CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

7.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is devoted to present the summary of the work done and important findings supplemented with suggestions. Looking into the summary, one can easily understand what were done in the study without reading it page by page. Findings convey the outcome of the empirical analysis. The suggestions made by the researcher would pave the way for increasing the welfare conditions of the fishermen of different categories in various ways.

7.1 SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

Fishing is an ancient activity of mankind. It is an important occupation of the people living in coastal regions. To help the fishermen to increase their catch, the Government has implemented many schemes. Fishermen are given monetary assistance for buying mechanised fishing boats and modern fishing nets to make blue revolution. Fishery sector provides employment for 10 lakh fishermen and about 12 lakh fisher folk including 5 lakh women employed in the post-harvest sector. During 2000-01, the quantity of marine exports rose to 4.21 lakh tonnes, showing an increase of 22.8 percent.
India has maintained its 8th position in 1999 with a catch of 8.317 million tonnes compared to 3.215 million tonnes in 1998. China remains the top global fishing nation with a catch of 17.24 million tonnes. The contribution of fishery sector to foreign exchange earnings was substantial and had a share of 1.4 percent of the GDP. The country has a long coastline of 8118 km and an equally large area under estuaries, backwaters and lagoons highly amenable for developing capture as well as culture fisheries. The annual (2002-2003) fish production in India has been estimated at 6.180 million tonnes.

The State of Tamil Nadu with a coastline of 1076 km, covers both East and West Coast which constitutes about 15% of India's total coastal length. About 6.8 lakhs marine fisher folk live in 13 coastal districts.

Kanyakumari district has a long fishing tradition. Thirty nine fishing communities inhabit in the 68 km stretch of the coast. In Kanyakumari District, there are 42 fishing villages and 3 major and 42 minor fish landing centres in the district. There are also 45 fishermen sangams in 28 coastal villages. In Kanyakumari District, fishery wealth is in abundance. At about 40,000 active fishermen living along the above coastal stretch in 42 Villages are not only winning their bread by fishing but also help the country to earn
sumptuous foreign exchange. Therefore, as a popular Government, it is the foremost duty of it to work for the upliftment of the socio-economics status of the fisher folk. With the aim of achieving this goal lot of welfare schemes are launched by the Government of Tamil Nadu through subsidies, construction of free houses etc.

As this study focuses attention on the fishermen welfare schemes, the government could involve in various ways to increase the standard of living and to protect the life of them from risk. This will automatically increase the well-being of the fishermen and will give a boost to make them steady to involve in fishing occupation continuously and the Taluk economy will be developed.

The core of the problem of the study is that unless certain welfare schemes are provided for the betterment in the life of the fisher folk, they would suffer a lot not only in their fishing occupation but also in their standard of living. As a result, it would lead to migration of the fishermen and would even lead to ruin the fishing occupation.

Both primary and secondary data were used to fulfill the objectives of this study. Primary data were obtained by employing structured interview schedule. Secondary data regarding the welfare schemes exclusively implemented for the well-being of the fishermen belonging to the Catamaran sector and Mechanised boat
sector were obtained directly from government records for a period of 15 years from 1990-1991 to 2004-’05.

**Simple regression analysis** was carried out to establish the trend of fish catch in the three categories over the study period. **Semi-log growth model** has been applied to determine compound growth rate in the fish catch. **Linear multiple regression analysis** was made to assess the default in the repayment of loan for the three categories. The mathematical form of the multiple regression equation is:

\[ Y = b_0 + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + \ldots + b_nX_n \]

The estimation of the parameter \( b_i \) (\( i = 1,2,3,\ldots \)) was made through Ordinary Least Squares (OLS). The regression coefficients \( b_i \) were tested by the ‘t’ statistic and the goodness of fit was done.

The important factors (natural, social and economic) limiting the occupation of fish-catching in their day-to-day life were identified by employing **Garret ranking technique**. Some **descriptive statistics** consisting of minimum, maximum, mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis was employed to establish the concentration of welfare schemes with respect to the fishermen belonging to the respective sector.

The study was inclined to a period of 15 years from 1990-91 to 2004-05. However, only 14 years were considered for the study of the welfare schemes.
The important findings are highlighted below.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

I. Low level education is enough to do the fishing occupation with catamaran and little higher education is essential to operate mechanised boat in the same occupation.

II. Majority of the sample respondent were living in nuclear family system.

III. Majority of the families look after less number of family members.

IV. The earner – dependent ratio was found to be 2.71, indicating the fact that one earner looked after three dependents.

V. Fishing was the major occupation in all the categories.

VI. Mechanised boats were costly compared to the remaining two categories

VII. The value of net under catamaran with OBE was comparatively higher than the remaining categories of catamaran without OBE and mechanised boat.

VIII. Persons engaged in occupations other than fishing were found in the category of catamaran sector without OBE only.

IX. In the total monthly household expenditure, food occupied a major share of 50.52 percent.
X. Fuel and maintenance of nets were the major occupational expenditure in fish catching.

XI. The total expenditure incurred in the mechanised boat sector was more than two times greater than the total expenditure incurred in the rest of the two sectors.

TREND AND GROWTH RATE OF FISH CATCH

I. The fish catch (40,916.67 tonnes per annum) in the mechanised boat sector was found to be more than 11 times higher than the fish catch (3491.73 tonnes per annum) in the catamaran sector without OBE and more than 20 times higher than the fish catch (1964.73 tonnes per annum) in the catamaran sector with OBE.

II. A gradual increasing trend was found in the fish catch under the catamaran sector without OBE and a fish catch of 170.86 tonnes increases every year.

III. An increasing trend was visualized in the fish catch under the catamaran sector with OBE and a fish catch of 242.81 tonnes increases every year.

IV. A gradual increasing trend was found in the fish catch under the mechanised boat sector and a fish catch of 2,015 tonnes increases every year.
V. The compound growth rate was 0.58 percent during the peak season and during the slack season the compound growth rate was 0.40 percent in the catamaran sector without OBE.

VI. The compound growth rate was 2.16 percent during the peak season and during the slack season the compound growth rate was 1.35 percent in the catamaran sector with OBE.

VII. The compound growth rate was only 0.45 percent during the peak season and during the slack season the compound growth rate was 0.47 percent in the mechanised boat sector.

FACTORS LIMITING FISHING OCCUPATION

I. Huge waves were considered as the major natural limiting factor as reported by 86.60 percent of the respondents.

II. Communal clash was considered as the foremost social factor limiting the fish catch, as reported by all the sample respondents.

III. Higher cost of vessels was considered as the foremost and important economic factor limiting the fish catch as reported by 95.62 respondents

WELFARE SCHEMES

I. Only the fishermen in catamaran sector without OBE and with OBE were benefited from the free housing facility
II. The implementation of saving cum relief fund scheme by the Tamil Nadu government has created the awareness of saving among the people in the fishermen community.

III. The average amount of insurance paid per year per respondent works out as Rs. 48,449.61. It is noted that no fisherman under the mechanised boat sector was covered under this scheme. It is inferred that marine fishing is an accident-prone occupation.

IV. The average amount of New India Assurance scheme (Rs. 1,70,588) was higher than the average amount of Group Accident Insurance scheme as Rs. 1,66,667 (as seen in Table 6.3) by an amount of Rs. 3,921.

V. On an average, 9.67 $\approx$ 10 fishermen got subsidy of Rs. 9,66,666.67 every year. It is inferred that motorization of country crafts increased every year over the reference period.

VI. Every year two fishermen in each sector joined in the junior mechanic course and underwent training in modern fishing methods respectively over the study period.

CONCENTRATION OF WELFARE SCHEMES

I. There was greater variation in the amount provided under free housing facility as indicated by the standard deviation worked out.
II. There was relatively more number of years where there was higher amount of saving cum relief.

III. There was relatively less number of years in which higher amount of Group Accident Insurance were given.

IV. There was relatively more number of years where there was higher amount of New India Assurance.

V. There was relatively more number of years where higher amount was provided for motorisation of country craft.

DEFAULT IN THE REPAYMENT OF LOAN

In the catamaran sector without OBE

I. A unit increase in the loan availed would result in an increase of 0.019 units in the default amount.

II. A unit increase in the expenditure would result in an increase of 0.294 units in the default amount.

III. A unit increase in the income diversification would result in an increase of 0.117 units in the default amount.

In the catamaran sector with OBE

I. A unit increase in the loan availed would result in an increase of 0.011 units in the default amount.
II. A unit increase in the expenditure would result in an increase of 0.203 units in the default amount.

III. A unit increase in the expenditure would result in an increase of 0.097 units in the default amount.

In the mechanised boat sector

I. A unit increase in the expenditure would result in an increase of 0.007 units in the default amount.

II. A unit increase in the expenditure would result in an increase of 0.101 units in the default amount.

III. A unit increase in the expenditure would result in an increase of 0.005 units in the default amount.

IV. Taking into account the three sectors together, the fishermen were highly responsive in repaying the loan availed by them, however, the fishermen in the catamaran sector without OBE neglected their responsibility in the repayment of loan.

SUGGESTIONS

1. As fishery provides employment and income and earns foreign exchange considerably, the central as well as state governments should allocate at least 2 percent of their plan outlays to the fishery sector.
2. The fishermen community belongs to the Most Backward Community (MBC). If this community is recognized as Scheduled Caste (SC), all the provision being provided to the SC could also be provided to the fishermen community. This will give a better standard of living of this community.

3. During slack season fishermen used to migrate elsewhere for their bread. In order to mitigate migration, they must be employed within their locality. Establishment of fishnet factories and ice factories in the nearby fishing villages will absorb the fishermen during the slack season so that they could maintain their standard of living without sufferings.

4. The fishermen get Rs. 300 per month from the saving cum relief fund scheme for four months during the slack season. This amount is inadequate to spend for living. Therefore, the amount to be paid to the fishermen during the slack season must be increased to Rs. 1,000 per month for months.

5. In addition to the welfare schemes, investment must be made on the basic infrastructure comprising marketing, financial and public health in the coastal villages.

6. Fisheries cooperatives play a crucial role in the fisheries development. A comprehensive plan for the development of fisheries cooperatives can be evolved with the inputs like
education of fishermen, training of secretaries in the cooperative societies, better catch of fish, proper marketing of fish and full financial and promotional support by the government and financial institutions.

7. The fishermen under the catamaran sector with OBE and under the mechanised boat sector used to buy fuel and lubricants at subsidised rate from private bunk. The private bunk owners often deceive the fishermen in quantity as well as quality (adulterated diesel and kerosene). Therefore, the government should supply adequately the required quantity of fuel and other lubricants through cooperatives at still concessional rate.

8. To protect the fishermen from the clutches of village money lenders, the government should give monetary help directly to the Kanyakumari District Fishermen Sangam Federations already established in the respective villages so that the Federations could finance directly to the fishermen and also could involve in marketing of fish for the well being of the fishermen

9. Mere monetary help will not yield fruitful result in the upliftment of the standard of living of the fishermen. Therefore
monitoring services are also essential to reap the overall benefit from fishing occupation.

10. Credit for the traditional motorised and mechanised craft sectors in the fishing economy is burning need. Giving credit to a particular section of the fishermen society on one or two occasions will not solve the problem. So, the government should try to establish an institution, for example, a National Fisheries Development Bank (NFDB) to finance exclusively for the overall development of fisheries sector.

11. Monetary services are needed to reduce lenders’ risk so that various credit transactions could be linked with marketing.

12. Periodical evaluation with respect to the effectiveness of the implementation of the welfare schemes should be undertaken to make necessary modification for the improvement of the schemes exclusively meant for the fishermen community.

13. No saving cum relief fund has been provided to fisherwomen in the study area. The saving cum relief fund scheme should be extended to these women.

14. Pension may be provided to fishermen above sixty years of age.
15. It was observed that the price of catamaran log has been escalating in recent years and the catamaran fishermen who are only at subsistence level of operation found it difficult to replace the old logs with new ones. Therefore, logs should be supplied to catamaran fishermen at subsidised rate by the Forest Department.

16. Banks must provide liberal loans with lower rate of interest to motorise the traditional fishing crafts. A large number of small boat owners may be assisted to improve the economy of fishermen on the border line of poverty.

The fisherfolk in Kanyakumari district stands deprived of the power to enjoy their basic rights due to their low level of income and social, political and cultural factors. They happen to be in the lowest rung of the ladder and ignorant of different welfare schemes. Unless these downtrodden fishermen are provided with money and material by way of vast coverage and implementation of useful welfare schemes by the government, the occupation of fishing will be reduced and migration will emerge, thereby affecting the economic development of this district. Thus, instead of providing financial help to the rich fishermen for buying boat and net, the welfare schemes, which are useful to uplift the poor fishermen, could be implemented.
continuously without any break so that the standard of living of the poor fishermen would be increased. This would ultimately pave the way for giving a further fillip to the fishing occupation of Kanyakumari District.