SUMMARY
5.0 SUMMARY

5.1. Findings

- Economic transformation of a country depends on solving the problems of rural poverty and unemployment. Socio-economic development of the rural population is a major problem confronting the nation.

- The present study has been conducted in a sample of 2,638 fishing workers households dwelling in 10 coastal villages (S.P.Pattinam, Pasipattinam, M.R. Pattinam, Thondi, P.V.Pattinam, Nambuthalai, Lanjiyadi, M.V.Pattinam @ Soliyakudi, Karankadu and Morepannai) of Thiruvadanai Taluk, Ramanathapuram District in Tamil Nadu and highlights the level of various parameters which determine the socioeconomic conditions of these marine fishermen.

- This study indicates that the fishermen community is traditional bound and that it prevents the men in the most productive age from work participation. After the age of 60, the male members keep away from fishing and they are cared by their children and the youth in the fishermen community do not like the fishing activities.

- Religion in the Indian society plays a major role in the economic activities especially of women. It also plays an important role in determining the socio-economic conditions of the fishermen. The study reveals that, Hindu population (66%) was seemed to be dominant when compared to Muslims (22 %), and Christians (12%).

- The marine fishing workers of Thiruvadanai Taluk, Ramanathapuram District as elsewhere in the country are largely literate. The present survey revealed that the spread of education among the fishing workers community is 72% which is confined up to school level and rarely in college level of education.

- Apart from fishing which is the main occupation of majority of fishermen, a sizeable number of fishermen and fisherwomen were engaged in fishing allied activities and they were not having any subsidiary work and they do not earn any income to their households.

- The average number of the family members in the study area is 4.1. A total of (2436) 92% of the respondents have got own houses whereas and 8% were residing in rented houses. Most of the fishermen are living in tiled houses because their standard of living is moderate. Most of the houses have a living room, a bed room and a kitchen.

- This study revealed that 95% per cent of fishermen population in the study area was depend on common water facility provided by the village panchayet. Majority of the
families in the villages of the study area (73%) have availed loan and about 44% belong to the annual income in range of ₹40,001 to ₹80,000.

5.2. Suggestions to improve the Labour Conditions of Fishing Workers

- The Government policies and programmes should be oriented towards Human Resource Development which in turn includes education, health care, nutrition, educational and economic empowerment of women.
- The Satellite information relating to the distance and depth of the sea where the density of the fish is higher should be obtained from Indian National Information Service Centre located at Hyderabad can be passed on to the fishermen through Village Information Centers so as to enable them a good capture and thereby enhance the labour conditions of the fishing workers families.
- The coastal hamlets need trained technical manpower to repair engines so government can provide training to youths thereby they can earn a lot and uplift their families. Cottage industries designed to utilize local materials may provide certain opportunities for fishing families to earn subsidiary income.
- The Government shall provide the most essential life-saving devices like the floating ring, life jacket and mask to all fishing workers at free of cost to take with them in the boat while fishing in order to avert accidents in the sea.
- As the fishermen spend whatever they earn the government should insist on compulsory small saving schemes apart from the existing schemes on the part of fishing workers while selling the fish.

5.3. Measures to Improve the Labour Conditions of Fishing Workers

- The literacy level of fishermen in this region is low. Therefore, non-formal education must be provided in these area and voluntary social workers can be involved in these programmes.
- It has been found the average size of the family is 4.1. The fisherwomen must be educated on the importance of small family norms and family planning programmes may be effectively implemented to bring down the size of fishermen household.
- Majority of the fisherfolk of the district in the artisanal sector is living in thatched houses with no sanitation facilities. This shows that the standard of living of them has not changed. Considering the needs of small-scale and poor fishermen, more housing schemes must be implemented. The fisher household should be provided proper sanitation, latrines and other essential requirements. The small fishing villages
situated near the sea shores should also be provided with electricity. Solar energy can be tapped in the sea shore areas.

- Fishing being a seasonal occupation with highly fluctuating incomes, the fisherfolk has little money even to meet their normal food requirements. Hence, the fisherwomen may be encouraged in rearing goats, chicken or growing vegetables in their houses to supplement their family income.

- The interior fishing villages along the coast should be provided with suitable road facilities with adequate feeder roads and with frequent bus services to enable the fisherwomen to transport the fish from the landing places to the nearby marketing centre quickly.

- Modern fish processing units must be established at the important fish landing centers by the state government for the welfare of the local fishermen and fisherwomen. Fishing industry must be taken into a priority sector on par with agricultural sector and must be included among the small scale and cottage industries to provide financial assistance to the fisherfolk thereby liberating them from the clutches of the moneylenders or middlemen.

- Periodical monitoring of the socio-economic conditions of the marine fisherfolk particularly of fishermen in the area may be undertaken which helps them greatly in estimating the success and feasibility of any development programme drafted for them.

- Audio-visual programmes based on all these suggestions be made and must be telecast/broadcast in all the fishing villages. For this, the help of the information and Broadcasting Department may be sought.

- A suitable scheme to insure the crafts and gears of fishermen community is suggested, because the accidental loss of craft and gears are common. The gears are often damaged when the gears of fishing crafts encounter with rocks. So the fathometers and other technologies should made available at the concession rate by the government. This enables to increase the catch and also help the fishing workers to find out presence of rocks in the fishing area.

- The government should educate the fishing workers not to enter the border of Sri Lankan sea through proper training and demonstration. Mass communication methods may be initiated by the government to effect transfer of new technology to the fishery sector.