CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Brief Summary of the Research

In this chapter the investigator would like to summarise the work and present the major findings of the research, "A study of the occupational aspirations of college students in Ernakulam District as related to their socio-economic background", and also to make certain valuable recommendations on the basis of the findings.

1100 senior Pre-degree students were the respondents of this study. These students were randomly selected from 21 colleges of Ernakulam District (Kerala).

There were 340 boys and 670 girls in the sample selected. The sample size being large (1100), the investigator did not try to have an equal number of boys and girls. Majority of the students (70.72 per cent) was with rural background.
Out of the 1100 students studied, 74.5 per cent did not have any confusion as to which occupation they were to select; but a good number of the students (74.3 per cent), said that they wanted better information about different careers.

The two hypotheses tested in this research work were (I) The occupational aspirations of college students are influenced by their (a) caste groups, (b) economic status, (c) parental education, (d) parental occupation, (e) Rural-urban background, (f) gender differences and (g) academic achievement; (II) The occupational aspirations of college students are related to their interest.

An elaborate questionnaire was used to collect the data related to the first hypothesis. And "Mathew Interest Inventory" was used to measure the interests of the students on eight Interest Scales (Aesthetic, Social, Science, Business, Outdoor, Political, Sports and Religious).

The questionnaire gathered information regarding the occupational aspirations as well as the occupational preferences of the students. The students were asked to mark their aspirations with the feeling that all the
facilities were available to them to enter in any occupations. But while preferring their occupations, the students had to take into consideration their particular socio-economic situations.

The students were given a list of occupations for the convenience of marking their options. They were to show their aspirations and preferences from the list given; also chances were given to write any other occupations not included in the list. The occupations were grouped into four categories, on the basis of the classifications given by Anne Roe, and the judgment made by 100 individuals from various occupational fields. The four categories on the basis of the social prestige value, as judged by the 100 individuals, are given below:

(1) Professional-managerial-I (2) Professional-managerial-II (3) Semi-professional occupations and (4) Skilled occupations.

After measuring the interests of the students on eight interest scales, the cumulative percentages of the scores of each scale were calculated. These cumulative percentages were divided into three groups: "Low", "Moderate" and "High".
Chi-square test was used to find out the significance of association between the independent and dependent variables. The two dependent variables were: 1) Occupational aspirations and 2) Occupational preferences. The independent variables were: 1. Caste affiliation 2. Religious affiliation 3. Economic status of the family 4. Parental education 5. Parental occupation 6. Gender differences 7. Rural Urban background and 8. Academic achievement. Other independent variables were: the "low", "moderate", and "high" interest scores on the eight Interest Scales of "Mathew Interest Inventory". The associations between the independent and dependent variables were considered as significant at the level of $p = 0.05$, in the chi-square test.

7.2 Findings

The present research study has the following salient findings:

7.2.1 Caste and Communities and the Occupational Aspirations of the College Students

The investigator studied the caste and communities of the students based upon the divisions followed by the Government of Kerala for the purpose of reservations in occupations and education. Accordingly, there were three
categories: (1) Forward Communities (not enjoying any reservation) (2) Backward communities (enjoying reservation) (3) Scheduled castes (enjoying reservation). Analysing the data related to caste affiliations the following were the findings:

7.2.1.1 From all the three groups (Forward communities, Backward communities and Scheduled Castes), more students aspired for the Professional-Managerial-I occupations; Forward Communities: 50 per cent Backward communities: 54.7 per cent; and scheduled castes: 37.8 per cent.

7.2.1.2 Comparatively more students from the backward communities than from the forward communities aspired for the Professional-Managerial-I occupations, which were the highest ranked occupations.

7.2.1.3 Except for the Professional-Managerial-I occupations, the students of forward communities do not show polarization of aspirations for any other occupations: aspiration for Professional-Managerial-I occupations: 50 per cent, aspiration for Professional-Managerial-II occupations: 17.4 per
cent aspiration for semi-professional occupations: per cent, and aspiration for skilled occupations: 1 cent. Among the scheduled caste students the least occupations were of the Professional-Managerial-II (only 9.5 per cent).

7.2.2 Caste and Communities and Occupational Preferences

Students

7.2.2.1 Comparatively more students from the forward (26.9 and backward communities (26.2 per cent) than from scheduled caste (17.2 per cent) preferred Professional-Managerial-I occupations.

7.2.2.2 The highest percentage of students from the forward communities preferred skilled occupations.

7.2.2.3 The highest percentage of students among the backward communities preferred semi-professional occupations.

7.2.2.4 More students from the backward than from the forward communities preferred higher occupations.

7.2.2.5 More students from the scheduled caste group prefer skilled occupations.
7.2.2.6 The occupations least preferred by the scheduled caste students are professional-managerial-II occupations.

7.2.3 Religion and Occupational Aspirations

7.2.3.1 There were no significant associations between the religious affiliations and the occupational aspirations.

7.2.4 Economic Status and Occupational Aspirations

7.2.4.1 As the family income of the students increased, the aspirations for higher occupations also increased.

7.2.4.2 More than 50 per cent of the students from families with an annual income of above ₹15,000/- aspired for professional-managerial-I occupations.

7.2.5 Economic Status and Occupational Preferences

7.2.5.1 More students from the families with the highest annual income preferred professional-managerial-I occupations.

7.2.5.2 Comparatively more students from the lower income families, than from the higher income families preferred the semi-professional and skilled occupations.
7.2.5.3 The economic status of the family is seen as a very prominently determining factor in the occupational preferences of the students.

7.2.6 Fathers' Education and Occupational Aspirations of Students

7.2.6.1 When the educational qualifications of the fathers are higher, the students aspired for higher occupations.

7.2.6.2 Majority of the students (55.8 per cent), whose fathers are either graduates or post-graduates aspired for the highest ranked occupations (Professional-Managerial-I Occupations).

7.2.6.3 From the students of the illiterate fathers also a considerable percentage (38.5) aspired for Professional-Managerial-I occupations. This finding is to be viewed against the reservation policy of the government, which guarantees reservation of seats for the scheduled castes students in the educational institutions as well as in different occupations. Because, in the illiterate group of fathers, chances are there that more members from the scheduled castes are included. Therefore, even if the
fathers are illiterate, their children on the strength of reservation might have aspired for higher occupations.

7.2.6.4 Comparatively lesser percentage of students of the fathers with graduation and post-graduation aspired for skilled occupations, than the students of the fathers with lower educational qualifications. And as the educational qualifications of the fathers were lower, more students aspired for skilled occupations.

7.2.6.5 More students from all the educational qualification groups of the fathers aspired for the Professional-Managerial-I occupations, though in varying percentages from each group.

7.2.7 Mothers' Education and Occupational Aspirations of Students

7.2.7.1 As the educational qualifications of the mothers are higher, higher percentages of students aspire for the highest-ranked occupations.

7.2.7.2 Majority of the students (56.5 per cent), whose mothers are either graduates or post-graduates, aspired for Professional-Managerial-I occupations.
7.2.7.3 Lesser percentages of students, whose mothers are either graduates or post-graduates, aspired for semi-professional and skilled occupations.

7.2.7.4 As the educational qualifications of mothers were lower, more students aspired for semi-professional and skilled occupations.

7.2.8 Fathers' Occupations and Occupational Aspirations of Students

7.2.8.1 More students from all the "fathers' occupation" groups aspired for the highest-ranked occupations (Professional-Managerial- I).

7.2.8.2 Comparatively more students of the fathers in the highest ranked occupations aspired for the highest-ranked occupations, than the students of the fathers in the lower ranked occupations.

7.2.8.3 Fewer students with fathers in the unskilled occupations aspired for the highest ranked occupations.

7.2.8.4 Fewer students with fathers in the Professional-Managerial-occupations aspired for the skilled occupations.
7.2.9 **Fathers' Occupations and Occupational Preferences of Students**

7.2.9.1 From the students of the unemployed fathers, only lesser number preferred Professional-Managerial-I occupations.

7.2.9.2 More students with unemployed fathers preferred skilled occupations.

7.2.10 **Gender Differences and Occupational Aspirations**

7.2.10.1 Comparatively more boys than girls had their occupational aspiration for Professional-Managerial-I occupations.

7.2.10.2 More girls than the boys had their aspiration for the skilled occupations, which include, Nurse, Clerk, Typist etc.

7.2.10.3 Gender differences did not affect the students' aspiration for Professional-Managerial-II occupations, which included Professor/Lecturer, Officer, Manager, etc.

7.2.11 **Gender Differences and Occupational Preferences of Students**

7.2.11.1 Compared to the occupational aspirations, only lesser percentages of boys and girls preferred the occupations of the highest category.
7.2.11.2 More girls than boys preferred the skilled occupations, which included Nurse, Typist, Clerk etc.

7.2.11.3 More boys than girls preferred the semi-professional occupations (Manager, Lecturer etc.).

7.2.11.4 Comparatively more boys than girls preferred Professional-managerial-I occupations

7.2.12 Rural-Urban Background and the Occupational Aspirations of Students

7.2.12.1 Both from the rural and from the urban students more percentages aspired for the Professional-Managerial-I occupations.

7.2.12.2 Comparatively more students with the urban than with the rural background aspired for the Professional-Managerial-I occupations.

7.2.12.3 More urban students than the rural aspired for the Professional-Managerial-II occupations.

7.2.12.4 More students with rural background aspired for the semi-Professional occupations.
7.2.12.5 Rural-urban differences did not influence the students' aspiration for the skilled occupations.

7.2.13 Rural-Urban Background and the Occupational Preferences of Students

7.2.13.1 Both from the rural and from the urban background more students preferred the skilled work. (The aspiration of more students were for the Professional-Managerial-I Occupations).

7.2.13.2 Comparatively more rural students than the urban preferred the skilled occupations.

7.2.14 Academic Achievement and the Occupational Aspirations of College Students

7.2.14.1 More students with higher academic achievements aspire for higher occupations, and fewer students with lower academic achievements aspire for higher occupations.

7.2.14.2 From the students who secured above 80 per cent marks in S.S.L.C. (Secondary School Leaving Certificate), 73.6 per cent aspired for the Professional-Managerial-I occupations.
7.2.14.3 More students with lower grades in S.S.L.C. aspired for less prestigious occupations.

7.2.14.4 Comparing the 'academic achievement' groups, more students having marks upto 40 per cent (SSLC), aspired for skilled work.

7.2.14.5 From all the "academic achievement" groups more students aspired for Professional-Managerial-I occupations.

7.2.15 **Academic Achievement and Occupational Preferences of Students**

7.2.15.1 Compared to the percentage of students who aspired for Professional-Managerial-I occupations, only lesser percentages from all the "academic achievement" groups preferred the same occupations.

7.2.15.2 The higher the academic achievements of the students, the higher was the percentage of students who preferred for higher occupations.

7.2.15.3 From the students with above 80 per cent marks (SSLC), who aspired for Professional-Managerial-I occupations, only just above half preferred the same occupations.
7.2.15.4 While only 26.8 per cent of the students with "upto 40 per cent marks" aspired for the skilled work, 47.8 per cent from the same group of students preferred the skilled work.

7.2.15.5 Students with lesser marks in S.S.L.C. preferred the occupations that need only lesser academic training.

7.2.16 Aesthetic Interest and Occupational Aspirations of Students

7.2.16.1 There is no significant association between the aesthetic interest of the students and the aspiration for Professional-Managerial-I occupations.

7.2.16.2 A slight association is found between the "moderate" and "high" aesthetic interests of the students and the Professional-Managerial-II occupations.

7.2.16.3 More students with "moderate" aesthetic interest aspired for semi-professional occupations.

7.2.17 Aesthetic Interest and the Occupational Preferences of Students

7.2.17.1 "Moderate" aesthetic interest and preference for Professional-Managerial-II occupations are associated positively.
7.2.17.2 No association was found between the aesthetic interest and the students' preference for skilled occupations.

7.2.18 Social Interest and Occupational Aspirations of Students

7.2.18.1 No significant association was found between the social interest of the students and their aspirations for Professional-Managerial-I and Professional-Managerial-II occupations.

7.2.18.2 Slight association is found between the "moderate" social interest and aspiration for semi-professional occupations.

7.2.19 Social Interest and Occupational Preferences of Students

7.2.19.1 No significant association was found between the social interest and the occupational preferences of students.

7.2.20 Science Interest and the Occupational Aspirations of Students

7.2.20.1 Significant association was found between the Science interest and the aspiration for Professional-Managerial-I occupations. More students with Science interest aspired for "doctor", "engineer", "Lawyer" etc.
7.2.20.2 "Low" Science interest and Professional-Managerial-II occupations were positively associated in this study.

7.2.20.3 "Low" and "Moderate" Science interest and aspiration for semi-professional occupations were slightly associated in the positive direction.

7.2.21 Science Interest and the Occupational Preferences of Students

7.2.21.1 Science interest and preference for Professional-Managerial-I occupations were positively related.

7.2.21.2 There was no association between the science interest and the preference for the skilled work.

7.2.22 Business Interest and the Occupational Aspirations of Students

7.2.22.1 Very slight positive association was found between the Business interest and Professional-Managerial-I, Professional-Managerial-II, Semi-professional and skilled occupations.

7.2.23 Business Interest and the Occupational Preferences of Students

7.2.23.1 No significant association was found between the Business interest and the preference for Professional-Managerial-I,
Professional-Managerial-II and skilled occupations.

7.2.23.2 Slight association was found between "high" business interest and the preference for semi-professional occupations.

7.2.24 Outdoor Interest and the Occupational Aspirations of Students

7.2.24.1 No significant association was found between the outdoor interest of the students and their occupational aspirations.

7.2.25 Outdoor Interest and Occupational Preferences of Students

7.2.25.1 As the level of "outdoor" interest increased, the preference for Professional-Managerial-I occupations also increased. From the students who preferred Professional-Managerial-I occupations, 42.8 per cent was with "high" outdoor interest.

7.2.25.2 More students with "moderate" outdoor interest preferred Professional-Managerial-II occupations.

7.2.25.3 "Low" outdoor interest and skilled occupations are positively associated.
7.2.26 Political Interest and the Occupational Aspirations of Students

7.2.26.1 Skilled occupations and "low" political interests are positively related.

7.2.26.2 Political interest was not significantly associated with the students' aspirations for Professional-Managerial-I, Professional-Managerial-II occupations.

7.2.27 Political Interest and the Occupational Preferences of Students

7.2.27.1 "Low" political interest and preference for skilled occupations are positively associated.

7.2.27.2 Political interest is not associated with the preferences for other occupations.

7.2.28 Sports Interest and the Occupational Aspirations of Students

7.2.28.1 "Low" Sports interest and aspiration for semi-professional occupations were slightly associated positively.

7.2.29 Sports Interest and Occupational Preferences of Students
7.2.29.1 More students from those preferred Professional-Managerial-I and Professional-Managerial-II occupations were with "high" sports interest. Thus "high" sports interest and preference for Professional-Managerial-I and Professional-Managerial-II occupations are positively associated.

7.2.29.2 Semi-professional occupations and "moderate" sports interests are positively correlated.

8.2.29.3 "Low" sports interest and skilled occupations are positively related.

7.2.30 Religious Interest and the Occupational Aspirations of Students

7.2.30.1 No association was found between the religious interest and the occupational aspirations of students.

7.2.31 Religious Interest and the Occupational Preferences of Students

7.2.31.1 From those who preferred skilled work, more students had "high" religious interest. Mainly girls might have come in this group. Because, the skilled occupations include, "nurse", "clerk", "typist" etc.
7.2.31.2 Religious interest did not influence the occupational preferences of students with regard to the Professional-Managerial-I, Professional-Managerial-II or the semi-professional occupations.

7.2.32 Other Findings

7.2.32.1 The common trend applicable to all the categories of students was that, from all the categories, more students aspired for Professional-Managerial-I occupations, which included "doctor", "engineer", "lawyer", etc.

7.2.32.2 Comparatively more girl students than boy students get admission in the regular colleges affiliated to a University. In the randomly selected sample of the present study there were 670 girls and 430 boys (total 1100).

7.2.32.3 More than half of the total strength of students (54.4 per cent) belonged to families with 2-3 children.

7.2.32.4 The large majority (86.5 per cent) of students belonged to the age group of 15-17 years.

7.2.32.5 More students gather information about various occupations from newspapers and magazines.
7.2.32.6 Only very few students (9.5 per cent) claimed that their source of information about various occupations was their teachers.

7.2.32.7 Only five per cent of the students benefitted through radio and television in getting information about various occupations.

7.2.32.8 Seminars and discussion groups helped only 1.8 per cent of the students to know about different careers.

7.2.32.9 A good majority of students (74.5 per cent) did not have any confusion about the occupational aspirations or preferences.

7.2.32.10 At the same time, a good majority of the students thought that it would be more helpful to have more information regarding various careers.

7.2.32.11 92.4 per cent of girl students feel that there will not be any problem in future, to combine well the family responsibilities and the occupational responsibilities. This shows the desire of girl students to enter into various occupations.

7.2.32.12 61.4 per cent of the boys feel that there will be no problem in the family adjustment even if their wives would be employed.
35 per cent of students complained that their main problem was economic difficulties at home; and 16.5 per cent found their main problem in the area of health; travel difficulties were mentioned by 8.6 per cent of the students.

68.1 per cent of students said that they aspired for particular occupations because of "personal liking for that occupation" (the first reason).

When the second reason for aspiring for the particular occupations was asked, 30.6 per cent of the students replied "to improve the economic status of the family", 25.7 per cent said, "want a job different from that of the parents"; 20 per cent gave the reason "to improve the social status of the family", 15 per cent said "will be happy" in this occupation and 8.7 per cent gave one or other of 3 other reasons as "to be independant from the family", "teachers encouragement" and "know more about this job".

The investigator, on the basis of the findings of the research would like to make some recommendations to help the students in their effort to climb up the heights of the occupational ladder.
7.3.1 Vocational Guidance Service is to be made available in all the colleges, so that the students may be kept informed of the various occupations. This service will be of help to the students in finding out their own abilities and interests to various occupations. The experience of the investigator while visiting the colleges for the data collection was very encouraging to proceed in this line. The students were happy to learn that there were standardised tests to measure their occupational interests.

This starting of the vocational guidance service is a pressing need of the time because, the present study showed that, students from whatever socio-economic background or with whatever academic achievement, always had great attraction towards the occupations like 'doctor', 'engineer' etc. This blind attraction is due to the lack of enlightenment in the occupational fields.

The University Employment Informations and Guidance Bureau attached to a University cannot reach out the distant colleges to give any vocational guidance. Therefore if one centre for five colleges is immediately started, it will be of great help to the students. Gradually we should start Vocational Service Centres in all the colleges.
This centre should function under the guidance of a qualified and experienced director which will help the students to identify their interests, disseminate information regarding various occupations and respective educational qualifications etc.

In addition to career counselling the centre can be of additional help to the students in helping them to solve their psychological problems.

7.3.2 The scheduled caste students must be given special academic care and vocational guidance. This must be in such a way as to develop in them a sense of adequacy to serve the nation as any other citizen. In this study it was found that even with all the favourable reservation policies the aspirations and preferences of these students are at lower percentages compared to other communities.

Together with reservations special educational training programmes also should be introduced into the college system, so that these students may improve their academic performance also. Reservation policy should not tranquilize the vigour in the students for healthy academic competitions and successful achievements.
7.3.3 Together with the social status the economic status of the individuals also must be an important factor in granting reservations to various backward communities. The mere fact that one is a member of a particular community does not justify the enjoyment of reservation which originally was granted on the basis of the socio-economic backwardness.

The present study revealed that more students from the backward communities than from the forward showed the sense of adequacy to aspire for higher occupations. Many members who get the advantages of reservation are in a very good economic position and, consequently, they enjoy higher social status also. At the same time many members of the forward communities are in the grip of extreme poverty and without much sympathetic policies from the governments.

The investigator, therefore, recommends a more detailed comparative study on the socio-economic statuses of the forward and backward communities.

7.3.4 To stop the capitation fee system in the medical and engineering colleges would be another recommendation on the
basis of the present study. Academic merit is to be the sole criterion for entrance to medical and engineering colleges. Many intelligent students are kept away from the portals of professional colleges, while many 'average' students, because of their parents' "purchasing power", get easy entrance there.

7.3.5 The present study shows that the gender differences are reflecting in the occupational aspirations of students. Women, compared to men, are still reluctant to aspire for higher occupations. Two suggestions are given here: Parents and guardians should develop a positive attitude towards women's higher education and occupational entry. Women themselves must develop confidence in themselves to aspire for higher occupations. Although the present study revealed that 92.4 per cent of the girls showed their desire to enter some occupation in future, the specific aspiration patterns showed, that they aspired for lower level occupations compared to the boys. Conscientization programmes will help to develop positive attitudes towards this issue, both in the parents and in the girls.

7.3.6 More students who aspired for professional-managerial-I occupations had "high" science interest. Many other interests
were also related to various occupations. Interests are developed, according to the psychologists, through the early experience in the family by the various other environments to which the child is exposed. A conscious effort, therefore, to develop specific interests in the child will be helpful for future career choice. Although this is not a concrete suggestion, the investigator hopes that more information from the psychological studies will complement this effort.

7.4 Contribution of the Researcher

This research exploring the impact of socio-economic variables and interests on the occupational aspirations and on the occupational preferences of college students is a new attempt in Kerala. This study, therefore, is unique on the ground that predictions on career aspirations and preferences can be made by assessing the socio-economic conditions and measuring the interest of college students. No study is known to have been conducted in Kerala exploring both the occupational aspirations of students (where the ideal aspirations are reflected) as well as their occupational preferences (where the real aspirations are shown) in relation to the socio-economic status and interests.
7.5 Recommendations for Further Research

7.5.1 A comparative study on the socio-economic statuses of the backward and forward communities.

7.5.2 To study the academic history of those performing well and otherwise in the professional-managerial-I occupations.

7.5.3 To investigate how far the political affiliations are helpful for entering into a job and for promotions, especially in higher occupations.