FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
This chapter provides an overview and synthesis of major and significant findings and offers relevant suggestions. The chapter highlights the major findings by each competency dimension which has a set of related competencies.

5.1. Findings

On the whole, the research finding points to the fact that NGOs in Tamil Nadu have a long way to go in the process of professionalizing. While it is believed that NGO sector in TN has matured in terms of strategies and suitable response to the social problems, the study suggests that the sector falls short in capabilities. The manpower lacks skills and competencies. In other words, NGO sector is burning out by excessively taking up programmes and not sufficiently looking into and developing its core competencies and strategies for social intervention. In terms of its presence, reach, scope, and type of activities, it is growing and has a significant role in voicing the concerns of the marginalised communities and highlighting the issues of the people. More than ever, the problems are becoming more and more complex and, therefore, there cannot be simple solutions too. The NGO managers certainly do not possess adequate competencies to take on the state and the market. It is to be noted that those above 40 years of age and with more than 10 years of work experience are better in terms
of overall NGO professional competencies. To the contrary, those who have less experience are poor in terms of these competencies. While grass roots NGO managers are better skilled in awareness generation and mobilising the communities, the supportive NGOs such as training, research NGOs are better skilled in campaigning and advocacy works. While those in supportive NGOs are good at knowledge about social issues, those in the grassroots NGOs have better skills in working with communities. It is to be noted that most of the respondents are non-professionals in terms of their educational qualification. The development professionals seem to acquire the competencies skills over a period of years through work experience.

5.1.1. Perception of Vision

NGOs usually have well articulated vision and mission statements that are manifested in the structure and programmes of the organisations. All the activities of NGOs strive to achieve the avowed objectives. Therefore, it is necessary that the NGO personnel understand the vision and mission of the organisation and integrate with their own personal vision so that there is mutual growth and benefit. Understanding of the mission and vision is a prerequisite for taking up efforts that integrate the activities into the over all objectives of the organisation. As many as 40.4% of the respondents say that their capability to encourage the staff to set their own goals is just average while surprisingly 38.8% of them say that they cannot motivate the staff to set their own goals. The same trend is reflected in the ability of the respondents to set specific, measurable goals in consistent with the vision of the organisation. This makes one to conclude that even when the respondents have fairly good knowledge about the vision and mission of the organisation, their
ability to convert the same into specific tasks and encourage their subordinates to set their own vision get a beating. While ranking the different competencies related to 'vision', it is clear that awareness of the organisational objectives gets the first rank but the statement 'encourage staffs to set their own goals consistent with the organisational goals' gets the sixth position in ranking.

**Vision and Age**

There is a correlation between vision and age. The age group above 40 years has better understanding of vision. Those, who have been with the organisation for more number of years, have apparently interiorised the vision, mission and policies of the organisation. Higher the age of the development professionals, higher is their perception of the vision and mission of the organisation.

**Vision and Experience**

60.5% of those above 10 years of work experience have good perception of the vision statements of the organisation, while 68.8% of those below 5 years of work experience say that they are just average in their perception about the vision and mission statements of the organisations. There is significant correlation between experience and perception about the organisational vision. Thus, one can say higher the work experience, higher is the perception of vision of the organisation. Those who have more than 10 years of experience have better understanding of vision and are able to convert the vision into tasks.
Vision and Salary

Conspicuously 100% of those drawing more than Rs.8,000/- of monthly salary say that their understanding of the organisational vision is good. Higher the salary, higher is the perception of vision about the organisation. This also reveals that they are good both at understanding the organisational vision and converting them into output oriented tasks. Those who draw more than Rs.8,000/- must be qualified as well as have more years of experience. This also reveals that only those who like the job and draw job satisfaction from the job will stick on to the job while those new entrants might skip the job in favour of other jobs in other sectors.

Vision and the Type of Organisation

More than sixty per cent of those respondents working at the grassroots NGOs have poor perception of the vision and mission of the organisation. Interestingly, only 35.7% of the respondents working in the supportive NGOs say that they have very poor understanding of the vision, mission statements of the organisation. 41.9% of those respondents from the research organisations say that they have good understanding of vision. Therefore one can say that a great number of people from supportive and consultancy NGOs have good understanding of vision, mission statements of the organisations. This is mainly due to the level of professionalism existing in these organisations as the staffs in these organisations are professionally qualified and trained in their chosen field of expertise.
5.1.2. Perspectives

Perspectives refer to the attitudes and worldview of the respondents. Unlike for-profit organisations, NGOs need to operate within a framework of a worldview and ideology without which the works will become meaningless. Therefore, the perspectives on social issues and the solutions that are offered and the strategies adopted to achieve the solutions are very important for NGO managers. What may distinguish the development worker from other employees is his/her passion for societal transformation based on human rights principles of equity and justice. Therefore their understanding of the key issues that affect the society both locally and globally, the causative factors, and the micro and macro factors influencing the social processes is vital.

The study shows that as many as 45.6% of the respondents do not understand the causes and dynamics of contemporary problems encountered by marginalized sections. In the same way 40.45% of the respondents express that they are not knowledgeable about the critical issues in India and 43.65% of the respondents say that they do not follow the participatory approach in the process of people’s development. It is surprising to note that development professionals who are supposed to have understood about the critical issues of the country and follow the latest development discourses are not sufficiently aware of this. Looking at positively, the competency ‘Follow participatory approach in the process of people’s development’ gets first position among other competencies. However what is surprising is that the competency ‘knowledgeable about the critical issues in India’, gets the last position while ranking the competencies under the category of ‘perspectives’.
Perspectives and Age

More than eighty per cent of the respondents above 40 years are very good in the level of perspectives. 57.7% of those below 30 years say that they are just average with regard to development perspectives and 52.8% of those in the middle age group (31-40) say that they are also average with regard to the perspectives of the organisations. The other statistical analysis also reveals that higher the age group, higher the level of perspectives on development issues. It is also revealed that the age group above 40 years has better development of perspectives.

Perspectives and Experience

More than sixty five per cent (65.1%) of those above 10 years of work experience are very good at development perspectives. 58% of those below 5 years of work experience and 59.4% of those with 6-10 years of work experience say that they are just average with regard to the level of perspectives on social issues. The findings lead to say “higher the work experience, higher is the level of development perspectives”. Those who have more than 10 years of experience have better development perspectives.

Perspectives and Salary

All the respondents (100%) who draw more than Rs.8,000/- of monthly salary say that they are good at development perspectives. Thus, one can say higher the salary, higher the level of perspectives. Those who have monthly wages above Rs.8,000/-, are very good in perspectives.
Perspectives and the Type of NGOs

52.9% of those respondents working at the grassroots are at an average level with regard to perspectives. Interestingly, 26.2% of the respondents working in the supportive NGOs say, that they are very poor in development perspectives. Cutting across different types of organisations, majority of the respondents say that they are average with regard to development perspectives.

Perspectives and Sectoral Activities

Cutting across all the sector-wise differences, only 25-40 percentage of the respondents from all the sectors say that they are good in the development perspectives. 40% of the respondents from all the sectors agree that they are average with regard to their development perspectives. Relatively, a higher percentage of respondents from NGOs working for tribal (39.45%) and dalits (38%) claim to have good development perspectives.

Perspectives and Type of Activities

Those people who work in documentation, campaigning and advocacy are good in perspectives. 61.3% of those from documentation, and 60.5% of those from advocacy NGOs are good at development perspectives. It points to the fact that those who involve in these three types of activities such as documentation, campaigning and advocacy are better informed about societal issues and develop proper perspectives and clarity needed for taking up the issues in favour of the affected people. The respondents who are involved in administering Government programmes and welfare programmes, which are falling in conformity with the ruling class, lack in social perspectives.
5.1.3. Project Planning / Organising

Interiorising the vision and mission of the organisation and developing the right development perspectives should lead to proper implementation of the projects that are a set of activities to achieve some objectives. Therefore, skills in project planning and organising are important for strategising and effective implementation of the programmes. 62.8%, that is the majority of the respondents, are average in project planning / organising skills. While only 35.2% say that they are either good or very good with regard to their ability in project planning / organising, just 2% say that they are either poor or very poor in project planning / organising.

About 23.1% of the total respondents say that they are very good in project planning and organising. It should be a matter of concern that almost half of the respondents have no opinion with regard to project planning/organising competencies. It is heartening to find that the competency ‘evolving suitable concrete intervention strategies (to develop the beneficiaries)’ has found the first place in ranking of the various competencies under the category of project planning. In the same way, it is good to note that working out systems for training and performance evaluation finds the second place, because training of the staff and having a mechanism to periodically evaluate the performance of them is of utmost importance. It is also evident from the finding that capability to articulate the core issues of the people is considered by the respondents to be of importance, because only then they could positively intervene in the development of communities.
Project Planning / Organising and Age

Eighty one per cent of those above 40 years of age are of the view that they are good in competencies related to project planning / organising. 70.7% of those below 30 years say that they are just average in project planning / organising skills and 63.2% of those in the middle age group (31-40) say that they are also average with regard to their capability in project planning / organising. Thus, it can be said that higher is the age group, higher the level of competencies in project planning / organising.

Project Planning / Organising and Experience

It is good to note that 60.5% of those above 10 years of work experience are good in competencies related to project planning / organising. 75.4% of those below 5 years of work experience say that they are at an average level in project planning / organising and 58% of those with 6-10 years of work experience say that they are also average in project planning / organising. 9.3% of those above 10 years of experience, 7% of those below 5 years of experience are poor in project planning / organising. Higher the work experience, higher is the level of competencies in project planning / organising. Those who have more than 10 years of experience are better skilled in project planning / organising.

Project Planning / Organising and Salary

Those who draw monthly wages above Rs.8,000/- have better skills and competencies related to the project planning / organising. Thus, one can say that higher the salary, higher the skills of the respondents in project planning / organising.
Project Planning/Organising and Type of Organisations

Cutting across all types of organisations, around 70% of the respondents say that they are average concerning their ability in project planning and organising.

5.1.4. Directing / Controlling

In any organisation, the manager’s role is to lead a group of people and motivate them so that their level of motivation and dedication is kept high. More so in development organisations that are often working in complex and unrewarding environment and risky context as one is often pitted against the power that be, in the locality, keeping up the morale and team spirit is of utmost importance.

The study shows that as many as 59.6% of the respondents are average in their competencies with regard to directing / controlling functions. While only 31.6% say that they are either good or very good with regard to the functions of directing / controlling, and 8.8% say that they are either poor or very poor in the skills of directing / controlling. As many as 34% of the respondents say, that their capability to evolve systems for facilitating self evaluation of the organization and projects is just average. 45.2% of them say that they cannot evolve systems for facilitating self evaluation of the organizations and projects. This makes one to conclude, that the respondents have fairly good skills in directing / controlling. The ranking of the competency statements reveals that both ‘set up quantitative / qualitative indicators for monitoring and evaluation of the achievement of
objectives’ and ‘keep the stakeholders informed about the progress of the project’ get first rank but the statement ‘evolve systems for facilitating self evaluation of the organization and project’ gets the seventh position in ranking.

**Directing / Controlling and Age**

There is significant correlation between age group and skills in directing / controlling functions. Thus, it can be said, higher the age group, higher is the level of competencies in directing/controlling.

**Directing / Controlling and Experience**

58.1% of those above 10 years of work experience are good in directing/controlling functions. 72.5% of those below 5 years of work experience say that they are just average in their skills in directing/controlling functions and 55.1% of those with 6-10 years of work experience say that they are also average with regard to the skills of the directing/controlling of the organisations. Therefore higher the age group, higher is the level of skills in directing and controlling.

**Directing / Controlling and Salary**

Apparently, 100% of those drawing more than Rs.8,000/- of monthly salary say that they are good in directing / controlling. Only 25 % of those whose monthly remuneration is below Rs.4,000/- are good in directing / controlling and the same trend is reflected with people drawing a monthly salary between Rs.4,000/ and Rs.8,000/-. Thus, one can say higher the salary, higher is the level of skills in directing and controlling.
Directing / Controlling and Types of the Organisations

Fifty nine percent of those respondents working at the grassroots NGOs have an average capability in directing/controlling competencies. 45.1% of those respondents from the research organisations say that they are good at directing/controlling. Therefore, those who work in supportive and research organisations have higher levels of skills in directing and organising.

Directing/Controlling and Sectoral Activities

From the analysis, one can conclude that there is no significant variation with regard to the respondents’ skills in directing and controlling across NGOs involved in different activities. More than half of the respondents involved in different activities fall into the average level in their skills in directing and controlling.

Directing/Controlling Level and Type of Activities

There is no significant variation with regard to the respondents’ skills in directing and controlling and the types of activities. More than 50% of the respondents cutting across different activities are average level in their skills on directing and controlling.

5.1.5. Boundary Management Skills

Boundary management skills are those that are necessary for the implementation of the projects with the community and engaging external stakeholders. These are specific competencies to build good rapport with the communities and stakeholders, influence them, involve them and make them the
real partners of development. As per the findings of the study, 67.6% of the
respondents are only average in the overall boundary management skills. While
only 32.4% say that they are either good or very good with regard to the boundary
management skills and nobody says that they are either poor or very poor.

It is to be noted that the competency ‘have skills in awareness building
among the target groups’ gets first position among other statements, which means
that 31.6% of the respondents have claimed to have good and very good levels of
awareness building skills. This again, points to the fact that many of those seeking
employment in NGO sector are driven by a strong commitment to social change
which calls for awareness building skills. Apparently the statement ‘have skills for
achieving wider impact through external relations with state, private sector and
other associations in civil society (advocacy and negotiation strategies)’ gets the
lost position. This particular skill can be developed only through training,
continuous learning and exposure. 43.6% of the respondents say that they do not
have campaigning skills while 30.8% of them say that they are average in such
skills. This again points to the fact, that there is a lack of adequate skills related to
boundary management skills. This aspect has a lot of implications regarding fund
raising and maintaining good donor relationship which requires strong project
management skills.

**Boundary Management Skills and Other Factors**

Conspicuously, 80% of those drawing more than Rs.8,000/- of monthly
wages say that they are good in boundary management skills. Only 29.6 % of
those whose monthly remuneration is below Rs.4,000/- say that they are good in
boundary management skills and the same trend is reflected for the people
drawing the monthly salary between Rs.4,000/- and Rs.8,000/-. Therefore, one can
say that higher the salary higher the boundary management skills. Other factors
such as age and experience also have positive impact on boundary management
skills like other sets of competencies discussed earlier.

5.1.6. Leadership Competencies

NGOs basically provide leadership to the civil society in articulating the
carens of the people, mobilising and making them socially conscious groups. It
is all the more important that the NGO managers possess leadership competencies
to provide leadership both within the organisation as well as in the society. The
study reveals that seventy four per cent of the respondents are just average in
overall leadership skills. While only 25.6% say that they are either good or very
good with regard to leadership skills; no one says that he she is either poor or very
poor in leadership competencies.

As many as 34.4% of the respondents say that their capability to share
information, advice and suggestions to help others to be more successful is just
average, while surprisingly 43.6% of them say that they do not have the capability
to share information, advice and give suggestions to help others to be more
successful. The ranking reveals the respondents’ ability to ‘offer coaching and
career development programmes to teams and individuals’ and ‘give honest and
constructive feedback to team members’ gets first rank but the competency ‘share
information, advice and suggestions to help others to be more successful’ gets the
sixteenth position in ranking.
Leadership Skills and Other Factors

Conspicuously, 100% of those drawing more than Rs. 8,000/- of monthly wages say that they are good in leadership skills. Only 16.7% of those whose monthly remuneration is below Rs.4,000/- are good in leadership skills and the same trend is reflected with those who draw a monthly salary between Rs.4,000/- and 8,000/-. Therefore, higher the salary, higher is the level of leadership skills.

5.1.7. Problem-Solving and Decision Making

NGO managers are essentially dealing with individuals and groups both in the organisation and in their working area. Invariably, problem-solving will become a routine affair in an NGO both organisationally and programmatically and therefore, problem-solving and decision-making skills are essential for NGO managers. As per the study, fifty four per cent of the respondents are just average in their level of overall problem-solving and decision making skills. Only 34% say that they are either good or very good with regard to their ability in problem-solving and decision-making skills. As many as 36% of the respondents say that their ability to identify / scan potential problems is just average while 41.6% of them say that they cannot identify / scan potential problems. The ranking reveals the respondents’ ability to ‘analyse problems and situations carefully and make judgments accordingly’ gets the first rank but the statement ‘able to identify / scan potential problems’ gets the fifth position in ranking.
Problem-Solving / Decision -Making and Other Factors

There is significant correlation between experience and problem-solving and decision-making skills. Thus, one can say higher the experience, higher the skills in problem-solving and decision-making. Those who have more than 10 years of experience are better in problem-solving and decision-making skills. Similarly, those who draw more salary possess better problem-solving and decision skills.

5.1.8. Managing Change

NGOs are operating in a socio economic and political scenario that are fast changing and unpredictable. Unlike business and private enterprises, NGOs often respond to the changes that take place outside, because all the changes have their impact on the marginalised and vulnerable communities whom NGOs serve. NGO personnel need to possess capabilities and strategies to respond to the changes in the environment and strengthen the communities. The competency statements focus on the different sets of competencies needed to manage change in the NGOs.

Sixty eight percent of the respondents say that they are average in their capability to manage change. While only 24.4% say that they are either good or very good with regard to managing change, 7.6% say that they are either poor or very poor in managing change. Therefore, majority of the respondents fall in the category of either poor or average with regard to their ability to manage change. As many as 46.4% of the respondents say, that their capability to seize opportunities to influence the future direction of the organization is just poor. But about 30.4% of the respondents feel that their greatest concern is to keep track of the latest trends in the field. It is also to be noted that as many as 28.4% of the
respondents are keeping in mind that exploring new challenges and new opportunities is of importance and a considerable number of people feel that they should necessarily take the lead in setting new directions, partnerships, alliances, policies and procedures. The analysis also reveals that higher the experience, higher is the levels of skills in managing change. One also infers from the study that higher the salary higher is the level of skills in managing change. 80% of those drawing more than Rs.8,000/- of monthly wages say that they are good in managing change.

5.1.9. Self-Management

Work in NGOs can be highly stressful, frustrating and unrewarding. The only way for the NGO managers to withstand these odds of life is to acquire skills to manage themselves, grow contextually and make their life meaningful. Therefore, self-management competencies are important for NGO managers. The study shows that more than seventy three per cent of the respondents are average in their capacity for the overall self-management skills. While only 26.8% say that they are either good or very good with regard to the self-management skills, nobody says that they are either poor or very poor with regard to the self-management skills. Among the various statements under the category self-management, ‘practice self control and perseverance’ gets first rank. Interestingly, ‘maintain commitment to goals in the face of obstacles and frustrations’ which is very much needed for social change agents occupies the second place. The statement ‘demonstrate awareness for need to balance work, family and personal time’ gets the last place.
5.1.10. Need for Training

The respondents were asked to prioritise their training needs by assigning rank to the nine competencies. They have given first priority to training in Problem-Solving and decision making skills; rank two for self-management; rank 3 for project management; rank 4 for fund raising; rank 5 for issues and perspectives; rank 6 for leadership and team management; rank 7 for understanding and managing change; rank 8 for boundary management; and rank 9 for reporting and documentation.

5.2. Suggestions

The personal qualities of the unique breed of development professionals such as dedication towards the empowerment of the communities and ability to take up risk need to be supplemented and complimented by the possession of knowledge and skills relevant to the NGO activities and to the tasks involved in the management of the organisation as a whole. NGOs walk a thin line between being on the one hand professional and on other hand retaining their traditional values and ability to be effective and efficient. They have to achieve the objectives by paying adequate salaries and investing in staff development. NGO sector is inevitably affected by trends in other sectors in society, by labour market forces, and by prevailing social attitudes that increasingly lean towards individualism and fast upward mobility in career progression. This results in, people preferring private enterprises rather than NGO sector which struggles to retain donor support amidst shrinking funds on the one hand and the hostile attitude of the state and the private enterprises towards them. While learning to live with these trends, NGOs struggle to retain the values and non-profit objectives that drive them in their
work. The following suggestions are made keeping in mind the dilemmas and difficulties of the NGO sector.

5.2.1. Vision- Mission

- A well-planned orientation programme has to be organised as part of the induction programme so that the new entrants have a comprehensive understanding of the vision and mission of the organisation. A regular capacity building programme for the staff would ensure that they are updated about how the organisational efforts and strategies seek to achieve the objectives of the organisation. Unless there is integration between the objectives of the organisation and that of the individuals, an individual will not be able to put in his/her efforts for the effective realisation of the ideals of the organisation. Integration of organizational goals and the aspirations of the individual are important for perceiving the mutual benefit between the organization and the individuals.

- For effective management and development of competencies, a positive and enabling environment needs to exist. The chief functionaries of NGOs need to create a culture of ownership and shared values with the staff. As the content of vision and mission is important, so the process of evolving or re-looking at the vision and mission statements to ensure the participation and contribution of the staff and evolve the shared perception and understanding among the staff.
5.2.2. Organisational Structure

- Well functioning governance and management systems are a prerequisite to the development and sustaining of NGO competencies. Organisations need to ensure the establishment of procedures and guidelines of day-to-day operations. NGOs should, therefore, develop strategies for recruitment that will emphasise on personal qualities of integrity, creativity, innovation and requisite skills. Management systems and practices have to be adapted to allow flexibility and innovation. In the smaller NGOs, employees have to be multi-skilled and often perform numerous tasks that may not be in their job descriptions.

- Organisational structures of NGOs should take into account the dynamic and complex context of NGOs. Traditional hierarchical structures with clearly defined channels of authority may not be the best for NGOs.

- Circular and cluster type of organisations with task groups that have delegated authority and responsibility to carry out programmes will be more suitable and effective to NGO work.

- Results-based management approach can be adapted with clearly defined outputs at each individual and team levels that would require a flexible team management approach. Developing a model organisational structure based on the principles of team management is vital to promote NGO competencies that could be mostly acquired on the job.

- Delegation of authority and responsibility to the middle level and operational level staff will promote leadership competencies of the staff and will fill the future requirement of NGO leaders.
5.2.3. Career Progression

NGOs have to create career progression and succession plans to ensure personal career growth and retain qualified and motivated staff. Taking into account that many NGOs are small, the career management system should be flexible. Unless an individual sees chances of growth within the organisation he/she will not be inclined to develop competencies and stay with the organisation.

5.2.4. Capacity Building

- Capacities of the NGOs need to be strengthened in formulation of overall strategies for achieving wider impact. More emphasis need be given to strategies at different levels so that the whole organization can move towards the goals. Inadequate attention to strategy formulation can lead to failure in translation of goals into concrete action. Training is required in technical skills, management, strategic planning, policy formulation, policy analysis, advocacy, gender and development, monitoring and evaluation, proposal and report writing. NGOs need to conduct skills training in project development and management, awareness generation on critical issues, analysis of contemporary problems, and formulation of alternative paradigm on development and analysis of the role of NGOs in current context for programme staff.
• There is a tendency to get oneself engulfed in the particular sectoral intervention and get into the regular routine work without linking the macro social economic and cultural processes. Only a sound understanding of social issues with its macro and micro linkages will help the intervention to be effective on a long-term basis. Therefore, NGOs need to focus on sharpening the perspectives and understanding of the NGO managers on the social issues through training and sharing of learning across the organisations.

• Those who work in supportive and research NGOs are not found to be very strong in social perspectives. While they are good at understanding organisational objectives, they do lack proper perspectives to work for social development. There can be a shift to make development work to be techno-centric mainly relying on sophisticated tools and methodologies but lacking in deep perspectives therefore, intensive perspective building need to be carried out in NGOs involved in research and capacity building.

• Project planning and organising is a specific activity requiring professional training and expertise. Many of the NGO personnel, though involved in very good work, are unable to articulate their needs in a proposal format and even when external help is sought for proposal writing they are unable to effectively organise and implement the programme. Therefore, there is a need for training in project management.
• Organising, directing and controlling are the essential functions of NGOs especially for the grassroots NGOs. But those from these types of NGOs are apparently lacking in related to community work competencies. Mobilising the communities to uphold their rights and advocate their cause is one of the prime activities of NGOs. Therefore, there can be training on mobilising and networking strategies.

• Social work requires professionalism and expertise to take on the perpetrators of human rights violations. Moreover, the functions are no more confined to the simplistic approaches of service delivery or administering charity. It requires skills of advocacy and lobbying and therefore more attention need to be given to train in advocacy skills and link their work at the community to the change in the macro processes.

5.2.5. Leadership

• NGOs as organised effort of voluntary activism can work best with the spirit of collective leadership. Many NGOs seem to work with the charismatic or authoritarian type of leadership styles of those who founded or those at the helm of affairs. There is a need to promote transformational type of leadership promoting team work and shared perception.

• Problem-solving skills are very much needed for an organization that works in a challenging environment and amidst competing claims. The NGOs work in a totally uncontrollable environment and therefore they
are bound to be dragged into many problems both organizational and programmatic nature. This calls for greater skills in problem-solving and hence training in these areas is important to improve related competencies.

5.2.6. Integration of Personal Life and Work

- There is also a common perception among the public that those who work in NGOs do not spend sufficient time with family to attend to their family duties. The same thing was expressed when the researcher went to visit some of the respondents. Integration of the family life and work life needs much more attention. Often the families of the NGO workers suffer from insufficient care and attention.

5.2.7. Organisational and Individual Learning

- An individual cannot develop his/her capabilities if there is no organisational learning. A learning atmosphere need to be ensured in the NGOs and equally important is that there must be efforts to transform individual competencies into organisational competencies. Monitoring and evaluation activities are of critical importance to the NGOs because they are the means by which change and evolutions can be guided and can feed into learning processes. Monitoring and evaluation are valuable tools of capturing accumulated experience and expertise that is all too easily lost when rapid changes occur within organisation and outside. Therefore,
NGOs should ensure that there is a system of monitoring and documentation and that the staff actively involve in the process.

5.2.8. Remuneration

- The remuneration package of the NGO workers are much debated: whether to adequately remunerate on par with their counterpart elsewhere or to maintain selfless, poorly paid workers. NGOs need to focus on professionalism without losing the vigour of dedication and people-centred perspectives. Hence, the need for paying adequate remuneration to NGO personnel keeping in line with the job market trends need to be focussed.

5.2.9. Scaling up

- Scaling up is necessary so that they impact on broader sections of the population. Some NGOs have grown from being small, local projects to large-scale programmes over the last 20 years. Indeed, some have gone beyond this and become movements. NGOs face the tasks of both scaling up and co-operating in the face of such obvious constraints as resource, skill and organisational infrastructure deficiencies, and a general lack of understanding of their role in civil society. In the event of such constraints, like-minded NGOs can come on a common platform and operate on a broader level to have greater impact on the society.
5.2.10. Educational Institutions

- Educational institutions have to come to grips with the development trends in the NGO sector and accordingly redesign the syllabus to sharpen the perspectives and develop the skills and competencies of the young development professionals. A strong tie up and interface between the educational institutions and NGOs will help the young professionals to learn and be prepared for this challenging job. There could be more space in the syllabus for development intervention strategies and perspectives along with managerial competencies rather than welfare administration. The already existing practice of field based training has to be strengthened with further inputs and interactions.

5.2.11. Future Research

- Further researches can be undertaken to study the level of professionalism in the NGOs. Such studies can focus on the systems and processes within an organisation that are indicators of professionalism, organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Another study could be undertaken to study the syllabus and training given in educational institutions that offer degree on social work to see if the content and methodology of training meet the competency requirements.
5.3. Conclusion

The study certainly highlights the general lack of professional competencies among the NGOs. While they fare well in terms of skills such as raising awareness among the local communities, they lag very much behind in the boundary management skills such as advocacy, lobbying, networking, and project management skills. While the present mode of functioning may have positive aspects such as commitment, flexibility and interactive learning with the community, organisational sustainability and scaling up of activities will suffer greatly.

The competencies of a development professional will increase only if there are enabling organisational systems, processes and culture. The NGO sector needs to look attractive for creative and dedicated young minds that are also influenced by the latest trends in remuneration package and working environment in the private enterprises. However, competent an individual is, his/ her competency can be enhanced only if there are chances of work and roles related to such competencies. This is possible with the proper delegation of authority and responsibility and collective leadership.

NGOs that are the vital nerves of the civic consciousness have to be supported so that they continue to play the role of empowering the marginalised communities to enjoy their rights and potentials. NGOs have come to stay and emerge as big players in the development of the communities. Developing their general as well as core competencies will certainly benefit the communities and led to pro-people policy changes. Higher the visibility, higher is the chance of
demands for credibility, capability and efficiency. The increasingly important role played by NGOs in the civil society calls for demonstrating professionalism, accountability and transparency all of which are closely linked to each other. A Competency framework for development professionals in the context of Tamil Nadu and changing socio-economic scenario need to be developed and all social work studies and training can be focussed on this.