SUMMARY

The discussion on the Socio-Economic Conditions of the tribals of Dindigul District- a Study leads to the following findings.

This study summarises the findings from the analysis of primary data and secondary data in the forgoing chapters. The analysis in the preceding chapters clearly indicates the socio-economic condition of the Paliyans and the Kattunayakan tribals with special reference to Dindigul district in Tamil Nadu. It also provides a brief review of literature of past studies, objectives, hypotheses, and demographic profile of the study area.

Dindigul district is one of important districts of Tamil Nadu. The tribals like the Paliyans and the Kattunayakans live in the district. The tribal distribution is in four taluks viz., Kodaikanal, Palani, (Sirumalai) and Nilakkottai. These two tribals are nomadic and semi-nomadic.

It is evident that the Paliyans and the Kattunayakans are the original inhabitants of the Kodai hills of Dindigul district and the Nilgiris district respectively. The Paliyans 98.7 percent of them own no property except the clothes they wear while 100 percent of the Kattunayakans own no property expect their huts.

In the hierarchy of the tribes, the Paliyans are weak without any overall headman for the entire tribe. Intra-settlement disputes are not solved effectively. Each settlement has however a headman. They perform the rites and rituals adopted by their ancestors during such ceremonies pertaining to life like birth, attaining puberty, marriage and death.

Female infanticide is not practised among the tribals. Widow remarriage is permissible among the Paliyans. The widows are not permitted to remarry among the Kattunayakans. The divorce and inter-caste marriages are allowed among them.

The Paliyans and Kattunayakans spend their time on entertainments, while the ladies and youth spend their time by watching films and listening songs.
The Paliyans are the earliest known occupants of these hills since the historic times. Collecting non-timber forest products remains their principal subsidiary occupation. The tribal customs and practices are still prevalent among them in spite of the onslaught of the alien culture and its influence on them.

The Paliyans and the Kattunayakans are nomadic and this life is closely associated with forests. They change their work according to the seasons. Due to poverty they migrate from place to place for job opportunities.

Indebtedness is widespread in the tribal areas and amongst the problems that the tribals face, it is probably the most difficult one to tackle. Living on a low economy the tribals fall into debt, especially for the performance of their socio-religious obligations.

The change of environment, the impact of the people living in the plains have a tremendous influence on these ethnic clans, since they encounter a new situation. Civilization is the changing aspect which is noticed in their food, dress, knowledge, body health, characteristics, manners, behaviour, heritage, life discipline and rituals. The Paliyans and the Kattunayakans have now been civilized and refined because of their contact with the people of the town. Both the clans are in union with their people.

These communities lived in joint-families in ancient times. At present they wish to live individually.

The field study revealed that the people who have got the land on lease do not understand the labour of the Paliyans and give a meagre amount as wage. A few of them work as watchmen in their land lord’s grove and get things as wage like rice and vegetables. With the given things they cook and eat. In taking honey from the beehive they different methods and have become great veterans in this art.

The government should give them concessions for the growth of economy and education. Their skills can be indentified so that work can be given their according to the merit. This will increase their economic status. Though many social changes are on the increase the tribals are still in the backward status.