Chapter – V

SUMMARY, MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS
5.0 SUMMARY

The refugee crisis has been the international concern since the inception of UNHCR. At the global level the issue has been discussed and researched on varied grounds. Similarly this research too is a piece of contribution to the refugees of Sri Lankan Tamils who are in exile in Tamil Nadu for the last 16 years as refugees restricted to living in camps and eking out a meagre existence.

This thesis has got five chapters. **CHAPTER I** - is Introduction. At the outset the introductory part begins with the statement of the problem. The Sri Lankan Refugees in Tamil Nadu are highlighted into four categories of refugees; refugees in camps, refugees outside the camp or non camp refugees, Sri Lankan Nationals and Tamil Militants detained in special camps. Then key terms and definitions are explained. Refugee crisis in the history at the global level explains the various refugee groups; Huguenot refugees, Armenian refugees, Jewish refugees, Bengali refugees and Indochinese refugees. The nature and trends of the major protracted refugee situation countries are given with facts. The root causes for the situation are also furnished. This chapter ends with the root causes for the creation of Sri Lanka Tamils as refugees. The important milestones from the history of Sri Lanka are presented starting with prehistory, ancient history, colonial rule, two important commissions like Donoughmor and Soulbury and ending with various factors like Sinhala Only Act, Standardisation, 1983 riots etc. It finally concludes with reference to peace accords.

**CHAPTER II** deals with the Review of Literature. It includes research studies, books, journal articles, research database, on line information and all other sources available on this subject. To have better understanding of the problem, the conceptual understanding is discussed. The review of literature is categorised and explained in the following manner.
1. Socio-Cultural Dimension
2. Economic Dimension
3. Psychological and Mental Wellbeing
4. Political Dimension
5. Legal Dimension
6. Future Durable Solutions
7. Policy Decisions

Social scientists find refugees as disoriented beings. The refugee mind is in constant confusion. His life is determined by officials of an alien land. His ‘house’ is restricted, his movement monitored and his food rationed. He is an object under the gaze of officials and charity groups, denied even a modicum of privacy. Life is oppressively monotonous. This disintegration of his sense of self is an aspect rarely considered. Therefore social life in camps is slowly deteriorating.

A Research Report, by Multicultural Family Connections Program with funding from Edmonton and Area Child and Family Services through the Early Childhood Development Initiative Edmonton, Alberta gives a cultural approach which is helpful to get integrated.

The different theories such as Push Theory, Pull Theory, Meso Theory, Micro and Macro Theories regarding migration are explained succinctly. With available researches, the researcher is able to bring the literatures from various fields based on the continents: Europe, America, Africa, Australia and Asia with regard to the political dimension. The review of the national and international literature on the housing of refugees has highlighted important issues for further conduct of this research. The international literature and international experience has shown: Homelessness is a potential problem for refugees in some recipient countries; Refugees may have difficulty in gaining
access to public and private housing because of language, cultural and discrimination barriers; Refugees often move to private rental housing, and this housing may not be appropriate for their needs; Overcrowding and low housing standards are a problem in some sections of refugee populations and these conditions may reflect hidden homelessness. It is noted that the sources of family stress during exile is also included. This research also reveals that housing in refugee camps in Tamil Nadu is overcrowded with no proper facilities.

In the dimension of psychological and mental wellbeing, it is noted that sources of family stress during exile include; concern over family members and family completeness, dependence on the government and the government officials, marginalization, stigmatization, and diminished social position, perceptions of social injustice, acculturation, perception and interpretation of current events, helplessness and uncertainty. Most of the researches conclude that durable solution is the best option for the refugees. And finally the refugees should have;

(a) the right to work;
(b) the right to social assistance; and
(c) the right to health protection.

CHAPTER – III carries the Methodology. It explains the objectives, hypothesis, significance, research design, sampling and the area of study. The Pilot study was conducted at Valavanthankottai camp. Based on the pilot study the objectives, the hypotheses are proposed and they are analysed and tested. They are as follows.
OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To understand the life of the refugees in their home country, Sri Lanka.
2. To know their life during transition/crisis.
3. To study the life in the refugee camps in India.
   - To describe the social dimensions of the refugee population; age, gender, family system, marriage, religious practices, social problems etc,
   - To identify the economic dimensions of the refugee population: occupation, job opportunities and income.
   - To understand their cultural dimensions; education, entertainment and media influence, health related concerns etc.
   - To study their psychological problems and concerns.
   - To analyse the political dimensions including the host government assistance to the protection of refugees.
4. To study the role of NGO’s and their activities.
5. To suggest the probable measures for the future.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is a significant association between gender and the monthly income level of the respondents.
2. There is a significant difference between the occupation and the monthly income of the household heads.
3. There is significant difference between income earned by the household heads and camps. (Comparison of monthly income by Camps)
4. There is a significant association between dowry practices in Camps in Tamil Nadu and in Sri Lanka.
5. There is a significant association between the refugees in the camps and the local people in maintaining a cordial relationship.
6. There is a significant association between the family system in camps and the level of social problems.

7. There is no significant difference in the average percentage score in social problems among the various age groups of the respondents.

8. There is no significant difference in the average percentage score in social problems among the various occupational groups of the respondents.

9. There is a significant association between the camp life and the effect of mass media on children.

10. There is a significant association between the location of the camps and the reasons for diseases.

11. There is a significant relationship between gender and psychological problems.

12. There is a significant relationship between the family system and the psychological problems.

13. There is a significant relationship between age groups and psychological problems.

CHAPTER – IV has the Analysis of Data and Interpretation. It has been analysed on the basis of the following four important elements; Life in home country, Life during crisis/transition, Life in host country and Future integration. Based on this analysis, the major findings are arrived at. They are explained further below.
MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The major findings of this study are furnished according to the proceedings that were followed in the data analysis and interpretation.

1. Life in home country
2. Life during crisis/transition
3. Life in host country and
   a) Economic Dimension
   b) Social Dimension
   c) Psychological Dimension
   d) Cultural Dimension
   e) Political Dimension (Government Assistance) and
   f) NGO’s Role
4. Future integration.

GENERAL PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS FOUND IN TAMIL NADU REFUGEE CAMPS

• Among the male population the age group 25-30 gets the highest percentage with 31.5% respondents. Among the female population the age group 41-50 gets the highest percentage with 27.0% respondents. (Table 4)
• The respondents from Hindu religion form 80%, from Christian religion form 18.8% and 1.3% of the respondents are Muslims. (Table 5)
• 35% of the respondents earn Rs.1001-2000 per month. And only 7% of the respondents earn Above Rs.2000 per month, which is very minimal. The unemployed respondents account for 37%. (Table 6)
• Those who have reached India during the first phase between 1983-85 records for 19.0%. The majority (81.0%) of the respondents have reached India as refugees during the second phase in the year 1990’s. (Table 7)
I. LIFE IN HOME COUNTRY - SRI LANKA

- 31% of the respondents came from Vavuniya District, and the least 2.3% of the respondents from Colombo. Among the Male population Vavuniya District has 34.5% of the respondents. Among the Female Population 27.5% of the respondents are from Vavuniya district. From Mannar district the women outnumber men with 22.0% and 4.0% respectively. (Table 8)

- 52.5% of the respondents have completed OL, 32.5% of the respondents are illiterates; 12.3% have completed AL and only 2.8% of the respondents have completed University studies. Among the illiterates Female population is higher than the Male population with 41%. In the camps Female population is higher than the Male population with 3.5%. (Table 9)

- 4 respondents out of 74 respondents from Jaffna district and again 4 respondents out of 52 respondents from Mannar district have done university studies. Two respondents out of 16 respondents from Mullaitivu have completed university studies. One respondent out of 124 respondents from Vavuniya has completed University studies. (Table 10)

- 31.0% of the respondents had agriculture. 23.0% of the respondents had fishing. 20.0% of the respondents had coolie work in Sri Lanka. 1.75% of the respondents had government job. (Table 11)

- The values of land, house, boat, vehicles and cattle differ significantly with district wise while not significant with occupation wise in Sri Lanka. (Table 12)

- 84 of the respondents from Vavuniya District say that they had Land worth Rs.1, 63,761.9. The respondents who had Houses with worth Rs.38, 959.46 account for 74 from the same District. 31 respondents from Vavuniya District had their vehicles worth Rs.25, 259.26. Those who have had other things or goods account for 32 respondents with worth Rs.23125.00. (Table 13)
II. LIFE IN CRISIS/TRANSITION

- A vast majority 94.8% of the respondents say that they have used a Hired Boat to enter India. Those who have come by Flight form 3.5% and very minimum number of respondents (1.8%) have used their own boat. (Table 14)

- 43.3% of the respondents express that they have been placed in Mandapam Camp in the beginning. 33.8% of the respondents have been placed in godowns. (Table 15)

- The most affected people with regard to loss of property are Colombo district people with the Mean value Rs.20, 06,667. These people are from Colombo city. And the next affected people are Trincomalee district people with worth Rs.14, 03,964. (Table 16)

- 36.2 percent of the respondents have said that they have lost their brothers. 30.4 percent of the respondents have expressed that they have lost their uncles. (Table 17)
III. REFUGEE CAMP LIFE IN HOST COUNTRY, TAMIL NADU, INDIA

ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS

- 36.0% of the respondents are engaged in coolie work such as quarry work (cutting stones), construction work, mason etc. And the remaining 37.3% of the respondents are unemployed. The others are engaged with semi-skilled works. Among them 9.0% are tailors. (Table 18)

- 55.4% of the respondents earn Rs.1001-Rs.2000. And only a few 11.6% of the respondents earn above Rs.2000. It is observed that their earning is very low as they cannot claim white-collar jobs. From the teachers 90% of the respondents earn up to Rs.1000. (Table 19)

- Among the employed respondents male respondents are 62% and female respondents are 38%. Only the male respondents (12%) earn above Rs.2000. Nobody from the female respondents earn above Rs.2000. The female population who earn up to Rs.1000 is higher (20%) than the male population (13%). (Table 20)

- On an average men get Rs.592 (Rs.1765 – Rs.1173) more than women in a month. (Table 21)

- The respondents residing in camps, Kottapattu, Mettupatti, Lenavilakku and Naranammalpuram have slightly higher income compared to other camps based on their occupation. (Table 23)
SOCIAL DIMENSIONS

- 82.75% of the respondents follow nuclear family type. 17.25% of the respondents follow joint family. (Table 24)

- 59.3% of the respondents follow exogamy system and 33% of the respondents say that they follow endogamy system. And it is interesting to note that 7.8% of the respondents say that they get married to Indians. (Table 25)

- 68.3% of the respondents say that they have the custom of getting and giving dowry. The remaining 31.8% of the respondents deny getting or giving. (Table 26)

- 59.3% of the respondents say they receive and give dowry range from 1 - 5 Sovereign of Gold. The least would be 11 Sovereign and above with 2.5%. And 14.5% of the respondents don’t give and get dowry in gold at all. (Table 27)

- 64% of the respondents say that they had the custom of getting and giving dowry in Sri Lanka too. (Table 28)

- 64.55% of the respondents feel that social pressure is the reason for early marriage. And another 27% of the respondents express that insecurity is another reason. (Table 29)

- 64.5% of feel that social pressure is the reason for suicide and poverty is another reason with 19.5% and insecurity with 16.5%. (Table 30)

- Mostly, 87.0% of the respondents say that their relationship is smooth with the locals. (Table 31)

- Ranks based on the Weighted Average show that most of the social problems in the camps are (Table 32)
  1. Unemployment
  2. Early Marriage and
  3. School Drop Outs

- Besides the age group Above 60, all other age groups experience social problems. (Table 36)
CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

52.3% of the respondents have expressed no opinion and 41.0% of the respondents say that it created negative impact among the children. The highest percentages (64.0%) of the respondents from the Dam Site Camp say it creates negative impact among the children. (Table 39)

The Assigned Rank for Urban Camps regarding common diseases (Table 40)

Rank – 1: Dysentery
Rank – 2: Viral Fever
Rank – 3: Malaria

The Assigned Rank for the Rural Camps regarding common diseases. (Table 40)

Rank – 1: Dysentery
Rank – 2: Viral Fever
Rank – 3: Small-pox

The Assigned Rank for the Urban Camps with regard to Rare Diseases. (Table 41)

Rank – 1: Tuberculosis
Rank – 2: Cancer
Rank – 3: Heart Problems

The Assigned Rank for the Rural Camps with regard to Rare Diseases. (Table 41)

Rank – 1: Tuberculosis
Rank – 2: Skin disease
Rank – 3: Cancer

- Majority (76.3%) of the respondents have expressed that congestion is the cause for spreading disease in all the camps. It is very high with 94% in Dry Rocky Hill. (Table 42)
- 73.9% of the respondents feel that the diseases prevalent here, were also found in Sri Lanka. (Table 43)
PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS

- The Ranks based on the Weighted Average are as below. (Table 44)
  1. Depression
  2. Deterioration
  3. Dependency

- 57.8% of the respondents from both genders say that the psychological problem is high. (Table 46)

- 57.8% of the respondents say that their psychological problem is high with regard to occupational groups. Those who experience this problem at the medium level is 42.3%. Artists, blacksmiths, coolies, plumbers, teacher and drivers go through psychological problem at a higher level. Farmers, Tailors experience the psychological problem at the medium level. (Table 47)

- 57.8% of the respondents say that those who lead both nuclear and joint family system feel that the psychological problems are at the high level. And 42.3% of the respondents from both family systems say it is only at the medium level. So the refugees are affected by psychological problems irrespective of the family system. (Table 48)

- The respondents with the age group of above 60, 51-60 and 31-40 have significantly lower percentage social score compared with the other age groups. The age groups 25-30 and 41-50 face more psychological problems than the other groups. (Table 50)

- Up to 1000 has significantly higher percentage psychological score compared with the other income groups. So this income group faces more psychological problem. (Table 52)
POLITICAL DIMENSIONS

- It also explains the type of housing in which refugees are live. Naranammalpuram is a go-down type camp, which has got bricks roofing. It is a hall, partitioned with plastic sheets to separate each family. Kottapattu is a special camp, which is urban centred with terraced building. Each family is given a room. All the other camps are of huts nature. (Table 53)
- Camps like Kottapattu and Gummidipoondi fulfil the expectation of the sphere project - One toilet per 50 people in case of conflict situation. All the other camps, Mettupatti, Bhavanisagar, Lenavilakku, Chinnapallikuppam, Naranammalpuram and Sevalur are beyond the standard of Sphere project. It means that one toilet is used by more than 50 people. Lenavilakku, and Chinnapallikuppam camps’ toilets are over used with 153 and 120 persons per toilet. (Table 54)
- 72.0% of respondents from Mettupatti Camp feel that the quality of rice is Very bad. (Table 56)
- 60.3% of the respondents say that the subsidies are not given in time (Table 57)
- 98.8% of the respondents say that the quota for refugee students in Professional course should be continued. The reason is that the then government stopped the quota. (Table 60)
- 60.0% of the respondents say that attendance is taken depending upon the need. (Table 61)
- 82.0% of the refugees have expressed that by checking they are harassed by the authorities. Sometime at mid-night, the officials go and knock at the door and go in for random checking. (Table 62)
FUTURE INTEGRATION

- Ranks based on the Weighted Average. (Table 63)
  1. Unable to take decision
  2. Future is at stake
  3. Expecting Peace would come through in Sri Lanka

CHAPTER – V has the Conclusion and Recommendations. It is concluded that Sri Lankan refugees go through Depression and lot of pains in the camps both mentally, physically and socially. So their future is at stake. The recommendations are forwarded based on the findings.

CONCLUSION

The research findings reveal that among the refugee population of Sri Lankan refugees in Tamil Nadu, most of the refugees had taken refuge in Tamil Nadu for the first time since 1990. They are placed in make shift camps and rice go-downs. Prior to fleeing, they had lived in Sri Lanka representing various districts of North-eastern regions having agriculture and fishing as their prime occupations. In Tamil Nadu refugee camps, their employment opportunities are entirely new to that of the occupation that they had in Sri Lanka. Employment availability differs from camp to camp irrespective of urban and rural camps. Most of the refugees go for coolie work such as whitewashing, cable work, mason, carpentry, load men work, wine shop etc. And a few others are engaged in semi-skilled work; Advertisement board preparation, artist, blacksmith, business, farming, painting, plumbing, tailoring and teaching. Unemployment is a problem and their life is thrown out of gear. 

It is also understood from the research findings that the government is concerned about the welfare of the refugees. Though the monetary benefits are distributed late yet they get all benefits extended by the government. With regard to the education of their children, whatever privilege given to the local
students concerned is also extended to the refugee children up to higher secondary level. The refugees are affected by common diseases, as their tents/huts are narrow and over crowded. Kottapattu, Kumidipoondi are the amps that fulfil the UN / Sphere project standard with regard to toilet use, i.e., one toilet per 50 persons. The other camps like Mettupatti, Bavanaisagar, Lenavilakku, Chinnapallikupam, Narananammlpuram and Sevalur are beyond the standard of UN / Sphere project. It means that one toilet is used by more than 50 people. Lenavilakku and Chinnapallikuppam camps’ toilets are over used with 153 and 120 persons respectively per toilet. As the camp life increases they are attuned to be affected by social and psychological problems. 

As regards their cultural life, child marriage, suicides and school drop outs are of new phenomenon which they ever had in Sri Lanka. They go through psychological agony of depression and dependency. Their future is at risk, though repatriation is the most durable solution in the political arena. Unlike in Canada, European Countries, UK and Australia, India is reluctant to induct or integrate the Sri Lankan refugees into the Indian society as it is bound by the laws concerned. So they are alienated and impoverished socially, economically, psychologically and culturally. As long as the refugees are in Tamil Nadu they need to be protected well as is the case of customary international law. The best solution would be while protecting the refugees, the Indian government can intervene as early as possible and contribute to the peace process and thereby help the nation, Sri Lanka to end the conflict. When the proper time comes refugees could be repatriated.

The indicators of UN / Sphere projects with regard to water facility are 250 people per tap well. It is arrived after the research that Kottapattu, Mettupatti, Gummidipoondi and Sevalur camps fulfil the required taps recommended by the Sphere projects. The other camps like Bavanisagar, Chinnapallikuppam and Naranammalpuram the taps are over used with more than 250 people per tap. Some of the camps have only hand pump not tap.
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Better housing facilities like Kottapattu camp could be made available.
2. Drinking water facility could be connected with the local panchayat integrated drinking water system of Tamil Nadu.
3. Though one toilet per house is ideal, at least one toilet for 25 persons (UN standard) could be made available which would solve the health related issues.
4. Free higher education could be given to the college students in Government and Aided Private Arts and Science Colleges.
5. Admission to MBBS could be resumed.
6. Entrepreneurial skills could be imparted to the graduate students.
7. Tamil Nadu Government can place the refugees where there are more employment opportunities available as found in this research.
8. The Self Help Groups in the camps could be recognised by the Government of Tamil Nadu and provide them with loan facilities.
9. The government official could be merciful while handling the refugees and proper training can be imparted to the officials for better coordination as various departments are involved.
10. Arbitrary arrest of the youth under suspicion can be avoided.
11. The Indian Government could allow the UN organizations and other NGO’s to carry out programmes for the refugees as found elsewhere especially on housing and other activities.
12. There is an urgent need for national law on the status of refugee, as the most refugees in the country fall outside the mandate of the UNHCR.
13. The Government of Tamil Nadu can pass a bill on employment opportunities for the graduate’s students if not in public sector at least in the private sector.
14. There is a need to create a separate tribunal for the refugees in the State concerned.
15. India can amend Refugee Act rather than following the Foreign Act.
FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. There is a need to address the special problems of refugee children and women for further research.
2. Housing facilities need further research.
3. Health related issues need further research.
4. Cross cultural researches need to be explored.
5. New course on forced displacement could be thought of so as to serve the refugees.