CHAPTER-VII
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

7.1. Introduction:

The traditional cultural practice of dedication of girls to gods and goddesses as Devadasis and Joginis to temples has been in existence for ages. As these norms gained social sanction of feudal societies, prostitution as a system became institutionalized. Once initiated into the profession, the girls become the property of wealthy men and a wage earner for her family. Many of the studies have already described Devadasi as prostitution came to be called as a divine one and it even becomes a religious practice.

The Indian Health Organization has estimated nearly 15 to 20 per cent of the total number of prostitutes in Mumbai red-light areas is Devadasis. It defines four districts in South Maharashtra – Sangli, Satara, Solapur and Kolhapur – and four in North Karnataka – Hubli, Belgaum, Bijapur and Gulbarga. It is noted that almost all the Devadasis are from lower castes such as scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward classes and surprisingly, these Devadasis belonged to acute poverty affected families without any land holdings and depending on unorganized sector for the livelihood. Even the family members of these
Devadasis are illiterates or low-educated. As such, they believe in mythology related to Devadasi.

It is observed that, compared to other social evils, devadasi practice is worst practice, which degrades women in society. Due to devadasi practice, there is increase in prostitution, in the name of devotion. Considering this reality, the governments have passed legislation to ban devadasi practice and also to rehabilitate the existing devadasis. But still it is not completely disappeared in Karnataka. Hence, it is essential on the part of the Non-Governmental Organizations and voluntary associations to increase awareness among common people against such evil acts on women. For this purpose, there is need to increase education among the poor, lower class and rural people.

7.2. Summaries of Findings:

Following are the summaries of findings from the present study:

1. Total 400 Devadasis were surveyed to collect the primary data and of which 250 are from rural areas or villages and 150 are from towns and Bijapur city.

2. Age of the respondents disclosed that, 43.0% of the respondents are of middle age, that is between 36 to 50 years followed by, 38.75% are of old age that is of more than 50 years and only 18.25% are of young age that is between 18 to 35 years. It is found that there are
more Devadasis of more than 36 years and number of Devadasis of less than 35 years is less, it shows that, there is gradual decrease in Devadasi practice in society.

3. Education of the respondents shows that, 54.5% have not went to schools and are illiterates, 28.75% have completed primary education and only 16.75% have completed their secondary education or high school. It is emphasized that majority of the respondents are illiterates and as such, they are following Devadasi practice.

4. 45.5% of the total respondents are living in medium families with 5 to 8 members, followed by 38.25% are living in small families with family members between 1 to 4 and only 16.25% are living in large families with more than 9 family members. To summarize, majority of the respondents are living in small families or medium families.

5. Nature of families of the respondents revealed that, 51.75% of the respondents are living in nuclear families, whereas 37.25% are living in joint families and the remaining 11.00% are living single. It is highlighted that due to isolation as Devadasi in society, majority of the respondents are living in nuclear families or even living single.
6. Annual income of the respondents disclosed that, 38.0% of the respondents have lower income of less than Rs. 11000, 37.75% have medium income that is between Rs. 11000 to Rs. 25000 and the remaining only 24.25% are of high income group that is more than Rs. 25000. Hence, it can be stated that annual income of the respondents is lower or medium.

7. 18.5% of all the respondents are living in Pakka houses, whereas a great majority that is, 81.5% are living in Kachcha houses. Hence, it can be summarized that majority of the Devadasis have no systematic Pakka house.

8. 72.75% of all the respondents are belonged to scheduled caste followed by, 21.5% of the respondents are belonged to other backward classes, 4.0% are belonged to scheduled tribes and the remaining only 1.75% of the respondents belonged to other castes. It is clearly shown that compared to all castes, more scheduled castes believe and practice Devadasi.

9. Few of the respondents are engaged in more than one type of occupation. Particularly, 41.0% of the respondents are engaged in performing religious rituals called ‘Joga’, 32.75% are working in seasonal employment or unorganized sector, 11.50% are working as prostitutes, all the respondents are self-employed and 4.0% of the respondents are working in agriculture.
10. The family occupations of all the respondents shows that, families of 28.50% of the respondents are working as agricultural labourers, families of 9.25% of the respondents have their own business, families of majority that is 49.0% of the respondents are engaged in their caste based occupations and that of 13.25% of the respondents are working in other occupations. It is highlighted that, due to modernization, though caste based occupations are disappearing, still majority of the respondents have agreed that their families are working in their caste based occupations.

11. Marital status of the respondents disclosed that, 10.50% are living single and unmarried, 53.50% of the respondents are married and living with their husbands, 22.75% of the respondents are alienated or separated or got divorced and 13.25% of the respondents are widows. It is unfortunate that nearly half of the respondents are living single due to separation, divorce and widowhood.

12. Number of male children of the respondents shows that, 71.50% of the respondents have 1 to 2 male children followed by, 18.25% have no male children and the remaining 10.25% of the respondents have 3 to 4 male children. On the other hand, numbers of female children of the respondents revealed that, 14.0% of the respondents have no female children, 77.75% of the respondents have 1 to 2 female children and the remaining 8.25% of the respondents have 3
to 4 female children. When compared to gender of children, there are more female children for the majority of the respondents.

13. 96.0% of the respondents have been dedicated to temples and become Devadasis at their child hood, that is up to 16 years of their age, whereas 4.0% have been dedicated to temples and become Devadasis, when they have become young or adolescent.

14. A great majority that is, 81.50% of the respondents are living in their own houses, whereas 18.50% of the respondents are living near temples.

15. For their religious services, only 16.50% are charging, whereas 83.50% are not charging for their services, but the devotees are paying to Devadasis for their services. Hence, it can be concluded that, the income of the Devadasis from their religious works, is not fixed and depends on the devotees.

16. Of all the respondents surveyed, 63.5% of the respondents are Devadasis, whereas 36.5% are Joginis.

17. 76.0% of all the respondents have remarked that they are paid less for their services compared to others, whereas remaining 24.0% have mentioned that they are paid equal with all other Devadasis for their services.

18. Regarding the physical health problems faced by the respondents, a few of the respondents are suffering from more than one type of
physical health disorders and few of the respondents are not suffering from any physical health problems. Particularly, 10.50% of the respondents are suffering from Sexually Transmitted Diseases, 13.25% of the respondents are suffering from menstrual disorders, 32.75% are suffering from poor reproductive health, 4.25% are suffering from spontaneous abortion and only 40.75% are not having any of the physical health problems.

19. Few of the respondents have stated that they are suffering from more than one type of psychological or mental health problems. Particularly, 17.75% of the respondents are suffering from nervous disorders, 2.50% are suffering from insomnia, 13.25% are suffering from emotional trauma, 3.50% of the respondents are suffering from other psychological health problems and majority that is 66.50% of the respondents are not facing any psychological health problems.

20. Only 17.5% of all the respondents are aware about the Karnataka Devadasi (Prohibition of Dedication) Act, 1982, Rules 1987 and Amendment 2010, whereas the remaining majority that is, 82.5% are not aware about the same. Now, it is essential on the part of NGOs and the Government to increase awareness of people including Devadasis on restriction or ban on Devadasi practice.
21. The reasons furnished by the respondents for their dedication as Devadasi to temples revealed that, 7.00% of the respondents were dedicated due to social pressure, 57.75% were dedicated as Devadasis as per their parents’ wish, 12.25% were dedicated as Devadasis as it is heredity of their families, 4.75% of the respondents were dedicated to temples as Devadasis as it is their custom, 16.50% were dedicated as Devadasis due to their poverty and 1.75% were dedicated as Devadasis due to other reasons. It is concluded that parents are pressurizing or dedicating their female children to become Devadasis.

22. It is surprising to note that, 9.75% of all the respondents have dedicated their children as Devadasis to temples, whereas 79.0% have not agreed to the same and it is not applicable to 11.25% of the respondents as they don’t have children.

23. The reasons furnished by the respondents for dedicating their children as Devadasis revealed that, 6.75% of the respondents have stated that their children don’t have father, 2.0% have mentioned that due to poverty they are dedicated, 1.0% have expressed that social circumstances made their children to dedicate to temples as Devadasis and it is not applicable to 90.25% of the respondents as they have not dedicated their children as Devadasis or they don’t have children.
24. On the reasons for not dedicating their children to temples as Devadasis, 43.25% of the respondents have expressed that their children are educated, 23.00% have mentioned that their children are not interested to become Devadasis, 12.75% have given other reasons and it is not applicable to 21.0% of the respondents as their children have dedicated to temples already or a few of them don’t have children. It is highlighted that due to education, many of the children of Devadasis shows their disinterest in Devadasi practice and as such, they have not been dedicated to temples.

25. Few of the respondents are members to two or three associations and organizations and few of the respondents are not members to any of such associations and organizations. 28.50% of the total respondents are members to Mahila Mandals, 12.0% of the respondents are members of Cooperative Societies, 61.50% are members to Self-Help Groups and 43.50% of the respondents are not members to any of such associations or organizations. Of the members of associations and organizations, 5.25% of the respondents are working as office bearers of Mahila Mandals, 1.50% are working as office bearers of cooperative societies and 10.50% of the respondents are functioning as office bearers to Self-Help Groups. The participation of respondents in these associations shows that, 17.0% of the respondents are participating
regularly, 31.75% are participating occasionally, 7.75% are not participating actively and it is not applicable to 23.25% of the respondents as they are not members of any associations, organizations or groups.

26. Of all the respondents and on their exposure and use of mass media, especially using radio shows that, only 16.25% of the respondents are listening radio regularly, 43.25% are listening radio occasionally and 40.50% are not listening radio. Similarly, only 13.50% of all the respondents are regularly watching television, 57.75% are watching television occasionally and 28.75% of the respondents are not watching television. Only 6.25% of all the respondents are reading newspapers regularly, 23.25% of the respondents are reading newspapers occasionally and 70.50% are not reading newspapers. Surprisingly, only 2.75% of the total respondents are reading magazines regularly, 4.50% are reading magazines occasionally and 92.75% of the total respondents are not reading magazines. It is concluded that majority of the respondents are not using mass media and as such, they are not aware about the latest news and events.

27. Many of the respondents are participating in more than one type of extension activities. Particularly, 6.0% of the respondents are participating in demonstration, 38.25% are participating in training,
31.50% are participating in meetings, 2.75% of the respondents are participating in Krishi Mela, 4.00% are participating in exhibitions, 3.00% of the respondents are participating in other extension activities and 33.50% of the respondents are not participating in any of these extension activities.

28. Few of the respondents have owned more than one type of household articles in their houses. Specifically, 55.75% of the respondents have owned television, 10.50% have owned radio, 17.0% have owned refrigerator, 5.50% have owned Mixer Grinder, 15.75% have owned other articles such as Mobile phones and 14.0% have not owned any of such household articles at their houses. It is surprising to note that many of the respondents have not owned household articles, which are essential in modern days.

29. Surprisingly, only 16.25% of the total respondents are fully satisfied in their social life, 45.50% are satisfied to a greater extent and the remaining 38.25% of the respondents are not at all satisfied in their social life. It is emphasized that, majority of the respondents are not fully satisfied in their life due to suppression and depression in their life.

30. It is found that, only 41.50% of the respondents are getting higher status and holy respect in their families, 45.25% are facing equal status and respect like other family members and the remaining
13.25% of the respondents are getting lower status and respect in their own families. Surprisingly, it is noted that a few of the respondents are treated lower or inferior in their own families.

31. It is surprising to note that, only 22.00% of the respondents are getting higher and holy respect and status in society, 42.25% are getting equal status and surprisingly, 35.75% of the respondents are getting lower status and inferior treatment in society. It can be summarized that considerable number of respondents are facing lower status and respect and inferior treatment in society.

32. Surprisingly, 35.75% of all the respondents are fully discriminated and exploited in society, 45.50% are somewhat discriminated and exploited and only 18.75% are not discriminated or not exploited in society. It shows that, though Devadasi practice is servants of deities, still, majority of the Devadasis are fully or somewhat discriminated and exploited in society.

33. The problems faced by the respondents surveyed in their families shows that, 15.75% of the respondents are facing domestic violence, 9.75% are facing physical attacks, 33.50% of the respondents are facing verbal abuse, humiliation, etc. 11.25% of the respondents are facing mental depression, suppression, etc. 2.0% are facing other problems and only 27.75% of the respondents are not facing any of such problems in their families. Though
Devadasi practice was began with good aim to dedicate servants to deities, the present situation shows that a great majority of these Devadasis are humiliated, abused and exploited in their own families.

34. The attitudes of husbands of the respondents revealed that, 5.75% of the respondents have stated that their husbands are violent, abuse and neglect them, 10.25% have remarked that their husbands are dominant and suppress them, 23.75% of the respondents have expressed that their husbands are cooperative and equally treat them, 13.75% of the respondents have opined that their husbands are always giving importance to them and it is not applicable to 46.50% of the total respondents as they are living single, divorcees, unmarried, widows or separated from their husbands.

35. On the attitudes and views of society towards the respondents, it is noted that, 21.25% of the respondents are feeling holy or honourable attitudes from society, 34.50% are feeling indifferent attitudes from society, 27.50% of the respondents feels neglected from society and 16.75% of the respondents are getting evil attitudes from society. Though the Devadasis are ‘Servants of God’, surprisingly, majority of the respondents are facing evil attitudes or neglect in society.
36. Only 22.25% of all the respondents are leading social activities, whereas 48.75% are actively participating in social activities and the remaining 29.00% are social excluded and not participating in social activities. It is already discussed that Devadasi practice is a stigma attached to the social life of Devadasis and it creates the depression and suppression in society. Consequently, few of the Devadasis are not participating in social activities.

37. 61.50% of all the respondents have agreed that their income is sufficient to meet their expenses, whereas the remaining 38.50% have not agreed to the same. Hence, it can be concluded that considerable numbers of respondents don’t have sufficient income to meet their family requirements and expenses.

38. To manage excess expenses, 4.50% of the total respondents have stated that they borrow loans, 18.25% have expressed that they work in income generating activities, 14.25% have remarked that they control their excess expenses, 1.50% have given other solutions to control excess expenses and for the remaining 61.50% of the respondents, it is not applicable as they are managing all of their expenses from their existing income.

39. 60.50% of all the respondents are getting monthly pension under Devadasi Rehabilitation Programme (DRP), whereas the remaining only 39.50% of the respondents are not getting monthly pension.
40. The reasons for not getting monthly pension under DRP, 27.25% of the total respondents have mentioned that they are of lower age, that is less than 45 years and not eligible to get monthly pension, 7.0% have stated that there are many official formalities to get pension, 5.25% have expressed that they are not aware about monthly pension for Devadasis and for the remaining 60.50% of the respondents, it is not applicable as they are getting monthly pensions from the Government.

41. The problems faced by the respondents to continue their education shows that, majority that is, 66.50% of the respondents have stated that they are dedicated to temples as Devadasis at an early age, 22.75% have remarked that due to poverty, they were not able to continue their education and 10.75% have mentioned that due to the negligence of their parents, they were not able to continue education. Devadasi practice has become major obstacle for continuation of education for the majority of the respondents.

42. Only 19.0% of the total respondents have felt proud about being Devadasi, 34.75% of the respondents have felt indifferent and the remaining 46.25% of the respondents have felt inferiority about being Devadasi. It shows that, though they are Devadasis, they have faced many situations in society, which made them to feel inferior towards Devadasi practice.
43. 69.25% of the total respondents have agreed that education is essential for girls, whereas only 30.75% have disagreed to the same. It shows that though majority of the respondents have approved for girls’ education, still many of the Devadasis are not realized the significance of education for girls.

44. The reasons for girls’ education as stated by the respondents shows that, 26.50% of the respondents have mentioned that girls’ education is essential to get good employment, 28.00% have agreed that education is essential for girls to get better marriage prospects, 13.25% have stated that education is essential for girls to gain knowledge, reading and writing, 1.50% have mentioned other reasons for girls’ education and it is not applicable to 30.75% of the respondents as they have felt that education is not essential for girls.

45. On their visits to hospitals and health centres, it is observed that at the time of their ill health, 81.25% of all the respondents are visiting to public or government hospitals, 4.0% are visiting to private hospitals, 6.25% are visiting to private clinics and 8.50% are following holy remedies or home or herbal remedies. Though, majority of the respondents are visiting to different hospitals, still it is noted that a few of the respondents still believe in holy remedies or home remedies and herbal remedies.
46. Among the total respondents, 10.50% of the respondents have expressed that there is higher attitudes from doctors towards the respondents, 67.75% have felt that they have equal attitudes from doctors, 13.25% of the respondents are facing inferior attitudes from doctors and it is not applicable to 8.50% of the respondents as they are not visiting to hospitals and following holy or home or herbal remedies.

47. Few of the respondents are aware about more than one type of self-employment or income generating activity. Particularly, as stated by all the respondents, 15.75% of the respondents are aware about candle making, 23.50% are aware about tailoring and embroidery, 5.50% are aware about Agarbathi making, 6.75% are aware about pickle and papad preparation, 8.25% are aware about basket weaving, 12.75% are aware about preparation of confectionary, bakery items, etc, 11.25% are aware about animal husbandry, poultry, etc, 5.0% are aware about making of paper plates, envelopes, etc and 4.0% are aware about such other income generating and self-employment activities. It shows that a great majority of the respondents are aware about one or other self-employment activities.

48. 10.75% of the respondents are aware about candle making, 23.50% are aware about tailoring and embroidery, 5.50% are aware about
Agarbathi making, 6.75% of the respondents are aware about pickle and papad preparation, 8.25% are aware about basket weaving, 12.75% of the respondents are aware about preparation of confectionary, bakery items, etc, 11.25% are aware about animal husbandry, poultry, etc, 5.0% are aware about making of paper plates, envelopes, etc, 4.0% of the respondents are aware about such other income generating and self-employment activities and 23.25% of the total respondents are not aware about any of the above stated income generating activities or self-employment activities. It shows that a great majority of the respondents are aware about one or other self-employment activities.

49.34.25% of all the respondents have fully agreed that self-employment give economic security, 37.25% have agreed to a greater extent that self-employment give economic security and the remaining 28.50% have not agreed to the same.

50.26.50% of the total respondents have fully agreed that there is change in social status, 57.0% have stated that there is change in social status to a greater extent and only 16.50% have not agreed to the same. It shows that along with increase in income and economic security, the social status of Devadasis is also changed due to self-employment or income generating activities.
51. 48.00% of all the respondents have agreed to greater extent that there is change in their self-esteem and self-confidence due to self-employment, 38.75% have also fully agreed to the same and the remaining only 13.25% of the respondents have agreed that there is no change in their self-esteem and self-confidence due to self-employment or income generating activities. To sum up, it can be stated that there is change in self-esteem or self-confidence due to self-employment among Devadasis.

52. 37.75% of the respondents have fully agreed that they have gained economic power and independence from self-employment, 53.50% have agreed to a greater extent that they have gained economic power and economic independence and the remaining only 8.75% have not gained any economic power and economic independence from self-employment.

53. 78.0% of the respondents have fully agreed that their income earned from self-employment added subsidiary income to their families, 19.25% have agreed to greater extent that their income from self-employment added subsidiary income to their families and the remaining 2.75% have not agreed to the same. It is summarized that, income earned from self-employment or income generating activities has added as subsidiary income to their families.
54. 38.75% of the respondents have fully agreed that they have gained self-confidence from self-employment or income generating activities, 48.00% have agreed to a greater extent that they have got increased their self-confidence and only 13.25% of the respondents have not agreed to the same.

55. 41.25% of the total respondents have fully agreed that there is effective use of leisure time, whereas the remaining majority that is, 58.75% have agreed to a greater extent that their leisure time is effectively used due to self-employment.

56. Majority that is, 58.0% of the total respondents have agreed that the income earned from the self-employment is not helping them to get rid of poverty, only 16.25% of the respondents have fully agreed that their income from self-employment helps to get rid of poverty and the remaining 25.75% have agreed to a greater extent that the income earned from self-employment helps them to get rid of poverty.

57. Only 22.00% of all the respondents have fully agreed that income earned from self-employment helps them to lead independent life, 38.00% have agreed to greater extent to the same and 40.00% have not agreed to the same. The income from self-employment varies from occupation to occupation and even family size of the respondents is also varied. Hence, it may not become possible for
the few of the respondents to lead an independent life from the income earned through self-employment.

58. Only 13.25% of all the respondents have fully agreed that there are more opportunities for self-employment, 41.00% have agreed to a greater extent to the same and 45.75% of the respondents have not agreed to the same.

59. 65.75% of the respondents have fully agreed that they are getting financial support from financial institutions, 24.00% of the respondents have agreed to a greater extent to the same and only 10.25% have stated that they are not getting any financial assistance from financial assistance for the self-employment in which they are engaged.

60. 35.75% of the total respondents have fully agreed that they are earning good profits and rewards, 48.00% of the respondents are earning good profits and rewards to a greater extent and only 16.25% are not earning good profits and rewards from their self-employment.

61. All the respondents have attended and participated in self-employment training organized by various agencies such as Government Departments, Karnataka State Women Development Corporation (KSWDC), NGOs, etc.
62. 53.25% of the respondents have gained self-employment training from Government Departments or Karnataka State Women Development Corporation, 43.25% have gained training from NGOs and Banks and 3.50% of the respondents have gained training from other such agencies.

63. On the duration of self-employment training, 39.00% of all the respondents have gained training of one week or less period, 37.25% have gained training for a period of fortnight and 23.75% have gained training for one month from the different agencies mentioned above. It is highlighted that the period of training to majority of the respondents is lower as they have gone for training for less than 15 days.

64. Only 21.00% of all the respondents have gained full expertise and skills from the self-employment training, 49.50% have gained partial skills for self-employment and 29.50% have not gained adequate knowledge essentially needed for self-employment. As majority of the respondents have not gained adequate skills and partial expertise in self-employment, it is essential to impart complete expertise in self-employment in self-employment training.

65. Only 61.50% of all the respondents are members of Self-Help Groups, whereas 38.50% of the respondents are not members of Self-help Groups.
66. On the assistance gained from Self-Help Groups, it is noted that many of the respondents have gained more than one type of benefits or assistance from Self-Help Groups and few of the respondents are not members of Self-Help Groups and as such, they have not availed any of such assistance or benefits from Self-Help Groups. Particularly, 30.75% of the respondents have gained financial assistance from Self-Help Groups, 44.00% have gained social contacts from Self-Help Groups, 8.25% have gained other types of assistance or benefits from Self-Help Groups and it is not applicable to 38.50% of the respondents as they are not members of Self-Help Groups.

67. Many of the respondents have gained more than one type of benefits or assistance from Devadasi Rehabilitation Programme. Particularly, 31.0% of the total respondents have gained training in income generating activities, 26.75% have gained financial assistance from DRP, 11.50% have gained housing facilities, 33.25% have formed Self-Help Groups with the help of DRP, 8.0% have gained other benefits or assistance from DRP and 11.0% have not gained any types of benefits or assistance from DRP. It can be concluded that, Devadasi Rehabilitation Programme is playing significant role in economic empowerment of Devadasis and indirectly helping to increase the social status of Devadasis.
68. 71.50% of all the respondents are members of Mahila Abhivruddhi Mattu Samrakshana Samiti (MASS), whereas 28.50% of the respondents are not members of MASS.

69. On the participation of respondents in the activities of MASS, 46.50% of the respondents are increasing awareness against Devadasi practice through MASS, 5.50% are helping Devadasi rehabilitation programmes of MASS, 15.75% are solving the problems of Devadasis, 3.75% are engaged or participating in other activities of MASS and it is not applicable to 28.50% of the respondents as they are not members of MASS.

70. The different problems and challenges faced in effective implementation Devadasi Rehabilitation Programme (DRP) and Mahila Abhivruddhi mattu Samrakshana Samiti (MASS) as observed by the respondents revealed that, 28.75% of the respondents have stated that there is limited area of these programmes and association, there is scarcity of adequate Government finance as expressed by 27.50% of the respondents, 13.00% of the respondents have remarked that there is lack of interest among Devadasis on these programmes and association, 24.0% have mentioned that there is lack of awareness among Devadasis about these programmes and association and 6.75% of the respondents have also given other problems and difficulties.
71. On their suggestions to eradicate Devadasi practice in society, a few of the respondents have given more than one suggestion to eradicate Devadasi practice in society. Particularly, 45.75% of the respondents have emphasized for female education to eradicate Devadasi practice in society, 37.75% have suggested for mass awareness in society to eradicate Devadasi practice and 18.25% have also given other suggestions to eradicate Devadasi practice in society.

### 7.3. Discussion and Conclusion:

It has been already discussed that, totally 400 Devadasis were surveyed to collect the primary data and of which 250 are living in villages and 150 are living in Bijapur city and towns. Majority of the respondents are of middle or old age and it shows that, Devadasi practice is slowly disappearing as there is decrease in dedication of young girls. As observed, majority of the Devadasis are illiterates or low-educated and due to lower education, their parents are believe in myths associated with Devadasi practice.

The family size of the respondents shows that the Devadasis are living in small or middle families, which is due to social exclusion of Devadasis in society. Even many of the Devadasis are living single and without marriage. Annual income of the families of the Devadasis
disclosed that great majority of the respondents are living in lower income or middle income groups. It shows that a considerable number of the respondents are poor. Due to poverty, an overwhelming majority of the respondents are living in Kachcha houses.

It is highlighted that of all the respondents, a great majority of the respondents are from scheduled castes, which revealed that Devadasi practice is more prevailed among scheduled castes. Apart from their religious works called ‘Joga’, these Devadasis are engaged in other occupations like seasonal employment and self-employment. All the respondents are engaged in self-employment or income generating activities. But, the family occupation of majority of the respondents depicted that, their families are still engaged in caste based occupations or working as agricultural labourers.

Though majority of the respondents are married and living with husband, still nearly half of the respondents are living single, divorced, separated, alienated or even widows. Majority of the respondents have both male and female children and only a few of the respondents don’t have children. It is surprising to note that, almost respondents were dedicated to temples at their early age or childhood, whereas only a few of the respondents are dedicated during their young age.
In Karnataka and in Bijapur district in particular, Devadasi, Basavi and Jogini are more compared to Mathamma, dancing girls, etc. For their livelihood, to a greater extent the Devadasis are depending on religious work, that is ‘Joga’ or praying gods on behalf of their devotees. For which, the devotees are paying to Devadasis. Few of the Devadasis charge a fixed fees, whereas majority of the respondents are not expecting fixed charges, but the devotees are paying to Devadasis. It is highlighted that the Devadasis have shown their discontent on the charges, which they are getting as lower compared to the charges levied by others.

Majority of the Devadasis are suffering different physical as well as mental health problems. Particular health problems revealed that, reproductive health problems, menstrual disorders, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, etc. The psychological health problems include, nervous disorders, anxiety, insomnia, etc. Though the Government has passed legislation to ban Devadasi practice through Karnataka Devadasi (Prohibition of Dedication) Act, 1982 Rules 1987 and Amendment 2010, still a great majority of the Devadasis are not aware about such law. Parents’ wish, heredity, custom of Devadasi in family, social pressure, etc. are major reasons for dedicating the respondents to temples.

It is surprising to note that though they are suffering as Devadasis, still a few of the respondents have dedicated their children as Devadasis.
It shows that, still they believe in Devadasi practice. Absence of father and dire poverty are the major reasons for such dedication to temples. It is clearly shown that due to education of their children, their children are not dedicated as Devadasis. Hence, it can be concluded that education helps to eradicate social evils like Devadasi.

The social activities of the Devadasis revealed that, they are members to Self-Help Groups, Mahila Mandals and Cooperative society. Even few of these Devadasis are also office bearers to these societies and groups. Television and Radio are most power means of communication and entertainment for majority of the Devadasis as they are regularly using the same and television is owned by majority of the respondents at their houses. The Devadasis are also engaged in meetings, demonstrations, rallies, exhibitions, etc. Though majority of the respondents are satisfied or satisfied to a greater extent in their social life, it is noted that still most of the respondents are not at all satisfied in their social life and this may be due to social stigma associated with Devadasi practice in society.

The Devadasis are getting equal or higher status in their families, but on the other hand, majority of the Devadasis are not getting higher status in society. It shows that, the Devadasis are suppressed and depressed in society. As such, the Devadasis have remarked that they are exploited and discriminated in society. Though getting equal status or
higher status in families, majority of the respondents are also facing problems of domestic violence such as physical attacks, verbal abuse, humiliation, mental depression, suppression, etc. Only few of the Devadasis are not facing any of such problems in their families. Even many of the respondents are facing negative attitudes such as abuse, neglect, suppression and violent attitudes from their husbands and only few of the respondents have positive attitudes from their husbands.

Though Devadasis are called as ‘Servants of God’ and performing religious worship on behalf of their devotees, still they are not having higher or equal status in society and they are treated as evils and are also neglected in society. As such, considerable numbers of the respondents are not participating in social activities. The income of nearly half of all the respondents is not sufficient to meet their family needs and requirements and to bridge the gap of expenses with income, the respondents are engaged in self-employment or income generating activities and a few of the respondents are also reducing their expenses or borrowing loans.

Majority of the respondents are getting monthly pension under Devadasi Rehabilitation Programme (DRP) and a few of the respondents are not getting the same due to lower age or lack of awareness and more official formalities. It is found from the present study that Devadasi
practice and poverty have become major obstacles to the Devadasis to continue their education. Due to suppression, discrimination, exploitation, etc in society, a great majority of the respondents are feeling inferior or frustrated in their life.

Even though the Devadasis are deprived from education in their life, they have supported for female education. It shows that the Devadasis have realized the significance of education in the life of females. Marriage, good employment and knowledge with reading and writing skills are the major aims of education as stated by the respondents. Even few of the respondents have also not supported female education. As discussed above, majority of the Devadasis are poor and neglected in society and as such, during their ill health, they visit public or government hospitals to get rid of their ill health. A few of the respondents are also getting herbal remedies or holy remedies and home remedies. Still a few of the respondents are facing inferior attitudes of doctors at hospitals.

The study disclosed that many of the respondents are aware in more than one type of self-employment or income generating activities. The particular income generating activities in which the respondents have gained expertise include, Candle Making, Tailoring, Embroidery, Agarbathi Making, Pickle and Papad preparation, Basket Weaving, Preparation of Confectionary, Bakery items, etc, Animal Husbandry,
Poultry, Making of Paper Plates and such other income generating activities. As such, majority of the respondents have agreed that there is economic security from these income generating activities. There is also change in status and respect due to their involvement in self-employment as stated by the Devadasis. Change in self-esteem, self-confidence, economic power, economic independence, etc are the benefits gained from self-employment and income generating activities as expressed by the respondents. Hence, income generating activities are playing significant role to get rid of poverty of the Devadasis and also to lead independent life.

The collected primary data revealed that, all the Devadasis were participated in self-employment training or training in income generating activities. Such training is mainly imparted by the Government, Karnataka State Women Development Corporation (KSWDC), NGOs and banks. The duration of such training is less than fortnight period. As the training period is smaller, majority of the respondents have gained only partial knowledge and only few of the respondents have gained full expertise.

Majority of the Devadasis have also formed Self-Help Groups or joined Self-Help Groups. Social contacts and financial assistance to extend their income generating activities or self-employment are the major
benefits gained by the Devadasis from Self-Help Groups. The Devadasis have also gained many benefits under Devadasi Rehabilitation Programme (DRP) such as financial assistance to start income generating activities, training in income generating activities and self-employment, formation of Self-Help Groups and housing facilities, etc.

It is observed from the study that a great majority of the respondents are also members of Mahila Abhivruddhi mattu Samrakshana Samiti (MASS) and they are also actively participating in different activities of MASS. Basically, the Devadasis are organizing mass awareness on the eradication of Devadasis, solving problems of Devadasis and making efforts to rehabilitate Devadasis under MASS. Still, the Devadasis have found few of the problems to execute the programmes under MASS and such problems include lack of awareness among Devadasis, scarcity of Government finance, limited area of the programme, negligence among Devadasis, etc. Female education and mass awareness are suggested by the Devadasis for complete eradication of Devadasi practice in society.

7.4. Suggestions from the Study:

Following suggestions are made from the present study:

1. It is suggested to promote marriage of Devadasis by providing incentives to those who come forward to marry the Devadasis.
2. It is suggested to increase awareness of the masses, who visit the temples by displaying Boards and banners on ‘Prohibition of Dedication to Temples in the name of Devadasis’ and Punishment against such dedication should be mentioned in such Boards.

3. The leaders of religious communities and Panchayats should take lead to eradicate Devadasi practice in their own communities.

4. It is suggested to the Government and NGOs to provide rehabilitation to Devadasis by providing housing facilities, self-employment training, financial assistance to start self-employment, promotion of Self-Help Groups, etc.

5. Special health camps must be organized near temples, where Devadasis are living so as to provide free health check-up and treatment for the ill health of Devadasis.

6. It is essential to organize Counseling and Guidance Centres for the Devadasis by NGOs to address their psychological problems.

7. It is suggested to increase awareness of devotees on ‘The Karnataka Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act 1982, Rules 1987 and Amendment 2010’ in villages nearby temples, where there are more dedications.

8. Promotion of Associations or Organizations of Devadasis such as MASS, is essential to rehabilitate them and also create awareness against Devadasi among common people.
9. The awareness of Devadasis should be increased in legislations to prohibit domestic violence, gender based discrimination, exploitation, etc.

10. The Devadasis must have to increase their self-confidence and this should be made by initiating and starting self-employment or income generating activities. For this purpose, the Government should give necessary training along with financial assistance to Devadasis.

11. The problems and challenges of Devadasi Associations such as MASS and rehabilitation programme such as DRP should be solved by providing adequate finance assistance and skilled personnel.

12. Female education should be increased especially in rural areas so as to curb dedication of Devadasi practice in society.

13. It is suggested to promote the formation of Self-Help Groups by Devadasis and also promote income generating activities by groups of Devadasis through Self-Help Groups.

14. The essential facilities such as housing, health, food security, etc. should be given to Devadasis located at different places in Karnataka.