CHAPTER V

SUMMAEY AND CONCLUSION

The study titled "Problems and Prospects of TRYSEM among Scheduled Caste women in Dindigul Anna District, Tamil Nadu" is an attempt to understand the problems in the TRYSEM programme development cycle, from planning to evaluation and follow-up, and the potential of the scheme for genex-ating employment and related advantages for Scheduled Caste women.

The overall objective of the study was to evaluate the implementation of TRYSEM in the study region with focus on Scheduled Caste women and to suggest modalities for making the programme more beneficial to the target group.

The specific objectives of the study were:

- to understand the implementation of TRYSEM in the study area with focus on Scheduled Caste women,

- to study the extent of employment generated through this programme among Scheduled caste women beneficiaries,
to find out the factors promoting or hindering employment generation among Scheduled Caste women beneficiaries, and,

to suggest the modalities for effective implementation of the programme among such deprived categories of women.

The study being of an exploratory nature, requiring both qualitative and quantitative data, a normative survey design was chosen. Dindigul Anna District of Tamil Nadu, renamed Dindigul Mannar Tirumalai District in June 1996, was purposively chosen for the present study.

All organisations that conducted TRYSEM training for women between 1 April 1990 and 31 March 1993 were identified through perusal of the records and reports maintained in the office of the District Rural Development Agency, Dindigul. There were thirteen institutions offering training to women. All these institutions were chosen for the study.
A total of 302 Scheduled Caste women had been enrolled during the study period. Of these 40 women had dropped out. Among the 262 who had completed the training only 177 beneficiaries could be located. Data were collected from all these 177 trainees.

The tools used for data collection were an interview guide for administration to the heads of institutions and a schedule for gathering data from the beneficiaries of the programme. Along with the schedule, a rating scale was administered to assess the attitude of women towards the training programme.

5.1. FINDINGS

Women trainees in the study period extending from April 1990 to March 1993 accounted for only 27 percent as against the prescribed minimum of 40 percent. Of the total 543 women enrolled for TRYSEM during the three-year study period, 55.6 per cent belonged to Scheduled Castes/Tribes. The drop-out rate among Scheduled Caste women trainees was, on an average, 13.2 per cent as against the
average of seven per cent for non-Scheduled Caste women.

The majority of the institutions were found offering TRYSEM training to women candidates. The majority of them were Non-Governmental Organisations. The spread of women's training institutions within the study area was not uniform. There were seven Blocks with no training institution while the central Block had five training institutions.

A total of 15 trades were offered to women. The duration of the training ranged from 3 to 6 months. Tailoring was the most popular trade. During the study period, totally thirty training programmes were conducted for women. Mat-weaving, leather work, handicrafts, food-processing and agarbathi-rolling were the next popular trades.

Most of the institutions took up the training programme with the basic intention of helping the poor. However, a few (2096) took up the programme for getting recognition and reputation for themselves. The stipend attached to the training
programme was the main attraction of the programme.

For confirming the eligibility of the institution for taking up TRYSEM programme, the registration status (under the Societies' Registration Act 27/1975) of the institution was the main criterion considered. In the selection of the trade, the institution's facilities and resources were considered rather than the locational demand for the skill and trainees' interest.

For selection of the trainees, the reservation policy given in the programme directives was followed by most of the institutions. Ration card was the main document used for confirming eligibility by caste, income and nativity. So families without this documentary evidence were not permitted to join the programme. While selecting the trades, no techno-economic survey, resource survey or area-skill survey was made by any of the organisations.
Seventy per cent of the institutions offered training programmes for both men and women. The reasons given by many of them for favouring training of women were mainly the women trainees' sincerity and interest in the work, co-operation and submissive nature (expressed by the opinion "easy to take decisions") in comparison with their male counterparts. Many institutions found menfolk difficult to manage, less interested, less sincere and more problematic at work site than the female trainees.

One day's casual leave per month is permitted with stipend and all Sundays and national holidays are holidays.

The syllabus for the course is framed by the institutions and filed for scrutiny by the concerned officials along with the application for conducting the training programme. But a uniform syllabus is not followed for any of the trades.

In one half of the institutions, training was imparted through 100 per cent practical work. In the other half of the institutions, it was
practical supplemented by theory. Other methods of training like field visits were not in common practice. The class hours extended for 6 to 6.5 hours a day.

All the trainers were on temporary service. It was reported to be difficult to get well-qualified and dedicated trainers for conducting the programme because of the discontinuity expected of the programme and the low salary payable from the project provisions.

Only 46 per cent institutions conducted the programme in their own buildings and the others did so in hired buildings. Hiring of building was reported to be a handicap for them to install machines required for conducting training in innovative trades. Space for conducting the training was inadequate and equipments insufficient, in 38.4 per cent and 46 per cent institutions respectively.

The Assistant Project Officer in charge of TRYSEM is the kingpin in the programme decision-making exercise. He is the final authority to
monitor and evaluate the programme. Block officials assist him in this work.

Testing of the skill acquired was not done by conducting examinations. The regularity in the attendance of the members was the main criterion adopted for judging individuals' interest in the trade.

As many as nine records were maintained by the training institutions. The most important among them was the students' attendance register. No institution reported maintaining all the other records. Even the student's stipend acquittance register was not available in 46.2 per cent institutions.

Eight of the institutions did not attempt any follow-up work even though there were provisions for formation of DWCRA group, or society, or availing of bank loan with subsidy and/or tie-up with prospective employers and service units.

Two-fifths of the heads of the institutions 'perceived' that a good section of the women joined TRYSEM either to while away their time or for
getting the stipend. Sell employment and wage employment with the trade learned were reported to be the objectives of only a section of the women.

Frequent absenteeism, high drop-out rate and lack of motivation in learning the trades were reported as the problems typical of Scheduled Caste women. Some complained of their non-adjustable nature while a few pointed to their subservient nature and inability to keep abreast of others in learning potential.

Reasons reported for absenteeism and drop-out of the trainees were mainly family problems, distance between home and the training centre and lack of interest in the trade offered. Other reasons were migration due to marriage, non-co-operative attitude of the trainees, indiscipline or their dislike for the institution and the trade. Both the training situation and trainee behaviour were considered crucial in ensuring regularity and completion of the training.

Delayed and improper distribution of stipend, health problems and pregnancy were the reasons
reported for the irregularity of Scheduled Caste women trainees in attending the training programme.

In the case of drop-outs, seats had to be kept vacant throughout and this led to under-utilisation of the training facility and reduction in the honorarium paid to the trainers.

The heads of TRYSEM training institutions suggested tailoring and handicrafts as the most promising trades for women. The next in the line of preference were mat-weaving and leather work. Only a few recommended sericulture, handloom, food-processing and bee-keeping.

The problems experienced by the institution heads were external pressures to include ineligible candidates in the selection list, difficulties in adhering to the selection norms prescribed by the Government, inability to form DWCRA groups with trainees selected from scattered villages, too short a period given for the selection of candidates, inadequate teaching grant, delay in the release of stipend, the
inability of the trainees to get IRDP loan soon after their training, the inability to reach the expected pace of learning, lack of space and finance at the initial period of the training and difficulty in installing machines in rented buildings.

The major suggestions given by the institution heads for strengthening the programme for Scheduled Caste women were prompt disbursal of stipend, granting of full freedom to the institutions to select the trainees, wide publicity to the scheme through mass media and awareness-generation at local level, allotment of more trainees and programmes without discontinuity to selected institutions excelling in their performance, proper follow-up work on a collective basis and extension of the duration of the training programme.

The Scheduled Caste women beneficiaries of TRYSEM in the study area were mostly in the age range of 16-45, with no or low level of literacy.
Those with broken marital bonds constituted 11.4 per cent of the beneficiaries of the scheme.

The families who had received help under the scheme were small/medium-sized, relying on wage employment or low-paid service or traditional trade. In spite of there being any number between one to six earners in a family, the income of 57.5 per cent families remained below the subsistence level and the rest showed progressive variations only at the peripheral level.

Only 14.2 per cent of the trained women could become self-employed, while 36.2 per cent of them remained unemployed. One-third of the wage-employed women worked in areas related to the trade and the rest worked in unrelated trades.

The employed Scheduled Caste women were found working in domestic sector, wage-work related/unrelated to trade learned, unpaid family occupation or salaried jobs.

The self-employed women were found working for longer hours, i.e. 11 hours+/day and for 28 to 30 days in a month. The wage-employed were found
working for 11 hours/day but could get work only for less than 24 days in a month. The salaried group reported working for 7 to 10 hours a day, and for 25 to 28 days in a month. Those engaged in unpaid family occupation and domestic service were found working throughout for less than six hours/day.

A significant association was noticed between the educational level of the trainees and the type of employment (self/wage employment) they received.

Desire to earn a regular income, self employment scope and interest in the trade were the motivations for the Scheduled Caste women for joining TRYSEM training.

Some of the beneficiaries had undergone training twice even though rules do not permit this. In tailoring and agarbathi-rolling, a few persons had undergone training for the third time also.

The officials from the training institutions were the main informants of the scheme (52.5%) to
the prospective beneficiaries. The people trained in earlier batches constituted the next popular informant group. The information that the beneficiaries received at the pre-training period was scanty and dealt with only availability of the training with stipend. No recognised information flow on the scheme through mass media was reported. Around 60 percent of the beneficiaries had to make personal efforts to get themselves selected for the training.

The time lag between submission of application and starting of the training programme ranged from one week to 3 months. The majority of the trainees reported their waiting period as less than one week, a desirable trend.

The majority of the beneficiaries were chosen for the training based on their community identity and low family income (below the poverty line). In a few cases, favouritism influenced the selection of trainees in order to satisfy pressures from political leaders and bureaucrats.
The trade opted for was offered only to one half of the beneficiaries (52.5%). In 47.5 percent cases, the trainees were compelled to change their option.

The promises made to the trainees were mainly regular employment on daily wages, IP.DP loan, with subsidy, formation of DWCRA group, or, selection to a trade of their choice in the subsequent batches.

More than half of the trainees were from nearby villages within a 2-km radius and the rest (22.5%) from within a 5-km radius.

The time spent by a trainee on her one-way travel ranged from 30 minutes to 2 hours. Nearly two-thirds of the trainees were from places close to the training centre.

The stipend for the training ranged from Rs.250/- to Rs.300/- per month. In about one half cases (52.5%), it was paid at the rate of Rs.250/- per month and in the remaining cases it was Rs.300/- month.
Only one-tenth of the beneficiaries reported that the distribution of stipend was prompt and, in the remaining 89.3 per cent cases, it was reported to be irregular.

All had one or more ambition(s) in joining the training programme. The majority of them desired to get employment and earn additional income. The rest of them aspired either for regular wage employment or the stipend, or to develop self-confidence and/or to start an independent unit of their own.

Along with employment generation through skill development in specific trades, the programme, in the opinion of 40 per cent of the women, enabled them to get an identity of their own and thereby an elevated social status" and it boosted their personality traits. Two-fifths of the trainees were dissatisfied with the training they received under TRYSEM.

The dissatisfaction of the beneficiaries was due mainly to the defects in the programme implementation. Reduction in the hours of
training, poor quality training by the instructors, inadequate supply of raw materials, neglect or the trainees during their training period, under-qualified instructors and less attention to practicals were the specific defects pointed out by the trainees.

The mean personal income of the women prior to their training was Rs.1966.5 per annum and, after the training, it rose to Rs.2778.5 per annum and the difference between the means was significant.

Machinery and raw materials were supplied only to 13 candidates for pursuing trades like tailoring and bamboo work. This was done using partly the portion of the stipend compulsorily deducted at source and partly an interest-free loan advanced by the institution.

Nearly two-fifths of the beneficiaries did not seek any assistance for employment generation because of lack of confidence and interest in the trade learned, while 42.6 per cent of the beneficiaries were not aware of such support available under the scheme. Some could not get
help in spite of their repeated efforts while some did not require loan or subsidy as the equipments were already available with them.

All the trainees exhibited either poor or average attitude towards the training programme. The unmarried women in the age group of 16-20, irrespective of their educational status, exhibited a highly positive attitude towards the training and their attitude score distribution indicated a fair level of consistency.

The attitude of the beneficiaries towards the programme varied by the benefits accrued. Those beneficiaries who were economically benefitted by the trade exhibited a high mean score.

The mean attitude scores of women towards TRYSEM by the trade chosen indicated a highly positive attitude towards tailoring, followed by food-processing. Food-processing appeared to be the highly-accepted trade with fairly consistent scores.

Reasons reported for the success of the programme were the trainees' interest and self-
confidence, choice of known trade, migration to urban areas, possibility of raising own capital resources, timely assistance from banks, and identity of the trade chosen with their traditional occupation.

The problems experienced by the trainees were the delay in the payment of stipend (89.3%), long distance between home and training institution (49.7%), monthly deduction from stipend toward institutional charges (39.5%), lack of demand for the products made during the training period (32.5%), and non-issuance of certificates (30.5%). Reduction in the hours of training and inadequate infrastructure facilities, less attention to TRYSEM trainees in the institutions, use of trainees for personal work, delay in starting the training programme due to late installation of machinery, lack of concentration due to age, literacy gap and health problems, allotment of trade contrary to one's interest, inadequate propaganda, lack of trained instructors, contribution to installation of costly machinery and institutional failure to teach grading and
marketing of products were the other problems affecting the success of the programme.

Suggestions for improving the training programme were proper follow-up (72.8%) extension of the duration of the training (68.3%), and increase in the number of trainees (51.4%). Other suggestions were increased stipend and its prompt distribution, supply of necessary tools, career guidance to interested trainees, timely provision of raw materials, choice of easy-to-learn trade, arrangements for marketing of products and formation of co-operative marketing societies.

5.2. CONCLUSION

Scheduled Caste people who occupy lower rungs in the social ladder not only struggle for ensuring their livelihood but also for securing a dignified life. Struck already by the gender-discrimination, the Scheduled Caste women suffer from social oppression simultaneously. TRYSEM was one of the programmes introduced by the Government of India for ameliorating the socially suppressed and economically backward sections, by imparting
productive skills and enabling the poor youth and women to take up not only self employment but wage employment as well. TR.YSEM is a potent tool for making the poor Scheduled Caste women become productive by acquiring skills with more employment. No doubt, this programme roped in Scheduled Caste women in a much larger proportion (55%) than the prescribed minimum of 50 per cent.

Two-thirds of the trained women were based in their homes while the remaining one-third were non-traceable. The status of such women and the utilisation of their trained knowledge for self employment generation is a matter of conjecture. Barring a small segment (13%) who dropped out, all the trainees successfully completed the training in several trades offered. Further, nearly half of the Scheduled Caste women who underwent the training were satisfied about their training but a substantial share of their unsatisfied counterparts causes concern.

Similarly, about two-thirds of the trained women were found employed, largely in wage employment (50%) but those engaged in self
employment (14%) were marginal. However, reduction in unemployment from 42 to 36 per cent after attending TRYSEM training reveals its poor impact on reducing unemployment, among the target groups. Moreover, its impact on augmenting the income of trainees employed with help of TRYSEM training is also moderate (R.s.231/- per month) and below the subsistence level. Availability of financial support from the Government (Banks and Blocks) to only 10 per cent of the TRYSEM trainees, and provision of tool kits to hardly two per cent trainees are an ample proof of poor post-training care and support. Nearly, two out of every five trainees, therefore remained unemployed even after the TRYSEM training.

Implementation of TRYSEM programme bristled with problems - mainly in the form of delay in the payment of stipend, long distance to training centres from home, unauthorised deduction from their stipend by the training institution, unsold products made during the training period and non-issuance of certificate several months after completion of the training programme.
Typical of any other development programme, TRYSEM programme too has had both bright and dark spots. Some women among the target groups have reaped the benefits while others renounced their hopes. In short, TRYSEM has had operational problems' greater than the prospects and there is vast scope for minimising the problems and maximising the prospects. TRYSEM has immense potential to trigger economic transformation in the lives of poor Scheduled Caste women, with the active and genuine involvement of the Government, Non-Government Organisations, Financial institutions, the trainers, and the trainees in the pre-training, training and post-training phases of the programme.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3.1. To the Government Department:

Integrated planning of the training based on locational needs and requirements is to be ensured.

An association of trained youth at the Block level along with an apex body at the District level is needed to decide on strategies for streamlining further development.

The duration of the training may be doubled, with the second half being used for
entrepreneurial skill-development, and confidence-building through in-service training or training with job-undertakings.

Periodical interaction of the representatives of each local-level forum of the trained personnel will facilitate boosting of self-image through meaningful interaction.

A holistic programme of training, encompassing all development aspects with employment, and skill-orientation as the core is desirable for this disadvantaged category of women.

At the District level, a women's resource centre may be established for planning and executing single-point delivery of information and services for women belonging to weaker sections. The centre should have tie-up with policy-making bodies and institutions offering different services to the women. Only then can TRYSEM be made the entry point for economic empowerment of women.

Advanced training facilities for outstanding trainees interested in self employment are
necessary if self-sustaining with are to be established.

5.3.2. To Future Researchers

Action research is needed to evolve need-based training modules incorporating all basic components, starting from need-identification and extending to marketing and organisational support-building for sustainable and sufficient employment generation.

A functional literacy module to be incorporated into TRYSEM needs to be developed and integrated with skill-training for making the programme holistic and purposeful to the beneficiaries.

Research on skill-development transfer of skill through communication, extension and training is required for effecting changes in the programme planning and implementation.

A training programme needs to be evolved to build up competent manpower to work on relevant training as trainers, supervisors and change
agents in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors.

Standardisation of the management training of the beneficiaries for enabling them to enter into a competitive market with very strong forward and backward linkages is another need to be fulfilled through integrated research.