CHAPTER V
FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter gives the summary of the key findings and conclusions of the study. The study has investigated the following hypotheses.

5.1 Hypotheses

H1: 1
“Fisherwomen of different age groups significantly differ in their utilization of media resources”.

H1: 2
“Fisherwomen with varying levels of literacy significantly differ in the utilization of media resources”.

H1: 3
“Fisherwomen with varied marital status utilize media resources differently”

H1: 4
“Fisherwomen with varied levels of monthly income utilize media resources differently”

H1: 5
“Media utilization varies across Fish Trades”

H1: 6
“Utilization of Media resources does not differ depending upon the number of members in the family”.

H1: 7
“The amount of investment in the trade does not make any difference in the utilization of media resources”.

H1: 8
“Age and profitability of trade of the fisherwomen are associated”

H1: 9
“Literacy level and Profitability of the fisherwomen are associated”

H1: 10
“Marital status and profitability of trade are associated”
H1: 11
“Monthly income and Profitability are associated”

H1: 12
“Occupation and profitability are associated”

H1: 13
“Family size and Profitability are associated”

H1: 14
“Nature of residency and Profitability of the trade are associated”

H1: 15
“Person involved in fishing business and profitability of trade of the fisherwomen are associated”

H1: 16
“Place of fish trade and profitability of trade of the fisherwomen are associated”

H1: 17
“Investment of amount on trade per day and profitability of trade of the fisherwomen are associated”

H1: 18
“Significant difference exists between mean ranks towards media that are easily available among fishery women”

H1: 19
“Significant difference exists between mean ranks towards media easily accessibility among fishery women”

H1: 20
“Significant difference exists between mean ranks towards media allocating rational slot/space for the betterment of the livelihood among fishery women”

H1: 21
“Significant difference exists between mean ranks towards media approach and attitude of the main stream media in depiction among fisherwomen”
H₁: 22

“Various utilization of media resources and availability of media resources are related”

H₁: 23

“Various utilization of media resources and access to media resources are related”

H₁: 24

“Availability of media resources and access to media resources are related”

5.2 Findings from the Demographic Analysis

The study has resulted in interesting findings with regard to the reach, access and utilization of the media among fisherwomen. As in any research here also the demographic characteristics played a significant role.

Based on the analysis of demographic data majority of the fisherwomen studied here are younger and middle aged fisherwomen of 31-40 years of age they are more outgoing and enterprising and possess more bargaining potential; mostly involved in fishing allied activities than the other age group; neither could read nor write; economically poor and not supported by the rest of the family members; earning below Rs. 3000 per month; involved in selling fish in the streets; have on an average 4 members in the family; and have their own houses.

They were also found to be selling fish in the streets or door to door, they prefer to walk from harbor to other selling places or sometimes by any transport vehicles to go the market or to the street; invest less than Rs. 1000; involved in the fishing related work 6 days in a week except Sunday; generating their source of income from self-help-groups; paying interest below Rs. 500; and making an average level of profit.

With regard to reachability mobile phone takes the top slot and television is easily accessible to people. TV is used for entertainment and Internet is of no use for the majority. TV and newspaper play a major role in helping fisherwomen in the promotion of their business. Most of the media are unfavorable and not helping them to enhance their livelihood.
5.3 Findings on Reach and Accessibility

Among all the media studied here the Public announcement and Bill Board Media are found to be the most reachable media among the fisherwomen. When compared to other media the mobile phones are the least reachable medium. However, in the field it was found that some of them had easy reach to mobile phones. In contrast, the Cinema and the Mobile Phones are the most readily accessible media for the fisherwomen. The newspaper is the least accessible medium for the fisherwomen.

The majority of the fisherwomen find that the newspapers and the Internet are of little use for their work. Among the few users most of them use the newspapers to know about the weather. Radio, Television and Cinema are used for entertainment purpose only. The mobile phone users use them to keep in touch with their relatives and other people. The study further states that only a negligible number of fisherwomen use any media to know the government schemes; know the current affairs; and to learn new ideas for their trade.

The majority of the fisherwomen are of the opinion that Newspaper, Radio, Cinema, TV, Internet, Community radio, Bill boards, Community newspapers, Oral medium, and Public announcements never allot any specific space for their knowledge and betterment and interestingly only a small number of them said that the media allot some space for their betterment.

For the fisherwomen Television and Oral Medium allot more space for their betterment than other media and the Community radio and Bill board allot lesser space for their betterment. All the media studied here were perceived to have unfavorable attitude regarding the depiction of the fisherwomen in their programmes. Mobile phones and internet were perceived to have the most unfavorable attitude and approach towards them. However the newspaper medium is found to have comparatively favorable attitude and approach to fisherwomen.

The fisherwomen perceive that newspapers depict most favorable attitude towards the fisherwomen and the Internet shows the least favorable approach and positive attitude.
5.4 Findings from Utilization of Media Resources

The fisherwomen’s use of the media for political participation is low. Fisherwomen with various levels of literacy significantly differ in their utilization of media resources.

Marital status, variation in the success of the fish trade and size of the family do not affect media resources utilization. People with a monthly income of Rs 5000 and above the utilization are found to utilize the media resources for family life more than the other two groups which have lower income.

Fisherwomen who invest between Rs.1000 and Rs.2000 per day in their trade are found to utilize the media resources for their family life has than the other two groups.

Majority of the ‘Read only group’ were found to be able to earn an average profit; the Read and Write were on lesser profitability.

Majority of the people who own a house or a government constructed house are found to have average profitability. Majority of the people who live in rented houses are found to generate lesser profit.

There is no association between age group and profitability; between marital status and profitability; income and profitability; the occupation and profitability; family size and profitability; person involved in fishing and profitability; location of fish trade and profitability. Majority of the people who invest less than Rs. 1000 per day have only less profit and majority of the people who invest between Rs. 1000 and Rs.2500 and people whose investment per day crosses more than Rs. 2000 per day earn an average profit.

The mobile phone is the most frequently used medium for fisherwomen, followed by community television and internet is very rarely available to fisherwomen. Mobile phone is the easily accessible medium for fisherwomen, followed by oral medium. Fisherwomen perceive oral medium as having more space for their betterment than any other media. Community newspapers and television are found to allot equal slots/space for them. Of the entire media internet is perceived to allot very less slot/space for the betterment of fisherwomen. The newspaper has the
most positive approach and attitude in depicting fisherwomen in their media followed by Radio and internet.

Of all the relationships, utilizing media resources for Knowledge and Empowerment have the highest significant positive relationship. Generally for the fisherwomen every variety of utilization of media resources is significantly positively interrelated to the other. It is found that Fisherwomen are not portrayed and also not clearly identified in the media. Among the seven aspects, portrayal and identity of fisherwomen and positive images of fisherwomen have the highest mean scores. For all the seven aspects of economic condition of utilization majority of the fisherwomen opined disagreement.

The fisherwomen perceive that the media do not help them for political participation. The fisherwomen perceive that the media is not utilized for family life participation as it is evident from their disagreement responses. Majority of the fisherwomen are found not to utilize the media for getting health-care advice and awareness on personal hygiene. However, to the extent of agreement with the utilization of media resources for getting health-care advice and awareness on personal hygiene, fisherwomen perceive that media resources are more for creating and promoting awareness on personal hygiene than for providing health-care advice.

Utilization of media resources for information to the fisherwomen is rated very low among this group. But, to the extent of agreement with the utilization of media resources for information many of the fisherwomen perceive that the media has changed from traditional way of thinking and secondly offered information on fishing trade.

On the utilization of media resources for environment the fisherwomen are found not to be utilizing the media properly and to the extent of agreement with the utilization of media resources for environment they feel that media can be utilized more for knowing the information on disposal of wastage than for knowing the importance of ecology and obtain awareness of many changing patterns weather conditions.

Fisherwomen completely disagree with the media utilization for their empowerment. Nevertheless, to the extent of agreement with the utilization of media
resources for empowerment they feel that media can be utilized more for creating awareness than for uplifting fisherwomen, capacity building of fisherwomen, bridging government and fisherwomen, exposing atrocities against them, and bringing information on gender sensitivity.

As per the structurally equated model on the causal aspects of the media, Print media, Electronic media and Oral media cause media accessibility to have effect on media utilization.

Where women’s projects and initiatives in the fishing sector are concerned there appears to be increased tension caused through a lack of mutual acknowledgement, power struggles and undercover hierarchies, the inability of delimitation and constructive criticism, of merciless quarrels and too little praise and empathy. Since women’s projects along the years have been – and still are – suffering from lack of finances as well as social security for their collaborators and labours, this is regarded as one major cause, besides, race and caste discrimination-for the disturbed communication structure among interpersonal contacts and women’s projects.

For many it is no longer a secret that the traditional struggle of the women’s movement for better working conditions for women has resulted in many cases in creating the movement itself and less protected working conditions for women.

In order to reach a change for the better, this research proposes to utilize more strongly the communication method of “debate” among the women related to fishing in the coastal area of Cuddalore district. This would allow every thought and its verbalization.

To implement such a kind of debate this research recommends to the women related to fishing to establish a so-called “devil’s advocate”, a woman who has the task of being consciously provocative during the debate, by giving her voice and vote to all kinds of motives which are considered to be patriarchal and socio-politically incorrect. It was expected that such as kind of uncensored communication could introduce processes of clarification and could cancel manners of communication among women which have already in several cases paralyzed the collaboration of women and consequently made their work ineffective. It would
allow discussion in order to counter the reality that communication among women
does not take place in a vacuum freed of discriminating attitudes concerning class or
caste.

Availability of print media is significantly positively related to all types of
utilization and overall utilization. Availability of electronic media is significantly
positively related to social life, health condition, empowerment, knowledge, overall
utilization of media resources. Availability of oral media is not at all significantly
related to any of the utilization of media resources.

Access to print media is significantly positively related to social life, political
participation, family life, health condition, knowledge, empowerment, and overall
utilization of media resources except economic condition. Access to electronic
media is significantly positively related to social life, political participation,
economic condition, health condition, knowledge, empowerment, and overall
utilization of media resources except family life. Access to oral media significantly
positively related only to social life and health condition utilization and not with
other forms of utilization.

Availability and accessibility are significantly highly correlated with each
other.
5.5 Conclusion

The role of media, the Fourth Estate, as an influencer of public opinion and an effective agent of social change has always been recognized as the fastest and the most powerful weapon by the world today. Empowerment through education by media is generally accepted as a corner stone of modern social system. It has come to the realization that Media is a powerful double edged sword that can be used in either way. Media which was earlier slowly entering into the Indian psyche, now, due to the internet is penetrating. In the days of Citizen Journalism when the world has shrunk to wavelengths and information-sharing through the social media in bringing about major changes, it is essential to take a critical look at the role and the responsibilities of the media among the fisher living in coastal areas of Cuddalore. In order to understand this phenomenon understanding the consumers of media and the extent of media penetration is important. This study has revealed interesting findings on this situation.

It can be concluded that demographic characteristics such as age, levels of literacy, economic status, profitability, type of trade, nature of residency, and amount of investment influence fisherwomen’s media consumption.

Based on usage newspapers are used to know weather and Radio, TV, Internet, and Cinema for entertainment purpose only; the mobile phones are for staying to be in touch with other people. Television and Oral Medium allot more space for their betterment than other media and the Internet, Community radio and Bill Board allot lesser space for their betterment and utility.

Generally the media studied were perceived to have an unfavorable attitude regarding the depiction of the fisherwomen in their programmes. However, mobile phones and Internet were perceived to have the most unfavorable attitude and approach towards them and the newspaper medium is found to have a favorable attitude and usefulness.

Finally, the investigation concludes that as per feedback from the fishermen there is no association between age group and profitability; between marital status and profitability; income and profitability; the occupation and profitability; family
size and profitability; person involved in fishing and profitability; place of fish trade and profitability.

The excerpts from the interviews with experts regarding the reach, accessibility and utilization of the media suggest possible strategies the strategies for improvement of the fisherwomen. They have elicited mixed responses from extremely positive attitude to modest to extremely negative attitude about the role of media in the lives of fisherwomen. Though the media is perceived to play a positive role in the fisherwomen’s life the strategies, the experts would like to see that the media help the fisherwomen more effectively and regularly cutting the currents of their normal life.

Regular columns or programs dedicated to the welfare of the fisher folk are suggested. With such a power and respect it is expected to play more as it makes use of the problems of the people of the coastal areas to become popular. As fishing community is a marginalized society in general and the media space for their welfare is not given priority. The media sector and government are expected to take serious steps to develop the fishing community through education and relevant projects.

As the fishing community is one of the underdeveloped communities in the social perspective, the media are expected to take many measures to help them, and to educate them in the development of their trade.

Regular and sufficient empowerment programs in the Television, radio and newspapers that could empower women are expected. Further, as rural women do not even have an access to these media many outreach programmes by the media is expected. Publishing their issues and throwing light on their hard life to the rest of the world is also emphasized.

A well-being approach to small-scale fishing encompasses, economic aspects of livelihood together with a focus on capabilities such as education, health and food security that shape livelihood options and people’s aspirations for the future. Fishing communities are often marginalized, mobile, and found in remote locations which can constrain their access to information and education and health. Well-being is closely linked to vulnerability. Shocks which can increase vulnerability and reduce well-being include price changes in fish and input markets. Education, right for
decision making, managing varied income, seasonality of livelihoods, poor hygiene, need for balanced food intake, awareness on health, social security etc., can be addressed with the support of mainstream media.

The media is expected to empower the women fisher folk in all walks of life, besides creating awareness among them. Outreach programmes are also expected from the media.

If the media can recognize the social shades of women engaged in fishing allied activities and subsequently build support systems and systematic interventions that can tide them over in times of need, sustainable development for them is possible.

The media needs to create more space for the fishing industry as it is a global industry with thousands of people involved in it. The media is expected to build an identity for the fisherwomen that will lead them to be respected for the revenue they bring to the country. This focus will prompt young fishermen to take pride in their work and persist with fishing. Social networks can be crucial for the survival of both individual and households. Networks can also extract costs as they may require individuals to meet various obligations. Membership in formal organizations such as fisheries associations or cooperatives is more prevalent among men than women.

Women’s involvement in fisheries is more significant than often assumed. Their current engagement is shaped by rapidly dwindling fisheries stocks on one hand, and the increased global demand for fish on the other. Without women’s under enumerated and under-valued work, men might not be fishing at all. In this sense fisherwomen’s role in economic development needs to be highlighted. Programs and current information that would enhance social, economic status of fishers and fishing women should be published and broadcast regularly.

Women participate in community-based fisheries committees in Cuddalore for three major reasons: improvement in livelihoods, enhancement of capabilities (skills, knowledge and self-confidence) and a belief in sustainability in fisheries resources for the next generation. While women are active in savings and credit, and self-help groups, only a minority assume leadership positions in the committees. The active engagement in savings and credit groups are based on traditional gender
norms that associate women with household financial management, as well as patience and negotiation skills to collect dues from group members.

For women regular independent spaces are to be assigned for fishing related works that could help improve their social transformation. Regular programs in Television and other media explaining various welfare schemes for fishermen community by the respective departments are also said to be the need of the hour. They must be regularly telecast at a convenient time for the concerned people to watch and get benefitted. Even weekly Tamil magazines should publish articles of success stories and challenges of both men and women in the field.

While women bear the brunt of the costs of gender inequities, these costs are distributed widely and are a cause of persistent poverty for all members of the society. Addressing gender inequities by improving women’s incomes and educational levels, as well as their access to information and decision making processes, improves human capabilities of the household, as well as society in general. The media such as television, newspaper, radio and Internet can bring out programmes to empower women and the other household in these areas of critical concern.

Finally, more number of TV serials and Movies should be released depicting the problems of the fishing community and rectifying measures undertaken by the government, Banks etc. Efforts must be taken by the media to empower the fishing community taking into consideration the various emerging trends in globalization and modern revolution in fishing technology. Media must employ or involve more women in their programs and make policies to run the’ women- only- village centers’.

Climate change has emerged as one of the biggest challenges to the resilience of human societies. Coastal and flood plain communities by virtue of their location are vulnerable to exposure and face high risks in climate change-related disasters. Costs to women and children are often disproportionate because traditional norms and beliefs prevent them from acquiring skills and capacities, such as the ability swim, or access to information on impending disaster. Such disasters also put strain on assets used for consumption or for investing in livelihood activities and
micro or small enterprises. A better understanding of the gendered nature of coping and risk perception would help the women in the coastal area in the design of gender equitable mitigation and adaptation strategies to address the potentially unequal impacts of climate change on women in fishing areas. In this situation Media can give reports of the aftermath of the natural catastrophe like Tsunami and cyclones. As men are off-shore most of the time the women can run the affairs of home and be a guiding force of their tradition. For this they must be systematically educated in the media field.

In conclusion we may add that India may have achieved the status of a trillion dollar economy but there is huge inequality in the way the wealth and accompanying opportunities are distributed across various communities. Women continue to be largely excluded from the growth and empowerment story despite innumerable schemes and special efforts at greater inclusion.

As found in the survey of this research, despite the saturation of the media in the world, the average fishing family today finds it difficult to earn their livelihood throughout the year (see table. 4.2.4). Therefore, a vast potential available among the unemployed fisherwomen need to be tapped, which can be done by making them capable of doing something remunerative on their own. This, however, requires that the women are motivated, have a degree of awareness, the ability to think critically and take decision, and above all possess a measure of self-esteem. These are some of the parameters of empowerment, and education the surest means to it, as spelled out in the programme of Action for the National Education Policy, 1986.

This research has been discussing effectively the reach, access and utilization of media resources in the development of women related to fishing community of Cuddalore District today. Given the omnipresence of new media resources in our society, there is a vast difference between the rich and the poor in India. As per the findings of this research, the obstruction in the path to development of the fisherwomen is that the scope of information is not available to everybody. Hence, the development brought through media resources needs to be equally shared by all sections of the society. The opening up of reach, access utilization of media resources is necessary for coastal women who must have easy
access to them. Easy accessibility of information will certainly open up new avenues of development and empowerment of the women related to fishing. It is the author’s strong belief that if the role and functions of media resources have to be successful it must be pro-people and pro-development, which can happen only if it reaches out to the fisherwomen in Cuddalore district, and if its use in local language is promoted. Real progress requires co-ordinated efforts directed by clearly defined priorities. With the right kind of access to media resources we can improve the overall lifestyle of the fisherwomen in Cuddalore district.
5.6 Recommendations and Suggestions

- India is experiencing a revolution in communication media on the lines of Western countries in terms of reach, access and utilization. The mass media’s role in diffusion of innovation is well known in its immediate programme effect and wide coverage of people. It is also well known that Tamil Nadu is emerging very successfully in software development. The Government of Tamil Nadu has implemented a number of women’s development programmes using new and the social media. Through application of new communication strategies, the people in general and women in particular must be made aware of these programs in such a way to utilize them and bring behavior change for their betterment.

- The vast amount of literature and also this research provide ample evidence to show that women’s access to media resources is fairly low compared to men, mainly due to women’s roles and their disadvantageous position in the coastal culture. Consequently, women miss much in terms of access to information and knowledge when they are very busy with other family and household chores. The capacity to access information is greatly determined by one’s social and economic background. Generally, men have a higher status than women, which results in gender disparities in access to information. Exposure to the media has led to exploration of the connection between women and media. Therefore it is suggested that women’s image in the media must change as independent potential citizens also women must be seen as creators of contents in the media and in the world.

- The accessibility of the modern communication media like the Internet, cell-phones, videoconference and so on, and its utilization by women is another issue for analysis. Through e-training and e-education a great majority of women related to fishing can be empowered as functional literates. This will reduce the gap on gender divide.

- The fishing community at present is exposed more to technological media and are in the crisis of transition where women are at the receiving end, the dysfunctional communication process of new age vis-à-vis this community
demands a re-look. The conflict and convergence of tradition and change on this society should ensure that the strength of healthy man-women relationship already existing is not lost forever. While wrongs in this tradition need to be corrected such amendments should come from within this society with minimum external intervention. The political administration of the country needs to be sensitive to these aspects.

- Most men in the fishing sector are victims of alcohol addiction. The women suffer more due to this social evil. The women’s movement through a series of forums – human rights, mainstream media and alternative media – must initiate discussion on hitherto closed or restricted topics for public debate such as wife battering, sexual abuse in the home of girls and marital rape. These issues have an important bearing on women’s health, autonomy and development.

- Women in the coastal area are struggling hard to bring communication issues to a new level of political expression. One of the salient forces reshaping the era in which we live would be a well-organized communication system based on meticulous research. In fact, to ensure success aiming at empowerment through communication, women’s rich experiences from their struggle can provide new definitions to the problems and bring many other changes that are necessary.

- Women in the fishing sector must be able to lay down ways of thinking and talking about their roles to be shared by the entire spectrum of women’s communities. Communication-academics such as local man-dominated groups might have rules of their own but women in accordance with their need for development and empowerment need to break rules while still playing the game since their actions are going to shape many events.

- The policy makers have to take into consideration the need to provide training and capacity building workshops for the women related to fishing. Moreover the media institutes, schools of journalism, ministries of information and broadcasting at state and central levels and audio-visual media should contribute proactively so as to involve and empower the women in the fishing community.
5.7 Recommendations and Suggestions to the policy makers

- The policy makers must take steps to create an environment through positive economic and social policies for full development of women in the coastal areas to enable them to realize their full potential; the de-facto enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on equal basis with men in all spheres-political, economic, social cultural and civil; equal access to participation and decision making of women in the social, political and economic life of the nation, equal access to women to health care, quality of education, career and vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupational health and safety, social security and public office.

- The increase in the numbers of women who work in the fishing industry however, has not translated into increased access to power and other media of communication. The government and the policy makers must take steps to make available the social and new media by establishing as many as community centres in order to have more access to the new innovations in the media.

- According to the analysis of this research it is observed that while mass media have the largest direct effect, women’s access and utilization of mass media have greater indirect effect on the decision-making and autonomy of women. Education, employment and family income have strong influence on mass media exposure. The quality of women related to fishing is measured in terms of education, health status and economic status. Hence, the policy makers must take steps not only to make access of the new media to the women but also to establish as many as formal or non-formal education centres for the fishing community.

- Personal communication and mass media can easily diffuse the message about various developmental programmes available for women. The women have more access to messages of various developmental schemes available in this coastal area of Cuddalore. The Self-Help-Groups functioning under Government and Non-Government Organizations contribute to women’s
development in this territory. However, it could be said that this coastal area could be made as a more literary region.

- Through enacting a law, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting at centre or state level can instruct Government and private owned new or social media to plan exclusive programmes for women in the fishing community. Such programmes should focus on disadvantages faced by women, interaction among the women facing gender-discrimination, women’s rights and legal facilities available, availability of economic betterment and health care. The government also could make it possible for the equal participation of women with men in employment in the mass media channels which will be helpful to produce programmes giving importance to gender-sensitive and feminist perspective.

- Most of the women related to fishing suffer from many health problems. Improving women’s health requires an effective mass media communication approach, a strong and sustained government commitment, a favourable policy environment, and well-targeted resources. The communication strategy should include balancing the roles of the public and private sectors to maximize resources and to extend care to women to whom government programmes do not reach.

- Government should take responsibility for the isolated section of the society of the fishing community and produce programs of better standard and authenticity. Certain awards or prizes can be instituted for the private media or channels who serve the cause of development of the fishing community.
5.8 Recommendations and Suggestions to the media professionals

- Mass literacy is an essential criterion for development. This is possible by imbibing basic skills among the people. Mass media plays an important role in this. It can instruct people and educate them. Projects like educational television and Gyan Dharshan are few examples where media is used to instruct people, impact them basic skills. Further it helps the people to raise their standard of living.

- Based on the understanding from the field research it is clear that there is a need to improve the general situation of women on a long term basis. But as a priority, the social media could further affect more interventions in creating awareness among women on the market situation, nature of fish markets, health, sanitation, child care and gender sensitivity. The research also strongly recommends that the media must take care to educate women formally as well as informally in improvement of the quality of the product.

- Mass Media, to some extent, strives to bring developmental change, through its message to the fishing community. The Mass Media, through interpretation, analysis and discussion point out the drawbacks of the fishing society and core areas of empowerment. The message should be such that it should create an urge for change and development among the fisherwomen. The media in its aim to bring about developmental changes functions as a decision maker and teacher.

- Mass Media play an important role in development communication through the circulation of knowledge, providing forums for discussions on issues, teaching ideas, and skills for a better life and creating a base of consensus for stability of the state. In this manner the media can exploit the potential of the fisherwomen for development purpose.

- Reach access and utilization of media resource is vital for women of the fishing community for their development and empowerment. The media resource can expose a large number of fisherwomen to positive role models. The primary goal is to persuade viewers and readers to change their behavior
and attitude. As a powerful socializing agent, media have become an important tool as well as site of struggle for women seeking to eliminate the low status in the society. Definitely, mass media play a significant role in shaping women’s values, attitudes, perception and behavior.

- The Media professionals must think of producing creative and useful programmes. The programmes like, “Women’s Issues This Week” can be planned and telecast every weekend to make women understand and issues of various dimensions. Because of multitude of channels, programme options are plenty. The information and broadcasting policy can be designed to fix a time for transmission of short duration women’s development - programmes by all the media channels in order to avoid the skipping of people from watching such programs.

- As most of the women in fishing trade have more access to television the TV channels could telecast messages on women’s issues during the short breaks of certain popular serial or programmes. The agencies which are committed to social causes must be given greater consideration and the general policy must view the performance of mass media on the basis of their degree of commitment.

- The private TV channels and other new media are run for purely profit motives and their programmes are mostly entertainment oriented in nature and produce programmes which will attract the largest audience. The private media should take responsibility to reach out to the socially marginalized group such as women in fishing hamlets for purely as part of their corporate social responsibility.

- Media professionals should help to popularize women’ strategic gender needs and practical gender needs. Strategic gender needs are different in different economic contexts and are determined by statutory provisions, affirmative action by the state, pro-active role of the employers to enhance women’s position in the economy and social movements.
• There are issues of the impact of liberalization and its specific effects on women in fishing hamlets which should form topics of information and debate for the media. The fallout of reforms on various sectors of economic stagnation, closing down of industries, the setbacks on fishing industry and livelihood for women should be reported and discussed through the media. The media should enable the fishing community to know the political, economic and social implications of various policies, strategies and treaties. Media should recognize their roles as watchdogs of the society and culture in these identified issues.

• The indiscriminate opening of doors to new experiences and impressions by the media sometimes alienates people from their own culture. The media must take steps to adapt the local cultural communication methods such as: puppet shows, street plays and other community oriented methods to communicate to people for village development.

• The fishing community is exposed to various sicknesses due to the weather. Hence, health communication for women must draw the family into the programmes and encourage members including husbands to render emotional and domestic assistance at home. Positive role modeling through audio-visual communication tools will help to break the initial resistance and enable the family and community to participate in empowering women towards health care and improving their status.

• A multi-sectoral and multi-media strategy is necessary to motivate and empower women related to fishing to seek self-health care and in the process lead safer and satisfying lives. To achieve these mass media strategies must be decentralized so as to meet the local needs determined by social and cultural variations.

• Social and economic development is one of the priorities of the fishing communities. Hence, improving the socio-economic conditions of the women related to fishing is expected to enhance the status of women and thereby quality of their life. Mass media can help women have certain behavior of change useful for women’s empowerment and achievement of
better quality of life. In spite of the developmental efforts taken, certain basic messages on social, economic and demographic changes could be effectively communicated through mass media which can take the message to the largest section of the society in a short time.

- Reach, Access and Utilization of media resources among fishing women is an evolving process and demands involvement. For involving women, communication has a crucial role to play. Low cost communication aids like newsletters along with strong interpersonal support network, participatory trainings and process documentation exercises will help women to have easy access to media resources. These strategies if used with consistency and clarity can be of immense help in empowering women.

- Media education is another area of concern. There is an urgent need for media education and literacy to create a demand for better, need based media stories and programmes. This is important to attract readers and viewers among the fishing community enabling them to pass the development messages among the illiterate women for whom the programmes are undertaken. Decentralization and provision of training for communities is necessary for local broadcasting like community radio. Placing communication resources in the hands of the fishing community is a sure way to achieve success in developmental project with the use of mass-media.
5.9 Scope for Further Research

In this research, apart from several practical findings a few relevant theoretical propositions have been made, which deserve testing in future research.

- Surveys can be conducted at regular intervals to assess the level of exposure to mass media, media content, women’s interest in media programmes, and the impact of the programmes among women in the coastal areas. The research scholars can involve as many fisherwomen related to fishing for enhancing their lifestyle though the utilization of media for empowerment and further development in the social and economic spheres. This will be useful to design a specific communication strategy to achieve what will have to be done to make the women choose more educative and informative programmes. A careful qualitative research on mass media and its usefulness will be needed as a basis for designing messages to convey knowledge and modify behavior. Action research should be used to investigate and test alternative communication approaches to improving the delivery of services and showing greater responsiveness to women’s needs.

- The impact of mass media on the fisherwomen is a potential area of research especially in developing countries. Research Communication will be more useful to remove certain bottlenecks in the exposure to mass media. Fishing women are to be integrated with mass media and will have to be involved in the production of the programmes relating to women issues and application of new strategies to cater to the changing needs of the people.

- Women in India are major stakeholders in the Indian economy and so they cannot be ignored any longer. Identifying and studying in detail policy related research issues on gender concerns specifically with relation to communication and women in fishery, to provide feedback to policy makers would be a great help. This would bring a positive change in the scenario of the fishing community.

- As fishing from sea is very much limited due to various natural and other causes aquaculture is becoming more lucrative and promising. Hence, new
researches can be introduced to find how this area can be exploited to sustain the livelihood of the fisherwomen.

- Fishing sector is an area that is still under-researched particularly from a sociological and gender perspective. There is need for deeper and broader research into the many aspects of fisheries such as those related to employment, the role of community based organisations, the contributions of decentralized local Governments and so on. This then will provide informed opinions on the sector and consequent formulation of relevant measures to be taken.

- The extraordinary revolution in media affects the basic structure of the society, and is raising discussions and debates that are profoundly related to women. Though the media is to a considerable extent helping as the important source and access to speak out against the oppression and marginalization of women at the grass root level. One may say that there has been great strides in many areas with notable progression reducing some gender gaps. Yet, as the study points out that media resources have not fully or satisfactorily penetrated into the real empowerment of fisherwomen. The afflicted fisherwomen suffer sprawling inequalities in their access to information. There is a need to uncover many factors like cultural and social aspects, self-decision making, economic independency, managing disaster situation, health and sanitation, awareness and exercise of rights, political participation and many more issues that can help progressive development of women in the fishing community. Today, it is possible, to find anything related to empowerment of women by typing keyword searches using a reliable internet browser. Media have huge potential for the empowerment of women, however, the overall reach, access and utilization of media resources by women is very low among the fishing community. It is thus vital, to utilize the media for improving the social, economic, cultural and political status of women in Cuddalore coastal areas and divulging their role in national development.
The Father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi firmly stated that the status of women will not change merely by bringing legislations; it must be supported by change in the women’s social circumstances and situations. The research further adds that empowerment of women will lead to development of the family, then community, then society, then state and then the nation. A nation that aims to make a ‘media revolution for the development of the county by 2020’ cannot afford to ignore capacity building and empowerment of women related to fishing.

“There is no chance of the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on one wing.”

- Swami Vivekananda