CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter deals with the summary of findings, suggestions and conclusion emerged out of the present study on migration of fishermen. It includes findings related to the socio-economic conditions of migrant fishermen, causes for migration, nature and pattern of migration, impact of migration on the socio-economic conditions of fishermen, problems faced by the migrants in the place of origin and at the place of destination.

9.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

9.1.1 The sex-wise distribution of sample population reveals that the males outnumbered the females by 8.94 per cent. There were 494 males and 413 females in the sample villages. The average size of the family was 4.54.

9.1.2 Among the total migrant households 75.30 per cent of the sample population was in the age group of 15-60, which is a healthy sign because more labour power is available to work to earn their daily bread.

9.1.3 In the study area 86.40 per cent of the sample populations were literates. Among the literates, 23.33 per cent are having high school education. Only 7.85 per cent are having collegiate education and 2.81 per cent is having technical education.
9.1.4 Out of the sample population of 683 (75.30 per cent) are in the age group of 15 – 60 years, only 328 (48.02 per cent) are employed. Out of the 237 employed fishermen, 229 (96.62 per cent) are engaged in fishing. Further, persons employed in non-fishing activities are 83 (25.30 per cent of the employed). It includes the employment of 56 fisherwomen (17.07 per cent of the employed) in Shelf Help Groups.

9.1.5 Among the migrant households 66 per cent were nuclear in nature and 34 per cent were joint families. The joint family system made it easy for the migrants to move to other places.

9.1.6 Out of 200 households, 60.29 were having concrete roof followed by tiled roofs (35.71 per cent) and thatched roofs (4.00 per cent). Thus majority of the migrants had reasonably good houses. Of this, 173 (86.5 percent) migrants live in their own houses, 20 (10 per cent) in rented houses and seven (3.5 per cent) in free houses. All the sample households have electricity facilities, 34 (17 per cent) have bathroom facilities, 46 (23 per cent) have attached latrines and 134 (67 per cent) households did not have drinking water facilities.

9.1.7 The study shows that Colachel possesses the highest amount of assets (Rs.30,13,000) followed by Vallavilai (Rs.27,88,000), Thoothoor (Rs.27,84,000) and Kodimunai (26,16,000) respectively. Item-wise comparison shows that Colachel is having the maximum amount of investment in fishing crafts (92.70 per cent) followed by Kodimunai (92.16 per cent), Thoothoor (90.66 per cent) and Vallavilai (90.28 per cent) respectively.
9.1.8 The study reveals that fishermen households also own non-fishing assets like land, houses, jewels, vehicles and the like. Colachel is having the maximum amount of investment in non-fishing assets (Rs.5,51,300) followed by Thoothoor (Rs.3,23,700), Vallavilai (Rs.3,22,600) and Kodimunai (Rs.2,96,100) respectively.

9.1.9 The study portrays that 89 (44.5 per cent) crafts have two owners, 71 (35.5 per cent) have three owners, 17 (8.5 per cent) have four owners and only 3 (1.5 per cent) have five owners for their crafts. At village level the pattern of ownership by single owners were the highest at Kodimunai and Colachel constituting 57.69 percent and 54.69 percent respectively. This showed the financial soundness of the migrants in these villages.

9.1.10 Before migration, 127 (63.5 per cent) households have income less than Rs.2,00,000/-. But after migration, there is a thorough change in the income status of the sample migrants. Fishermen households receiving more than Rs.2,00,000/- as income is 199 (99.5 per cent). These changes paved the way for an increase in average income per migrant fishermen household from Rs.1,25,600/- before migration to Rs.4,500,700/- after migration.

9.1.11 It was found out that 34.70 per cent of the total expenditure among the various items of consumption expenditure of migrants was spent for food. Only 12.33 per cent was spent for education purposes of their children. This showed the backward nature of the migrant fishermen families regarding education.
9.1.12 The study shows that among the various items of consumption expenditure, food constitutes 44.00, 40.65, 40.86 and 43.86 in Colachel, Kodimunai, Thoothoor and Vallavilai respectively. Another important item of family expenditure was expenditure on clothing. It is followed by expenses on social and religious ceremonies, health, education, fuel and lighting. These expenditures show that the status of fishermen households has improved to some extent.

9.1.13 The migrant fishermen were less interested in savings. Only 54 per cent of the migrants had the habit of saving. The study shows that the overall average savings per migrant fishermen household has increased by 184.62 per cent.

9.1.14 It was found out that 82.5 per cent of the migrants were indebted. The average debt was the highest in Kodimunai before (Rs.3,19,900/-) and after (Re.93,700/-) migration. In total, the migrants have settled 73.41 per cent of their debt leaving 26.59 per cent to be settled later.

9.1.15 Among the push factors, it was found out that 40.5 per cent of the migrants were motivated on their own accord and the remaining 59.5 per cent by their friends or other members of the family who had migrated earlier.

9.1.16 Of all personal factors 25 per cent of the migrants were induced by poverty, another 25 per cent for want of employment and only 9 per cent had migrated to fulfill their self-aspirations.
Among the occupational factors which forced the fishermen to migrate:
the nature of uncalm sea and tidal waves (36 per cent) followed by
rocky bottom (29.5 per cent), fish famine (22 per cent) and cyclone
(12.5 per cent) are more important.

Of all family factors, 32 per cent of the migrants were forced primarily
by indebtedness followed by fulfillment of the desires of the family
members (31 per cent), family size (21 per cent) and other reasons (16
per cent).

Among the local factors which induced migration:
lack of landing, anchoring and berthing facilities (35 per cent), non-availability of
fishing harbour (33 per cent) and high cost of inputs like ice and water
(30.5 per cent) were the main reasons for migration of fishermen.

The pull factors for migration of fishermen are success stories of early
migrants (60 per cent) and the availability of fishing harbour, landing
and berthing facilities (40 percent) at the destination.

The result of the regression model reveals that only three (Family size
(X1), income at the destination (X4) and debt (X6) out of the selected
six variables, are significantly influencing the number of migrants (Y).
Family size and income at the destination influence migration positively
while debt influences migration negatively.

The researcher has identified family clutches, low degree of
monetization, lack of transport and marketing facilities as the
constraints on migration of fishermen.
9.1.23 Out of the sample migrants, 32 per cent were short distance movers (less than 400 kms.) and the remaining 68 per cent are long distance migrants (400 kms and above). At the village level 50 per cent of the migrants from Thoothoor and Vallavilai preferred to migrate to more than 1200 kms since they go for shark fishing.

9.1.24 Regarding the preference of fishing centres in various States such as Kerala, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra and Gujarat, it was found out that 43.5 per cent of the migrants preferred Kerala, 23 per cent of the migrants preferred Goa, 15 per cent preferred Maharashtra and only 8 per cent preferred Gujarat. At the village level, 67.31 per cent of the migrants from Kodimunai followed by Colachel (64.06 per cent) preferred Kerala. On the other hand, 27.08 per cent of the migrants from Vallavilai preferred to move to Maharashtra.

9.1.25 It was found that 41.5 per cent of the migrants have repeated their migration for 7 to 10 consecutive years. At village level 50 per cent of the migrants from Vallavilai and 41.67 per cent from Thoothoor had repeated migration for 7-10 consecutive years.

9.1.26 Out of 200 migrants, 86 (43 per cent) migrants preferred to stay for 90 to 180 days and 40 (20 per cent) migrants for more than 270 days at destination. While 75 per cent of the migrants from Colachel preferred to stay for 90-180 days, 50 per cent of the migrants from Thoothoor as well as Vallavilai had stayed for more than 150-270 days.
9.1.27 Out of 200 migrants, 135 (67.5 per cent) have received advance money. Out of them, 41 (30.37 per cent) migrants from Thoothoor followed by Colachel 35 (25.93 per cent), Vallavilai 30 (22.22 per cent) and Kodimunai 29 (21.48 per cent) have received advance money.

9.1.28 Out of the total migrants, 83 per cent were within the age-group of 40 years. Of this, 39 per cent belonged to the age group of 20-30 years. At the village level, Thoothoor has the highest percentage of migrants in the age group of 20-30 (47.92 per cent), followed by Vallavilai (38.89 per cent). The specialisation in shark fishing by Thoothoor and Vallavilai fishermen is the reason for such a situation.

9.1.29 Out of the 200 migrants, only 58 (29 per cent) have insured their life, the average amount insured was the highest (Rs.91,710/-) for the migrants from Thoothoor and it was the lowest for the migrants from Vallavilai (Rs.63100/-). Regarding insurance of mechanised boats the average amount of insurance was the highest (Rs.4,50,600/-) for Colachel followed by Vallavilai (Rs.3,71,550/-), Thoothoor (Rs.3,69,100/-) and Kodimunai (Rs.3,15,050/-).

9.1.30 The migrants from Colachel worked for 305 days in a year and those from Kodimunai for 300 days. Out of this they engaged in fishing related activities for 25 days and 30 days respectively. At the same time the migrants from Thoothoor and Vallavilai had engaged in fishing activities alone for a period of 290 days and 295 days respectively.
9.1.31 Regarding cost of migration, a major portion (79.95 per cent) was spent to meet transport expenditure alone, followed by food (10.86 per cent), water (6.55 per cent) and others (2.64 per cent).

9.1.32 There is an increase in the number of days employed from 83 days to 215 days. Thoothoor is having the maximum impact on employment due to migration (251 days) and Colachel is having the minimum impact (191 days). The result of the t-Test for the impact of migration on employment shows that it is significant at one per cent level in all the four villages.

9.1.33 The study reveals that the post-migration income has increased by Rs.3,51,000/- (208.68 per cent). The percentage of increase in income of the migrants is greater in Colachel (285.33 per cent) followed by Kodimunai (233.51 per cent), Thoothoor (158.87 per cent) and Vallavilai (177.47 per cent). The result of the t-Test for the impact of migration on income shows that it is significant at one per cent level in all the four villages.

9.1.34 The study shows that the post-migration savings has increased by Rs.31,200 (184.62 per cent). The percentage of increase in savings is greater in Kodimunai (338.60 per cent) followed by colachel (175.32 per cent), Vallavilai (166.00 per cent) and Thoothoor (135.06 per cent). The result of the t-Test for the impact of migration on savings shows that it is significant at one per cent level in Kodimunai and Thoothoor only.
9.1.35 The study shows that migration has negative impact on debt settlement. On an average migration has reduced debt amount by Rs.90,800/- (35.73 per cent). An inter-village comparison shows that Colachel stands first (53.03 per cent) followed by Kodimunai (37.79 per cent), Thoothoor (30.27 per cent) and Vallavilai by (22.45 per cent). The result of the t-Test for the impact of migration on debt settlement shows that it is significant at one per cent level in all the four villages.

9.1.36 The study portrays that 182 (91 per cent) migrant fishermen households have received remittances during the study period. Of these, 91 (50 percent) receive remittance every month, 40 (21.98 per cent) households once in a fortnight, 32 (17.58 per cent) once in a week and remaining on demand.

9.1.37 The researcher has identified the problems like family separation, women centredness of family, class conflicts, theft of fishing equipments as the main social problem faced by the migrant fishermen households at the destination.

9.1.38 The researcher has identified irregular payment of wages or catch shares, indebtedness, unfair trade practices, unfavourable working conditions, lack of navigational aids, registration of mechanized boats, inadequate infrastructure regarding fishing and financial as the important economic problems faced by the migrant fishermen households.
The study reveals that migrant fishermen have to face inter-regional problems like different languages and cultures, jealousy attitude of the native fishermen and also interruption by the various navigational departments such as the Indian Coast Guard and Indian Navy.

The study also shows that the attack/detention of migrant fishermen by neighbouring countries such as Sri Lanka and Pakistan and sea-piracy as the important international problems faced by the sample migrant fishermen.

9.2 SUGGESTIONS

To make migratory movements easier and to solve the problems of migrant fishermen, the home State, the host State and the Government of India should take certain steps such as:

9.2.1 By Home State

- In order to reduce the pressure of population and to help the sustainable livelihoods of the fishermen at large, the State Governments in cooperation with the NGOs should try to create social awareness among the fishermen regarding:
  (a) importance of family planning;
  (b) consequences of bigger size of the family;
  (c) defects of child labour
- The government should construct infrastructure - basic, financial, fishing and marketing to cater to the growing needs of the fishermen population.
• Quality boats with special safety equipments, navigational instruments and fish finding devices, should be provided to the migrant fishermen at subsidised price.

• To avoid accidents, recurring problems in the engine and to save fuel, the migrants should be encouraged to use new engines in the boats.

• Every migrant fisherman should be provided with social security benefits. As a long term strategy, the respective state government should plan for the creation of a social security fund to provide benefits to the migrant fishermen.

• By establishing regular communication channels between the migrants and their families, the NGOs can effectively provide helping hand to solve the problems of fishermen families.

• At the village level there should be compulsory registration in the Panchayats by the families who intend to migrate and arrangements should be made for providing identity cards to them. The Government should motivate trade unions to establish “Workers Facilitation Centres” (WFC) at the village level and help to organize them.

9.2.2 By Host State

• Some suitable mechanism should be evolved and necessary amendments in the law be made so as to ensure the registration in the host State about the migratory movements of fishermen. Without proper identification of the migrant fish workers, it is not possible to regulate their working conditions, to provide basic amenities of life and
to ensure proper and timely payment of their legitimate dues in times of distress.

- Relevant departments like the department of fisheries or accredited NGOs in the host states could provide an identity card to the migrants to ensure that they are not put in unwanted troubles and also are assured of their rights in the host states.

- The migrant fishermen should be provided with ration cards at destination. The State government as a matter of policy should ensure that migrant fish workers are issued temporary ration cards at destination. These cards will ensure that they get due benefits of public distribution system for the procurement of essential commodities such as food for consumption and ice, water and fuel for production purposes.

- Every coastal state should set up a special directorate to study the basic problems of migrant fishermen and monitor the enforcement of remuneration, statutory benefits and working and living conditions and other related provisions.

- In fishing centres, where the migration flow is substantial welfare officers should be appointed by the recipient States to protect their rights.

- The State governments should often instruct the administration and police regarding the rights of migrant fishworkers and protect their legal and human rights.
• The migrant fishermen should be encouraged to form trade unions at destination. Central trade unions should take up the initiative towards this direction.

7.2.3 By Government of India

• There should be exclusive enforcement machinery formally sponsored by the Central government which should inspect and investigate the causes and exploitation of the migrant fishermen.

• It has been found out that the migrant fishermen found it difficult to get shelter in the host States. The host States could be helped by the Central government by providing funds to construct colonies at fishing centres exclusively for such migrant fish workers.

• The investment per migrant fishing unit and the need of working capital are very high when compared to fishing at origin. Like agricultural bank there should be a “Fisheries Development Bank” (FDB) at national level for supporting the fishermen.

• Net working of various fishermen organisations, trade unions, environmental groups, government departments and research institutions by the Central government is essential to monitor the movements and welfare of the migrant fishermen.

• To improve safety at sea, the existing weather warning systems should be developed with latest technology, to warn the fishermen well in advance who are staying in deep seas. This would help them to protect their lives and crafts from cyclonic storms.
• The issue of seizure of fishers and boats by the Sri Lankan and Pakistan navy is another area that needs action at a high level. Already the issue appears to be receiving some attention, but there is a need to develop better campaign to highlight the rights of the migrant fishermen at sea within territorial waters.

• The procedure followed for the registration and renewal of fishing boats by navigation departments should be made easier.

• The migrant fishermen should be instructed by various media such as All India Radio (AIR), and Door Dharshan (DD) about their legal and human rights, by the Central government.

• There should be co-ordination among the Departments of Labour, Health, Civil Supplies, Education and Social Welfare in order to protect the human rights and to provide the basic amenities to the migrant fishermen.

• Considering the total number of fishermen population, number of motorized and mechanized crafts in Kanyakumari District infrastructure facilities at Chinnamuttom fishing harbour should be increased and steps may be taken for the construction of a port at Colachel.

7.3 CONCLUSION

For many seasonal fishermen migrants, migration has been an opportunity to improve their material conditions. In spite of the existence of ample evidence to show that migration is as much a traditional livelihood strategy among the fishing communities, the policy makers have tended to treat migration more as a problem, posing threat to social and economic stability and therefore tried to control it rather
than recognising it for a coping mechanism that needs careful understanding and nourishing. It is true that the fishers face a number of difficulties in migration; still they consider it essential for their survival, as there is no alternative to it in the near future. It is hard to visualise the ill effects that a fishing family can be exposed to in the absence of a mechanism like this to overcome the severe decline in fishing activities in the district.

Keeping in view the contribution of migrants not only in fisheries development, but also in promoting national integration, it is high time for the central and state governments to think of the migrant fishermen. It is essential that appropriate steps should be taken by the governments to facilitate genuine migration and healthy settlement of the problems of fishermen in other coastal states. After all India is a country which proclaim to the world universal brotherhood and unity in diversity. India belongs to all and every citizen has a right guaranteed by the constitution to move anywhere in the country and pursue his career, including fishing. The following issues have been identified for future research:

- A Study on Rural-Urban Migration of Fishermen in Kanyakumari District.
- A Study on Migration of Fishermen and spread of Communicable Diseases in Kanyakumari District.
- A Study on Status of Fisherwomen in Kanyakumari District.
- A Study on the Role of Non-Governmental Organisation in the Socio-Economic Uplift of Fisherfolk in Kanyakumari District.

If this study in any way helps further research in future the researcher would feel happy about his contribution.