SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The present study on Quality of life; A comparative study of Kerala and Tamil Nadu evolved in order to obtain holistic picture of both economic and social aspects of life in the rural areas of Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Quality of life is a relative term. There is no commonly accepted definition for the term quality of life and neither there are any universally accepted indicators of quality of life. With this background, it was decided to study quality of life mainly to identify a set of indicators which best explain the quality of life of the people. In order to assess the quality of life, the analysis was carried out at village level, household level and individual level. In this study, quality of life is considered as a function of Physical, Social and Perceived dimensions. In the Physical dimensions, the items which can be physically observed are considered such as types of house (Pucca, Kutcha etc.) availability of toilet, electricity and location, source of drinking water etc. In social dimensions, the educational attainment, occupation, awareness, attitude etc. are considered. In perceived dimension, the opinion about, income, occupation, workplace family and children and overall quality of life are captured in a rating scale (very happy, fairly happy and unhappy). On the other hand, village level availability of basic facilities such as health, education, housing and household amenities, infrastructure, transport and communication are also analysed in order to have an idea on quality of life considering the area level availability of these facilities. For eg. number of primary schools, PHCs, bus stand, common taps, telephone connections etc. At household level, the distance from the house to nearest primary school, PHC etc. are analysed along with the opinion about the quality of functioning and major problems. eg: The Public Distribution System, Govt. educational institutions, PHCs etc. The approach of the study was on availability, accessibility and quality of (AAQ analysis) functioning of these basic items influencing quality of life. Availability includes total number (for eg: Primary
School), accessibility is, distance from the house to a particular facility and quality means, opinion (problems with the functioning of each of the items). The unit of analysis is households and for area level, villages are the unit of analysis.

The main objective of the study is to identify the basic indicators of quality of life related to health, education, housing, household amenities, infrastructure, transport and communications and perceived indicators on quality of life reflected in occupation, work place, income, family and children as well as overall life. The objectives also include studying the degree and variation of distribution pattern of quality of life indicators in space with their spatial differentiation and reasons there off. Also the study looked into the correlation between indicators of each category of study and the distribution pattern of quality of life indicators in respect to overall development of the study area.

The study mainly depends on primary data collected form two southern states, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. 24 villages (12 each) are selected from 4 districts (2 each in Kerala and Tamil Nadu). The districts are selected based on the number of registered factories and also considering the percentage of urban population to total population. From each district, 2 taluks are selected using a composite index of adult female literacy, density of population per sq. km. and percentage of population engaged in non agricultural activities as a percentage to main workers. For the selected taluks, using same indicators, village level index is calculated for all inhabited villages and from each selected taluks, 3 villages (developed, less developed and least developed) are identified based on this index. The primary survey is conducted on these 24 villages. From each of the selected villages, 15 households are selected using stratified random sampling technique to make a total of 360 households for the area under study. A detailed questionnaire after the pre-test was used to collect information from the selected households.
The study is mainly divided into 6 chapters. Chapter I is introduction, includes statement of problem, objectives, sources of data and maps, literature survey, definition of the term quality of life, various studies on quality of life and comparative analysis of various studies on quality of life.

Chapter II is on methods and materials. In this chapter criteria used to select states, districts, taluks and villages, brief description of the selected states, districts, methodology adopted in sample selection, list of quality of life indicators, indicators selected at household level, individual level and village level are listed. This chapter also includes methodology adopted for the study. And describes physical and human aspects of selected states and districts.

Chapter III is on health and education. In this chapter, the analysis is carried out both at the villages level and also at household level. At village level, availability in terms of quantity is analysed and at household level, accessibility and quality of function are analysed in detail. Based on the availability of health and educational facilities the villages are ranked and their distribution patterns highlighted.

The first part of the chapter deals with health and the second part is on education. In both sections, the availability of government and private health educational facilities are studied in detail. The problems and quality of services provided by government health / educational institutions are analysed separately in order to have an idea of the government's responsibility to provide basic health and educational facilities in the area under study.

Chapter IV is on housing and household amenities. In this chapter, the framework adopted in previous chapter such as village level and household level analysis is carried forward. Types of houses, tenancy, size of the house, room density, privacy, toilet, electricity, source and location of drinking water,
household utility items etc, are analysed in order to assess the quality of life in relation to housing and household amenities.

Chapter V is Infrastructure, Transport and Communication (ITC). In this chapter each of the three indicators are dealt separately both at for village and household level. In the category of infrastructure, the items such as PDS, market, streetlights, approach roads etc. are included are in the category of transport, availability of bus stop, bus service and other public transport facilities such as jeep/tempo, ferry services etc. are considered for analysis. Communication mainly includes postal services and telephones (telephone includes both private and PCOs).

Chapter VI is on Quality of Life. In this chapter 32 indicators are selected from 4 categories such as health and education (11), housing and household amenities (10), infrastructure, transport and communication (6) and perceived indicators on quality of life (5) for detailed analysis. Composite ranks for each categories are worked out and the villages are grouped into 4 categories such as very high, high, medium and low. The distribution pattern is analysed with the help of simple statistical tools such as mean, standard deviation, coefficient of variation and range. The correlation matrix is used to study the correlation between the indicators.

The Index of availability of village level health care facilities shows, that it is best available in Sirumugai village of Coimbatore district. It is noticed that in all villages of Kerala, it is almost equally distributed, the range is 12, where as in Tamil Nadu, the distribution is unequal and the range is 26. Pudukkottai is the less developed district in Tamil Nadu and all the villages in this district attained very lower index. For Kurumpundi and Kallampatti the index value is zero. In Kerala, the less developed villages of less developed taluks attained a better index. The less developed villages in less developed district Wayanad, are in a better position, compared to developed villages of developed district.
in Coimbatore of Tamil Nadu. Velayudan Palayam is developed village in Avinashi (developed taluk of Coimbatore) and the value of index for this villages is 10, where as Panamaram and Thondenad are the less developed villages of less developed taluks of Wayanad district. The index values for these two villages are 19 and 16 respectively.

The villages in less developed taluks of Wayanad district (Manathavady) have hospitals facilities. The of two villages Karuma Palayam and Vadugan Palayam in Avinashi taluk (developed taluk) of Coimbatore district do not have any hospitals.

In Kerala, most of the villages have PHCs, clinics and hospitals. In Tamil Nadu it is noticed that, only sub PHCs cater to most of the health needs of the people. Consistent governmental intervention and people's awareness on health care needs are important in providing health care facilities. In Kerala it is noticed that, Town Improvement Committee (TICs) set up by the princely state of Tranvacore to look after health and sanitary conditions, was continued by the successive governments formed during the linguistic re-organistion of the princely states. Successive Marxist or Congress Governments (normally coalition of many parties known as LDF or UDF) followed this up. Also Christian missionaries were active in the filed of health and education. This also played a catalytic role in improving the health status of Kerala. Also community based organisations such as Nair Service Society (NSS) runs several hospitals in various parts of Kerala. Similarly active role was also played by Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP), a people's science movement in health awareness campaign through its publication 'Sastra Keralam' and also organising health camps and health parliament etc.

The availability of basic educational facilities are best developed in Puthuvype village, and least developed in Kallampatti village. Villages in Kerala obtained the first twelve ranks (except Muttil South). This also shows that the villages
in less developed district of Kerala are better in educational facilities, compared to the developed villages in Coimbatore and Pudukkottai. In Kerala, the range is 31 and in Tamil Nadu it is 38 in case of index for availability of basic educational facilities.

In Pudukkottai district, 36.7 percent of head of the households are illiterate and it is 2.2 percent in Ernakulam district. The Graduates and Post Graduates are higher in Wayanad compared to Coimbatore. 14.4 percent of households in Coimbatore district have 3-4 children school dropped out studies in Primary classes and it is 6.7 percent in Wayanad. The main reasons for school dropouts in Coimbatore and Pudukkottai are poverty and in Kerala it is lack of interest and loosing interest in studies. Kerala is one of the states with high per capita expenditure on education, higher teacher pupil ratio, and less number of schools with single teachers, and schools are located at lower distance with better public transport networks compared to Tamil Nadu. Irrespective of all these facilities, loosing interest in studies is the reason for the dropouts is a matter to be considered seriously by the policy makers and educationists in the state.

In Ernakulam district, 42.2 percent of the households, and in Wayanad 20.0 percent of the households are located at a distance of less than 2 kms from secondary / high schools and in Pudukkottai it is 2.2 percent. In Pudukkottai district, schools are mainly located in urban areas and high schools have not yet reached to many of the rural areas.

The education offered by most of the Govt. Institutions is very poor in quality both states. It is very poor for 44.4 percent of households in Pudukkottai and 25.5 percent for Coimbatore. In Kerala, it is 14.6 percent for Ernakulam and 21.1 percent for Wayanad. In Kerala, the major problems with Govt. Institutions are student politics and continuous strike. In Tamil Nadu, the major problems are low educational standards, lack of motivation and poor
mobilisation capacity of teachers to retain students. Since the teachers are not able to mobilise students, the dropouts rates are high in Tamil Nadu. In Kerala, student politics and strikes should be strictly banned and Government should ensure that teachers provide quality education rather than simply performing the duties.

In the field of education, performance of Kerala is well known. Kerala was declared as a totally literate state on 18th April 1991. Few studies highlight that, these neo-literate who emerged out of this campaign, due to the lack of follow up, became illiterates. Kerala’s educational sphere is also supplemented by tutorial and parallel colleges. These institutions provide formal education to several lakh students and also provide employment to several youngsters as teachers. These institutions are widely spread in rural areas and cater to the educational needs of a large number of students especially in rural areas of Kerala.

Next to health and education, housing and household amenities are studied in detail. According to 1991 census data, in Kerala 24.9 percent of the households were in Kutcha houses and in Tamil Nadu it was 36.4 percent. 34.1 percent of households in Kerala were without toilet, electricity and safe source of drinking water, and for Tamil Nadu it was 15.3 percent. In Kerala the main source of drinking water is ‘well’ and it is not included in the safe source of drinking water. The percentage of households with toilet and electricity is also high in Kerala compared to Tamil Nadu.

The index of housing and household amenities highlights that, Challanam village in Ernakulam is best developed in this regard and Kallampatti, village in Pudukkottai district in Tamil Nadu is least developed. Here also it is noticed that, the villages in Kerala attained the first twelve ranks. The index value for developed villages of developed taluk in Coimbatore district is lower than that of least developed villages of less developed taluk of Wayanad district.
In Ernakulam district, 53.3 percent households are in pucca houses and it is 50.0 percent in Coimbatore district. In Wayanad, it is 25.6 percent and the Pudukkottai it is 6.7 percent. 52.2 percent of the households in Pudukkottai district are in Kutcha type houses and it is 10.0 percent in Ernakulam district. Majority of the households are in their own houses. In Pudukkottai district 33.3 percent of the households have covered floor area of less than 500 sq. ft. and on the other hand 31.1 percent of the households in Ernakulam district have 1100 – 1400 sq. ft. covered floor area. In most of the selected villages of Kerala it is noticed that the houses are bigger in size with separate compound wall. The numbers of living rooms are also high in Ernakulam and Wayanad. 14.4 percent of households in Ernakulam district have 4-5 rooms and it is 8.9 percent for Coimbatore, for Wayanad it is higher than Coimbatore 10.0 percent and for Pudukkottai it is only 5.6 percent. In Wayanad district 5.6 percent of households have more than 8 rooms and it is only 3.3 percent for Coimbatore. This also shows that, the number of rooms available in most of the villages in Wayanad is higher than the villages in Coimbatore district.

In Coimbatore district, 21.1 percent of the households, and 52.2 percent of the households are without kitchen and bathroom. In Wayanad, these percentages are 4.4 and 37.8 respectively.

In Wayanad and Ernakulam, it is noticed that the major source of drinking water is net covered ‘wells’, few also use uncovered wells for drinking purposes. In Coimbatore the main source of drinking water is tap, mostly public tap and in Pudukkottai it is handpump and pond. In census data, wells are not considered as the safe source of drinking water supplies. Actually these wells are covered with net and periodically disinfected. In most of the selected villages of Kerala, it is noticed that the households have the habit of boiling drinking water. They normally drink boiled ‘jeera’ (cumin seed) water and it is a common practice throughout Kerala.
In Coimbatore 17.8 percent of the households have source of drinking water within the houses, it is 24.4 percent for Ernakulam and 7.8 percent for Wayanad. In Ernakulam and Wayanad it is noticed that, majority of the households have the source of drinking water within the premises of the house and mostly it is outside the premises in Coimbatore and Pudukkottai districts. In the entire study area, in 28.9 percent of households, the source of drinking water is 200 –300 meters away from the premises of the house and for 53.3 percent of the households it is more than 300 metres.

In Pudukkottai district, not even a single household has toilet. 65.6 percent of households in Coimbatore, 5.6 percent Ernakulam and 27.8 percent Wayanad are without toilet. Very few households in Pudukkottai have household utility items such as pressure cooker, iron box, television, refrigerator etc. 37.8 percent of households have television in Coimbatore and it is 26.7 percent in Ernakulam district. On the other hand, 12.2 percent of the households in Coimbatore have refrigerator and it is 16.7 percent in Wayanad district. This we can say that, even in the less developed villages of Kerala, the households have most of the household utility items, refrigerator / television etc.

Next to housing and household amenities, the study focussed on Infrastructure, Transport and Communication (ITC). Even though each of these items are dealt separately, a common index for ITC is calculated using best representative indicators from all the 3 categories. The index of ITC shows that, Puthuvype village of Ernakulam district is the best developed village, and Kallampatti vilalge of Pudukkottai is the least developed village in this front. As in other indices, here also the village in Kerala obtained the first twelve ranks except Muttil South.

In Pudukkottai and Coimbatore district, majority of the households have kutcha approach road to their houses and in Ernakulam and Wayanad, it is pucca roads. Majority of the households in all the districts opined that the
street lights in the area never functioned and in Coimbatore 43.3 percent of the households opined that street lights in their area occasionally functioned. Public Distribution System is nearer for the households in Coimbatore and Ernakulam district. In Wayanad, majority of the household could avail this facility in less than 2 kms. and it is 3 – 4 kms in Pudukkottai. The major problem associated with PDS in Coimbatore, Ernakulam and Wayanad is poor quality of rice and in Pudukkottai, it is non-availability of kerosene. Bus stops are available in less than 1 km for 97.8 percent of households in Ernakulam and 82.2 percent in Wayanad. In Coimbatore it is 35.6 percent and for Wayanad it is 6.7 percent. Majority of the households in Ernakulam and Wayanad are satisfied with the frequency of public transport and majority of the households are unhappy in Coimbatore and Pudukkottai. In Kerala tempo, / jeep, boat / ferry services support the public transport system. The availability of water transport in few of the selected villages provides better mobility to the people and goods.

The detailed analysis of health, education, housing, household amenities, infrastructure, transport and communication highlights that, the less developed villages (based on the index) in Kerala are better in all these fronts compared to developed villages of Tamil Nadu. The household level analysis of accessibility and quality of services highlights that the facilities are located nearer to most of the villages in Kerala compared to Tamil Nadu. The quality of services such as PDS, postal service, transport etc. are also good in villages of Kerala compared to villages of Tamil Nadu.

An attempt is also made to analyse the distribution pattern of selected quality of life indicators including physical, social and perceived dimensions. 32 indicators are identified and their village level distribution pattern is studied in detail.
A composite rank of indicators is calculated for each category. The composite rank of health and education (11 indicators) shows that, it is high in 6 villages of Ernakulam district and low in 6 village of Pudukkottai district. Majorities of the villages in Wayanad district are in high category and majorities of the villages in Coimbatore district are in medium category. This shows that The villages in Ernakulam district are best developed, villages in Wayanad district are highly developed, villages in Coimbatore district are medium developed and villages of Pudukkottai district are least developed as far as in indicators on health and education are concerned. Similar pattern is emerged in the case of housing and household amenities, infrastructure, transport and communications too. In case of perceived indicators on quality of life, very high categories dominate in the villages of Ernakulam but also has 2 villages of Wayanad and 1 village of Coimbatore. On an average, we can say that most of the villages is from Kerala are either in very high category or high category. Villages from Pudukkottai district dominate low category and in medium category, more villages from Coimbatore district are seen.

Conclusion:

The study helps to conclude that, overall development of the area has a strong influence on quality of life of the people. The villages in Pudukkottai district of Tamil Nadu are less developed with low literacy, low population density and low percentage of people engaged in non-agricultural activities to total main workers. In case of all the quality of life indicators, it is also noticed that the villages in Pudukkottai district are least developed especially Kallampatti and Adanoor. On the other hand, the villages in Ernakulam district are best developed as reflected in high literacy, high population density and high percentage of people engaged in non agricultural activities. The best developed villages in this district taking most of the indicators on quality of life are Puthupype and Challanam.
The of quality of life indicators are observed to be better in the under developed district of Kerala (as Wayanad) than in the developed district of Tamil Tanu (Coimbatore)

The rulers of erstwhile princely state of Travancore gave special importance to education (especially girls education) and health needs of the people. The successive government formed after linguistic re-organisation also followed this up which in the long run helped in improvement of the quality of life in Kerala. Further, the intervention of missionaries, community based organisations such as Nair Service Societ (NSS), Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDP) etc. in the field of health and education, played an important role in improving health and education in the state. Library movements also played a vital role in information dissemination in Kerala. Community mobilisation for a common cause is very common in Kerala which helps in maintaining quality of services of public utility items. People's participation in community based activities through neighbourhood watch groups (locally known as 'Ayal koottam') are very efficient in Kerala.

The hypothesis (H1) is proved correct. The study shows that the villages with easy access and availability of indicators on quality of life form part of very high category of levels of development on health and education, housing and household amenities, infrastructure, transport and communication, and villages with less availability and accessibility always appeared in low category of levels of development on quality life of each category.

The second hypothesis (H2) is accepted. The villages with high percentage of head of the households above matriculation and spouse's education above class 7 are in very high category of levels of development based on quality of life indicators. This is true of villages of Ernakulam district and villages of Pudukkottai district.
The third hypothesis H3 is also proved. The study shows that the villages of Pudukkottai district are least developed with low literacy, low density and low percentage of people engaged in non agricultural activities. In these villages, it is noticed that, all the indicators on quality of life are very low. This shows that the overall social development of the area has a direct relationship with the quality of life of the people.

In this study, the major objectives are achieved by identifying 32 indicators of quality of life from health and education, housing and household amenities, infrastructure, transport and communication and few perceived indicators on quality of life related to occupation, workplace, income, family and children as well as overall life. The study highlights that in villages of Kerala, the indicators are almost equally distributed and in villages of Tamil Nadu they are unequally distributed. Among the indicators of health and education, high positive correlation is observed between head of the household educational attainment with rest of the indicators. This shows that, education is the very indicator in changing quality of life. The educational attainment of spouse also shows high positive correlation with other indicators especially with school dropouts and attitudes towards girls education. A strong positive correlation is observed between availability of school and dropout rates. This shows that, if schools are made available in the neighbourhood the dropouts to a greater extent can be lowered.

Among the category of housing and households amenities, the strong indicators emerged are households living in pucca houses, households with safe source of drinking water within premises and room density of 2 persons per room. Pucca houses show positive and high correlation with availability of drinking water, toilet, electricity and low room density. This shows that, pucca houses explain to a greater extent the availability of basic household amenities, and it can be considered as one of the best indicator to represent
the quality of life in an area as far as housing and household amenities are concerned.

Among the category of infrastructure, transport, and communication, the availability of pucca approach road can be considered as a representative indicator of this category since it shows high positive correlation with rest of the indicators.

Among perceived indicators, work place and working environment emerged as the representative indicators in this category and show high correlation with rest of the indicators.

Recommendations:

The study recommends that, in Kerala, initiatives should be taken to improve the quality of education to reduce dropout rates. The survey indicated that students are loosing interest in studies and it is one of the reasons for high school dropout. Safe drinking water etc. The state should take steps to provide basic health and educational facilities to these villages along with drinking water and electricity. Availability of public transport facilities are poor in Pudukkottai and Coimbatore. Even if the health and educational facilities are available at a distant place availability of transport facilities helps to avail them. Steps should be taken to improve the availability of public transport system in the villages of Tamil Nadu and it is urgently needed in Kallampatti and Adanoor villages.

In Kerala the neighbourhood watch groups locally known as ‘ayal koottam’ are active in monitoring the services of health, education, transport in general and overall life in particular. Such initiatives will help the villages of Tamil Nadu to monitor the functioning of public distribution system, public health centre, public transport etc.
It is recommended that government should provide facilities (for e.g. Tube well, road etc.) and its monitoring and maintenance should be vested on community. This makes the citizens more accountable for public utility items. It is recommended that in very village the communities should form social watch groups and these groups should act as ‘watchdog’ in the village in various fronts.

The study recommends that, even through providing any facility is the responsibility of the Government, its maintenance and properly handling should be vested to responsible citizens through community based organisations of the area. The local residents should be trained to maintain it (both technical and social) and government should slowly withdraw from its maintaine for e.g. road, tub-well etc. At local level initiatives should be taken to mobilise community and awareness generation is very essential. The need to maintain the public utility items should be sensitised to the community.

It is recommended that in villages where the facilities are not available, initiatives should be taken to provide it and in areas where it is available it should be properly maintained and universal distributions of quality of life are very essential in present context.

Micro level planning is very essential for improvement in quality of life. In planning and implementation involvement of beneficiaries and community should be made mandatory. There should be necessary mechanisms to monitor the quality of life of people either by the state or community.

The study also recommends that, in addition to the availability of a service / function, the accessibility and quality of services should be ensured to improve the quality of life.