CHAPTER VII
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

SUMMARY

The present study has been undertaken with the paramount objective of identifying the determinants and motivators of higher educational choices in Kanniakumari District. The role of higher education is important in achieving the goals in terms of employment income and ultimately a better life. So, it attracts both the rich and the poor to join either professional or non-professional courses at post-higher secondary level. Privatisation has made higher education a commercial product which is offered in different forms according to the needs of human capital in the changing industrial-technological world. Consequently, choice of higher education has become an important problem of the students and their parents. In fact, cost, duration, availability, employment chances and income opportunity of one course are different from another. Moreover, the choice of higher education of socially and economically advanced people is different from that of backward ones. Hence, the determinants and motivators of higher educational choices have constituted the core of the present study.

The researcher has used both primary and secondary data to fulfil the objectives of the study. The primary data has been collected from the respondents through personal interview with a structured interview schedule prepared on the basis of examining the socio-economic background of the respondents and supply and demand for arts, science engineering and medical education, determinants of higher educational choices, factors
motivating the choice of higher education and problem perception of the respondents in higher educational choices.

The interview has been conducted with 400 respondents using random sampling on the basis of 100 respondents from four taluks. Each 100 respondents consists of 50 per cent from professional education and 50 per cent from non-professional one. A careful investigation has been made at the respondent’s house to obtain information related to their socio-economic background, determinants of higher educational choices and their problem perception in higher education. The required data related to the supply and demand for higher education and factors motivating higher educational choices have also been obtained through investigation made on selected samples and higher educational institutions.

The secondary data has proved to be important in analyzing the growth of higher educational institutions and student enrolment in the international, national, state and district levels. It has also been used to study the growth of private and distance education and students’ enrolment, growth of general and professional institutions and students’ enrolment, the state-wise educational institutions and students’ enrolment in India and growth of education and district-wise literacy in Tamil Nadu and growth and type of higher educational institutions in Kanniyakumari District have come to be known through the published sources such as U G C Report on Higher Education – A glance, 2013, FICCI Higher Education Summit-2011 and 2013, Statistical Abstract for Kanniyakumari District, Annual Status of Higher Education of states and union territories (ASHE) in India-2012 and the website for higher education. Thus, primary as well as secondary data go hand in hand to make the study an effective and meaningful
one. Moreover, this study has applied appropriate statistical tools like percentages, multiple regression model, factor analysis, F-test, index analysis and compounded annual growth rate to discern the growth rate of higher educational institutions and students’ enrolment and the significant of socio-economic factors in the determination of higher educational choices in Kanniyakumari District.

FINDINGS

Higher education in India and Tamil Nadu

India has the largest system of higher education in the world scenario. Among the eight countries, there are 58.2 per cent institution in India, 12.54 per cent in America, 8.63 per cent in Pakistan, 8.3 per cent in Japan, 8 per cent in China, 3.87 per cent in Philippines, 0.34 per cent in England and 0.04 per cent in Scotland. The study shows that India holds the third places (19.44%) in students’ enrolment while China (35.55%) and America (24.37%) have the first and second places. The potential demand for higher education is 43.04 per cent in India, 41.22 per cent in China, 8.03 per cent in America, 6.19 per cent in Brazil, and 1.52 per cent in England. As far as the growing target market for higher education is concerned, India has the highest place (13%) compared to China (12%), America (6%), Brazil (4%) and even the world average (4%).

It is understood from the study that the growth of higher education has been fast during the last three decades. The number of institution has increased from 4722 in 1980-1981 to 35539 in 2012-2013. The compounded annual growth rate of higher education in India is 4.6 per cent. Similarly, the growth of students’ enrolment has increased rapidly from 2.8 million in 1980-1981 to 25.9 million in 2011-2012. The compounded annual
growth rate of students’ enrolment is 6.4 per cent. It indicates that higher education is
given due importance in the Indian society.

The study reveals that the number of state universities is large when compared to
(43.4%), private (21.84%), deemed (18.49%) and central one (6.24%) in India. It is also
seen from the study that the contribution of un-aided institutions and students’
enrolment to the total institutions’ enrolment has increased from 42.6 per cent to 63.9
per cent and from 32.9 per cent to 67.1 per cent in 2001 and 2012 respectively. Moreover,
it is made vivid that the compounded annual growth rate of government institutions is
8.3 per cent whereas it is 10.3 per cent in the case of private ones. As far as the
compounded annual growth rate of students’ enrolment is concerned, it is 7.2 per cent in
government institutions and 11.3 per cent in private ones. It is important to note that out
of the total higher educational institutions, there were 59.27 per cent private, 38 per cent
state, and 1.99 percent central university/university level institutions and 74.84 per cent
private and 25.16 per cent state institutions which offered degrees and diplomas during
2011-2012. This shows the growth and the importance of private educational
institutions in India.

The study exhibits that the number of distance educational institutions has
increased from 22 in 1980-1-82 to 197 in 2011-12 where as the students’ enrollment
has increased from 0.17 million to 4.2 million during the same period. The compounded
annual growth rate of distance educational institutions is 9 per cent and it is 10.9 per
cent in students’ enrolment. Thus, the study shows the growth and importance of distance
educational institutions in imparting higher education.
It is inferred from the study that the growth of professional colleges and students’ enrolment have been increasing over the last two decades. Its compounded annual growth rate is 8 per cent which is higher than 6 per cent in the general one. Similarly, the enrolment of students in professional is 14.3 per cent which is more than 10.8 per cent in general education. It reveals that the demand for professional courses like medicine, law, agriculture and engineering has been increasing due to the high income and employment opportunities.

The study of state-wise higher educational institutions and students’ enrolment shows that the states such as Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu are educationally developed whereas the states like Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Mizoram, Tripura, Goa, Nagaland, Meghalaya, and Manipur are underdeveloped. It shows the inter-state inequality in terms of higher education in India.

It is seen that Tamil Nadu is one of the educationally advanced states in India. The number of higher educational institutions has increased from 390 in 1980-81 to 2330 in 2011-12. Its compounded annual growth rate is 8.91 per cent. At the same time, the number of students’ enrolment has increased from 187.35 million to 1427.69 million. Its compound annual growth rate is 10.26 per cent. Further, the study displays that the literacy rate of both men and women has been increasing rapidly. However, it is interesting to note that the increase in the literacy rate of women (from 37.33% to 80.34%) is higher than (from 51.59% to 86.81%) that of men in 1961 and 2011. This proves the decreasing trend of gender-wise literacy in Tamil Nadu.
The study found that the districts like Kanniyakumari, Chennai, Thoothukudi, Thirunelveli, Thanjavur, Nagapattinam, Virudhunagar and Madurai have higher percentage of literacy whereas Dharmapuri, Thiruvannamalai, izhuppuram, Erode and Krishnagiri districts have low percentage of literacy in Tamil Nadu. Thus, district-wise inequality in terms of higher education is found in the state. The gender literacy differential indicates that it is very high in Ariyalur, Thiruvannamalai, Karur, Vizhuppuram, Pudukottai and Sivagangai districts and very low in Kanniyakumari, Chennai, Thoothukudi and Madurai districts. Hence, it is accepted that there are inter-district and men-women literacy inequality in Tamil Nadu.

**Study area, Demand and supply and Socio-economic conditions of Respondents**

The profile study of Kanniyakumari District displays the fast growth of population during the last four decades. The size of population has increased from 12.22 lakhs in 1971 to 18.6 lakhs in 2011. It also shows that the population of women (93.6 million) is higher than that of men (68 million). Moreover, the urban population (82.47%) is higher than the rural population (17.53%). Among the blocks, Thovalai is the biggest and Munchirai is the smallest one. Melpuram block has the highest population whereas Thovalai has the lowest population. Nagercoil is the biggest municipality having the highest population. Padmanabhapuran is the second highest municipality, but it has the lowest population. This shows the demographic features of the study area.

The study exhibits that there has been a rapid growth in higher educational institutions from 43 in 1970-71 to 179 in 2012-13 in the study area. There are 12.85 per cent arts and science colleges, 17.32 per cent engineering colleges, 18.44 per cent
education (B.Ed.) colleges, 11.73 per cent polytechnic colleges and 11.17 per cent nursing colleges in this district. Thus, this is one of the well developed districts in terms of higher educational institutions in Tamil Nadu.

The study of demand and supply of higher education expresses that there is a little gap between the demand and supply of arts and science education. It shows that only 90 or 93 per cent of the supply is met in such education. This is due to the fact that most of the students like to join in any one of the non-professional colleges for the sake of degrees and a better future. But the gap between the demand and supply is a big one in the case of engineering education. It is discerned that 15 to 22 per cent engineering seats remain vacant due to the decline in employment opportunity in computer and technological fields. Another reason is the proliferation of engineering colleges. In the case of medical education, the demand and supply is balanced in most of the institutions. This is because it is a professional education having a lot of employment and income opportunities. The supply exceeds its demand for a few courses in arts, science, engineering and medical courses. The study reveals that lack of employment and income opportunities of the courses like Tourism, Fashion Technology, Bio-technology, Sociology, Political Science and Information Technology have widened the gap between the demand and supply of such education.

The study of the socio-economic background of the respondents exhibits that the number of women respondents (58.25%) is more than that of men (41.75%) in higher education. It shows that there is no gender-wise inequality in the study area. The respondents belonging to Hinduism, Christianity and Islam give importance to higher education. But, the percentage of Muslim respondents (8.25%) is less than those
belonging to Christianity (48%) and Hinduism (43.75%). There are more respondents belonging to backward community (60.5%) than forward (20.5%), most backward (12%) and SC/ST (7%) communities in higher education. It is found that a small percentage (2.25%) of respondents’ parents are illiterate and a high percentage of (21.25%) of respondents’ parents are professionally qualified.

The study shows that 95.75 per cent respondents belong to nuclear families, 64 per cent live in concrete houses and 0.75 per cent in thatched houses. It is observed that 69.5 per cent respondents have regularly employed parents and 30.5 per cent have irregularly employed parents. The respondents of coolies, masons, carpenters, businessmen, teachers, lawyers, doctors, engineers, professors and officers go for higher education. The number of respondents having the monthly income of Rs. 20001-30000 is more (13.5%) than the respondents (2.25%) whose income is Rs. 110001-120000 per month. Similarly, the number of respondents possessing less than 20 cents of land is more (14.75%) than the respondents (3.25%) who have 100 cents of land. It is interesting to note that all the respondents have electricity and television, but 25 per cent have television, car, refrigerator and motor cycle and 12.75 per cent use fire wood for cooking and heating.

A little variation is found among the respondents in the consumption expenditure. The expenditure on food is more (46.89%) than on clothing (29.48%) and education (3.67%). It is important to note that more than 50 per cent of the respondents pursuing professional education use institutional buses and 46 per cent of the respondents in non-professional education travel in public mini transport bus. It is seen that 40 per cent of the respondents study in nearby colleges and 8 per cent in other district and states. A few respondents (23.25%) save in private banks and large numbers (77%) in L.I.C and
(96.5%) in commercial banks. More respondents (36.33%) borrow from commercial banks and less (8.99%) from friends. It is deplorable that more than 50 per cent of the respondents’ families are in debt. It is important to note that 56 per cent of the respondents depend on self-financed colleges for higher education and 73.25 per cent depend on private hospitals for medical treatment. Thus, the socio-economic background of the respondents reveals that most of them belong to middle class families.

**Determinants of Higher Educational Choices**

The study found that gender affects higher educational choices. Men choose professional education rather than non-professional one. The respondents belonging to forward and backward communities give importance to professional education whereas the respondents belonging to most backward communities, Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes opt for non-professional ones. So, the study concludes that the community of the respondents affects their choice of higher education. The study indicates that the respondents belonging to Christianity prefer professional education to the non-professional one while the respondents belonging to Hinduism give importance to non-professional education. Thus, it is inferred that religion also plays an important role in higher educational choices.

The study found that age of marriage affects the higher educational choices. This is because those respondents who prefer early marriage to higher education join non-professional education whereas those who prefer late marriage join professional education. The study proves that the number of children affects higher educational choices. The one child families give importance to non-professional education while families with two or three children give importance to professional ones.
The study points out that parental education determines higher educational choices. The respondents of academically or professionally qualified parents give importance to professional education whereas the respondents of illiterate or primary or secondary or higher secondary educated parents choose non-professional education. The nature of employment of the respondents’ parents also plays an important role in making higher educational choices. It is seen that most of the children of regularly employed parents choose professional education. At the same time, the respondents of irregularly employed parents give priority to non-professional education.

The study found that the type of the parental occupation has a great impact on higher educational choices. This because most of the respondents of coolies, masons, carpenters and businessmen give importance to non-professional education whereas the children of doctors, lawyers, professors, engineers and officers prefer professional education.

The income of the family has a great impact on higher educational choices. The respondents, whose parents earn more than Rs.50,000 per month choose professional education. On the other hand, the respondents, whose parents get less than Rs. 50000 per month, give importance to non-professional education. The size of land holding has also proved to be one of the determinants of higher educational choices. It is found that the respondents who possess a small area of land join non-professional education, but the possessors of large area of land prefer professional ones.

The study points out that the cost of education is one of the most important determinants of higher educational choices. Most of the respondents prefer professional education in lieu of non-professional one if its cost is low. The study reveals that
instalment in fee remittance also influences the choice of higher education. The respondents give importance to professional education if they can remit the fee in two or three instalments.

The study observes that family tradition determines the choice of higher education. Most of the respondents belonging to doctors’, professors’, engineers ‘and lawyers’ families choose professional education whereas the respondents of coolies’, masons’, carpenters’ and businessmen’s families choose non-professional one.

The study observes that the health of the respondents affects the choice of higher education. Physically as well as mentally healthy and a few physically challenged respondents choose professional education whereas most of the physically and a few mentally challenged respondents choose non-professional education.

It is discerned from the study that availability of educational loan plays an important role in determining higher educational choices. Most of the respondents in professional education depend on educational loan, but a few in the case of non-professional one. In fact, the decision on choice of education depends on the availability of loans.

The study found that employment chances determine the choice of higher education. It is seen that a large number of respondents choose subjects like Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, English Literature and Commerce, Mechanical, Civil and Electrical and Electronic Engineering and various medical courses based on employment chances whereas a few choose Tourism, Sociology, Bio-technology and Information Technology.
The study shows that income opportunity also plays a vital role in making higher educational choices. The respondents prefer medicine, engineering and law to arts subjects because of the income opportunity. The study also found that even the respondents of low income parents chose expensive professional courses due to the financial support of either their relatives or friends or teachers or educational/religious institutions. So, the role of the financial support of others is considered as one of the determinants of higher educational choices.

The study also found that the respondents’ choice of higher education is determined by the success of their relatives, friends and neighbours. Moreover, distance of the educational institution affects the choice of higher education. It is seen that a few economically sound respondents go to other districts or states to pursue the professional education which is not available in the local area.

Factors Motivating Educational Choices

The factor analysis reveals that the seven factors which influence the decision making behavior of the respondents are economic, social, institutional, human, infrastructural, opportunity and environmental factors. Each factor analysis has more than one variable which is expressed as a linear combination of the underlying factors. The amount of variance a variable shares with all other variables included in the analysis is referred to as a communality. There is a high association among all the attributes which are formed under each factor. The t-test has been used to find out the significant in all factors. It proves that the economic and opportunity factors are highly significant at five per cent level while human factors are significant at one per cent level. On the
other hand, environmental and institutional factors are not significant in motivating higher educational choices

**Problem Perception in Higher Education**

The study has also examined the problems faced by the respondents in higher educational choices. The over-all problems represent the economic, social, domestic, health, gender, learning, hostel, transport, guidance and quality constraints. The highly perceived factors in economic constraints are ‘cost of education’, ‘unlimited fees’, ‘capitation fee’ and ‘lack of instalments’. The highly perceived social constraints are ‘unemployment’, ‘delinking degrees with job’, ‘low salary’ and ‘privatisation of education’.

The study finds out that the highly perceived factors in family constraints are parents’ ‘illiteracy’, ‘ignorance’, ‘separation or divorce’, and ‘loss’. As for as the health constraints are concerned, ‘mentally challenged’, ‘abnormal growth’ and ‘frequent illness’ are highly perceived in the study. In the case of gender constraints, the problems such as ‘dowry’, ‘distance of educational institutions’ and ‘duration of education’ are highly perceived while the gender based negligence of higher education and sexual harassment are less perceived in the study. The highly perceived problems of learning are ‘medium of instruction’, ‘mathematical application’ and ‘seminar and project’ The study reveals that the problems related to hostel perceived highly are ‘hostel deposit’, ‘low quality food’, ‘unsanitary environment’, ‘lack of freedom’ and ‘un-hygienic toilets’.

It is observed that the highly perceived problems related to transport are ‘lack of proper transport’, ‘heavy rush and non-stopping’ and ‘loss of time and energy’. In the
case of guidance services, the respondents highly perceive the problems such as ‘lack of personal guidance’, educational/vocational guidance’ and ‘lack of information services’. Moreover, it is found that the problems related to quality of education which are highly perceived are ‘failure to complete the syllabus’, ‘poor teaching’, ‘lack quality teachers’, un-qualified teachers’ and ‘lack of individual attention’ in higher education.

Thus, the respondents perceive a lot of problems in higher educational choices, which should be removed to provide quality education and eradicate the barriers which retard higher educational choices in Kanniyakumari District. It is possible only through effective rules and regulations and recruitment of qualified and quality staff irrespective of caste, religion and location especially in private aided and self-financed educational institutions.

**Suggestions**

The following suggestions are made on the basis of the analysis of data and the experience and knowledge gained from the study.

- The number of central and the state universities may be established wherever such institutions are not available and its numbers should be increased with a view to control the growth of deemed/private universities which make higher education a profit fetching commercial product and exploit the student community.  

- The allotment of finance in the budget for higher education may be increased in the state and the central level to remove the inequality found in terms of higher educational institutions and students’ enrolment especially in the
educationally backward states like Sikkim, Meghalaya, Bihar, Naga land and Mizoram.

- The government of Tamil Nadu may take effective steps to remove the district-wise inequality in the literacy rate and gender differential in enrolment especially in Thiruvannamalai, Vizhuppuram, Pudukottai, Karur and Namakkal, districts.

- The increase in the number of engineering and nursing colleges may be controlled to reduce the gap between the demand and supply of such education.

- Employment oriented subjects may be offered in the institutions in order to remove unemployment and maintain the balance between demand and supply of higher education.

- The government may appoint qualified, experienced and corruption-free officers to supervise the private aided and self-financed educational institutions without prior intimation to check the matters related to faculty, fee structure, hostel, laboratory, library, latrines other facilities to get rid of the problems of higher education.

- Instead of encouraging the privatization of higher education, the government should increase the educational facilities by reducing the salary and other expenditure on education. It will not only reduce the inequality in income distribution but also minimize the government expenditure and control inflation.
The government may establish colleges to provide education in law, agriculture and veterinary science in the district.

The parents should avoid suicide, separation or divorce and the consumption of intoxicating stuff as it affects their children’s future as well as their higher educational choices.

**Scope for further study**

The present study leads to a lot of researches in higher education from the socio-economic point of view. A few areas are suggested for research to be carried out further to expand knowledge and gain much experience especially in Economics of Education.

1. Socio-economic impact on higher educational choices in the other districts of Tamil Nadu.
2. Socio-economic impact on higher educational choices in the other states of India.
3. A comparative study may be conducted on socio-economic impact on higher educational choices at inter-district or inter-state level.
4. Socio-economic impact on higher educational achievement in Kanniyakumari District.
5. Impact of higher education on Socio-economic changes in Kanniyakumari District - A Study
6. Socio-economic problems of higher educational choices in Kanniyakumari District.
7. Impact of employment and income on higher educational choices in Kanniyakumari District.
It is doubtless that the knowledge and experience gained from research in the above areas will be the guidelines to frame educational policies that will bring about desirable changes in the Indian educational system.

CONCLUSIONS

The choice of higher education varies from person to person based on his/her socio-economic background. In this study, many social factors such as gender, caste, community, religion, age of marriage, parental education, size of family, success of others, distance of educational institutions, health and family tradition and economic factors such as parental employment, type of occupation, income, size of land, educational loan, cost of education, number of fee instalments, financial support of others, employment chances and income opportunity have been identified as important factors which determine the choice of higher education. However, parental education, nature of employment, type of occupation, income, employment chances, income opportunity, size of land, educational loan and financial support highly influence the choice in professional and non-professional education. On the other hand, gender, caste, religion, community, age of marriage, system of fee instalment, success of others and distance of educational institutions do not have much impact on higher educational choices in Kanyakumari District.

The overall findings of the present study displays that though this district is an educationally advanced one, there is no institution which offers Law, Agriculture and Veterinary Science courses. But, there are plenty of arts and science, engineering and nursing colleges which widen the gap between the demand and supply of such education.
Moreover, the study highlights various problems of the respondents related to economic, social, domestic health, gender, learning, hostel, transport, guidance and quality which affect higher educational choices. Hence, the suggestions stated above may be implemented to root out the problems of higher education and make the choice of higher education effective. Therefore, instead of producing inefficient degree holders, provision of job oriented or at least self-employable courses at low cost or maximum number of fee instalments is felt very necessary in the present society. In this regard, the study draws the attention of the state and the central governments to give top-most priority to higher education not in terms of the number of institutions and students’ enrolment but relate it to life by making higher education more meaningful and effective at national level