CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION
India's vast water resources capable of fish production are basically of two types: Inland and Marine. The development of marine fisheries is remarkable in the Indian economy. It has been estimated that the west coast would bring a catch of 60,10,000 tonnes and the east coast on the Bay of Bengal would only bring 32,21,000 tonnes of fish in a year. It has been observed that, of the two coasts, the west coast on the Arabian sea is richer in fish wealth. It is hoped that if an effort is made on the fuller exploitation of fisheries resources, the effort could lead to the scientific advancement of fish culture on one hand and the improvement of nutritional intake and rising level of income on the other.

Till recently, the inland fisheries in India meant traditional fish trapping and harvesting by fishermen, without adopting any scientific management practices. Traditional fish farming practices usually involve very little investment with automatic stocking of tanks and ponds by floodwater without any post-stocking management like supplemental feeding or periodic checking of fish growth, etc., and whatever fish are grown during certain periods of time are harvested and sold to provide a supplemental source of income to the fishermen.
The inland fisheries front has been rapidly changing since the introduction of composite fish culture technique and initiation of a number of pilot programmes since the beginning of the Fifth Five Year Plan. Under such circumstances, culture fisheries in the inland water bodies hold greater promise and are gradually becoming more and more popular with the fishermen communities.

Fish farming is a traditional practice in India. Fish farming has been practised in North-Eastern and Central India for over centuries more particularly in the states of West Bengal, Orissa, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. A flourishing activity in fish farming is also seen in the state of Andhra Pradesh. It has approximately 974 Kms. of coast line. The water resources are abundant in the state with perennial rivers, lakes and tributaries. In Telangana and Rayalaseema regions there is a dearth of tributaries. However, the absence of tributaries to some extent is eased by the presence of innumerable lakes and tanks.

The major fishing communities in the study area are Gangaputras and Mutrasi. The study covers the inland fishermen named Gangaputras. Here an attempt was made to study the economic, social, political and religious
aspects of Gangaputras. For the present study four villages were selected in Narsampet mandal of Warangal district, on the basis of locational aspects and the proportion of fishermen population to the total population. A pilot study was undertaken to collect the information relating to the villages. This information was used in selecting the sample villages. A field survey was conducted using unstructured interview schedule for the present study. The study was conducted during different seasons and different periods covering an entire year. The primary data were collected from all the 315 households of the fishermen community from these four villages. Besides, this study made use of secondary data. However, the primary data collected from the selected villages forms the core of the present study.

The economic means of Gangaputras is almost confined to the tank and lake resources. But due to hydrological and seasonal variations in the tanks and lake they are forced to take up other secondary occupations like agriculture, daily wage agricultural labouring and occasionally fruit selling. The rainy season is more favourable for fish growth as tanks and lake receive water from the inflow of rivulets/streams and drains.
due to rains. But during the early part of the season, fishing activity is sporadic and gradually it picks up and continues till the decline of water levels in the tank and lake. Fishermen have devised different techniques for fishing in accordance with the water level, season and size of the fish. They use different types of nets in different seasons. Six months in a year are more congenial for fishing activity, though the activity is continued throughout the year. The Gangaputras use different types of crafts like Mavu and Tooele which suit well in fishing operations in the streams and canals. Generally, fishermen make their nets themselves during leisure time as they believe that hand made nets are more durable than machine made nets.

The Gangaputras are usually assisted by their wives and sons during their fishing and agricultural operations. The assistance of an outsider or an employee was completely absent in their fishing operations. In their occupational pattern if at all the fishing activity requires the assistance of additional hands, the family members alone would adjust because employing an outsider involves additional expenditure. Gangaputra women share a major role in selling the dry fish. There are monopolised fish
merchants. The fish caught by the individual fishermen in the tanks as well as lake is disposed off both in the local villages and also to merchants from outside villages. When the financial requirements of Gangaputras are scarce for the fish culture, the Gangaputra fishermen enter into contract with middlemen, thus, the middlemen help the fishermen financially and have a binding that they should sell all the fish catch only to the middlemen. The middlemen are culturing only an export quality fish and these middlemen are not marketing the fish caught at the local marketing centres. Some Gangaputras who do not concentrate their total time on fish culture and capture are taking up agriculture. Moreover, the remaining respondents are taking up agricultural operations to subsistence and because of the prestige attached towards these land holding and involvement in agricultural operations.

For congenial agricultural operations, a year is divided into two seasons namely Rainy and Summer. The rainy season begins from mid-June and ends in mid-November. Farmers get sufficient water for irrigation for their first crop and for the second crop they are not able to get sufficient water. The water scarcity to some extent leads them, to hold secondary occupations like daily wage
agricultural labouring and fruit selling. Besides fishing, cultivation, daily wage, agricultural labouring and fruit selling became more conducive, to certain extent, for improving their livelihood. Thus in the present study area the Gangaputra reveal that one cannot maintain his family relying on a single occupation and hence one must look for alternative sources to supplement their income for their livelihood. In the study area they have an advantage in terms of their economy over the other communities because they involve in fishing as well as in agriculture and other allied occupations. Despite their economic advantages over other communities Gangaputra fishermen are resorting to borrowings due to their unplanned and unwarned investments. They are also spending lavishly on cultural activities relating to religion and other aspects in their day to day life.

In the present study the important aspects of social organisation such as marriage, family, kinship, life cycle ceremonies and intercaste relations of Gangaputra is also portrayed. In Gangaputas community, as in most of the other communities, marriage is considered to be a legal source to satisfy the sexual desire and to procreate children so as to perpetuate the lineage.
While arranging marriages they strictly follow the intiperu (surname) exogamy and caste endogamy. Cross cousin and uncle-niece marriages are quite common among Gangaputras. Though they follow monogamy, few polygynous cases are also observed. Marriage is usually arranged with due importance to the opinion of a boy in selecting his life partner. Inter-caste marriages are hardly found. Dowry system is a traditional practice within this community. Members of caste council play an important role in arranging marriages. Their presence is essential at the time of betrothal and marriage ceremony. Divorce and re-marriages are allowed with the approval of the caste council only.

The Gangaputras follow patrilocal rule of residence, patrilineal descent and the authority is patricentred. The general feature of Gangaputras family is corporatedness and it is preserved with the dynamic relationship among the family members. Every individual of the family has got some rights and duties over the other members. Their rights and duties help the family to run smoothly and thereby integrate with the wider society. Seven types of families have been identified among Gangaputras in the study area. They are: (1) incomplete nuclear famil...
(2) nuclear family, (3) sub-nuclear family, (4) joint family, (5) lineal-joint family, (6) supplemented sub-nuclear family and (7) single person household. Among different types of families nuclear family is a predominant type of family in Gangaputras. Apart from this, the family is dynamic in nature and not a static one. It changes in due course of time with the process of fusion and fission. The development of family either in the direction of progression or regression is influenced by several social and demographic factors like birth, migration, marriage, divorce, re-marriage and partition. Gangaputras practice different ceremonies at different stages in their traditional way of life.

The Gangaputra kinship terminology reflects the role which the kinsmen perform and on the type of behaviour one has to show towards each other. Their kinship terminology is primarily of classificatory type. It has a direct bearing on their practices of marriage and family. The forms of marriage, preferential marriage, alliances, customs of residence, descent rules and the like are seen in influencing the kinship terminology. The kinship system of the Gangaputras fits into the general work of the Dravidian kinship pattern.
In the present study area, the Gangaputras have their own traditional political institution which is known as the Kula Panchayat (caste council) and it is seen functioning effectively even till today without clashing with the village panchayat system introduced by the Government. Though both these bodies are functioning simultaneously, the traditional caste council continues to play a predominant role in all walks of life. As a matter of fact the village panchayat though is functioning under the direction of a Sarpanch and the ward members, it also functions with the co-operation of all different traditional caste councils.

The caste council of Gangaputras forms the basic unit of the traditional political organisation. The caste council exercises its control over the economic, social, religious and the day-to-day activities of the Gangaputras. The caste council is elected once in a year and the election to the caste council is normally unanimous. A consensus will be taken either to continue the previous council or to select a new council unanimously. The caste council is the custodian of the Gangaputras. It also enforces effective social control over people within this community. The decisions of the caste council:
should be accepted and should be obeyed by one and all. It settles and manages the problems like quarrels, disputes, violation of fishing rules and social order within the community. The caste council inflicts fines based on the gravity of the offence. All the meetings convened by the caste council are kept open to one and all and there will be more scope for discussion over a case, before the council arrives at a final decision. The caste council plays an important role in dealing with various aspects, such as marriage, divorce, pre-marital and extra-marital relationships, general disputes and quarrels.

The religious festivals and rituals pertaining to the general village welfare are being organised under the supervision of the village panchayat. The village panchayat enforces effective social control over its people and its decisions are accepted and obeyed by almost every member of the village community. The village panchayat takes care of the developmental programmes in the village and implements them.

Gangaputras are Hindus and their religious beliefs and practices are a blend of little traditional and great traditional elements. Fishing being their traditional occupation, a number of associated beliefs and rituals
constitute an important component of their religion. They worship a number of deities such as Gangamma, Uppalamma, Poshamma, Mankalamma, Yellamma, Kanakadurgamma and the like. They observe a variety of festivals which can be categorised into little traditional and great traditional levels. The Medaram jatara is celebrated once in two years. Gangaputras believe that, the Goddess Sammakka and Saralamma are the most powerful deities. Hence, they perform an annual jatara in honour of these deities. Among all festivals, Poshamma festival is celebrated with great fervour and pomp. Both the little and great traditional practices are observed during this festival.

In the present empirical study, a modest attempt has been made to explore the little known community of Gangaputras, who have been practising inland fishing by preserving the identity of their community and by continuing to follow their traditional occupation. The changes brought about in the society, at large, could not create any notable impact on this community to transform them.