lower beams of the loom. Now the main process of weaving starts. The pile carpet weavers sit on wooden plank locally called *Pada* resting their legs in the trench. The *Kabadis* of dyed woollen yarn arranged according to colours are hung along the horizontal rod so as to be within easy reach of the weavers. The weaving is some times described as the enrichment of a web. The warps run vertically and the wefts horizontally. First of all the upper *Gulla* is tightened by pulling the *Kamana* down and cotton yarn generally of warp thread thickness is passed from right to left in between the space of front and rear warp threads. Then the *Kamana* is pushed up and again the same cotton yarn is passed from left to right in between the space of front and rear warp threads. Thereafter the warp attached to the lower beam is arranged and measured as per quality of carpets to be woven. Then generally thick strings of cotton or wool locally known as *Kanni* are tied vertically on both sides of the warp thread. To produce *Katti* which is a mat like plain weaving and a pre-requisite of carpet weaving weavers pull down the *Kamana* and inserts the thick strings of cotton between shed of warp thread up to *Kanni* and again the *Kamana* is pushed up and the thick thread is inserted from opposite direction. This process is repeated up to 1|2 to 1 inch of the breadth of the carpet to form the edge of the carpet. After completion of this plain weaving knotting starts. The yarn used in each knot has to have sufficient length to be able to hold the warp together. The woollen pile of different colours are knotted on the cotton warp threads. At Obra only Persian knot or Senneh knot is in vogue. The Ghiordes knot (the Turkish knot) is not used in this village. In Persian knot woollen pile yarn is passed under the front thread and then over it from right to left. and then passed underneath the corresponding back thread and over it from left to right and the two ends are brought to the front and then cut with the *Chhura*. Short bits of woollen yarn are knotted around two adjacent warp cords in such a manner that their two ends hang out upon the upper surface of the web. The work starts at the bottom. "The front thread is pulled forward with the forefinger of right hand and the woollen yarn is passed under and over it with left forefinger and thumb. The companion thread in the back row is next pulled forward by the forefinger of the left hand and the thread passed under and over it, and when the two ends are brought to the front, the engaged ends are out to the required length of the pile with the knife in the right hand."[8] The passing of the wool round the thread and the cutting of it with *Chhura* are done so rapidly that it is impossible for an observer to find out how the wool is passed round the thread. The knotted woollen yarn so cut forms the pile of the carpet and the two ends of the wool which stick out between the two ends of the warps is called the knot. After the knotting of the yarn in first row is completed as per breadth of the carpet, the weft yarn (*Tharri*) is passed between front and rear warp from one side to another. Then a thin thread known as *Lachhi* passed across the warp in such a manner that every

odd and even warp threads are entangled. This thread acts as a binder. The weft thread is beaten down with the *Panja*, an instrument like a comb made of steel, against the knots of the pile as firmly as possible so that the knots and the fabric might become strong and firm by pressing it down. This pressing is done after knots are tried. *Kamana* is changed and *Lachhi* is filled through warp over the knots. After a few inches of knotting has been done the pile ends are cut uniformly by the weaver with *Quainchi* (ordinary ssossor) to remove the thick mass of woollen threads for maintaining a common level. By this process a thick and firm pile of a carpet having fine details of the pattern starts coming into picture. Finer the design the closer the shearing. The design of the carpet depends upon its knotting. The design can be seen in all its details if the knotting is close and tight. In loose knotting the outlines of the design become indistinct and hazy. The fineness of knotting depends upon the finness and thinness of the threads to be used. The design appears sharp and clear only when the knotting is even and regular. The finely woven and well-knotted design and colour stand out clearly on its reverse.

The quality of a carpet depends mainly upon the number of knots to the square inch. A carpet having a larger number of knots has a fine texture and is more durable. The weaver while knotting the carpet puts his heart and soul by his devotional involvement in the duration of weaving which in return brings bewitching beauty and charm. Every weaver individually adds richness to the carpet in his own way. This has a great aesthetic appeal. Hand knotted carpet is not only a carpet but it is a piece of art of great value. It has its own superbness. Its superbness is high value oriented.

After knotting up to the reach of the weavers has been done, the woven portion of the carpet is rolled up around the lower beam and the warp unrolled from the upper beam. When further unrolling of the warp is not possible the position of the sitting board (*Patla*) on which the craftsmen sit is shifted at a higher level and the knotting for the entire length of carpet is finished. The carpet is taken off the loom for chemical washing.

Technique of chemical washing of hand knotted carpet—chemical washing of carpet is one of the most important stages in the commercial manufacturing of hand knotted carpet. The origin, design and colour combination are all important, but equally important are the surface lustre, silky handling and the edge of the carpet. The Handloom Corporation of Obra uses Alkali Hypochlorite wash for chemical washing of carpet as per the process given below:

1. The carpet is first inverted and its minute fibres jutting out from the knots are burnt with a blow-torch. Then it is brushed off which makes the carpet extremely clean and smooth and the design appears very clear. Care is taken that the fringes of warp may not get burnt during the process.

2. The carpet is then washed with water and a bleaching solution is spread on the back to cover the entire length and breadth of the carpet. The back is then lightly scrubbed with a hard brush so that the knots might not tend to come out.

3. The carpet is now re-inverted on the floor. The pile is first soaked with water. Then the water is removed from the carpet with sharp wooden handles by moving against the pile. This process opens the pile and keeps it erect so that tops of the pile may not fall on each other. Now the bleaching solution is spread on the carpet just enough to soak the whole carpet. The solution is left on the carpet for 5 to 10 minutes and then it is scrubbed with long flat wooden handles, locally known as *Ferua*, by continually pouring water over it so that effect of chemical is completely removed. Then in order to make the carpet lustrous and silky the whole carpet is treated with requisite quantity of caustic soda and scrubbing is done like bleaching solution. After this process sunlight soap is applied on the carpet and again soap contents are driven out by water.

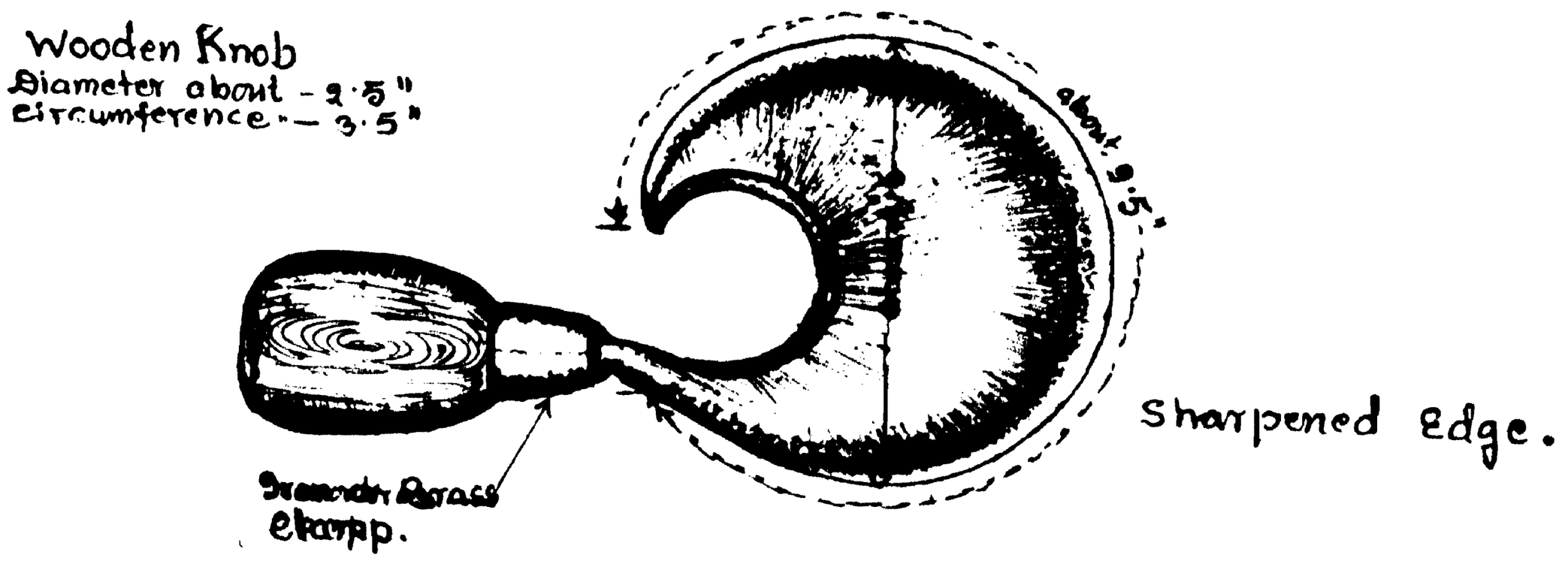
4. A very dilute solution of Acetic Acid is spread on the carpet for 10 minutes and water is taken out of the carpet by *Ferua*. Then the pile of the carpet is flattened in one direction parallel to warp. The carpet is hung on a wall or horizontal poles, etc., to dry. When the carpet is almost completely dry, the mouth of the pile is opened to make it soft with *Ferua* going against the pile. Now the pile is again manually smoothened in the direction it was when put to dry in the sun. When the carpet is completely dry it is ready for clipping. This requires clear weather for 2-3 days. This is the reason that during rainy season the output of finished carpet is declined. In washing the carpet of 6'x9' size one requires more than 500



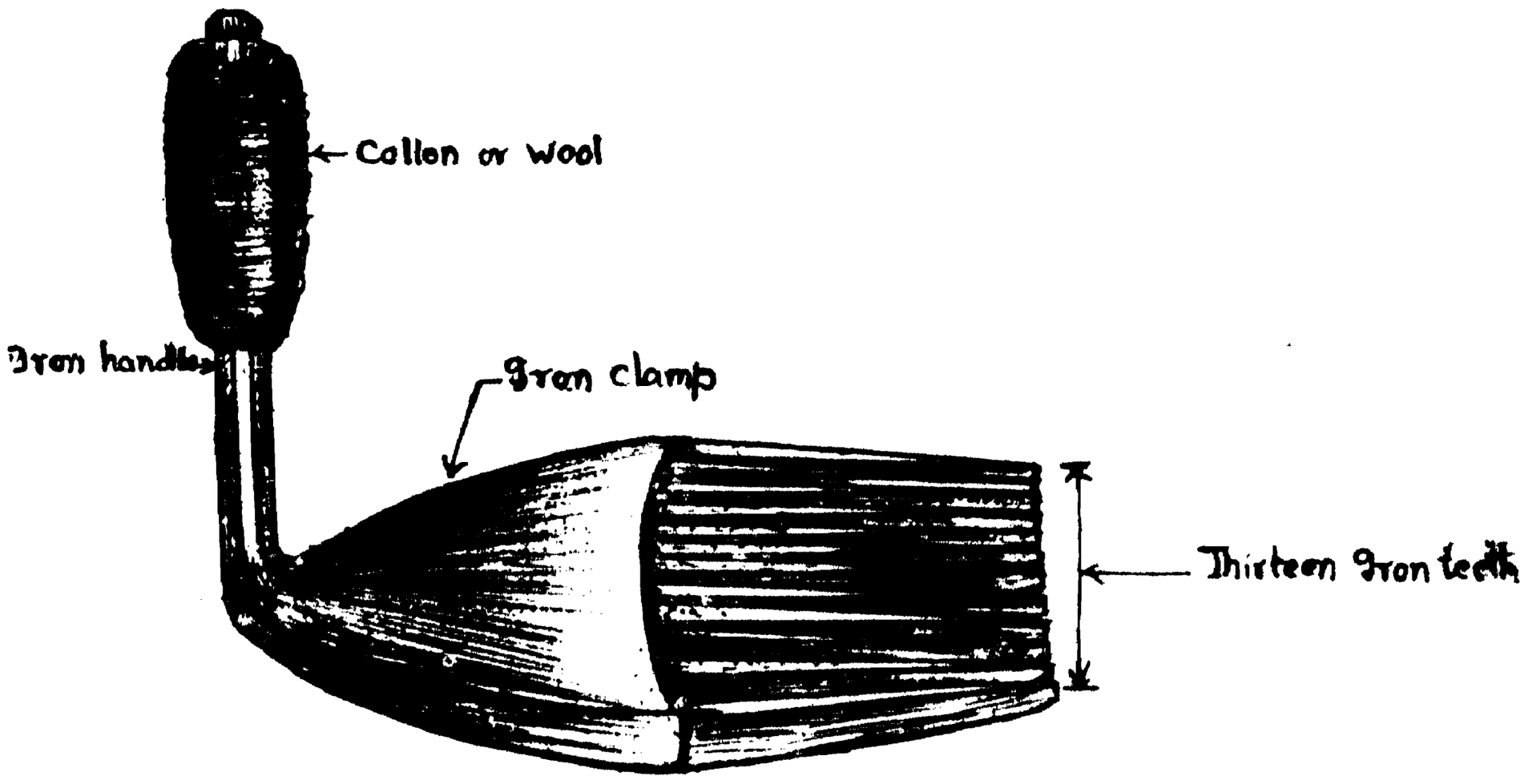
A view of carpet weaving under process



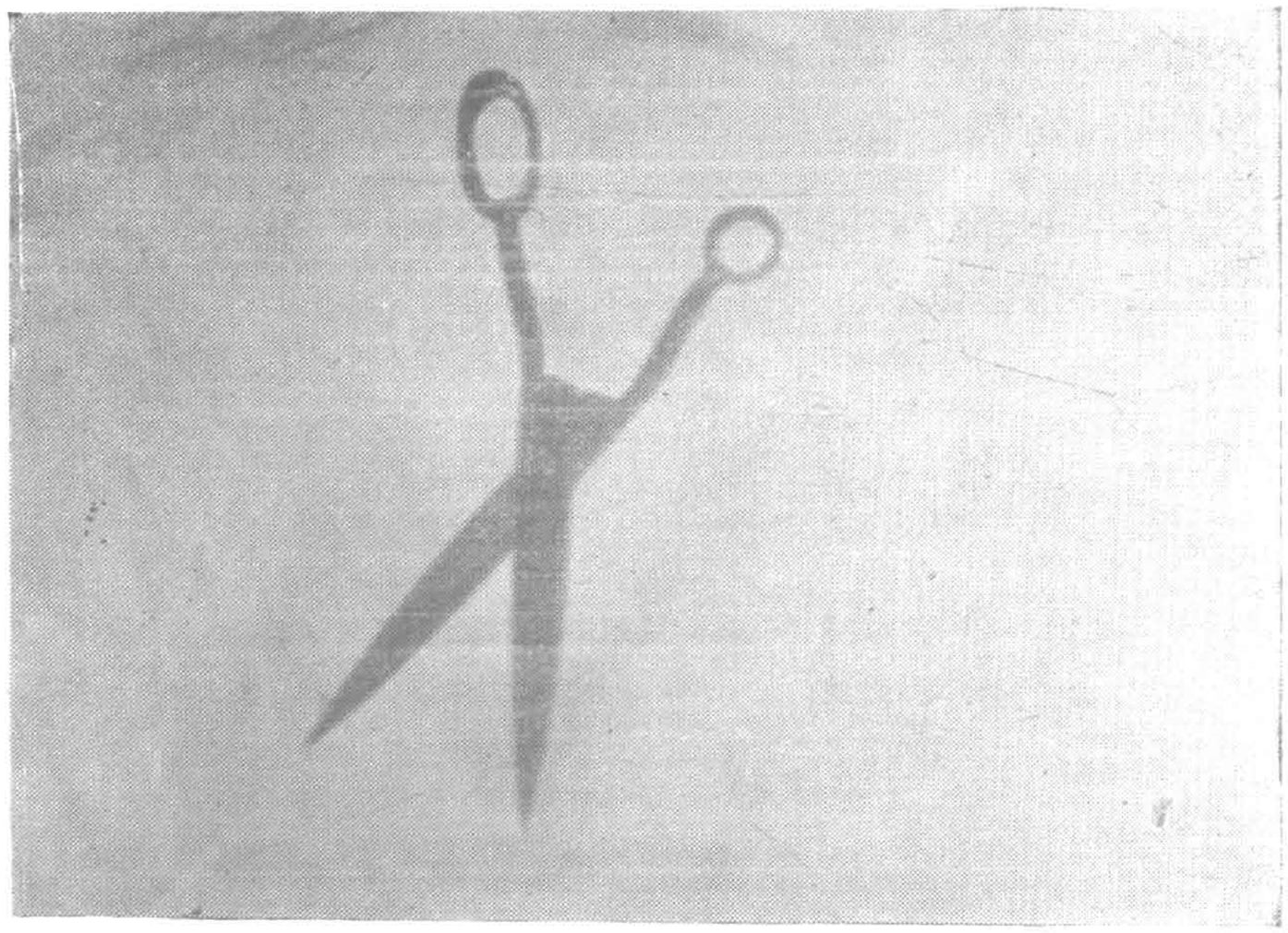
A view of carpet weaving under process



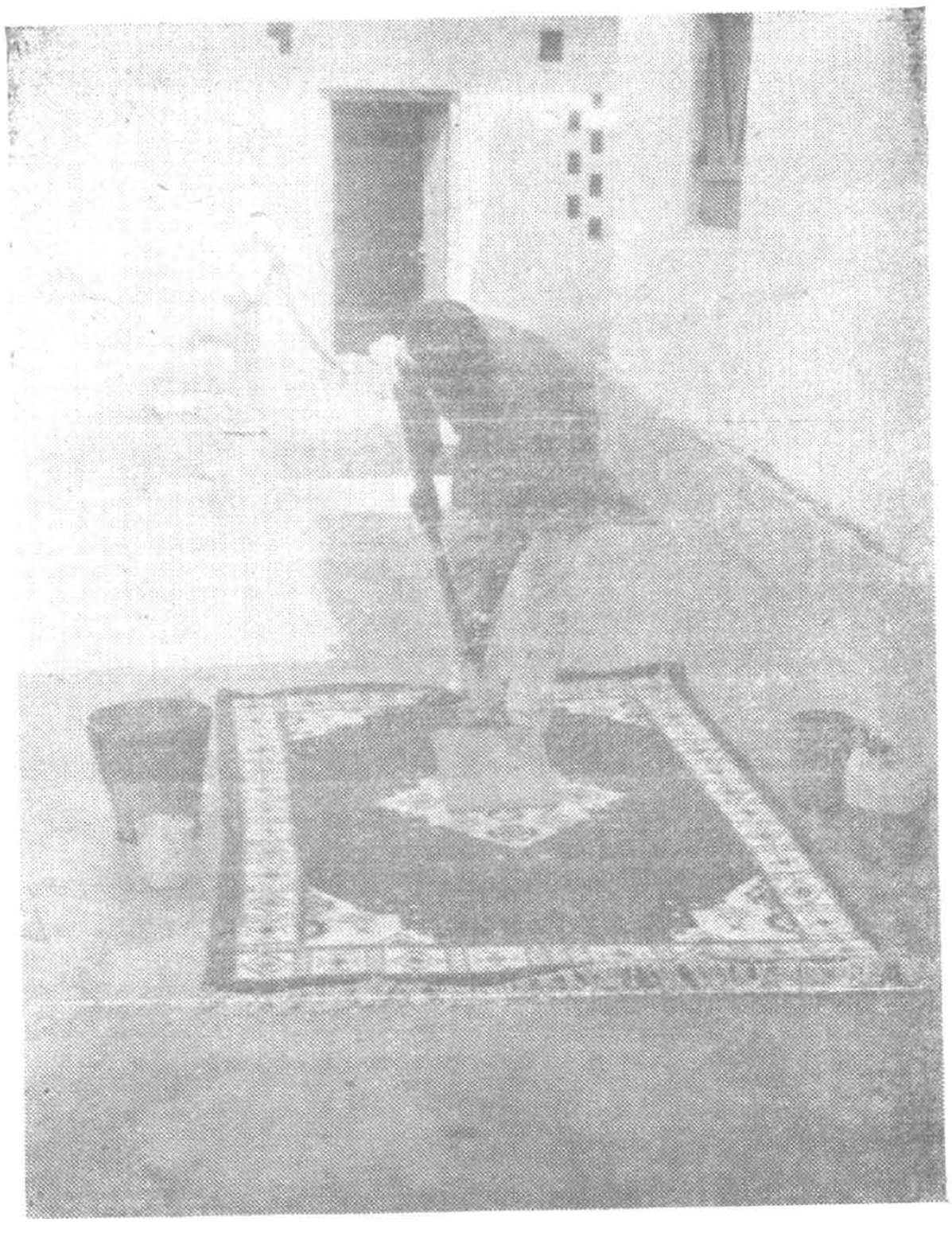
The woollen yarn cutting knife, locally called chhura **has a curved iron blade about 9.5 inches in length. Its handle made of wood is about 4 inches long and 3.5 inches round. It is used for cutting the two projecting ends of pile yarn after a knot has been tied.**



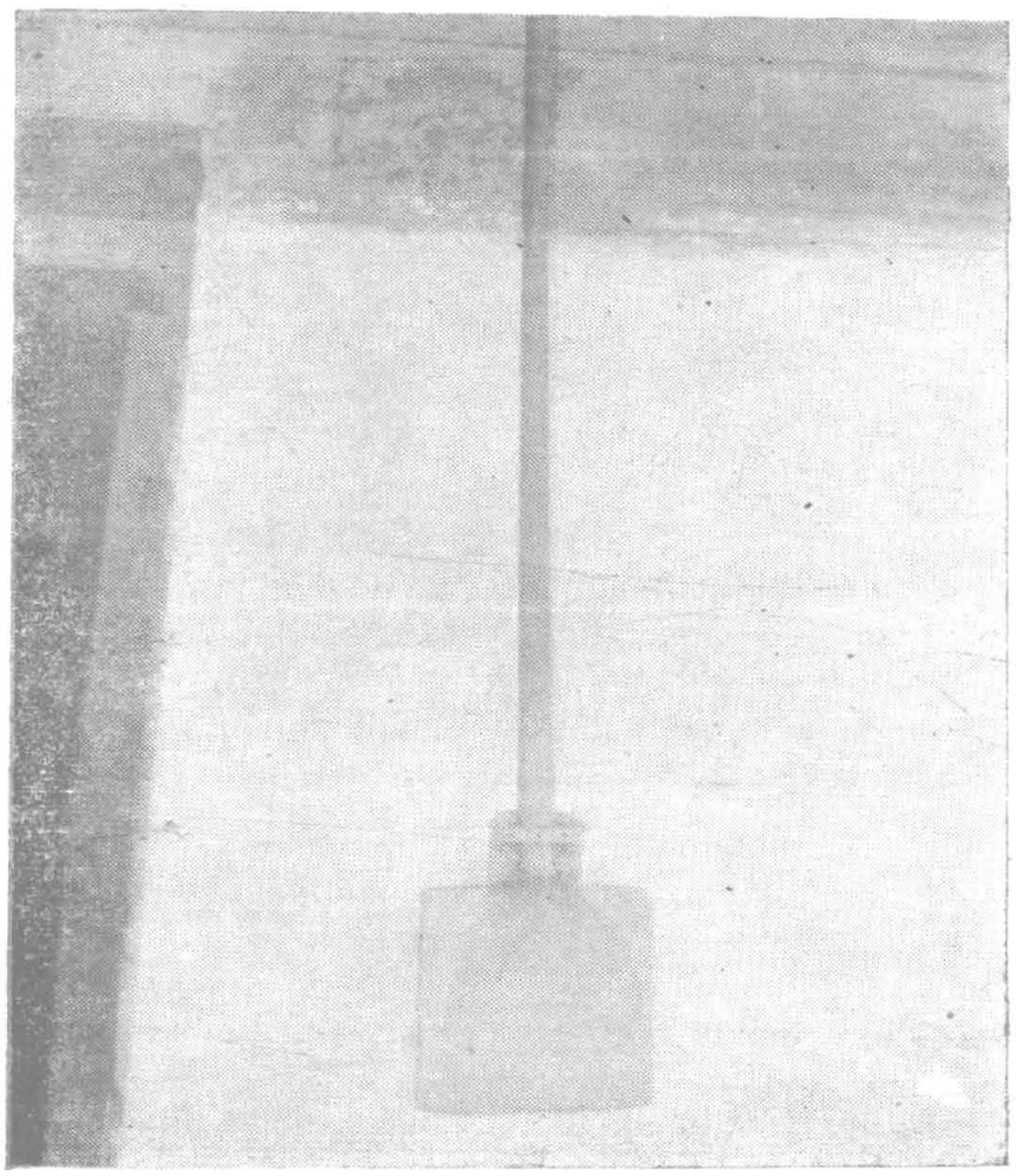
The comb beater, locally called *Panja* is used for beating the weft. It has tapering prongs of iron about 4 inches in length and a round handle of wood about 10.5 inches in length.



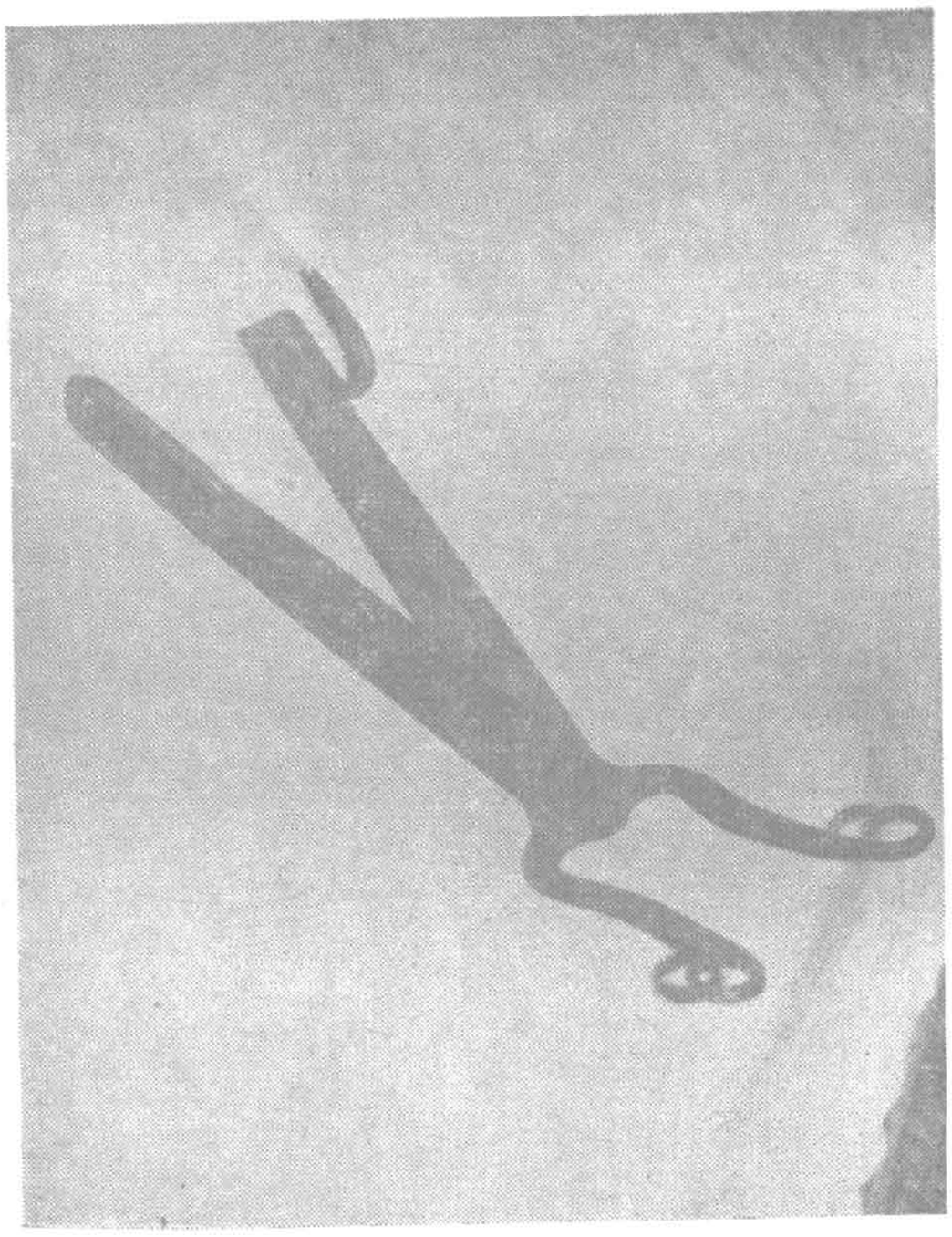
The scissor, locally called *Quaichi* is used for clipping the pile surface of the carpet.



Washing of carpet with *Ferua* **under progress in Handloom and Handicraft Corporation, Obra**



Ferua **made of wood used for washing the carpet**



Finishing scissor

gallons of water. Another important point is that one has to be extremely careful in using the bleaching powder and caustic soda. A little miscalculation may either ruin the carpet or under wash will not reveal the beauty of the carpet.

The carpet is spread on the floor and the pile is given final levelling up by shearing it with finishing scissors. This process is continued till the whole carpet has been completed. The carpet is always woven in higher pile height than actually required. Before clipping, the carpet is in raw stage and designs are not clear in the carpet. The pile of the carpet is cut so as to bring the smooth surface of the carpet. As and when the clipping goes on the design starts getting more clear. This type of clipping produces smooth surface.

It does happen that at the time of weaving as well as washing a carpet the threads of different colours adjoining each other get mixed up making the small portion of the design unclear. It is, therefore, necessary that the threads are separated to bring them in original position. This is done with the help of wooden sticks by children of the age group 10—14 years.

The finishing-touch to the border of the carpet are also given. The two sides of the carpet are bound. The binding is done on the weft side of the carpet where the carpet looks in raw condition. On the warp side the carpet binding is not necessary as the cotton yarn (*Tana*) is already there and *Jal* of that is made on these two ends of the carpet. The binding is done with woollen yarn with the help of *Sooja*. a type of needle. The yarn used should match with the base yarn of the carpet. After this process carpet is ready for sale.

Design

We have noticed that carpets at Obra are woven as per design on a graph paper. Designing is an integral and paramount important part of carpet weaving even as much as the colour scheme. A suitably designed carpet is like suitably jewelled damsel. Desings are expression of people's deepest thought reflected in colours, forms, symbols or motifs. A design is some time traditional preserve, some time reflection of mythological ideas or some time spontaneous expression of enchanting natural objects or temporal events. It is poetic expression of aesthetic beauty. Encyclopaedia Britanica writes "Carpet designing is a branch of applied arts, which makes exacting demands upon its adherents, requiring, as it does technical knowledge of exceptional quality". It is pre-requisite for an apt and successful designer to be armed with exceptional degree of technical knowledge.

Carpet weaving is a technology of hand and encourages fine workmanship. Hand weaving is an ancient art and has drawn upon a rich tradition of myth and symbol and a variegated fund of imagery. The design to be woven is generally prepared by the designs from a photograph, a plate on actual rug received from the manufacturers who very often get material from the importers. The desired pattern is formed by tying the knots with woollen yarn of different colours or other materials of which the pile is formed. The design is prepared on a graph paper. The weaver refers to the graph paper off and on for complicated designs. The design and colour of the carpet to be woven are clearly shown on the graph paper. As per designs of carpets the colours are filled in the graph so as to inform the weaver about the colours of woollen yarn that he has to use. After graphs are supplied to weavers, before each line is woven the weaver consults the graph to find out the colour that he has to use. In case of identical design one quarter design of the carpet is converted into the graph and is given to the weaver who repeats the weaving for the rest 3/4 portion of the carpet. Where the designs are not identical in whole of the carpet to be produced, the graph either half or full design is prepared. The pile for a carpet is really a translation of graphed paper design into woollen pattern faithfully reproduced. A squared paper has the same number of squares to the square inch. The pile yarn used is reasonably near the colour used by the designers in the design. The simple and well known designs with generally black and red colours pile are unmistakably woven by the skilled craftsmen. They tie each knot automatically in a proper place swiftly and unmistakably from memory. Even the children in the age group 10—14 years do not commit any mistake. They can easily read out the design from the graph paper. They tie knots locally called *Tapka* swiftly and the result is a pleasant chorus.

Basically designs which are made have originated from Iran (Persia) and certain changes are made as per buyer's demand as well as according to the convenience of the weaver. Beginning as Persian copy the pile carpet industry gradually Indianised assuming a character of its own. The great variety of designs varies from delicate Persian to study Central Asian. The weavers at Obra so faithfully follow the originals that some times even the expert can hardly tell that they were not made in their

native region. In addition to design from Persia, Afghanistan, Turkey, China, etc., a number of distant Indian designs have evolved in recent years reporting the latest scene and sceneries of India. Though the respected people of Bihar ask the weavers of Obra to prepare carpet of local flavour but the designs are still of Persian origin. The most of prevalent designs of carpet at Obra are (1) Sarouk Mir or Leechi (2) Harize (3) Herete (4) Tabriz (5) American Saruk (6) New Saruk (7) Bokhara (8) Ahar (9) Koshghai (10) Kashan (11) Floral (12) Persian (13) Serab (14) Mini Mikey (15) Export design (16) Aeroplane (17) Kharati (18) Nasara Leechi.

All the Persian designs have originated from the different villages of Iran where there has been a tradition of weaving carpet.

A few designs of carpets prepared at Obra are discussed below:

1. *Tabriz*—At present Tabriz is a chief centre of carpet making in Iran. The weavers at Obra make carpet of this design in all sizes of warp and weft of cotton and medium quality of wool is used. Pile height of this carpet is mostly 5/8" and the density of the knots per square inch ranges from 50 to 70. Many Tabriz carpets have animal or hunting patterns, medallion and floral patterns are also its characteristic. The borders of these carpets are always beautifully designed. The delicacy after manufacture is always admirable because of its various designs having marvellous colour composition.

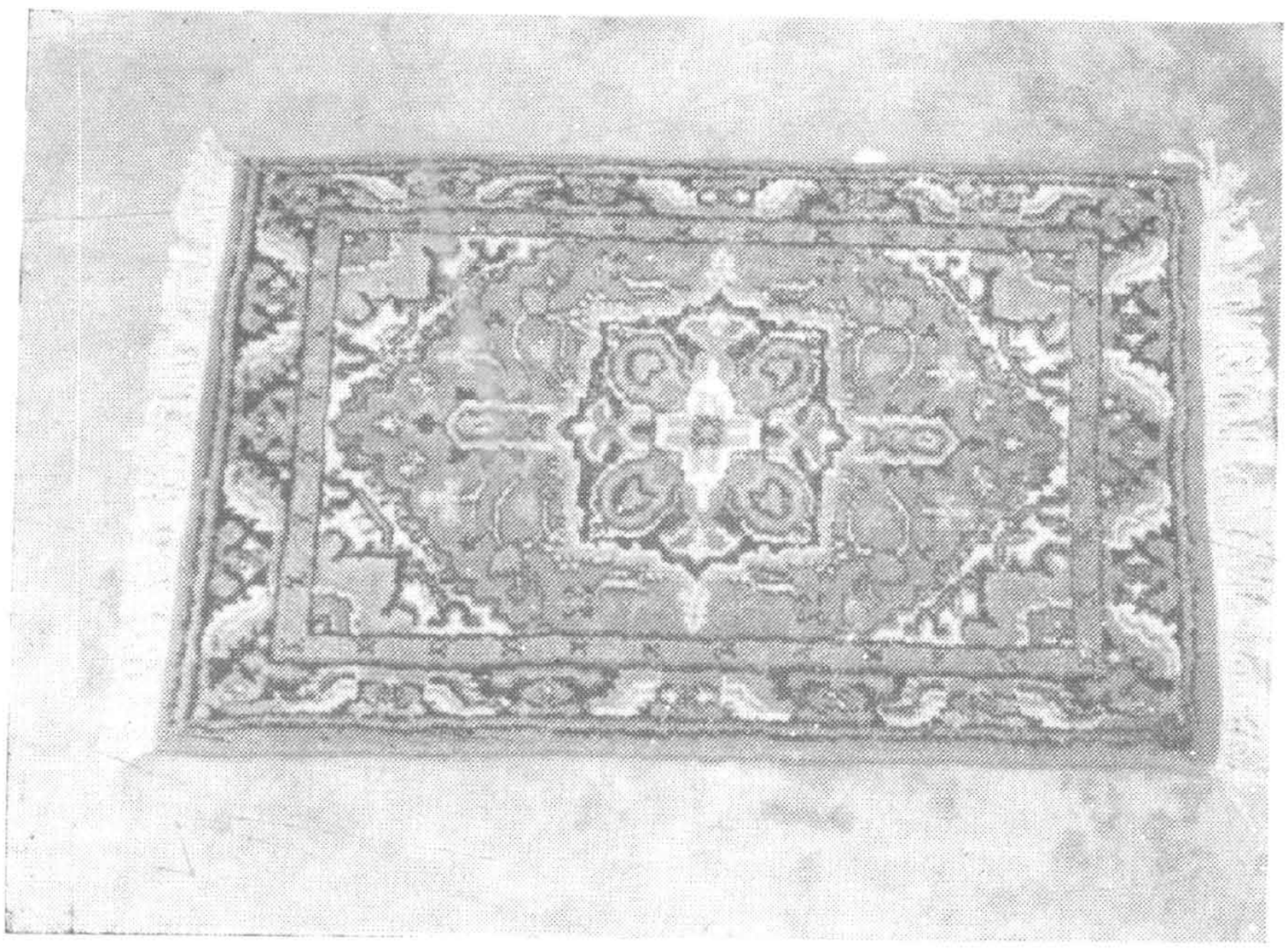
2. *Seraband*—This design is made in the town of Seraband in the West of Iran. In Obra this design is known as Sharook Mir or Leechi. This particular design carpet is made in very wider range of quality ranging from a density of 30 knots per square inch to 120 knots per square inch. Therefore, different varieties of woollen yarn is used. This carpet is made in numerous colour combination. Many times Serabands have medallions and the corners. Since it is repeated design the weaving charges are lower than the regular carpets. The weaver does not have to consult the chart every time. This carpet is made in 15 borders in case of carpet of 9'x12' size. This design is typical because it has dominance of various borders surrounded by flowering branches forming triangular motif. In fact this design is named after a small village SAROUK, Arak region of Iran.

3. *Kashan*—This design came to India from very important town of Iran which is also known as Kashan. Kashan has been producing rugs of exceptional density and fineness. It has very fine details and as such this design is made in very high quality. The ground colour of Kashan is mostly red or blue. It has floral medallion and corner with elegant sprays of leaves and flowers. This design is famous in delicacy. This is one of the costliest carpets.

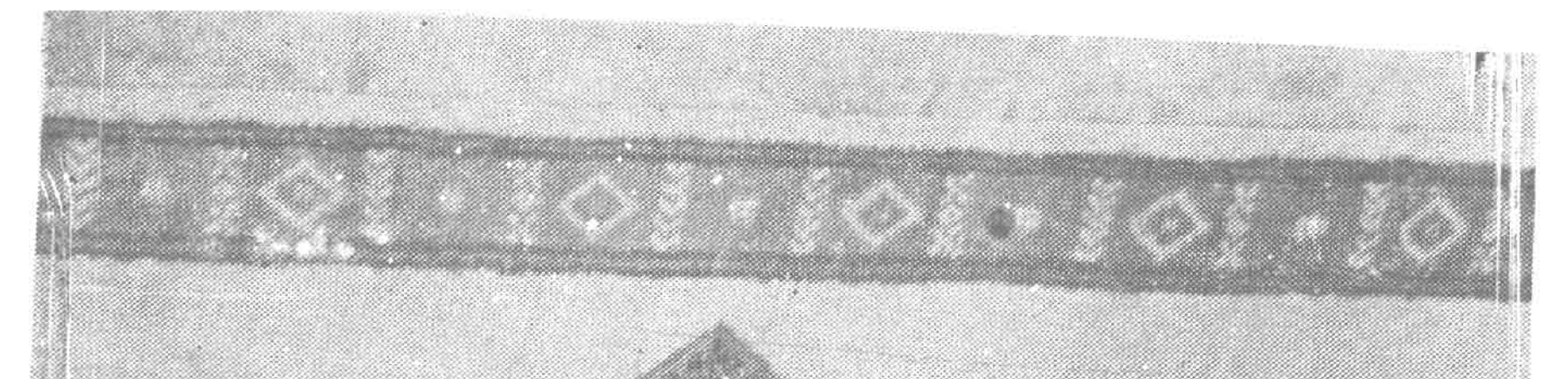
The designs on carpets are woven only on one side since carpets can not be used from both sides. The designs as prepared on the graph paper are supplied to the weavers by the exporters, Handloom Corporation and Co-operative Society. All the designs are registered designs so that other designers may not copy it. The weavers sometimes also purchase design from Bhadohi for preparing carpets of private parties. The Talem writing of script as prevalent in Jammu and Kashmir is not in vogue in Bihar or at Obra. The weavers at Obra prepare carpets only on the basis of the drawing drawn on the graph paper.

The carpet weaving relates to a physical function, a manual performance. This spark of dynamo within the weaver is brought out and woven in carpet. It has meant a total operation involving the emotion, mind, body and vibrant rythm that such a coordination generates. Though pile carpet introduced as a foreign craft, to-day the Indian carpet is essentially a native one. "The quality of sumptuousness which distinguishes this product vibrates more with the robustness of Indian brand."[4] The motifs have naturally, only indigenous significance, like Swastika as the guiding light in darkness, the circle as eternity, running water as the rythm of life, the meandering line, the continuity of life, the tree as bounty. "Thus a carpet is said to be an emblem of life without end and the pattern the visible world of change".[5] The carpet weavers of Obra being extraordinarily gifted, to-day some of them can produce carpets of any design from any part of the world and so largely for export.

We have seen above that hand knotted carpet is a long and tedious process: right from warping, a cotton yarn on a vertical carpet loom to handling a carpet yarn, normally, two plying ball making design, graph reading, individual knotting, adjusting loom from time to time to keep the carpet straight and tough, clipping, berai, chemical washing, and ultimately giving final and finishing touch to make the carpet a piece of beauty. It passes through so many hands. At every touch of hand something lively



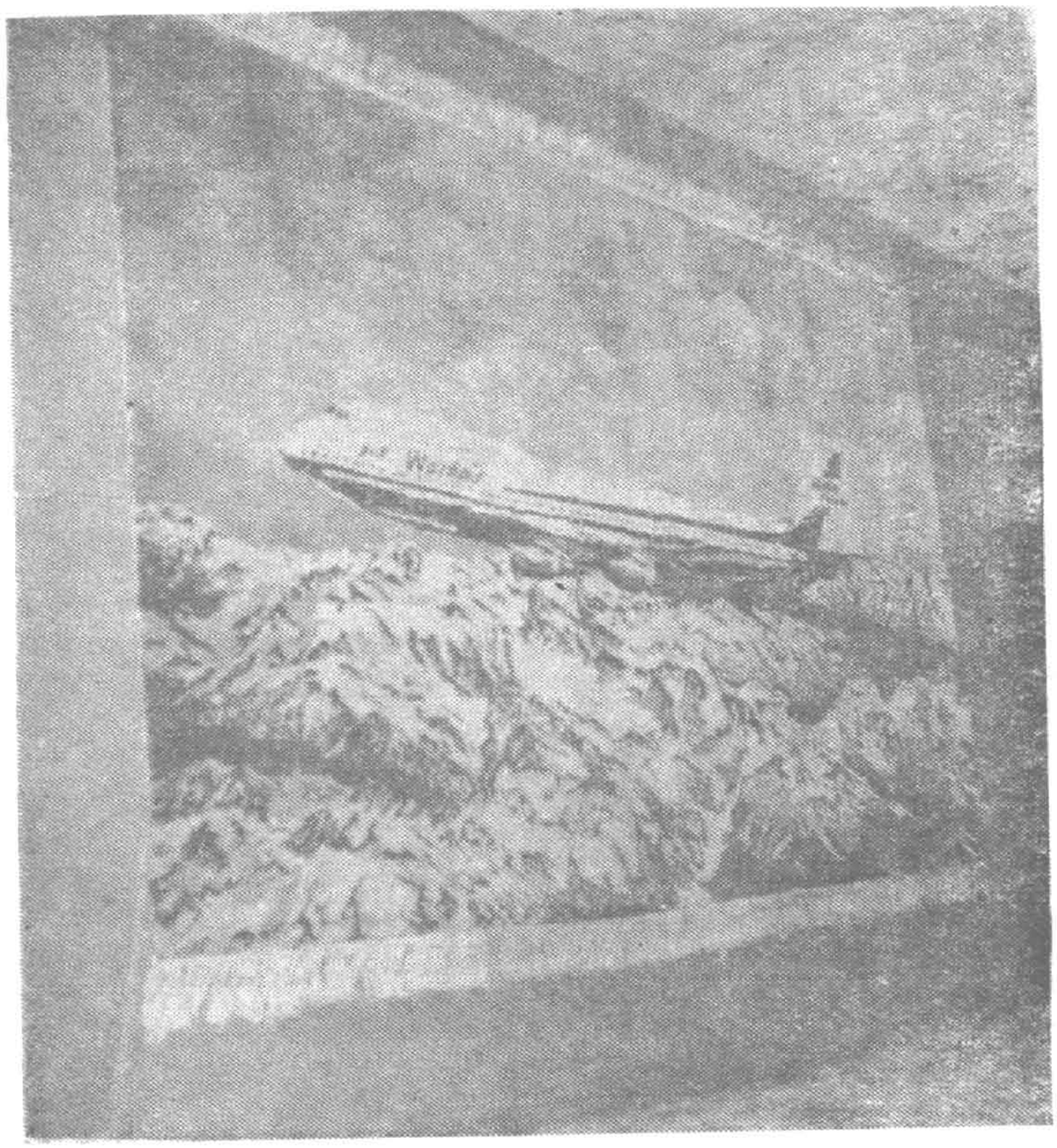
Woollen pile carpet of Harize design prepared by Handloom and Handicraft Corporation, Obra



Woollen pile carpet of Persian design prepared at the loom of Md. Mister



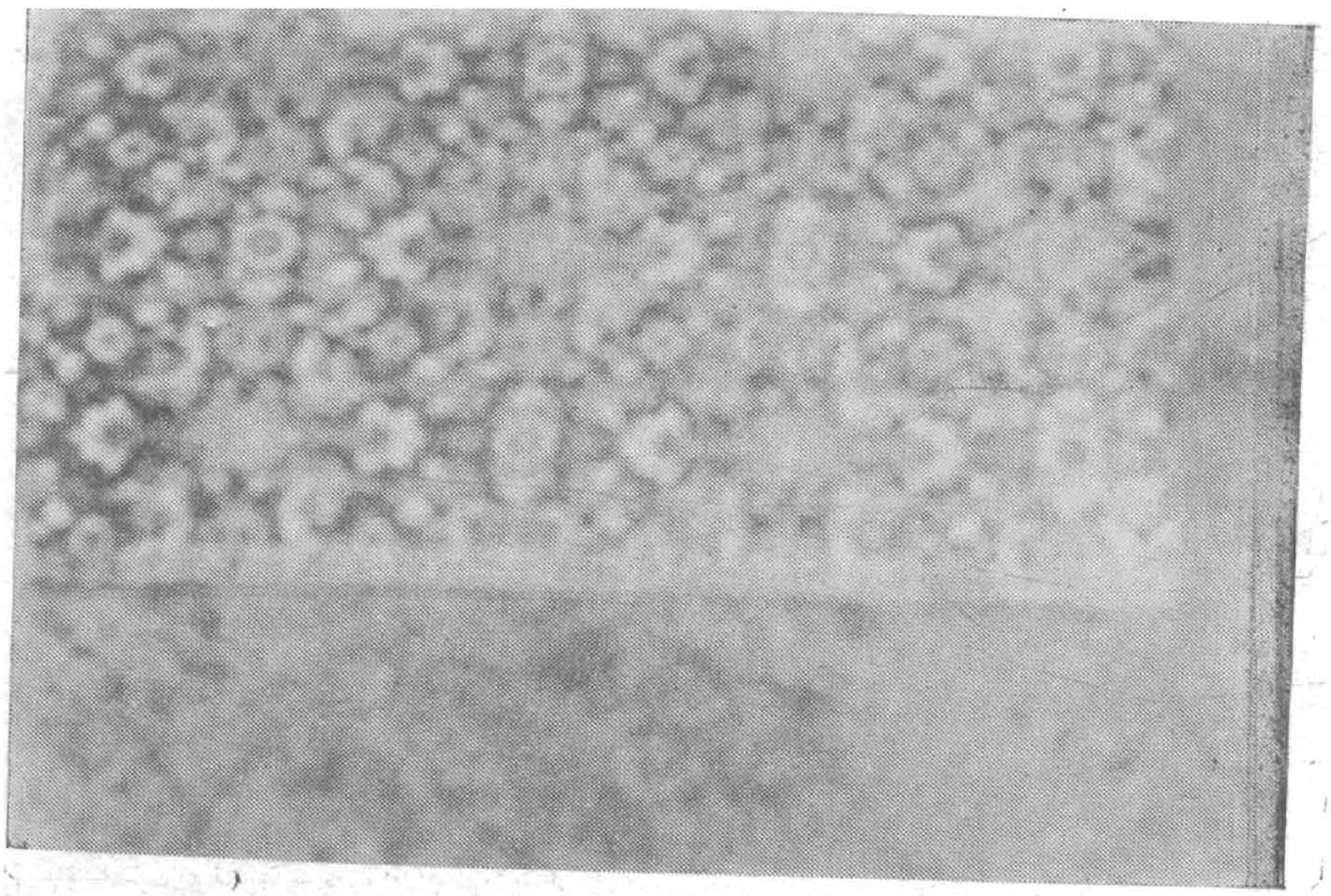
Woollen pile carpet of Export design prepared at the loom of shree Bochu Mian



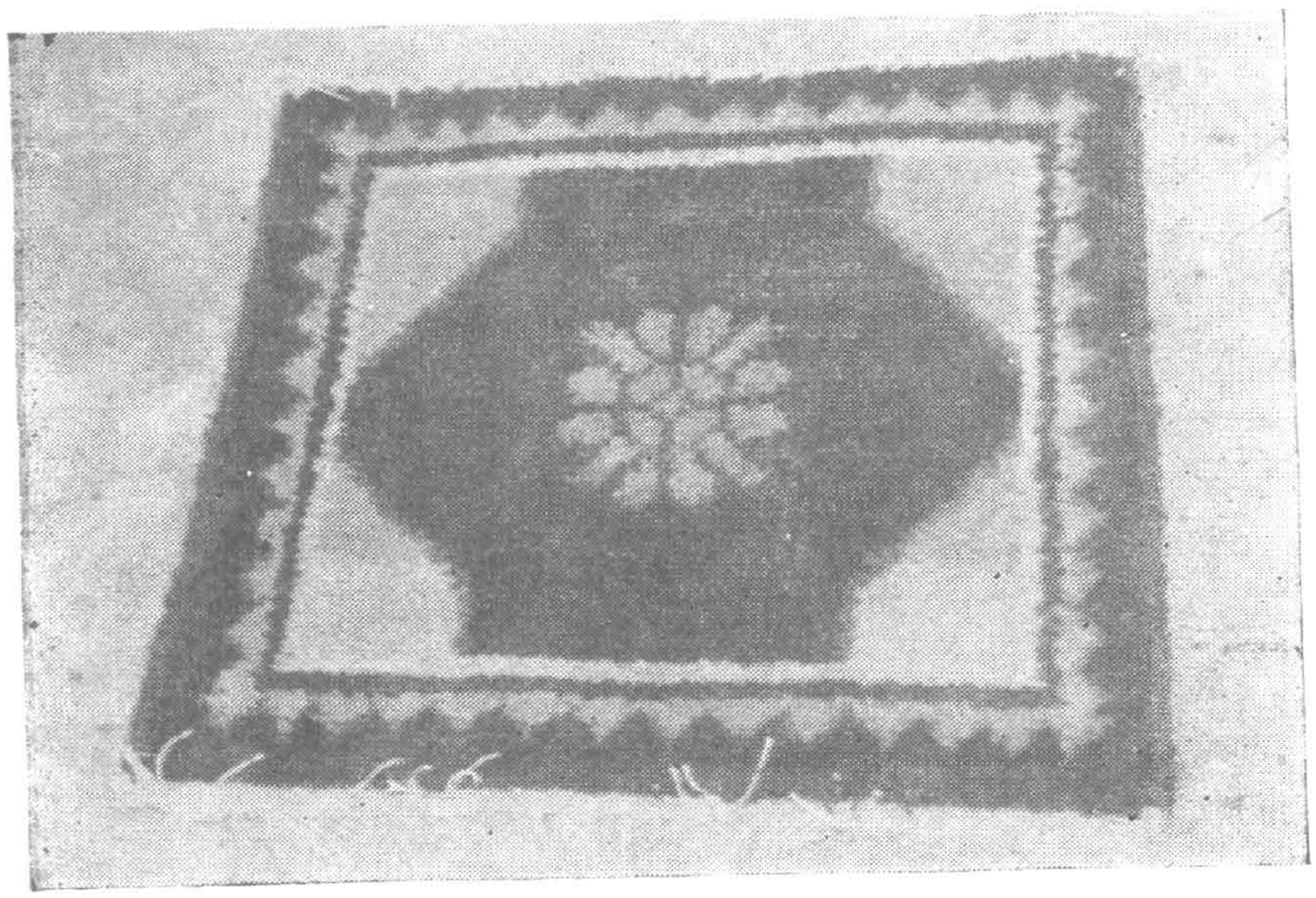
Woollen pile carpet of Aeroplane design



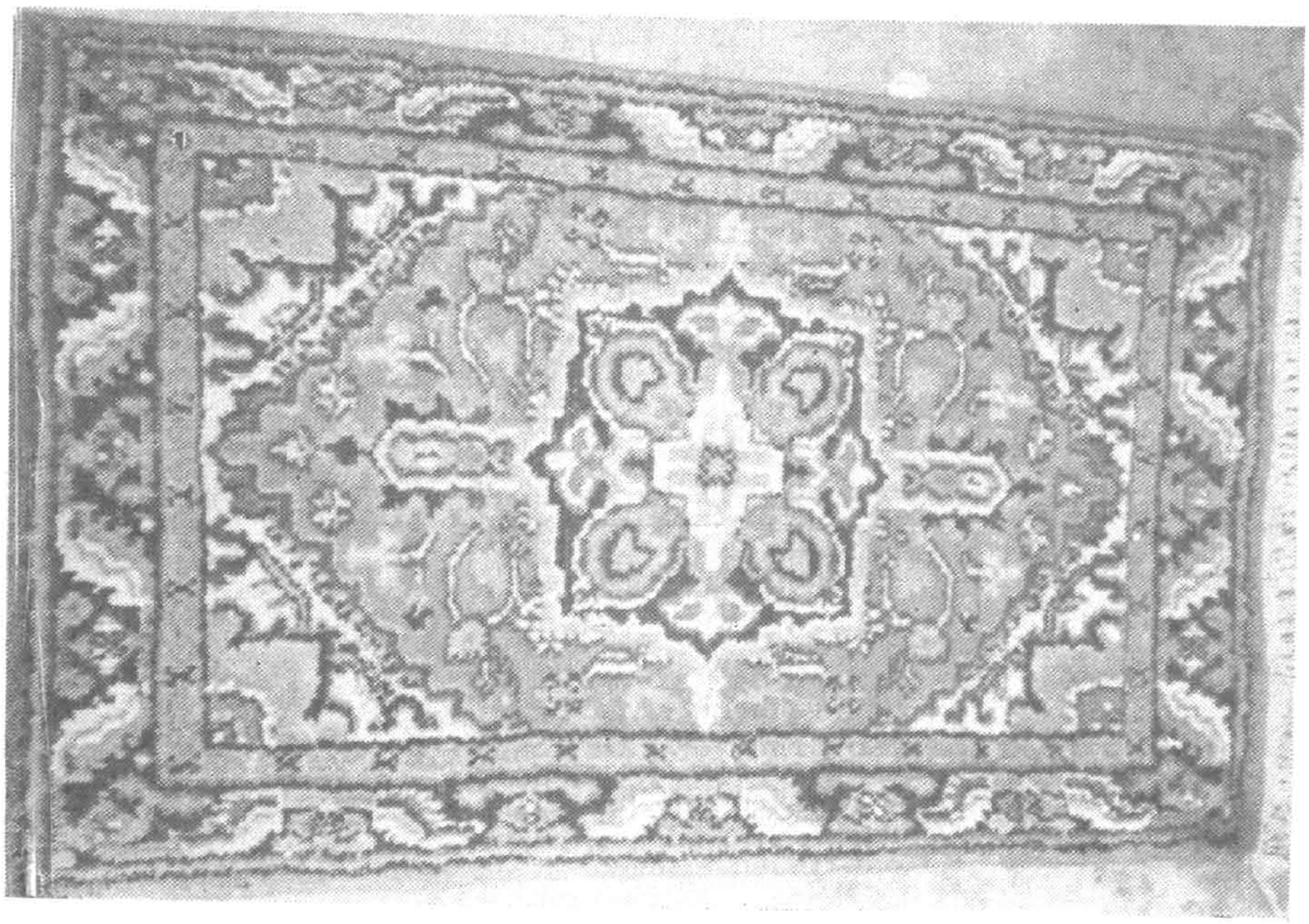
Wollen pile carpet of Floral design prepared at the loom of Shree Nandlal Prasad



Wollen pile carpet of Herete design prepared at the loom of Shree Bechu Mian



Ashni of persian design



Woollen pile carpet of Kashan design

is passed on to it from a part of the life of a person. This results in value addition at every stage and the result is that the piece is a costly piece. This piece is not only a floor covering but it is also a piece of art.

References

Sl.No.	Name of Author	Name of Publication
1	2	3
1	Murari, P	Census of India 1961—Vol. IX—Madras—Part VII-A—VII; Page 26 Editor, Nambier, P.K.
2	Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) New Delhi	Survey Report on Carpet Industry at selected centres—Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) New Delhi—Page-31.
3	Sharma, R.C.	Census of India 1961—Vol. XV-Uttar Pradesh—Part VII-A Handicarft Survey Monograph No. 1, Editor-Bhatnagar, Page-33.
4	Chattopadhya, K. . .	India's Craft Tradition—Publication Division—Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India, Page-44.
5	Ibid	Ibid.



Outer view of wool processing plant, office of the Handloom and Handicraft Corporation, Obra

CHAPTER V

MARKETING

Marketing plays a pivotal role in the development and expansion of an industry particularly an industry located in the rural areas. Without proper management of marketing the profit of the industry will not reach to the actual producers.

The exact quantity of different handicraft objects manufactured by the weavers at Obra could not be ascertained because they do not maintain any ledger for the incoming of raw materials like wool, *Tar*, *Tharri* and *Lachhi* and outgoing of finished products. The weavers of Obra work as only skilled workers and produce different varieties of carpets, *Ashni* and *Janemaz*. The Handloom Corporation, Co-operative Society and exporter's agents supply raw materials to the village weavers and take back the finished products after paying them only the wages. Since the weavers are only wage earners so they do not give satisfactory reply as far as input and output proportions are concerned.

However, during the survey conducted in the year 1986-87 it was ascertained that 8,637 square feet of *Ashni*, 379 sq. feet of *Jenemaz* and 36,165 square feet of carpet have been woven by the weavers.

The table V. 1 depicts the number of weaver's family producing different items, quantities and purposes of handicraft by caste and religion of the head of the households.

Table V.1.—Number of households manufacturing handicraft items classified by quantity produced, purpose for which

Religion, Caste, Tribe, Community of the head of the household		Name of the handicraft items manufactured	Number of households manufacturing handicraft items	Number of households			
				100—350 Sq. ft. per annum		351—600 Sq. ft. per annum	
				Entirely for the use of other Communities and sold against		Entirely for the use of other Communities and sold against	
Religion	Caste, Tribe, Community			Supplied to Exporters, Co-operative Society, Handloom Corporation, etc. by getting wages for production	Cash	Supplied to Exporters, Co-operative Society, Handloom Corporation, etc. by getting wages for production	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
HINDUS	Chamar (S.C.)	Carpet	1	..	..	1	
		Carpet, Ashni	2	..	..	1	
	Gareri	Carpet	1	1	..	..	
	Kahar (Rawani)	Carpet	4	3	..	1	
		Carpet, Ashni	2	..	..	..	
	Kandu	Carpet	4	2	..	2	
		Carpet, Ashni	3	2	..	1	
	Kumhar	Carpet	1	..	..	1	
	Nai/Hajam	Carpet	2	2	..	..	
	Noniar/Bania	Carpet	1	1	..	..	
	Sonar	Carpet	1	..	..	1	
	Yadava/Gwala	Carpet	1	1	..	..	
MUSLIMS	Muslim	Carpet	13	2		9	
		Carpet, Ashni	20	1	..	5	
		Carpet, Ashni, Janemaj.	4	..	..	..	

Note—(1) 10 households sell the products against cash also. Among them 1 is Chamar and 9 are Muslims hence horizontal total of column 4 in case of Chamar preparing Carpet-Ashni and that of Muslim preparing Carpet, Carpet-Ashni & Carpet-Ashni,-Janemaj do not tally with Col. 5—13.

(2) No household has produced less than 100 sq. fts. Hence this column has been omitted.

(3) The items manufactured are not entirely for the use of craftsmen Community hence this column also has been omitted.

produced and by Religion, Cast Tribe, Community of the head of household

reported having produced					
601—850 sq.ft. per annum		851—1,000 sq.ft. per annum		1,000 Sq.ft. per annum	
Entirely for the use of other Communities and sold against		Entirely for the use of other Communities and sold against		Entirely for the use of other Communities and sold against	
Cash	Supplied to Exporters, Co-operative Society, Handloom Corporation, etc. by getting wages for production	Cash	Supplied to Exporters, Co-operative Society, Handloom Corporation, etc. by getting wages for production	Cash	Supplied to Exporters, Co-operative Society, Handloom Corporation, etc. by getting wages for production
8	9	10	11	12	13
..	..	..	..	..	..
..	..	1	1	..	..
..	..	..	..	..	..
..	..	..	..	..	..
..	1	..	1	..	..
..	..	..	..	..	..
..	..	..	..	..	..
..	..	..	..	..	..
..	..	..	..	..	..
..	..	..	..	..	..
..	..	..	..	..	..
..	2	..	..	..	..
1	6	..	..	3	8
1	3	..	..	1	1

Out of a total 60 selected households, 23 belong to Hindu community and 37 to Muslim community. Among the Hindu households, 12 households produce approximately 100—350 square feet of carpet, *Ashni* and *Janemaz*, while 8 households produce approximately 351—600 square feet and the remaining 3 households produce approximately more than 600 square feet of carpet, *Ashni and Janemaz*. Among the 37 Muslim households, 3 households produce in between 100—350 square feet; 14 houeholds produce approximately 351—600 square feet; 11 households produce about 601—850 square feet and 9 households produce approximately 1000 square feet or more of carpets, *Ashni* and *Janemaz*. None of the households of either community has produced less than 100 square feet of carpet, *Ashni* and *Janemaz*. The wages of the weavers entirely depend upon the quantity and quality of goods produced by them. The only concern of the weavers is to keep themselves engaged in work for maximum period for their sustenance. Here it may be mentioned that only 10 households, 1 belonging to Chamar (S.C.) community and 9 to Muslim community also produce carpets for sale to private parties at their door steps.

None of the items prepared by the weavers is entirely for the use of craftsmen. They are for the use of other communities because the items produced by them are very costly and the poor weavers are unable to afford huge amount for the products.

The table V. 2 gives an idea of the weaving households as related to the quantity of different items produced and channels through which the same are sold/supplied in various proportions.

Table V.2—Households classified by quantity of finished products sold and channels through

Name of finished products produced	Number of households manufacturing the items	Quantity sold by households in broad ranges		Number of households disposed of the				
		Broad ranges (in sq.ft.)	Numbers of households	Directly to the consumer. in proportion			Middle men (exporters)	
				0.1—0.05 (1—5 per cent)	0.06—0.20 (6—20 per cent)	0.21—0.40 (21—40 per cent)	0.21—0.40 (21—40 per cent)	0.41—0.60 (41—60 per cent)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Carpet	29	100—350	12	..	..	..	..	..
		351—600	15	3	..	..	1	..
		601—850	2	..	..	..	1	..
Carpet, Ashani	27	100—350	3	..	..	..	..	..
		351—600	7	..	..	..	..	1
		601—850	8	1	..	1	1	..
		851—1,000	1	..	..	..	..	..
		1,000+	8	1	..	2	2	1
Carpet, A , Janemaj	4	601—850	3	1	..	..	1	..
		1,000+	1	..	1	..	..	..

NOTE : 1. Selling of Carpet, Ashani and Janmaj at weavers workrshops are negligible. They are supplied to exporters—Handloom Corporation and Cooperative societies. Hence sale/supply has been added in column heading.

2. Some households dispose of the finished products through more than one agency. Hence horizontal totals of columns 5—18 do not tally with the figures in column 4.

which it is disposed of by proportion

finished products through

in proportion		Cooperative society in proportion			Handloom Corporation in proportion			
0.61—0.80 (61—80 per cent)	0.81—1.00 (81—100 per cent)	0.06—0.20 (6—20 per cent)	0.21—0.40 (21—40 per cent)	0.61—0.80 (61—80 per cent)	0.06—0.20 (6—20 per cent)	0.21—0.40 (21—40 per cent)	0.41—0.60 (41—60 per cent)	0.61—0.80 (61—80 per cent)
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
..	12	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
4	10	..	..	1	..	4	..	..
..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
.	6	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
2	5	..	1	1	2	..	..	..
..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
3	2	..	..	..	..	2	1	1
1	1	1	1	..	..	2	..	..
..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..

Out of the 10 households which also sell the finished products directly to the consumers, 6 households contribute only 1—5 per cent of the total production sold directly to consumers. Whereas the share of 1 household is 6—20 per cent and that of 3 households are between 21—40 per cent. All the 60 households produce for and supply the finished products to exporter's agents. Of these 6 households contribute 21—40 per cent, 2 households 41—60 per cent, 10 households 61—80 per cent and 42 households 81—100 per cent of the total finished products supplied to the agents of exporters.

5 Households produce for and supply their finished products to the Co-operative Society also. Of which 6—20 per cent is contributed by 1 household and 2 households each supply 21—40 per cent and 61—80 per cent.

15 households produce for and supply the finished products to the Handloom Corporation also of which 6—20 per cent is supplied by 3 households, 21—40 per cent by 9 households, 41—60 per cent by 1 household and 61—80 per cent by 2 households.

It is seen from the table given in the *appendix*-1 that out of 60 households 10 households prepare items for private parties or to sell the products directly to the consumers. Of them 5 get profit up to 20 per cent because the carpets, *Ashani* or *Janamaz* prepared by them are not of high knottage and also the warp (cotton yarn) and Weft (wool) is of general quality, hence the price of these items are also less. The remaining 5 households sell their products at the margin of 21—40 per cent profit| On enquiry about the difference in the margin of profit it was revealed that the difference of profit was due to difference in quality of wool, *Tani*, *Tharri*, *Lachhi* used in the intricate nature of design with dense knottage. For weaving carpets of high knottage extreme care is taken at the time of weaving and to produce carpet of particular design, graphed design is consulted time and again. In each stage extreme care is taken to get the beautiful result for the labour put in by the weavers so that the customers may praise the quality of work done. All the items prepared by the weavers are sold at their door-step and they never go out side from the village for the sale of these products. For the carpets prepared in lieu of the materials supplied to the weavers by the Handloom Corporation, Co-operative Society and exporters the weavers get only the wages as per design and knottage. As a result there is no question of margin of profit in the preparation of carpets for these agencies which are located in the village itself.

Appendix 2 reveals that out of the 60 households, 10 households with the better economic status have reported that they are fully able to cope with local demands. 37 households have reported that since they are fully engaged in the work of exporters, Co-operative Society and Handloom Corporation they do not take orders from private parties, 7 households have reported that preparation of carpets involve much capital and since they are not financially sound they never undertake the work of any other agencies or private parties. 6 households have reported that carpet craft involve much capital and in preparation of this item their money remains blocked till the carpets prepared are sold in cash which usually take sufficiently longer period, hence all of them prefer to work for Co-opeative Society, Handloom Corporation and exporters office located in the village. Majority of the out side demands relate to importers of foreign countries who are in touch with the exporters for their finished products. Carpets meant for export involve much labour and huge capital which can be easily borne by the exporter's agents residing in the village.

On enquiry from the agents of the exporters regarding margin of proft, it has been learnt that terms and conditions in this respect are initiated and finalised at their headquarters. However it is subjected that in no case profit earned would be less than 30 to 40 per cent.

It can further be seen from Appendix-3 that 9 households have reported that they have faced problems to dispose of their finished products due to the high price of the items prepared by them. One household has reported that sometime carpet prepared on the basis of latest design in hope of alluring customers but paradoxially it is seen that the items prepared without order are sold with great difficulties, often on lower price as the customers prefer to purchase the carpets of their own choice of design and colour.

The carpet craft has some special features. It is a job of skilled and meant for persons who have learnt the intricacies of the craft. The wage of the weavers depends on the quality of carpet, design and knotting per square inch. The Handloom Corporation and export agencies care for the sale of the



Outer view of wool processing plant, office of the Handloom and Handicraft Corporation, Obra

products and besides giving raw materials they also advance cash to take up the work. A very negligible part of the products is sold locally. The carpets prepared for the exporters are supplied by the weavers to the exporters' agents who send the carpets in bulk to their headquarters located in U.P. State for sale in the international markets. The importers of foreign countries give orders for the preparation of carpets to the firms located in U.P. and also supply designs prepared on graph paper indicating therein colours of wool to be used. Thus the entire products of exporters are controlled by the importers of different countries.

The export agency located at Obra maintains record for the input and output of the products but showed their inability to give an account of quality, design, knotting per square inch, raw materials used and payment of wages because they do not keep any old ledger. The ledgers of previous years were deposited by the agents to their headquarters. Only the current ledgers were available. The ledger did not contain the cost of production and margin of profits earned. It simply indicated the wages paid by them to the weavers and raw materials supplied, but in absence of any written orders from the headquarters, the agents showed their inability to divulge any kind of figures. The craftsmen and the loom owners grumbled though in low tones, that they have been on the verge of starvation inspite of the hard work done by them whereas the exporters are simply thriving on them. The complaint is not without base.

The export corporation office located at Patna has not taken any step to get the carpets prepared from the weavers at Obra. The entire products of international markets are controlled by the agents of exporters. It is a sad plight on the part of the weavers that carpets prepared at Obra in Bihar State are sold in international markets in the name of Bhadohi or other places of repute of U.P. State as a result the name and fame of reputed artisans are side tracked.

The Handloom Corporation at Obra mostly prepare carpets for sale in Bihar State. Carpets prepared by Handloom Corporation are also sold locally at Obra amongst dignitaries, generally for floor coverings and wedding purposes during marriage seasons. The details of production, sale and transfer of products for the period 1976—87 done by the Handloom Corporation are shown in under noted table.

Table V. 3—Production sale and transfer of product by the Handloom Corporation

Year	Production		Sale		Transfer of products	
	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.
1	2		3		4	
1976-77	86,365	50	84,494	06	10,291	91
1977-78	44,829	02	7,861	40	51,431	15
1978-79	94,716	42	9,436	01	56,608	93
1979-80	35,551	34	10,504	03	60,482	90
1980-81	20,790	64	11,896	98	57,285	62
1981-82	70,960	74	6,046	68	59,425	09
1982-83	43,804	23	6,556	93	43,410	95
1983-84	39,367	24	17,527	65	20,318	05
1984-85	36,879	89	25,456	90	7,053	90
1985-86	78,096	96	33,038	06	52,583	70
1986-87	78,981	57	31,889	55	29,712	55

NOTE: Amounts shown in production column do not tally with the amounts shown in sale and transfer of products because stocks of previous years are also sold and transferred in subsequent years.

It is seen from the table V. 3 that production of carpets during the year 1976-77, 1978-79, 1981-82, 1985-86 and 1986-87 were above Rs. 75,000/- but in the remaining years the production was less than Rs. 45,000/- worth. On enquiry from the Sectional Head of the Wool Processing Plant located at Obra it was revealed that due to increase in demand of carpets in foreign countries and regular engagement given to the weavers by the export agencies majority of weavers preferred to work for exporters.

The primary weavers Co-operative Society of Obra has prepared carpets worth Rs. 2,66,100.50 and earned profit of Rs. 9,820/- as per audit report dated 30th June 1986. There is no proper arrangements of sale of products through this Society which is functioning in the village since 1956. The society is actually defunct. The aims and objectives of the society are to improve the quality as well as to increase the quantity of carpets and also to manage the supply of raw materials, tools and implements and look after the marking prospects.

Promotion of a co-operative enterprise is beset with numerous difficulties, but measures can certainly be taken to overcome them. A co-operative structure should be the ultimate aim in this field for socio-economical reasons. The setting up of handicraft market at Obra where the craftsmen could preferably sell their products directly is essential Publicity of the products through different media of publicity like radio, television, documentary films, posters, etc., is essential so that the buyers may know about the quality, design, durability and cost price of carpets. Visits of designers and extension workers and suggestions given by them could also be very useful. Yet another idea for encouraging direct contact between producers and buyers is to train the educated members of craftsman families in marketing and assist them in establishing sales outlets.

To enter the field of carpet marketing one has to know the places where carpets are prepared and the various processes involved in its manufacturing One should be fully acquainted with the life style of the weavers and the method of their working. In addition to these he should have sound supply contacts and maintain proper procurement arrangements with efficient distribution system. The whole enterprise should be managed in a business like way. For selection of carpet, buyer's taste and visual discrimination should be kept in mind besides a general understanding of the craft. For marketing of carpets the prices should be fixed reasonably and use of coded price mark for wholesale and retail is essential. The government should provide certain faoilities at Obra to improve the production of carpets and expand their markets. A good catalogue whether big or small, with printed leaflets containing therein various qualities and designs of carpets together with photographs are essential tools of publicity. The Obra carpet can continue to flourish only when proper attention is paid to the marketing aspect of the industry as marketing is the ultimate goal of production. For better prospect of marketing, consistent and strict vigil on quality control and research in design as well as in colour blending are most important factors. To sustain the process of better and efficient market management, active participation of young educated and dynamic youth in professional training is the most welcome step forward. Greater involvement of efficient co-operative marketing organisations backed and supported actively by Government is also most urgent requirement of the time without which it will be very difficult for the rural based industry to develop and provide a bright and lustrous future to its artisans.

CHAPTER VI

CRAFT AND EMPLOYMENT

During the survey no craftsman was able to say with certainty about the origin of the craft in the village. According to Mohammed Ali Mian, a recipient of National award, the industry started in the village during the period of Nizam of Hyderabad when the weavers were compelled to migrate from Hyderabad due to strife with their forefathers and Nizam. They were apt craftsmen so they took up this craft as their vocation. As per fild discussion the period of origin of the craft in the village was ascertained to be between 250—300 years back. All the Muslim (Sheikh) weavers replied the occupation as traditional. All the heads of the selected households recounted that carpet weaving started in the village before 1900. The estimated number of households and persons engaged in the craft during difierent periods as per knowledgeable craftsmen are given below:

Year	Number of Households	Number of persons
Before 1940	35	90
Upto 1950	45	140
Upto 1970	70	250
Upto 1980	105	400
At present	72	300

Initially the craft started with few households but later on it expanded rapidly and smoothly, 19 heads of the households have reported that the increase in the number of households is due to increase in population and division of families. 5 households are of the opinion that the employment is available in the household itself so the members of the family easily associate themselves with the craft. All the households have reported that at present the trade is no longer a monopoly of a few households who were practising the craft hereditarily. In fact the increase in the number of households and the number of persons up to 1970 is due to divisions of families and increase in population. The increase in population never posed any problem to the weavers because the nature of work of this craft is such that it can keep engaged all the members of the family. During the decade 1970—80 a carpet weaving training centre was started at Obra and the youngsters belonging to traditional carpet weaving Muslim-Sheikh families and non-traditional families of Hindu community pertaining to different castes were attracted to the training centre. After completion of training, persons belonging to even Hindu community hitherto non-attached, adopted the craft as their vocation for their subsistence. Consequently number of households increased from 70 to 105 in the decade 1970—80. During this period estimated number of persons increased from 250 to 400. This training centre, really, shattered the hitherto monopoly of Muslim-Sheikh families and opened a flood-gate for new entrepreneurs belonging to Hindus as well as Muslims.

During survey it was found that females with their nimble fingers are excellent weavers and they work on looms with great care and devotion. They learn all the intricacies of carpet weaving very quickly. But unfortunately the training centre has not produced even a single trained female candidate. It is partly due to hesitant nature of the rural females to work outside their family premises and partly because of the non-availability of any separate arrangement for training of women-folk.

Presently only 72 households with an estimated number of 300 persons are engaged in the craft Though, on enquiry it was revealed that carpet weaving knowing persons in the village are nearly 450 but most of them have deserted the craft due to vary low wages for such an intricate nature of work. The number of households decreased from 105 to 72 and work-force in this industry also decreased from 400 persons to 300 persons.

Unemployment in families of weavers

It would appear that out of 274 non-workers, only three persons are seeking employment, Among these

three persons, 2 are sons and the third is the brother of the head of the household.

It reveals that the two sons, i.e., one each in the age-group 0—14 and 15—34 have experience of carpet weaving for 1-2 years. The last one, brother of the head of household in the age-group 15—34 years has experience in the same trade for over 3—5 years. On enquiry about the activities of these unemployeds, it was ascertained that the son who is in the age-group 0—14, occasionally receive training of repairing tractors and the next son who is in the age-group 15—34 is also under occasional training in denting and painting of motor vehicle for 1-2 hours on honorary basis. The brother is under the training of repairing of radio without any monetary gain. Since these persons are least interested in the above mentioned training, they treat themselves as unemployeds. When asked about their engagements they explained that they did not suppose themselves under training for aquiring knowledge or skill but they simply had engaged to pass their idle-time and keep themselves free from monotony. They are in dire need of job and want immediate employment.

The following table furnishes information regarding unemployed persons, their relationship with the head of the household cross classified by educational level, duration of unemployment and experience/training.

Table VI. 1—Particulars of unemployed persons in the household with reference to relationship with the head of household Educational level, duration of unemployment and Experience/Training

Relationship of the unemployed persons with the head of the household	Educational level of the unemployed persons			Number of persons unemployed since	
	Middle	Matric	Graduate	1-2 years who have experience/ training of carpet weaving	3-5 years who have experience/ training of carpet weaving
1	2	3	4	5	6
Son	1	1	..	2	..
Brother	..	..	1	..	1

It transpires from the above table that out of the two sons unemployed one has passed middle and the other is a matriculate. The brother has obtained degree and is a graduate. They disclosed that they have got their names registered with the employment exchange for better employment elsewhere as they feel that they would not be able to earn much either from their traditional job of carpet weaving or from the work in which they are half-heartedly engaged to pass their idle time.

Disintegration of Craft cause and remedy

The table given below gives details regarding disintegration of the craft in the village:

Table VI. 2— Reasons reported by the Households for disintegration of the craft classified by period and religion, caste/tribe/community of the Head of the Household

Religion	Caste/Tribe/Community	Number of households engaged in the craft	Number of households reported about the disintegration of the craft since					
			Less than 5 years due to		5—9 yers due to			
			Involvement of much Capital	More labour less profit	Involvement of much Capital	More labour less profit	Non availability of Marketing facility	No facility of loans
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Hindus	Chamar (SC) . .	3	1	1	..	..	..	..
	Gareri . . .	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Kahar (Rawani) .	6	..	..	..	..	3	..
	Kandu . . .	7	..	..	..	..	1	..
	Kumhar . .	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
	Nai/Hajam . .	2	..	..	..	1	..	1
	Noniar Bania .	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Sonar . . .	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Yadava/Gwala .	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Muslims	Muslim . .	37	..	..	2	1	4	..

It appears from the table that 16 households have reported about the disintegration of the craft. 3 households of Hindu community have reported about the disintegration since less than 5 years and 13 households, 6 belonging to Hindu community and 7 of Muslim community have reported about the disintegration since 5—9 years because this craft involves much capital, more intricate nature of design and skilled labour with less profiit, adequate marketing facility and facility of easy loans. Of the 16 head of the households reporting disintegration of craft 3 are illiterate, 10 literate without educational level and 3 read up to primary or junior basic level. These households have reported that the craft can be rejuvenated and can generate more employment provided the craftsmen get raw materials at cheaper rate and involvement of middlemen like exporters is removed. Government should open its own centre to supply the raw materials at controlled rate. This would result in standardisation and regulation of finished products. The supply of raw materials be done as per need of weavers at opportune moment. All the finished products should be purchased and exported by the government so that the weavers may not face marketing problems and exploitation of middlemen.

Most of the weavers have complained that they are unable to bring out carpets of their choice. The designs and raw materials are supplied by Handloom Corporation, Co-operative Society and exporters and they are merely wage-earners. Some of the weavers who weave carpets for private parties are of the opinion that evenly spun mill yarn of good quality is not easily available. It is very difficult to ascertain the quality of yarn as for example, yarn of 80 counts may be having 40, 60, 100 or even 120 counts also.

Many weavers showed their ignorance about the circumstances under which the different households came to be associated with the craft. 46 households (76.67 per cent) have considered the craft in the past as a source of livelihood and 14 households (23.33 per cent) have considered the craft in the past as non-lucrative job. 57 households (95 per cent) have reported that the craft is not a source of gainful employment and only 3 households (5 per cent), one belonging to Kandu caste and 2 belonging to Muslim community have reported that they consider the craft now as a source of gainful employment and the factor responsible to make the craft profitable is the demand of carpet in international market and among elites.

The change in the economic status of the households can be seen from the table given below:

Table VI. 3—Households reported having improved/not improved their Economic Status with reasons thereof classified by Educational level of the Head of the Household.

Educational level of the head of the household	Number of households engaged in the Craft	Number of households reported about their economic position									
		Improved due to	Not Improved due to								
		All members are engaged in it and export agencies give regular orders	Graduat decline of demand in foreign market	Exploitation by export agencies for minor mistakes wages are cut to much extent	Payment of low wages	Lack of local market to sell the finished products	Wages not increased in comparison to rise of price Index	Profit not sufficient to maintain livelihood	Lack of Capital because it involves big investment	Demand limited to rich persons only	Indifferent attitude of the government
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Illiterate . . .	20	1	..	4	6	13	1	6	1	1	..
2. Literate without educational level . .	25	2	2	6	7	10	2	3	4	2	2
3. Primary or Junior Basic .	5	..	..	1	3	1	..	..	1	..	..
4. Middle . . .	7	1	..	1	1	4	..	2	1	..	..
5. Matriculation or Higher Secondary . . .	2	..	..	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
6. Technical Diploma or Certificate not equal to degree	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**60**	**4**	**2**	**13**	**18**	**30**	**3**	**11**	**7**	**3**	**2**

Note : Figures given in Columns 4—12 do not tally with figures of Col. 2 because 56 households have reported more than one reason for not improving their economic position.

Of the 60 households only 4 households (6.67 per cent) have reported that their economic positions have improved due to engagement of all the members of the family in carpet weaving and getting regular orders from the export agencies. 56 households (93.33 per cent) have reported that their economic positions have not improved. Most of the families have given more than one reason for this. Majority of the families were of the opinion that due to lack of local market they are unable to sell their finished goods, these were followed by families who opined low wages, exploitation by exporters, meagre profits, involvement of big investment, carpets being costly item their demand is limited to rich people and indifferent attitude of the government are the factors responsible for not improving their economic condition.

Normally, the weavers work for 8-9 hours per day for 8 months in a year. Thus the weavers are reported to remain idle for a period of about 4 months a year. Some of the weavers are also engaged in agricultural activities. During this period most of the looms remain idle due to location of looms in thatched houses which leak in rainy season. Thus the work of weaving during monsoon season receives a setback due to dilapidated conditions of the loom sheds. The poor weavers are the badly hit section of the work force engaged in the industry. These weavers represent the class of weavers who mostly work for the exporters on payment of wages. Very few weavers are such who also undertake their own production.

The government can help improving the craft by its concentrated effective approach. The industry has got high employment potential. As per Md. Ali Mian on a 12 feet loom 5-6 weavers and one master weaver can get employment directly. Indirect employment for supply of dyed materials like woollen yarns, cotton yarns, etc., would involve employment of 5-6 persons more per loom which means for every 12 feet loom at least 10 persons can get employment. From the point of view of investment required for such loom is not more than Rs. 12,000 to Rs. 15,000 per month. Thus it will be seen that for an investment of merely Rs. 12,000 to Rs. 15,000 about 10 persons get employment. There is hardly an industry which would employ 10 persons in a month on a small investment of Rs. 12,000 to Rs. 15,000. For achieving this score better planning and scientific approach by the government is essential. The economic conditions of the weavers must be improved.

The highest intensity of per unit employment is due to the fact that majority of units work with the help of the family members. The survey revealed that the female workers engaged in the industry formed 29.82 per cent of the total work-force including hired labours. The male workers dominate the employment pattern and constitute 70.18 per cent of the total number of workers employed in the industry. Further 14.22 per cent of the total work-force represent hired labours while the family workers working in their own establishments formed 85.78 per cent of the total number of workers engaged in the carpet weaving industry. All the female workers work in their own establishments and none of them go outside for employment.

The total work-force of 187 family workers and 31 hired labours covered by the survey was engaged on 82 looms while 15 looms were reported idle during the survey period. This gives on an average employment of 2.7 persons per loom inclusive of family and hired labours.

The wages to the weavers are, generally, payable on the basis of number of knots made per day. On an average 7,000 to 9,000 knots can be made per day by a weaver. The survey revealed that variations between average wage rates were mainly on account of different productivity level and also due to different qualities of carpets being produced. The number of knots differs according to density of pile and the qualities of materials. The average weaver can tie 700 to 900 knots in an hour. In other words it takes about three to four seconds to make a knot.

A skilled worker in carpet industry is expected to know not only tying of knots but all other processes connected with the manufacture of carpets. The skill is judged by one's capacity to imitate the pattern correctly, to weave evenly, to knot quickly and to use the knife and pair of scissors skilfully. A skilled weaver does not waste much wool and time.

The weavers at Obra are from the village. There is no immigration from outside the village in search of employment. The number of weavers in every unit is very small. The skilled workers without loom do not find any difficulty in getting job. They are generally engaged by loom owners on daily wages basis. The skilled workers are in demand everywhere and all the employers are keen to retain them but there is no security of job. Their services depend on the mercy of loom owners and can be terminated any day without notice.

An adult worker after a hard labour on an average earns Rs. 15|- to Rs. 20|- per day. The work-force engaged in actual weaving is mainly on full time

basis and due to its strenuous nature of job they are unable to take up part time employment. That is why some of the weavers who are doing this job under compulsion always remain in search of some other services, where they can get security of job and freedom from exploitation by the middlemen. The earnings are so meagre that in modern age even unskilled labours can easily earn either equal or even more wage in other comparatively less labour intensive jobs.

The opinion of the head of the household regarding engagement of their wards in the craft has been presented in the table below:

Table VI. 4—Households wanting/non wanting to have their sons/daughters engaged in the craft with reasons thereof classified by educational level of the Head of the Household.

Educational level of the head of the household	Number of households engaged in the craft	Number of households wanting to have their sons/daughters engaged in the same craft due to		Number of households not wanting to have their sons/daughters engaged in the same craft due to				
		Employment at door step	Being poor and uneducated unable to find alternative employment	Low wages and hard labour	Exploitation by export agencies (Middlemen)	It is a job of illiterate	Generally treated as labourers not as a craftsmen or artists	Indifferent attitude of the government towards the craft industry
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Illiterate	20	5	2	6	4	2	1	..
2. Literate without Educational level .	25	3	..	7	6	7	..	2
3. Primary or Junior Basic . .	5	..	..	3	1	1	..	..
4. Middle	7	2	..	1	1	3	..	..
5. Matriculation or Higher Secondary	2	..	..	1	1	..	..	..
6. Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..

It is seen from the table that out of 60 households only 20.00 per cent are in favour of keeping their sons/daughters engaged in the craft. They are of the opinion that this craft provides employment at their door-steps and hence their wards may not have to hanker for alternative employment outside the village for bread earning. A few of them are also of the opinion that being poor and uneducated they are not hopeful of their uneducated wards to get employment anywhere else. Majority of the families (80.00 per cent) do not want to keep their sons/daughters engaged in the carpet weaving. They are of the views that the job of carpet weaving is labour intensive where the payment of wages is low and has number of complications in the job due to exploitation by export agencies. The people treat the job of carpet weavers as the job of illiterates who are treated as labourers and not as artists and further due to indifferent attitude of the Government they do not find any prospect in carpet weaving so they do not want to keep their wards engaged in this craft.

The weavers have equal right to enter in temple/mosque/educational or religious institutions. They have right to draw water from common well and their kutcha foods are acceptable to their co-villagers without any hesitation and they enjoy right of equal participation in cultural, social and religious ceremonies. They work together, sit together and talk together whenever chances occur. All the traditional and non-traditional weavers are free from tension without caring their caste/community or religious stigmas, which reflects that they do not suffer from any social infirmities and enjoy equal social status among other communities as well.

The following table reveals the extent of interest shown by the younger generation in the craft.

Table VI. 5—Households reported about Younger generation of their Community taking/not taking interests in the craft with reasons thereof classified by Religion, Caste/Tribe/Community of the Head of the Household.

Religion, Caste/Tribe/Community of the head of the household		Number of households engaged in the craft	Number of households reported about the younger generation		Number of households reported about younger generation taking interest in the craft due to	Number of households reported about the younger generations not taking interest in the craft due to			
Religion	Caste/Tribe/Community		Taking interest in the craft	Not taking interest in the craft	Provides employment in the households itself	Low wages and hard labour	Being not traditional they do not like it	They consider it a job of illiterates	Exploitation by export agencies (Middlemen)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Hindus	Chamar (SC) . .	3	3	..	3	..	..	..	..
	Gareri . . .	1	..	1	..	1	..	..	..
	Kahar (Rawani) .	6	1	5	1	4	..	..	1
	Kandu . . .	7	1	6	1	5	..	..	1
	Kumhar . .	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	..
	Nai/Hajam . .	2	..	2	..	..	2	..	..
	Noniar Bania .	1	..	1	..	1	..	..	..
	Sonar . . .	1	..	1	..	1	..	..	..
	Yadava/Gwala .	1	..	1	..	1	..	..	..
Muslims	Muslim . .	37	3	34	3	27	..	2	5

Of the 60 selected households younger generation of 9 families (15.00 per cent) are taking interest in the craft due to employment available within the precincts of their households. Remaining 51 families (85.00 per cent) are of the opinion that the younger generation is not taking interest in the craft. Amongst these, majority are of the opinion that they lack interest in the craft due to low wages and hard labour. A few of them have also reported that people consider the job of carpet weaving as the job of illiterates, exploitation by export agencies are prominent in this job and their labours do not get the actual rewards which they deserve.

Out of 37 traditional Muslim families 6 are associated with the craft since 2 generations, 17 since 3 generations and 14 since 4 generations. All the Hindu weavers are non-traditional workers and only the members of present generation have associated themselves with the craft after the opening of carpet weaving training centre at Obra.

In such a hard days when there is crisis of employment everywhere, the employment of weavers at their door steps is a good sign. This household industry has become a part of weavers' life. Out of 60 families, 187 (85.78 per cent) workers were found working on their own looms and only 31 hired labours (14.22 per cent) on the looms of employers. The relation between the employer and the employee is cordial. The individual household predominantly constitutes the working unit and all the members of the family directly or indirectly remain engaged in the various processes of manufacturing.

Although the Central Government and the State Government have taken various steps to improve the working conditions but those steps have made sporadic improvement only, much more remains to be done for the economic upliftment of the weavers. The most neglected aspects are related to the earnings and working conditions. Indeed, in some cases a worker can not even find sustained work or employment throughout the year. The artisans working in their own houses are dependent upon exporters and other agencies for the supply of raw materials which is often inadequate and inconsistent. In the past, craftsmen used to receive recognition from royal patrons and patronages were often inherited by their families. To give incentives and infuse enthusiasm amongst the carpet weavers, Government has started to confer National Award for outstanding piece of carpet work alongwith other craftsmen belonging to various handicrafts.

Village Obra in Bihar is recognised as a major carpet manufacturing centre. This centre has its own characteristic. The basic characteristic of the industry as emerged out from the survey appears to be one having higher degree of receptivity to evolutionary process due to change in design and qualities without sacrificing the heritage of excellent workmanship. The industry in Obra is found to have attained certain level of maturity, yet it is incapable to cope with the wind of the time.

Training of artisans, selection of trainees, finalisation of syllabus and examination of candidates should be conducted by a committee consisting of representatives from craftsmen and government side. Training should be employment oriented and stress should be given to the practical aspect of the training. A tour to different prestigious carpet weaving centres should be kept in the curriculum so that trainees may imbibe some new ideas which may develop this existing carpet weaving industry at Obra. Only those persons should be selected for training who have aptitude to learn the craft and who can take up the work of craft as a source of livelihood. In the training classes besides giving training of all the processes of weaving, the trainees should be given training of Designing, Gultras, Clipping, Dyeing and Washing, etc., and then only they should be declared fit for actual job.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The art of carpet weaving at Obra was in the height of its glory in the past and majority of the craftsmen during survey had reported that this craft was source of livelihood as special care and due respect was given to the artisans by the Zamindars and Nawabs of the area. Honour was also bestowed upon the talented weavers by the dignitaries and the same was carried on by the offsprings of the family. But due to fall of Zamindari system and subsequent decline in aristocrat living of the Nawabs, the conditions of weavers also started deteriorating and as a result the industry became fully disorganised. The carefree weavers were burdened with the daily necessities of life and their attentions were diverted towards both the ends to be met. They lost all the charms in the trade because there was none to patronise them and purchase their costly items. Most of the weavers deserted the trade and shifted to alternative jobs like tailoring, *bidi* making, cycle repairing and retail trade in cloth, plastic shoe and betel selling, etc. At present most of them do not want to keep their sons and daughters engaged in the craft because of the problems faced by the industry. Only those are thinking to engage their wards in this craft who feel that their wards may not find alternative jobs.

A study of the situation surrounding this craft at Obra has revealed that it is already in quite a bad shape and its further deterioration needs to be arrested. What remains today of this splendid craft is merely a shadow. The government should help in the sale and publicity of Obra carpets through the State Emporia as it is doing for other handicrafts. Then only the name and fame of Obra carpet will reach in the national as well as the international markets. The changing structure of the industry has added a new dimension to the problems faced by the industry. The problems faced by the industry at the time of survey was "too much production chasing too less market outlet". The poor weavers did not have necessary skill and resources to enter into export market on which the industry is mainly dependent. Obra carpets find negligible market within the village and the export oriented character of the products made the small manufacturer dependent on the exporters. In this process they fail to get the full returns of labours put in by them.

Bihar State Export Corporation at Patna should immediately open its sale emporia at Obra and start compulsory registration of weavers in order to know the skilled hands available in the village. The weavers be given free hand to work independently with dignity. Assistance may be provided to weavers in terms of an easy grant of loans by Banks and other agencies. Registered newly developed designs be supplied to weavers and every care be taken to improve the economic conditions of the weavers and searching out better ways of weaving.

The Training-*cum*-Production Centre should be started in the village and regular supply of weaving materials be given to the trainees and suggestions for the new entrepreneurs be obtained from the craftsmen of repute of the village.

The Industry Department of Government of Bihar should open a separate carpet cell at Patna and monitor the functioning of Training-*cum*-Production Centre, marketing, export information and facilities of employment to the trained persons. Marketing facilities should be made available in the village itself.

They should also start a separate design wing at Obra where expert designers should constantly develop new designs and desired colour matching suiting the demand of foreign buyers. The best application of efforts be made to see that at least good designers are given full co-operation to make pretty attractive designs preferably based on Indian culture. The designers should be suitably rewarded on the basis of the results of design competition. Every carpet produced at Obra should have new design with a new look based on scenes and scenery of India.

As a remedial measure, a service institute with adequate testing facilities be provided at Obra for gradation of wool by the manufacturers before utilising yarn for weaving purposes. The same institute should be able to certify the colour fastness of dye used for dyeing the yarns to save the manufacturers from using low grade dyes which fade away with washing resulting in unnecessary repairs of carpets or total rejection of carpets. The institute could also offer services in the fields of advising proper methods of dyeing, washing and finishing of carpets to the manufacturers which will go a long way in stabilising quality of carpets. Facilities for training personnels of manufacturers in these fields should also be provided. Then only Obra carpets can face the stiff competition in the world market.

The most important suggestion for ensuring continuous growth in demand is to maintain the standard of qualities. One of the most important factors guiding the quality of carpets is the skill of weavers who are actually weaving on the looms. The weavers at Obra do not find independence in the execution of their jobs. They are forced to do as per desire of the exporters and this has led to the general deterioration of quality coupled with slow pace of production. Proper harmony and understanding must be maintained with weavers instead of allowing the situation of weavers getting out of hand and unmanageable.

An exhibition should be organised by the Bihar State Export Corporation in Bihar State every year and artisans from all the carpet producing centres of India should be invited to exhibit their talent by way of original products in an open competition. Manufacturers of the "Best" products should be suitably awarded. This sort of incentive to the artisans would definitely give much encouragement and enthusiasm so that the weavers could make every effort to participate with their latest and never before seen products to achieve better position in future competitions.

The wool processing plant located at Obra is not functioning properly due to erratic suply of power. The Bihar State Electricity Board should ensure proper and regular supply of power to Obra so that this unit may function properly. Special care must be given by the processing unit in washing process of the carpets so that they may have a bright shining after washing which is as important as anything else for an excellent carpet.

The working conditions of weavers are not satisfactory and to ensure proper workable condition the Government should take measures in this regard providing housing and educational facilities to the weavers and their families. The looms are fitted very close to each other and there is every possibility of a person being hurt while moving about. Moreover they obstruct the passage of light inside the workshed. Majority of the looms are fitted on the verandah hence in summer the workers have to face hot and dusty winds and in winter the cold breeze as there are no doors to check them. There is no arrangement of a place where the workers can rest and take meals in the afternoon. They have to take their meals near the looms which is further responsible for deteriorating their health.

The carpet industry has a bright future and prospect if the industry is run on proper lines. Standardisation of products and helping hands from the government are bound to give the much needed impetus to the industry which is more important under planned development.

The weavers of Obra should be ensured in a way, so that they feel confident. They may be able to take entire responsibility of carpet weaving. This involves the whole family of the weavers which means generations after generations become richer and richer in the experience of carpet weaving. A bogey of really trained weavers will be ready by this process. It will be a wave of carpet production and this will definitely bring the cost of production much down. There will be no exploitation of artisans. There will be no corrupt practices amongst the weavers. They will have their own world with full bright future. Obra carpet will have its identity in national as well as in global markets.

Glossary of local terms

Sl. No.	Local terms	English equivalents
1	2	3
i	Gola	Warp wounded in the shape of ball
2	Lachhi	Yarn made into coils
3	Kabuli	Knops
4	Charkhi	The one used for woollen yarn is a conical four sided frame.
5	Tharri	Weft yarn
6	Gadala	Pegs
7	Tani	Warp threads
8	Dori	Thick string
9	Butans	Pairs of warp loop
10	Kanni	Thick string
11	Nathi	String passing through the holes.
12	Gulla	Two prarallel piece of bamboo
13	Sariya	Strong iron rod of ½ inch in diameter.
14	Pashband	Prarallel beam
15	Patla	Sitting board
16	Kamana	Flat piece of wood to which heddles are attached
17	Katti	Mat like plain weaving
18	Chhura	The round pile cutter
19	Panja	Comb beater
20	Quainchi	Scissors
21	Ferua	Long flat wooden handles
22	Tapka	Knot
23	Sastun	Up right poles of loom
24	Baibharna	Preparation of heddles
25	Pawgaji	A quarter of a yard (9 inches)
26	Sooja	A type of thick iron needle

Appendix 1.—Terms and Conditions and margin of profit related to sale of finished products through different channels classified by educational level of the head of the households

Educational level of head of the household	Name of handicraft items	Number of households manufacturing handicraft items	Number of households sale/supply of the items through						
			Directly to consumers at the margin of profit		Middlemen (exporters) on items and conditions		Co-operative society, Kalin Bunker Sahyog Samiti, OBRA.		Bihar State Handloom & handicraft corporation
			Up to 20%	21 to 40%	Payment of advance	Supply of raw materials	Grant/loans received from the society	Others	Supply of raw materials
					Labour charges are paid as advance in cash to weavers	Wool, tani, tharri and Lachhi are supplied as raw materials	Loan of Rs. 3000/- with 33% subsidy granted by the society to members	Raw materials are supplied & finished products are received by the society	Payment of wages as per quality of the carpet
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Illiterate	Capret	11	..	..	11	11	..	..	3
	Carpet, Ashani	8	1	1	8	8	1	1	2
	Carpet, Ashani Janemaj	1	..	..	1	1	1	1	1
2. Literate without educational level	Carpet	11	2	..	11	11	1	1	1
	Carpet, Ashani	12	1	1	12	12	..	..	4
	Carpet, Ashani Janemaj	2	..	2	2	2	1	1	1
3. Primary or Junior Basic	Carpet	3	1	..	3	3	..	..	1
	Carpet, Ashani	2	..	1	2	2	..	..	..
4. Middle	Carpet	4	..	..	4	4	..	..	..
	Carpet, Ashani	3	..	..	3	3	..	..	..
5. Matriculation or higher secondary	Carpet, Ashani	1	—	—	1	1	1	1	..
	Carpet, Ashani, Janemaj	1	—	—	1	1	.	..	1
6. Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	Carpet, Ashani	1	..	..	1	1	..	..	1

Note : (1) Since major parts of production are supplied to exporters, co-operative societies, handloom corporation who supply them raw materials and for their production they are paid wages. A negligible part of productions are sold by the weavers themselves hence supply word is obliqued with word sale in colmn. heading.

(2) Since finished products are sold/supplied through more than one channels. Hence figures from Colmn. 4 to 10 do not tally with the figures given in colmn. 3.

Appendix—2 Particulars of households which reported to have met the demands for finished products and those which have not met the demand with reason thereof classified by educational level of the Head of the Household

Educational level of the head of the household	Name of handicraft items	Number of households manufacturing the items	Number of households reported to have met the demand for finished products	Number of households reported to have not met the demand for finished products			
			Local demand to the extent	Local demand due to			Outside demand due to
			Fully	Full time engaged in Weaving Work for exporters Co-operative Society and Handloom Corporation on Wages	Lack of Working Capital	Working Capital remained engaged for long period due to stagnation of items prepared for local demand	Non-attachment with importers further it requires much working Capital and manpower
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Illiterate . . .	Carpet .	11	..	7	3	1	11
	Carpet, Ashani .	8	2	4	1	1	8
	Carpet, Ashani, Janemaj	1	..	1	..	..	1
2. Literate without educational level.	Carpet .	11	2	5	2	2	11
	Carpet, Ashani .	12	2	9	..	1	12
	Carpet, Ashani, Janemaj .	2	2	..	..	..	2
3. Primary or Junior Basic	Carpet .	3	1	2	..	..	3
	Carpet, Ashani .	2	1	..	1	..	2
4. Middle . . .	Carpet .	4	..	4	..	..	4
	Carpet, Ashani .	3	..	3	..	..	3
5. Matriculation or Higher Secondary.	Carpet, Ashani .	1	..	1	..	..	1
	Carpet, Ashani, Janemaj	1	..	.	..	1	1
6. Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree.	Carpet, Ashani	1	..	1	..	..	1

Appendix—3 Details of Households reported having faced problems to dispose off finished products classified by educational Level of the Head of the Household

Educational level of the head of the household	Name of Handicraft items	Number of Households manufacturing item	Number of households reported having faced problems to dispose off finished products due to reason	
			High Price	Carpet made without order is sold with great difficulties as customers prefer to purchase the carpet of their own designs and colours
1	2	3	4	5
1. Illiterate	Carpet	11	2	..
	Carpet, Ashani	8	..	..
	Carpet, Ashani, Janemaj	1	..	..
2. Literate without educational Level	Carpet	11	2	..
	Carpet, Ashani	12	2	..
	Carpet, Ashani, Janemaj	2	1	1
3. Primary or Junior Basic	Carpet	3	1	..
	Carpet, Ashani	2	1	..
4. Middle	Carpet	4	..	..
	Carpet, Ashani	3	..	..
5. Matriculation or Higher Secondary	Carpet, Ashani	1	..	..
	Carpet, Ashani, Janemaj	1	..	..
6. Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	Carpet, Ashani	1	..	..

Note: (1) In addition to work for exporters, Handloom Corporation and Co-operative society 10 household noted in Colmn. 4-5 also prepare Carpet, Ashani, Janemaj for private parties. These households face difficulties in disposing off their finished products due to use of low quality of raw materials.

(2) Remaining 50 households who exclusively work for exporters, Co-operative society and handloom Corporation do not face any marketing problem because they supply the finished products as per design and quality assigned to them by the above three agencies for which they receive wages only.