FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher has presented the summary of methodology, the salient findings of the present study emerging from the survey, case studies and focus group discussion. Based on the methodology of the study, the researcher has attempted to triangulate the findings to validate the results relating “Children Out-of-School in Tiruchirappalli District. Subsequently, the researcher has put forth the suggestions based on the study to the various stakeholders in order to further reduce or nullify this social issue.

I. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY

The aim of the study is to analyze and understand the current situation of children out of school in Tiruchirappalli District. The objectives of the study includes to study the socio-demographic and economic profile of “Children currently out of School”; to understand the various factors that contribute to “Children remaining out of School”; to examine the implications of “Children not going to School” on the child and his (or) her family; to find out the situation of children below 14 years, who are out of school and their parents’ perception about their status; to obtain feedback on existing government schemes and programmes, and its benefits for “Out of School Children” and their families; to explore the perception and participation of the community (Parents, Teachers, Community leaders, Officials and NGOs) relating to children who are out of school; to suggest suitable measures to prevent the children being out of school and mainstreaming the children, who are currently out of school. The researcher had applied Descriptive Design with Mixed Method (Qualitative and Quantitative method) and exercised the triangulation technique to combine findings from different sources. Proportionate Stratified Random sampling technique under the Probability Sampling Method was used to the draw samples of “Out of School Children”.

With regard to data collection, Self prepared interview schedule was used to collect quantitative data from children and their parents. Qualitative tools such as case study and focus group discussions were applied so as to elicit primary data from the children and key informants such as Parents, Teachers (regular government
school), Teachers (Special Schools for rescued Childlabourers), Panchayat President (local community), Field Officer (for Childlabour Rehabilitation Project), School Head Master (regular government school), Representatives from Parents-Teacher Association, and Representatives from non-governmental organizations / clubs in the concerned blocks. Earlier, both the interview Schedule and interview guide was also tested with the targeted respondents and group members in 2 localities and necessary modifications were made. The researcher met 208 respondents individually and collected relevant quantitative data from children out of school in Tiruchirappalli district covering fourteen panchayats / blocks in rural area and two divisions in the corporation area. The collected data was entered, coded and analysed using the computer software. Tests such as Correlation, Chi-square, ANOVA were used to draw relevant inferences. In order to collect qualitative data the researcher conducted Case Study with 5 Children, who were out of school and 16 Focus Group Discussions with its respective target members and the same have been analyzed so as to arrive better findings. The qualitative and quantitative data were combined to bring out effective result using triangulation method.

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), define mixed methods research as “the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts, or language into a single study”. One way of overcoming the disadvantages of individual methods and enhancing the accuracy (and depth) of self-report data is through the combination of different methods. There is a growing methodological literature on mixed method research. Mixed methods are used for a variety of reasons:

1. To develop or evaluate study tools and procedures.
2. To examine different aspects of the research question.
3. To broaden the scope of the research.
4. To triangulate results in order to get more accurate data.

The definition of “mixed methods” do not limit to the combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches and it is considered that the use of different quantitative methods together, or different qualitative methods, could also be described as “mixed method” if they are used in the same project to study the same
phenomenon or different aspects of the same phenomenon. Padget (2008) defines triangulation as a concept adapted from navigational science involving the use of “two or more sources to achieve a comprehensive picture of a fixed point of reference”. By gathering data from multiple sources (data triangulation) or utilizing multiple analysts to review the data (observer triangulation), qualitative researchers are able to achieve what Drisko (1997) refers to as “completeness” or an exhaustive response to the research question. Data triangulation might involve gathering data at multiple points in time or using varied data collection strategies such as interviews, focus groups, or observations (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Triangulation by observer involves having more than one researcher analyze the data to be sure important ideas are not missed and that there is some consistency to how data analysis is linked to the findings. Padgett (2008) suggests that triangulation is particularly relevant with case studies and grounded-theory approaches, including mixed method studies (methodological triangulation).

According to Denzin (1978), three outcomes arise from triangulation: convergence, inconsistency and contradiction. Whichever of these outcomes prevail, the researcher can construct superior explanations of the observed social phenomena. Although acknowledging that triangulation may not be suitable for all research purposes, Jick (1979) noted the following advantages of triangulation: (a) it allows researchers to be more confident of their results; (b) it stimulates the development of creative ways of collecting data; (c) it can lead to thicker, richer data; (d) it can lead to the synthesis or integration of theories; (e) it can uncover contradictions, and (f) by virtue of its comprehensiveness, it may serve as the litmus test for competing theories. While convergence across data sources is important for triangulation, divergence can also play an important role in understanding the phenomenon under study.

Hence, the analyzed data was interpreted accordingly and research findings were drawn.
FINDINGS

II. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

In this section, the researcher has attempted to present the salient findings of the study gathered from all the three methods adopted. They are classified into three parts viz., findings from Interview Schedule, Case Study and Focus Group Discussion. The detailed and major findings from Interview Schedule, Case Studies and Focus Group Discussions are given below.

DETAILED FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The following are the detailed findings from Interview Schedule (for the Children Out-of-School and their Parents)

1. Socio-demographic and Economic Profile of “Children Out of School”

   Socio-demographic Profile

1. A majority (94.7%) of the respondents are in the age group of 11 to 14 years while only 5.2% of the respondents are in the age group of 7-10 years. (Table No.1).

2. More than half (54.8%) of the boys were out of school compared to 45.2% of the girls. (Table No.1).

3. With regard to the education of the children, more than half of the respondents (56.3%) have completed their school education between 4th and 6th standard and 2.9% of the respondents were illiterate and have been never enrolled in schools. (Table No.1).

4. A significant percentage (68.8%) of the respondents resides in rural areas, 16.3% of the respondents reside in urban areas, 8.2% of them reside in semi urban and 6.7% resides in slum areas. (Table No.1).

5. More than one third of the respondents (38.9%) belong to the Most Backward Caste (MBC) while 34.1% belong to the Scheduled Caste / Scheduled Tribes
community and the remaining 26.9% belong to the Backward Caste (BC). (Table No.1).

6. There is no statistical significance between Migration of Family with regard to respondents’ Sex is observed. This shows that the Migration of Family do not have any association with the Sex of the respondents (Table 29).

**Economic profile**

7. More than one third (39.9%) of the respondents earn a family monthly income of Rs. 2001 – Rs. 3000 while 30.8% earn below Rs. 2000 a month. 23.0 % and 6.3 % of the respondents earn a monthly income between Rs. 3001-4000 and above Rs. 4001-5000 respectively. (Table No.2).

8. A majority (80.8%) of the respondents belong to nuclear families while the remaining 19.2% belong to the joint family system. (Table No.2).

9. More than half (58.2%) of the respondents’ family size consists of 5-6 members, 21.6% of them have 7-8 members in their family and 10.1% have 9 and more members in their family. (Table No.2).

10. More than half (59.1%) of the respondents live with their parents, 15.4% of them live with father only, 21.6% live with mother only and 3.8 % of the respondents do not have parents and hence live with their guardian. (Table No.2).

11. Regarding the parent’s marital status a significant percentage (61.5%) of the respondents’ parents are living together, but 20.7% of the parents have been separated and 17.8% of the respondents’ parents were widowed. (Table No.2).

12. A considerable percentage (73.6%) of the respondents attended Government school before they discontinued their studies, while 9.6% of them attended Government Aided schools. (Table No.3).

13. Regarding the incidence of Out of School, majority of the respondents (89.9%) have dropped out from school and 7.2% have been pushed out from school, while 2.9% of the respondents have not enrolled for education. (Table No.4).
2. Various Factors contributing to “Children remaining Out of School”

School Related Factors

14. Regarding problems faced at school, more than half of the responses (58.6%) received from the children states that there is inadequate attention to their learning in schools, while 38.9% of the children met failure in exams. Nearly one third (31.3%) of the responses indicate that children were not happy with the infrastructure in the school and 17.3% articulated about irresponsible teachers in school. (Table No.5).

15. More than one third (35.6%) of the respondents have attended school at a distance between 3km and 4km from their home and 29.8% of them have attended school at a distance less than 2km. A significant percentage of the respondents (64.5%) had to travel for a distance of more than 4 km to reach their school. A significant percentage (60%) of the respondents revealed that in the absence of transportation facilities, they had to walk this distance to reach their school. (Table No.5).

16. A sizeable 69.2% of the children said that they enjoyed the experience of going to school, while 27.9% said that they don’t like the school. (Table No.5).

17. With regard to interest in studies, almost half of the respondents (49.5%) said that they were not interested and 47.6% said they were interested in studies and 2.9% expressed that they don’t know about studies. (Table No.5).

18. About health issues posed a hindrance for schooling, it is observed that a considerable percentage (78.8%) of the respondents did not have any health issues, while remaining 21.2% of the respondents reported that health issues prevented them from attending school. (Table No.5).

19. With reference to the correlation analysis the School related factors of Out-of-School children such as the problems faced in school, distance between the school and the home, transport facilities to the school from the place of residence, interest in studies, likeness towards school, etc has statistical correlation with the Psychological factors such as Out-of-School Children’s fear, deprivation, separation from parents, parents’ motivation, incidence of abuse, etc (Table 23).
Psychological Factors

20. A significant percentage (66.3%) of the responses indicates that these children had a fear of examination, while 36% of the responses obtained show that these children feared the teacher. (Table No.6).

21. More than half of the responses (51.4%) signify that these children felt that they were deprived of love and care from parents, while 42.3% of the responses avowed that they were deprived of adequate support for education. More than one fifth (21.6%) of the responses confirm that children out of school were deprived of adequate health care. Consequently, it is evident that a sizeable percentage (above 75%) of the respondents had encountered one or multifaceted deprivation. (Table No.6).

22. More than one fifth (21.6%) of the respondents said they have experienced separation anxiety when their parents were away at work. A considerable percentage (78.4%) of the respondents however was not disturbed about separation from their parents. (Table No.6)

23. Exactly half of the respondents’ (50%) parents have motivated their children to go to school. While more than one fourth (28.4%) of the parents did not give any encouragement or motivation to their children to attend school, the remaining 21.63% of the respondents’ parents compelled their children to stop education. (Table No.6).

Social Factors

24. Regarding parental pressure, it is apparent that a sizeable percentage, (76.4%) of the respondents did not experience any coercion from parents to quit school while the remaining 23.6% of them reported that their parents forced them to quit the school. (Table No.7).

25. With regard to activities of children at times of truancy, nearly half (52.4%) of the responses reported that the children were engaged in working for wages, while 33.7% of the responses say that the children have spent their time on playing and
having fun with friends. Nearly one fourth (22.1%) of the responses explain that they were assisting their parents at work (Table No.7).

26. In view of the problems faced by the families of the respondents, it was seen that more than half of the responses (56.2%) reported that their family income was insufficient to meet every day expenses. While 21.6% of the replies indicate that the respondents faced problems like parents quarrelling and cruelty and 19.2% of them said their family was disorganised. A little less than one fifth (17.8%) of the responses of the children shows that either father or mother is not alive. 16.7% of the responses confirm that the children have stopped school due to house hold work or to take care of their siblings, whereas 15.3% of the responses received were indicated that children have stopped schooling due to the irresponsibility shown by their family (Table No.7).

27. 21.1% of the respondents reported that they stopped education due to frequent migration of parents due to work, begging, etc. (Table No.7).

28. It is also observed that a considerable majority of the respondents (80.3%) reported that their community was not a discouragement to stop schooling while 19.7% of the respondents stated that the community was discouraging them to stop schooling. (Table No.7).

29. It is also observed that there is a statistical correlation between School related factors of children out of school and Social factors of children out of school such as activities involved while truant, problems faced in family, parents’ migration affecting education, discouragement from the community, etc. (Table 23)

30. With regard to ANOVA tests applied, there is a significant difference between Monthly Family Income of Children out of school with respect to Social factors responsible for Children out of school and also there is a significant difference between Monthly Family Income of Children out of school with respect to Psychological factors for children out of school (Table 27).

31. With regard to the mean scores obtained between the Factors responsible for children out of school and the Locality of Children out of School, they do have
some difference (Table 25) but statistically there is no significance.

Experiences of Abuse

32. More than half of the respondents (51.4%) reported that they have been abused in one or many ways like experienced rude behaviour, scolded and beaten by either, employer / stranger, teachers and family members. About a little less than half (48.6%) of the respondents revealed that they have never faced any incidence of abuse. (Table No.8).

Experience of Bullying

33. A considerable percentage (59.6%) of the responses has not experienced bullying incidents at school. Whereas more than one third (40.3%) of the respondents have been bullied for several reasons such as for not playing, entertainment, commenting on physical appearance and behavior of parents. (Table No.9.

3. Implications of “Children Not Going to School” for the Children and their Family

Implication to Child

34. It is seen that a significant 66.8% of the children experiencing family burden, as they had to bring in additional income to support domestic expenses, 45.7% of them did not have skills of literacy, 42.3% have experienced isolation and poor health, 29.3% have become disobedient and inferior and 20.1% have lost their childhood freedom and self esteem. (Table No.10).

Implication to Family

35. With regard to the family, the majority (89.4%) felt that the families have poor monitoring practice towards development of children and thus a considerable 70.2% opine that the families are becoming less progressive to manage the cost of living and 63.9% of the families do not have proper recognition in the society. (Table No.10).

Future Aspiration

36. With regard to the respondents’ future aspirations, nearly one third (28.8%) of the
respondents had not decided anything about their future plan. More than one fourth (25.9%) of the respondents expressed their wish to become drivers, mechanic, etc and nearly one fifth (19.2%) of the respondents aspired to become professionals like teacher, police, doctor, etc. 14.4% of the respondents preferred to get married and settle down as a family. (Table No.11).

37. With regard to Chi-square test analysis there is an association between the Size of the Family and the level of Implications of Children being out of school. As the Size of the Family reduces the level of Implications on Children out of school and their family is found to be increasing. Similarly as the Size of the Family increases the level of Implication on Children out of school and their family is found to be decreasing. This explains that the Size of Family refers to number of the adults and the children existing in a family, so the Implication of being out of school on the Children and their family depends on the number of children existing in the family. Thus the Family Size of 4 and below have 2 to 4 children and when these 2 – 4 children were out of school the level of Implication of being out of school on the Children and their family will be high, as there are 1 or 2 earning persons in the family, the dependency of family members is high compared to other Size of Family, which also have adult earning members and dependency of family members is managed results in variations in the level of Implication of Children being out of school on the Children and their family (Table 28).

4. Situation of Children Out of School and their Parents’ Perception about their Status

**Engagement in unhealthy non-school Activities**

38. As per the information obtained on situation of children out of school, a significant percentage of the respondents (65.9%) were engaged in child labour. 14.4% of the respondents were in domestic work, 13.9% of them were living on the streets, and 1.4% of the respondents were engaged in begging. (Table No.12).

39. With regard to the nature of work done by the child labourers, it is seen that 29.3% of the respondents were working for daily wages, while 9.6% of the
respondents were engaged in goat or pig rearing, 6.2% of the respondents were working as domestic servants and the remaining 19.7% of the children were engaged in other occupations such as Gem Cutting (2.4%), Quarry work (1.0), Beedi rolling (2.4%), Match box making (1.0), Brick kilns (1.0), Construction work (1.4), Agriculture work (5.3%), Catering and Hotel (3.4%), Rice mill work (1.0%), Automobile (1.4%) and Small scale industry (0.4%). (Table No.12).

40. With regard to children’s engagement in unhealthy activities, a significant percentage (67.8%) of the respondents was first engaged in these unhealthy activities at the age of 12 to 14 years while 29.8% of the respondents started these activities between 9 to 11 years and the remaining 2.4% of them at a very early age of 6 to 8 years.

41. More than half (53.4%) of the respondents worked for 8 to 12 hours, while 28.8% of them worked for 6-8 hours a day and only 5.3% of the respondents said they worked for less than 2 hours. (Table No.12).

Impact of unhealthy non-school activities

42. A significant percentage (60.1%) of the responses indicate that these children experience adult behaviour even from their early childhood, while 52.4% of the responses show that they were exposed to unprotected work environment. It was also observed that more than one fourth (29%) of the respondents experienced starvation or hunger which could impact their health, while 25% of the responses report that they were being exploited by others. (Table No.12).

Opinion on unhealthy non-school activities

43. More than half (52.4%) of the respondents opined that they themselves were responsible for their activities when out of school. More than one fourth (26.4%) of the respondents, held their parents to be responsible for their activities. Nearly one fifth (19.7%) of the respondents responded that their friends had influenced them to involve in these activities. (Table No.13).

44. A considerable percentage (75%) of the respondents had started engaging in these activities after discontinuing school and 22.1% of the respondents were first
engaged in them even before stopping school. (Table No.13).

45. On questioning the respondents about whether the present activities were acceptable to them, more than half (53%) of them said it was not acceptable to them and that they were struggling every day. The Remaining 47% of the respondents said that it was acceptable, as there was no other alternative for them to lead their daily life. (Table No.13).

**Opinion on Children engaged in Work / other activities**

46. About the respondents’ parents’ opinion regarding the activities of their children, a little less than one third of the respondents (30.8%) were forcing their child to work. Majority (69.2%) of the respondents revealed that they did not force their child to work but that their children were influenced by other factors for going to work. (Table No.14).

47. Regarding benefits received by the parents from their child’s work, it is seen that a significant percentage (62.5%) of the parents confirmed that their family had benefitted by their child’s earning and the remaining 37.5% of the parents said that they did not receive any benefit from their child’s activities. (Table No.14).

48. More than one third (38.9%) of the respondents opined that their children had developed bad habits. (Table No.14).

**Perception on Children’s un-schooling**

49. More than half (50.4%) of the responses show that the parents need their children to generate income for the family and so their children have dropped schooling. Slightly less than half (49.5%) of the responses reveal that parents feel that their children lacked interest in education, and more than one third (35%) of the responses seems to indicate parents’ inability to be a mentor for their children as a reason for the non-schooling of their children. (Table No.15).

50. When asked about the active steps taken for children’s education, almost one third (32.2 %) of the parents expressed that they haven’t bothered about their child’s education and 23.5% said that they expected their child to sit and study
even if they were playful. (Table No.15).

51. More than one third (40.9%) of the parents said that they cannot provide full support for their children to continue education. A little more than one fourth (28.4%) of the responses received from parents reveals that children were adamant to discontinue school. 35.5% of the responses obtained from parents show that their children could not continue school education due to inadequate resources in the family and 6.3% of the responses reveal that parents perceived chronic illness / disability as an obstacle for their children to attend school. (Table No.15).

**Perception of Children’s Worries**

52. Concerning the children’s worries in their life, a majority (85.5 %) of the responses obtained from parents show that their children are worried about their parents’ incapability, which affects them to struggle for their daily life. Nearly half (49%) of the responses of parents confirm that their children are worried due to their self inability to cope up with life situation. Remaining percentage of the responses i.e. 21.6% of the parents revealed that their children are worried about family conflict, 11.5% said that the teachers’ neglect led their children to face painful state, 9.1% of the parents’ felt that their children are worried about their father or mother’s anti-social behaviour, 8.7% parents revealed that their children are worried of ailing parents and 5.2% of the responses disclosed that death of father or mother or siblings have made the children to be too worried. (Table No.16).

**Perception of Scholastic difficulties**

53. With regard to parents’ perception of scholastic difficulties, 61% of the parents responded that their children found it difficult to get along with others while 15.4% of them stated that their children were lethargic and slow learners. Other difficulties were fear of subjects, speech and writing problems. (Table No.17).

**Perception on Monitoring Child’s Achievement**

54. On viewing the Parents’ perception on monitoring their Out of School Children’s
Achievement, it was noticed that more than half (50.9%) of the parents were unaware about their child’s achievement, as these children have missed the opportunities provided at school. More than one fifth (22.6%) of the parents felt that they had acquired certain work skills. Likewise some 15.4% of the parents said that their children were good in carrying out household work, and had acquired skills relating to family life. 11.0% of the parents felt that their children were performing well in cultural and fine arts at the community level and that they were able to see their child’s talents. 1.4% of parents felt that their children were very responsive and obedient towards them at home and was a good sign of development. (Table No.18).

Person Responsible for Child’s education

55. With respect to persons responsible for children’s education, a significant percentage (63%) of the responses feel that either parents or family is responsible for their children to continue education in school, while 61.1% of the responses say that the child itself is being responsible and a little less than half (43.2%) of the responses state that the school is responsible. More than one fourth of the responses (28.3%) say that the Society / Local Community are responsible for the children to continue school education. (Table No.19).

56. The Incidence of Out of School have significant correlation with the Perception of Parents about the status of Children of out of school, who were engaged in child labour, begging, stealing and other unsociable behaviour (Table 24).

57. There is statistical association between the level of Incidence of out of School and their Parents Perception about the status of the Children out of school (Chi-square test Table 30).

5. Feedback on Government programme, and its benefits for “Out of School Children” and their Families

Awareness on Government welfare measures

58. Regarding parents’ knowledge on government schemes for children out of school and their family, a significant percentage (62.7%) of the parents had awareness
about Scholarship programmes and Self-Help Groups. More than one third of the parents (39.9%) were aware about National child Labour Project Schools, 33.2% were aware about Sarva Shiksha Abiyan and 23.1% had knowledge of Housing Patta scheme. A little less than one fourth (22%) of the responses of parents indicate that they had knowledge about Government Schemes such as Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) (0.96 %), Tamilnadu Adi Dravidar Housing and Development Corporation (THADCO) (3.8%), Prime Minister Rozgar Yojna (PMRY) (5.7%), Group house (8.6%), and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) (2.9%). Less than one third (29.8%) of the parents are unaware of the government programmes. (Table No.20).

Accessibility of Government welfare measures

59. With regard to availing government schemes it is observed that more than half (53.3%) of the responses indicate that these families had availed scholarship / stipend programme for education, while more than one fourth (34.6%) of the families had benefitted from Self Help Group schemes. Other families had benefitted from schemes like SSA – “Education for all scheme” Schools (1.9%), NCLP Child Labour Special Schools (2.4%), Housing patta (4.8%), Group house / katcha house (2.4%), Cooperative department and Nationalized Bank loans (1.9%), Self Help Group activities (34.6%), Flood relief assistance and Accident relief assistance (12.5%). More than one third (44.7%) of the parents have not benefitted under major government programmes. (Table No.21).

60. There is a significant correlation between Incidence of Out of School and Government Schemes accessibility among children out of school and their family. This indicates that poor Reachability of Government Schemes such as SGSY, SGSRY, THADCO, PMRY, Housing Patta, Group house, Nationalized Bank loans, etc has an impact on Incidence of Out of School. (Table 24).

61. With regard to ANOVA tests applied, there is a significant difference observed between Castes with respect to Reachability of Government Schemes. Based on Duncan Multiple Range test, the respondents belonging to the Backward Caste (BC) have significantly higher level of Reachability to Government Schemes than
the respondents belonging to SC / ST and MBC Castes. Also there is no significant difference between MBC and SC/ST Castes (Table 26)

6. Perception and Participation of Community relating to Children Out-of-School

62. A significant percentage (69.2%) of them has never received any help from the community for their children to attend school continuously. A little less than one third (30.8%) of the respondents said that they have received help from the community in order to make their children attend school regularly. (Table No.22).

7. Suggestions to make the Children to attend School and prevent the Children becoming Out of School

63. More than half (59.1) of the members suggested that the scholarship and stipend amount can be given to all the socio-economically backward students in order to motivate the children at all levels of village / municipal administration irrespective of the community they belonged.

64. While few (16.8%) of the parents felt that the services / schools for the differently abled (disabled) children to be available in their local areas.

65. More than half (75.4%) of the members said that in order to know the student’s insight on subject, approach of teachers to each individual (children) is mandatory.

66. Majority (81.2%) of the members stated that all the families of out of school children to be provided with necessary assistance under the government programmes, which has to be strictly and closely monitored by local community leaders.
A. FINDINGS BASED ON QUANTITATIVE DATA

1. MAJOR FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (IS)

The following are the major findings from Interview Schedule (IS) [conducted for Children out of School and their Parents].

1. Socio-demographic and Economic Profile of “Children Out of School” - [IS]

1. Vast majority of the children out of school were in the age group of 11-14 years among which sizeable (more than half) number of out of school children reside in rural areas

2. The size of the families of more than half of the out of school children consists of members between 5 and 6 numbers. More than half of the boys were out of school compared to the girls.

3. Majority of the children have dropped or pulled out due to personal and family reasons, and pushed out due to reasons pertaining to their teachers and schools.

4. More than one third of the children, who are out of school, belong to the Most Backward Caste (MBC) followed by Scheduled Caste / Scheduled Tribes and Backward Caste (BC).

5. Majority of the children who were out of school belong to nuclear families

6. Majority of the respondents earn a family monthly income of below Rs. 3000 per month

2. Various Factors contributing to “Children remaining Out of School” - [IS]

7. More than half of the children faced inadequate care to their learning in schools

8. Sizeable number of children said that they enjoyed the experience of going to school. This shows that though children have interest in school, there are other factors which contribute for remaining out of school.
9. Almost half of the children who were out of school were not interested in studies

10. More than half of the children have inadequate transport facility to reach their school, which are located at least 2 - 4 km away from their residence.

11. Majority of the children have reported that their health conditions were not hindrance for them to attend schools.

12. Sizeable (more than half) number of children, who were out of school, had dropped out due to fear of examination and followed by more than one third of these children feared the teacher.

13. More than half of the children, who were out of school were deprived of love and care from parents.

14. More than half of the children, who were abused by either their parents or teacher or stranger / employer did not continue their school education.

15. More than half of the children had not experienced any bullying incidents at school while more than one third of the children, who had been bullied in school, did not continue their school education.

16. Migration of parents had affected the child’s continuity of schooling. One fifth of the children have stopped education due to frequent migration of parents.

17. Exactly half of the parents of out of school children have not motivated their wards to attend school.

18. Majority of the children did not experience any coercion from the parents to quit their schooling.

19. Little more than half of the children who were truant had engaged in part time work.

20. More than half of the children reported that they have dropped school due to extreme poverty.
21. One fifth of the children had stopped schooling due to the discouragement from their community members.

3. Implications of “Children Not Going to School” for the Children and their Family - [IS]

22. More than half of the children, who were out of school had faced burden of their families

23. Nearly half of these children did not have literacy skills.

24. Vast majority of the parents of out-of-school children have poor monitoring practice towards development of children

25. Nearly one third of the children, who were out of school, had not decided anything about their future plan and one fourth of the children wish to become drivers, mechanic, etc.

26. Majority of the families of out of school children had become less progressive to manage the cost of living

4. Situation of Children Out of School and their Parents’ Perception about their Status - [IS]

27. More than half of the children, who were out of school had engaged in unhealthy activities like child labour, begging, steeling, etc. A small percentage of them were engaged in domestic work, living in the streets begging.

28. More than half of the children were exposed to long working hours (8 to 12 hours a day) and were at various work places which were unsafe and hazardous.

29. More than half of the children opined that the unhealthy activities carried out by them at present were not acceptable to them.

30. More than one third of the parents of the out of school children opined that their wards had developed bad habits due to unhealthy activities and work
31. Half of the parents of out of school children opined that their children generating income for the family and they lacked interest in education and more than one third of the responses seems to indicate parents’ inability to mentor their children as a reason for the non-schooling of their children.

32. Nearly one third of the parents had not bothered about the education of their wards.

33. More than one third of the parents of out of school children stated that they cannot provide complete support for their children’s education.

34. Vast majority of the parents perceived that their children were worried about their parents’ incapability.

35. Majority of the parents responded that their children found it difficult to get along with others.

36. More than half of the parents were unaware about their child’s achievement.

37. Majority of the parents of out of school children felt that both parents and the children themselves are responsible for their children to continue education in school.

5. Feedback on Government Programme and its benefits for “Out Of School Children” and their Families - [IS]

38. More than half of the parents were aware of the two or three welfare measures provided by the government while nearly one third of the parents stated that they are unaware of the major welfare measures offered by government for poor families.

39. More than half of the parents had availed at least one or two of the assistance provided through the government programmes. More than one third of the respondents’ parents revealed that they had not availed any assistance under major Government schemes for their family except schooling, stipend and scholarship.
6. Perception and Participation of Community relating to Children Out of School - [IS]

40. One fifth of the children had stopped schooling because of poor encouragement from their community members.

41. More than half of the parents have never received any assistance from the community for their children to attend school continuously.

7. Suggestions to make the Children to attend School and prevent the Children becoming Out of School - [IS]

42. More than half of the members suggested that the scholarship and stipend amount can be given to all the socio-economically backward students in order to motivate the children at all levels of village / municipal administration irrespective of the community they belonged. While few of the parents felt that the services / schools for the differently abled (disabled) children to be available in their local areas.

43. More than half of the members said that in order to know the student’s insight on subject, approach of teachers to each individual (children) is mandatory.

44. Majority of the members stated that all the families of out of school children to be provided with necessary assistance under the government programmes, which has to be strictly and closely monitored by local community leaders.

B. FINDINGS BASED ON QUALITATIVE DATA

2. MAJOR FINDINGS FROM CASE STUDIES (CS)

The following are the major findings from the Case Studies (CS) conducted for five children, who were out of school.

1. Socio-demographic and Economic Profile of “Children Out of School” - [CS]

1. A child, who had not enrolled in school, resided in the rural area for many years.
2. Male child dropped out school while studying 6th std in Government School

3. Nuclear family had led to lack of attention by the parents on the schooling of the child.

4. The child was taken care by guardian in the absence of parents

5. The parents were fortune tellers and earn a very little income that they are unable to meet the demands of the family

2. Various Factors contributing to “Children remaining Out of School” - [CS]

6. Out of school child was not having interest in studies. While truant the child engaged in playing with friends, watching movie, etc.

7. Child avoided schooling due to long school hours and the long time taken to travel, since her home was not close by.

8. Poor health condition of the child was a barrier for the child to continue schooling.

9. Teacher was partial towards the children, who were performing well. Child got offended, when the teacher compared their performance with their other fellow class mates. Fear of exams forced the child to remain out of school

10. First born female stopped schooling at the age of 13 years in order to take of their siblings.

11. Girl child felt insecure and was scared to be alone in the absence of parents during migration. Child with his mother migrated from Kerala found difficulty to get admission in regular school due to non availability of migration certificate, ration identity card, etc. Even the mother was unable to get welfare assistance from government without ration identity card and without her father, who had left the family due to extra marital relationship.
12. Migration of parents had affected the child’s continuity of schooling

13. One of the respondents said that there was no one to provide assistance for her to continue her education.

14. Extreme poverty was seen high in the child’s family, which consists of more than 4 children.

15. Head Master and Teacher need to advise their poor illiterate parents and guardian for retaining her and also her friends in school to play and study in school.

16. A child responded that her guardian used to beat her to do the household work properly on full time basis.

17. Though the school environment was not conducive to study, the child used to play with friends and sometimes the teacher used to tell stories songs, which was interesting for the child to attend school.

18. Students were teasing the child by comparing with media personalities, which led the child to avoid schooling

3. Implications of “Children Not Going to School” for the Children and their Family” - [CS]

19. As the parents had availed loan, the child had to work daily to pay back the loan availed. Idleness of the parent resulted in the child shouldering the family responsibilities.

20. The child faced difficulty to read, write and concentrate.

21. The child felt lonely at home and used to fight with parents frequently, to get the attention of the parents towards the child’s needs.

22. Influence of adults resulted in developing unhealthy and immature habits of adults. Child also tends to develop no high expectations in life
23. The child had become anemic, since there is no nutritious food available regularly at home like that of the food provided in school. Then, the child was taken to hospital by the parent to improve the child’s health condition.

4. **Situation of Children Out of School and their Parents’ Perception about their Status** - [CS]

24. Life was engrossed in child labour practices once the child was out of school. Child was attending school for 3 days in a week and next three days she was taking care of siblings in the absence of parents. After dropping out from school, the begging practices were motivated in child by the parents, who are traditional beggars.

25. Child, who had practiced unskilled labour, met with an accident and got injured a finger while working.

26. Family circumstance has driven the child to practice unhealthy activities in their young age.

27. The child plays with friends, who were elder than him and have discontinued school earlier. This results in adapting negative behaviour.

28. Parent need the child to earn a living and was found to be inefficient to mentor the child and sort out difficulties

29. Guardian was not concerned towards the child’s education and did not purchase study material for the child.

30. Child’s lackadaisical attitude was a hurdle to join school and the parent unable to deal with the child.

31. Sudden death of a child’s mother had made the child to be fretted of life

32. Child was a slow learner, when she was studying in school.

33. Engaged in household work and sibling care on full time basis
34. Lack of a child friendly attitude among the teachers and the community.

35. Parents and teachers when asked the child to attend school, the child had threatened that he will attempt suicide if any one forces the child to go to school.

36. Though there was play area in the school, the child was not allowed to play. Since the school was on the road side and sports materials were not available. So the role of government and local body to fulfill the expectation of the child is a must to make the child attend school.

5. Feedback on Government and Programme and its benefits for “Out of School Children” and their Families” - [CS]

37. Inadequate support of government schemes to the child’s family and in turn poor support of parents to the child had made the child to be never enrolled in school.

38. A 13 year old girl child, who was in the 8th standard in the government aided middle school, with the help of stipend amount received from government, had to discontinue her studies the next year, as she had not received stipend amount.

6. Perception and Participation of Community relating to Children Out of School” - [CS]

39. Caste system and cultural issues like girl attaining puberty prevented the child to attend school.

40. Child was not covered in school health programmes since he was out of school. This has made the family to fully depend on government assistance.

7. Suggestions to make the Children to attend School and prevent the Children becoming Out of School” - [CS]

41. Breakfast should be given in the morning in the schools since the children were malnourished and often remained without any food in the morning.
42. Two uniforms should be provided per year. The quality of the uniforms at present is not good.

43. Stipend can be given to all the poor children till the completion of 12th standard.

44. The child expects the teacher to understand the condition of the child and be friendly in teaching the lessons.

45. The child wanted the parents to be economically balanced with the support of government.

3. MAJOR FINDINGS FROM FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGD)

The following are the major findings from Focus Group Discussion (FGD) conducted at 16 blocks in the district (for Parents, Teachers, Community leaders, Officials and NGOs).

1. Socio-demographic and Economic Profile of “Children Out of School” - [FGD]

1. Majority of the members across the district opined that number of boys and girls between 10 and 150 were out of school at block level and this varied from one place to another. Members of Musiri block revealed that the rate of children out of school was very low in their block.

2. Majority of the members (in urban and rural blocks) confirmed that the boys between the ages of 11-14 years remained dropped out from schools since they go out for places of work to earn a living.

3. If the elder girl child goes to school it prevents the parents from going for work outside villages, since there was no one to look after younger siblings at home.

4. Members of Marugapuri block stated that the dropout rate of girls was very high in number than boys.
5. Mostly there were 3 to 5 children in one family and the parents believed that education will be useful for boys only and not for girls.

6. Most of the families of out of school children were from social-economically backward community, who has uneven monthly income starting from Rs. 500. This monthly income of the family depends on either the earnings of father or mother or both or guardian, who works on daily basis.

2. Various Factors contributing to “Children remaining Out Of School” - [FGD]

7. Majority of members opined that the children studying in private schools were talented but children studying in Government schools were careless and not interested in their studies.

8. Majority of the members viewed that the out of school children have fear to go by road to school in the absence of a transport facility.

9. Children with chronic ill health and severe disability seemed to be dropped out and had not enrolled in schools due to inadequate special school facilities in their village. Children out of school in Thathiangarpet block were found to be mentally retarded hence they were not enrolled in regular schools.

10. Though few of the out of school children were to be with health problems they were interested to study.

11. Majority of the members stated that the out of school children had fear for exams. They found to have no recognition among their peer group and they felt ashamed when their teacher beat him/her in front of others.

12. Majority of the members felt that parents failed to be responsible and caring for their children to continue schooling.

13. Parents were uneducated and they do not watch whether their children were going to school.
14. Majority of the members viewed that the parents had to face difficulty in admitting their children in school during migration to other places and they were also unable to get welfare assistance from government without the ration card identity.

15. There were out of school children, whose parents were bed ridden or ran away due to illegal affairs or not alive, were deprived support of their parents. Ignorance of parents and villagers about child rights is found to be a key factor leading children to be out school.

16. In spite of advising the parents to send their children to school regularly, absenteeism was found in schools.

17. Majority of the members recorded that children remained out of school due to very poor income in the family and lack of awareness on education.

18. Addiction to alcohol and drug used by parents was reported as a reason for their children to be out of school. Addicted fathers used to beat and prevent their children from going to school and forced them to earn. Majority of Members reported that there were lots of wine shops, which had been opened in recent years.

19. Functioning of the schools was imperfect, children did not understand Tamil language, which was one of the subjects but children had the skills of questioning in the class room. For more number of children there are few teachers only. Student – teacher ratio is inappropriate.

20. Members of Thuraiyur block stating that when there is no proper building, toilet facility, mats or chair in the school how the parents will send their children to the school.

21. Poor sanitation and hygiene in the school environment has made children to be out of school. This is also reflected in the decline in the enrollment rate of the school in Thuraiyur block. Teachers were not available in schools located in remote village areas in order to cover the tribal children who were out of school.
22. Due to absence of counseling facilities at school the teacher was unable to deal with children’s problem. In few schools at Thathaigarpet block, children parliament was functioning with 5 representatives from five classes, who were well performing students, fixed with the responsibility to meet the out of school children and make them to rejoin the mainstream education.

3. Implications of “Children Not Going to School” for the Children and their Family - [FGD]

23. Majority of the members stated that the parents were working for particular season of six months to 8 months and remained idle for the rest of the days and they depend on children’s wages, as they have discontinued schools.

24. Out of school children found difficult to continue their studies after a long gap with the students, who were younger than them.

25. Majority of the out of school children were malnourished

26. As parents had to leave for their job early in the morning, they do not monitor whether their children were going to school. These children often went to work in places or to play other than to school. Members revealed that majority of the family members did not involve in helping the child to exercise their rights.

27. Children were found to be with low self-esteem and motivation, resulting in no positive goals in life.

28. Majority of the out of school children were not covered under health checkup regularly. This had resulted in parents to look after their unhealthy children, which in turn affected them to attend the work for daily living.

4. Situation of Children Out of School and their Parents’ Perception about their Status - [FGD]

29. Members recorded that though the rate of child labour was reduced to an extent, majority of the children, who were out of school were engaged in child labour practices with poor wages (Rs.10 to 75 rupees per day) and had to work for long
hours (more than 10 hours per day) than adults. Majority of the children, who were out of school were engaged in unskilled labour like beedi rolling, brick kilns, hotels, grocery shops, goat rearing, etc. Some children are wandering or going for fishing and girl children are engaged in household work in their own house. Beggary among children was prominent in Thathaigarpet block.

30. Members witnessed that local employers at industries and other work places exploited children by engaging them to work for low wages in their work places.

31. Majority of the members’ perception was children, who were not clever become easily dropped out and engage in unhealthy activities due to inadequate monitoring mechanism by the parents as well as the school at rural areas.

32. Children who were out of school learnt and adapted unhealthy practices like watching movie, moving with bad friends and developing bad habits.

33. Members reported of that the parents had received supplementary income through their child's work. Members of Manikandam block reported that children were less interested to study and going for fishing and other works to earn money in order to meet their own expenses.

34. Negative attitude towards education is found among parents and exercised on children. The majority of the members stated that the parents were very keen enough to preserve the lands, which they own but they don’t have good opinion about their child’s learning. They feel that education is a long term process to settle in life and employment opportunities are too little.

35. Parents were unaware about child rearing and the rights of the children, since they were struggling for their day to day living.

36. Children, who were out of school, faced crisis situation like death of their parents, broken family, uncared guardian, etc. The support rendered to recover these children was found to be inadequate.

37. Majority of the members stated that children left their schools, when they faced adjacent difficulties in their school.
38. Members reported lack of skill among parents to support their children, who were out of school, to accomplish good education instead they were becoming unskilled labour.

39. Child marriages have been controlled to a great extent in various panchayats of Tiruchirappalli district.

40. Majority of the parents did not contribute to their child’s education

41. Parents were found to be inefficient to mentor the child and sort out difficulties.

42. Majority of the members’ perception was children who were not clever become easily dropped out due to inadequate monitoring mechanism by the parents as well as the school at rural areas.

5. Feedback on Government Programme and its benefits for “Out of School Children” and their Families - [FGD]

43. Majority of members reported that family members of children out of school availed benefits such as ration card, assistance for flood / accident compensation, assistants for antenatal mothers, government hospital assistance, exemption from bank loan, etc. However, the equal preferences were not given for all families of out of school children in major welfare programmes such as Tamilnadu Adhi Dravidar Housing and Development Corporation Limited, Group house, Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), etc. As a result of this, the people who are below poverty line and also families of out of school children, did not receive the required welfare packages and were unaware about the details of government programmes.

44. The scholarship programmes were not common for all students, who belong to socio-economically backward, schedule caste / tribe, most backward and other backward community irrespective of the locations like Town Panchayats, Municipality and Corporation. Adhi dravida welfare department has provided stipend (ooka thogai) for all girl students in elementary school during 2005, 2006
but now the stipend is given to only limited number of children in a particular category and in some schools.

6. Perception and Participation of Community relating to Children Out of School - [FGD]

45. Members revealed that in some of their villages, the village leaders along with the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) school teacher and the Block Resource Teacher Educator (BRTE) of SSA and Teachers of NCLP were advising the parents of the out of school children about the importance of schooling, and the assistance they could receive from them. Majority of members revealed that for the past two years they had taken effort to identify children, who were out of school and admitted at least 20 of them in schools.

46. In Block Resource centre, they were spending more money for school development and there was close monitoring in the village to indentify and mainstream the out of school children. Members of Musiri and Thathiargarpet (T. Pet) recorded that in one or two villages, there was remarkable reduction in out of school children prevalence due to continuous monitoring of school authorities and community.

47. Majority of members stated that imperfect functioning of the Village Education Committee (VEC) was often reported. For the last three years, students enrolment in school was found to be decreasing in Thotiam block.

48. Members recorded that the Government was responsible for the children to stay out of school and lose their career prospects because of loopholes in existing welfare measures and thereby prevented the children from studying and attaining personal development.

49. Awareness done in Grama Shaba Meeting (village administration meeting) and Village Education Committee meeting about preventing children engaged in work, who were below 14 years.
50. Village leader told that they along with the SSA teacher and the BRTE, were advising the parents of the out of school children about the importance of schooling, and the assistance they could receive from them.

51. Parents – Teachers Association (PTA) meeting in schools were conducted to improve the schooling, which have to be reinforced in all places.

52. Majority of the members stated that the Grievance day meet is not being conducted in all Panchayats, hence it was unable to look into the problems of the out of school children.

53. Local donors were encouraged to supply free note books, uniform, etc.

54. Parents need to be responsible and caring for children to continue schooling.

7. **Suggestions to make the Children to attend School and prevent the Children becoming Out of School - [FGD]**

55. Counseling in school may be introduced to help children to effectively deal with their problems.

56. Adequate assistance for the education and rehabilitation of differently abled children in villages should be given.

57. Scholarship amount can be given to all the community students in the entire district.

58. Government may give the aid to the schools or village education committee to purchase the uniform in a good quality.

59. Based on the child’s interest in nature of work, vocational training can be given as a motivation to gain skillful training and education.

60. Teachers require special training to handle the children with problems and problematic children.
61. Individual child learning supervision to be done at schools and Individual child monitoring to be done at micro level by the village level leaders at the community

62. Basic facilities and good ambiance should be available in schools. Adequate transport from their home to school and back to homes is needed. This can be monitored by the village level leaders at the community

63. Cooperation to be given for school activities like conduct of awareness program for parents, motivating children for vocational education.

64. Initiating tuition centres by utilizing the service of educated adults at the village level is needed.

65. Capacity building of Parents to mend their children to study through Self Help Group

66. Counseling to parents on child rearing, child rights and education should be done.

67. De-addiction Centre at panchayat / ward level was needed for treating addicted Parents

68. One stable earning adult in a poor family should be monitored by government

69. Members revealed that the community needs to be made aware of the child rights and education through awareness generation programmes such as camps, cultural activities, etc.

70. Village leaders, important persons should meet once to discuss the out of school children issue and plan to send all the children who remain out of school to schools.

71. Members revealed that the community needs to be made more employment opportunity with the help of government assistance.

72. Members stated that the accountability to be fixed with School Management in order to meet the basic needs of parents, who were below the poverty line and the
transparent measuring scale to be applied to track whether the government schemes reach the poor parents in need.

73. Restrict the provision of ration cards to the parents, who send their children to school regularly.

74. Parents, who are economically rich and stable, need to be punished for not sending their children to school regularly.

III. TRIANGULATION – CONVERGENT AND DIVERGENT

The use of ‘triangulation’ can be traced back to Campbell and Fiske (1959) and Webb et al. (1966), who argued that the use of more than one method is necessary to confirm that the variance reflected is that of the phenomenon being tested and not that of the method being used. Denzin (1978, 1989) and Miles and Huberman (1994) have taken the work of Campbell and Fiske and Webb and colleagues as his starting point and have shared their concern with bias and validity. They distinguish four kinds of triangulation in qualitative research: 1) triangulation by data source (data collected from different persons or at different times, or from different places); 2) triangulation by method (interviews, survey, case study, observations, focus group discussion); 3) triangulation by researcher (the involvement of two or more researchers in the analysis) and 4) triangulation by theory, which implies that hypotheses are informed by more than one theoretical perspective or that different theories are used to interpret the researcher’s data. Miles and Huberman (1994) also add to their list triangulation by data type, meaning combining quantitative and qualitative data; this is also referred to as ‘mixed-methods approach’ (Creswell, 2003; Tashakkori & Teddlie 2003). Mathison (1988) suggests that all the outcomes of triangulation, convergent, inconsistent and contradictory need to be explained, the process is not a technical fix, but rather a means of providing the researcher with a holistic understanding of the phenomenon being researched.
CONVERGENT AND DIVERGENT FINDINGS

The importance of this research lay within the kind of ‘triangulation by method’. It presents the combination of survey, case study and focus group discussion, which provides a relatively probable means of assessing the degree of convergence and complementary findings as well as elucidating on divergences between findings obtained. This methodology was adapted for this study in order to analyse and gain as much comprehensive and insightful information as possible about the current situation of Children out of school in Tiruchirappali district. In this study, there is more information available concerning to convergence and only little information exist relating to divergence. Hence, the findings which are reciprocally supportive and contradictive of one another emerge from all the quantitative (Interviews) and qualitative methods (case study and focus group discussion) used in this research are emphasized in this section.

A. CONVERGENT FINDINGS

1. CONVERGENT FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (CIS)

The following are the convergent findings drawn from Interview Schedule (conducted for Children out of school and their Parents).

1. Socio-demographic and Economic Profile of “Children Out of School” - [CIS]

1. Vast majority of the children out of school were in the age group of 11-14 years among which sizeable (more than half) number of out of school children reside in rural areas

2. The size of the families of more than half of the out of school children consists of members between 5 and 6 numbers. More than half of the boys were out of school compared to the girls.

3. Majority of the children who were out of school belong to nuclear families
4. Majority of the respondents earn a family monthly income of below Rs. 3000 per month

2. Various Factors contributing to “Children remaining Out of School” - [CIS]

5. Almost half of the children who were out of school were not interested in studies

6. More than half of the children have inadequate transport facility to reach their school, which are located at least 2 - 4 km away from their residence.

7. Sizeable (more than half) number of children, who were out of school, had dropped out due to fear of examination and followed by more than one third of these children feared the teacher

8. More than half of the children, who were out of school were deprived of love and care from parents

9. Migration of parents had affected the child’s continuity of schooling. One fifth of the children have stopped education due to frequent migration of parents

10. Exactly half of the parents of out of school children have not motivated their wards to attend school.

11. Majority of the children did not experience any coercion from the parents to quit their schooling

12. More than half of the children reported that they have dropped school due to extreme poverty.

13. More than half of the children faced inadequate care to their learning in schools

14. More than half of the children, who were abused by either their parents or teacher or stranger / employer did not continue their school education.
3. Implications of “Children Not Going to School” for the Children and their Family - [CIS]

15. More than half of the children, who were out of school had faced burden of their families

16. Nearly half of these children did not have literacy skills.

17. Vast majority of the parents of out-of-school children have poor monitoring practice towards development of children

18. Nearly one third of the children, who were out of school, had not decided anything about their future plan and one fourth of the children wish to become drivers, mechanic, etc.

19. Majority of the families of out of school children are becoming less productive to manage the cost of living

4. Situation of Children Out of School and their Parents’ Perception about their Status - [CIS]

20. More than half of the children, who were out of school had engaged in unhealthy activities like child labour, begging, stealing, etc. A small percentage of them were engaged in domestic work, living on the streets begging.

21. More than half of the children were exposed to long working hours (8 to 12 hours a day) and were at various work places which were unsafe and hazardous.

22. More than half of the children opined that the unhealthy activities carried out by them at present were not acceptable to them.

23. More than one third of the parents of the out of school children opined that their wards had developed bad habits due to unhealthy activities and work

24. Half of the parents of out of school children opined that their children generating income for the family and they lacked interest in education and more than one third of the responses seems to indicate parents’ inability to mentor their children
as a reason for the non-schooling of their children

25. More than one third of the parents of out of school children stated that they cannot provide complete support for their children’s education.

26. Vast majority of the parents perceived that their children were worried about their parents’ incapability.

27. Majority of the parents responded that their children found it difficult to get along with others.

28. More than half of the parents were unaware about their child’s achievement

5. Feedback on Government Programme and its benefits for “Out of School Children” and their Families - [CIS]

29. More than half of the parents were aware of the welfare measures provided by the government while nearly one third of the parents stated that they are unaware of the welfare measures offered by government for poor families.

30. More than half of the parents had availed at least one or two of the assistance provided through the government programmes. More than one third of the respondents’ parents revealed that they had not availed any assistance under Government schemes for their family except schooling, stipend and scholarship.

6. Perception and Participation of Community relating to Children Out of School - [CIS]

31. One fifth of the children had stopped schooling because of poor encouragement from their community members.

32. More than half of the parents have never received any assistance from the community for their children to attend school continuously.
7. Suggestions to make the Children to attend School and prevent the Children becoming Out of School - [CIS]

33. Majority of the member stated that the families of out of school children should be provided with necessary assistance under the government programmes, which has to be strictly monitored by local community leaders.

2. CONVERGENT FINDINGS FROM CASE STUDIES (CCS)

The following are convergent findings drawn from the Case Studies (conducted for Children, who are out of school).

1. Socio-demographic and Economic Profile of “Children Out of School” - [CCS]

1. A child, who had not enrolled in school, resided in the rural area for many years.

2. Male child dropped out school while studying 6th std in Government School

3. Nuclear family had led to lack of attention by the parents on the schooling of the child.

4. The parents were fortune tellers and earn a very little income that they are unable to meet the demands of the family

2. Various Factors contributing to “Children remaining Out of School” - [CCS]

5. Out of school child was not having interest in studies. While truant the child engaged in playing with friends, watching movie, etc.

6. Child avoided schooling due to long school hours and the long time taken to travel, since her home was not close by.
7. Teacher was partial towards the children, who were performing are well. Child got offended, when the teacher compared their performance with their other fellow class mates. Fear of exams forced the child to remain out of school.

8. First born female stopped schooling at the age of 13 years in order to take of their siblings.

9. Girl child felt insecure and was scared to be alone in the absence of parents during migration. Child with her mother migrated from Kerala found difficulty to get admission in regular school due to non availability of migration certificate, ration identity card, etc. Even the mother was unable to get welfare assistance from government without ration identity card and without her father, who had left the family due to extra marital relationship.

10. One of the respondents said that there was no one to provide support for her to continue her education.

11. Parents and teachers when asked the child to attend school, the child had threatened that he will attempt suicide if any one forces the child to go to school.

12. Extreme poverty was seen high in the child’s family, which consists of more than 4 children.

13. Head Master and Teacher need to advise their poor illiterate parents and guardian for retaining her and also her friends in school to play and study in school.

14. A child responded that her guardian used to beat her to do the household work properly on full time basis.

3. Implications of “Children Not Going to School” for the Children and their Family - [CCS]

15. As the parents had availed loan, the child had to work daily to pay back the loan availed. Idleness of the parent resulted in the child shouldering the family responsibilities.
16. The child faced difficulty to read, write and concentrate.

17. The child felt lonely at home and used to fight with parents frequently, to get the attention of the parents towards the child’s needs.

18. Influence of adults resulted in developing unhealthy and immature habits of adults. Child also tends to develop no high expectations in life.

19. The child had become anemic, since there is no nutritious food available regularly at home like that of the food provided in school. Then, the child was taken to hospital by the parent to improve the child’s health condition.

4. Situation of Children Out of School and their Parents’ Perception about their Status - [CCS]

20. Life was engrossed in child labour practices once the child was out of school. Child was attending school for 3 days in a week and next three days she was taking care of siblings in the absence of parents. After dropping out from school, the begging practices were motivated in child by the parents, who are traditional beggars.

21. Child, who had practiced unskilled labour, met with an accident and got injured a finger while working.

22. Family circumstance has driven the child to practice unhealthy activities in their young age.

23. The child plays with friends, who were elder than him and have discontinued school earlier. This results in adapting negative behaviour.

24. Parent need the child to earn a living and was found to be inefficient to mentor the child and sort out difficulties.

25. Child’s lackadaisical attitude was a hurdle to join school and the parent unable to deal with the child.
26. Sudden death of a child’s mother had made the child to be fretted of life

27. Child was a slow learner, when she was studying in school.

28. Engaged in household work and sibling care on full time basis

5. Feedback on Government Programme and its benefits for “Out Of School Children” and their Families - [CCS]

29. Inadequate support of government schemes to the child’s family and in turn poor support of parents to the child had made the child to be never enrolled in school.

30. A 13 year old girl child, who was in the 8th standard in the government aided middle school, with the help of stipend amount received from government, had to discontinue her studies the next year, as she had not received stipend amount.

6. Perception and Participation of Community relating to Children Out of School - [CCS]

31. Caste system and cultural issues like girl attaining puberty prevented the child to attend school.

32. Child was not covered in school health programmes since he was out of school. This has made the family to fully depend on government assistance.

7. Suggestions to make the Children to attend School and prevent the Children becoming Out of School - [CCS]

33. The child wanted the parents to be economically balanced with the support of government.
3. CONVERGENT FINDINGS FROM FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (CFGD)

The following are convergent findings drawn from the Focus Group Discussions conducted for the tertiary group consisting of parents, teachers, local community leaders, officials and NGOs.

1. Socio-demographic and Economic Profile of “Children Out of School” - [CFGD]

1. Majority of the members across the district opined that number of boys and girls between 10 and 150 were out of school at block level particularly high in rural areas and this varied from one place to another. Members of Musiri block revealed that the rate of children out of school was very low in their block.

2. Majority of the members (in urban and rural blocks) confirmed that the boys between the ages of 11-14 years remained dropped out from schools since they go out for places of work to earn a living. If the elder girl child goes to school it prevents the parents from going for work outside villages, since there was no one to look after younger siblings at home. Members of Marugapuri block stated that the dropout rate of girls was very high in number than boys.

3. Mostly there were 3 to 5 children in nuclear family and the parents believed that education will be useful for boys only and not for girls.

4. Most of the families of out of school children were from social-economically backward community, who has uneven monthly income starting from Rs. 500. This monthly income of the family depends on either the earnings of father or mother or both or guardian, who works on daily basis.

2. Various Factors contributing to “Children remaining Out of School” - [CFGD]

5. Majority of members opined that the children studying in private schools were talented but children studying in Government schools were careless and not interested in their studies.
6. Majority of the members viewed that out of school children have fear to go by road to school in the absence of a transport facility.

7. Majority members stated that the out of Children had fear for exams. They found to have no recognition among their peer group and they felt ashamed when their teacher beat him/her in front of others.

8. Majority of the members felt that parents failed to be responsible and caring for their children to continue schooling.

9. Majority of the members viewed that the parents had to face difficulty in admitting their children in school during migration to other places and they were also unable to get welfare assistance from government without the ration card identity.

10. There were out of school children, whose parents were bed ridden or ran away due to illegal affairs or not alive, were deprived support of their parents. Ignorance of parents and villagers about child rights is found to be a key factor leading children to be out school.

11. In spite of advising the parents to send their children to school regularly, absenteeism was found in schools.

12. Majority of the members recorded that children remained out of school due to very poor income in the family and lack of awareness on education.

13. Functioning of the schools was imperfect, even children did not understand Tamil language, which was one of the subjects but children had the skills of questioning in the class room. For more number of children there are few teachers only. Student – teacher ratio is inappropriate.

14. Addiction to alcohol and drug used by parents was reported as a reason for their children to be out of school. Addicted fathers used to beat and prevent their children from going to school and forced them to earn. Majority of Members
reported that there were lots of wine shops, which had been opened in recent years.

3. Implications of “Children Not Going to School” for the Children and their Family - [CFGD]

15. Majority of the members stated that the parents were working for particular season of six months to 8 months and remained idle for the rest of the days and they depend on children’s wages, as they have discontinued schools.

16. Out of school children found difficult to continue their studies after a long gap with the students, who were younger than them.

17. As parents had to leave for their job early in the morning, they do not monitor whether their children were going to school. These children often went to work or to play other than to school. Members revealed that majority of the family members did not involve in helping the child to exercise their rights.

18. Children were found to be with low self-esteem and motivation, resulting in no positive goals in life.

19. Majority of the out of school children were not covered under health checkup regularly. This had resulted in parents to look after their unhealthy children and this in turn prevented them from attending work for their daily living.

4. Situation of Children Out of School and their Parents’ Perception about their Status - [CFGD]

20. Members recorded that though the rate of child labour was reduced to an extent, majority of the children, who were out of school were engaged in child labour practices with poor wages (Rs.10 to 75 rupees per day) and had to work for long hours (more than 10 hours per day) than adults. Majority of the children, who were out of school were engaged in unskilled labour like beedi rolling, brick kilns, hotels, grocery shops, goat rearing, etc. Some children are wandering or
going for fishing and girl children are engaged in household work in their own house. Beggary among children was prominent in Thathaingarpet block.

21. Members witnessed that local employers at industries and other work places exploited children by engaging them to work in their work places.

22. Majority of the members’ perception was children, who were not clever become easily dropped out and engaged in unhealthy activities due to inadequate monitoring mechanism by the parents as well as the school at rural areas.

23. Children who were out of school learnt and adapted unhealthy practices like watching movie, moving with bad friends and developing bad habits.

24. Members reported of that the parents had received supplementary income through their child's work. Members of Manikandam block reported that children were less interested to study and going for fishing and other works to earn money in order to meet their own expenses.

25. Parents were unaware about child rearing and the rights of the children, since they were struggling for their day to day living.

26. Children, who were out of school, faced crisis situation like death of their parents, broken family, uncared guardian, etc. The support rendered to recover these children was found to be inadequate.

27. Majority of the members stated that the children left their schools, when they faced adjustment difficulties in their school.

28. Members reported lack of skill among parents to support their children, who were out of school, to accomplish good education instead they were becoming unskilled labour.
5. Feedback on Government Programme and its benefits for “Out of School Children” and their Families - [CFGD]

29. Majority of members reported that family members of children out of school availed benefits such as ration card, assistance for flood / accident compensation, assistants for antenatal mothers, government hospital assistance, exemption from bank loan, etc. However, the equal preferences were not given for all families of out of school children in major welfare programmes such as Tamilnadu Adhi Dravidar Housing and Development Corporation Limited, Group house, Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), etc. As a result of this, majority of the families of out of school children did not receive the required welfare packages and they were unaware about the details of Government programmes.

30. The scholarship programmes were not common for all students, who belong to socio-economically backward, schedule caste / tribe, most backward and other backward community irrespective of the locations like Town Panchayats, Municipality and Corporation. Adhi dravida welfare department has provided stipend (ooka thogai) for all girl students in elementary school during 2005, 2006 but now the stipend is given to only limited number of children in a particular category and in some schools.

6. Perception and Participation of Community relating to Children Out of School - [CFGD]

31. Members revealed that in some of their villages, the village leaders along with the SSA teacher, the BRTE and NCLP Teacher were advising the parents of the out of school children about the importance of schooling, and the assistance they could receive from them. Majority of members revealed that for the past two years they had taken effort to identify children, who were out of school and admitted at least 20 of them in schools.

32. Majority of members stated that imperfect functioning of the Village Education Committee (VEC) was often reported. For the last few years, students’ enrolment in Government school was found to be decreasing in Thotiam block.
7. Suggestions to make the Children to attend School and prevent the Children becoming Out of School - [CFGD]

33. Members stated that the accountability to be fixed with School Management in order to meet the basic needs of parents, who were below the poverty line and the transparent measuring scale to be applied to track whether the government schemes reach the poor parents in need.

B. DIVERGENT FINDINGS

1. DIVERGENT FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (DIS)

   The following are divergent findings drawn from Interview Schedule (conducted for the children out of school and their parents).

   Sizeable number of children said that they enjoyed the experience of going to school but at the same time they were not interested in studies. This shows that though children liked the school and not liked the studies, there are other factors which contribute for them for remaining out of school. Majority of the children have reported that their health conditions were not hindrance for them to attend schools. More than half of the children had not experienced any bullying incidents at school, while more than one third of the children, who had been bullied in school, did not continue their school education.

2. DIVERGENT FINDINGS FROM CASE STUDIES (DCS)

   The following are divergent findings drawn from the individuals of Case Studies of five Children, who are out of school.

   Though the school environment was not conducive to study, the child used to play with friends and sometimes the teacher used to tell stories or sings songs, which was interesting for the child to attend school. Poor health condition of the child was a barrier for children to continue their schooling. Students were teasing the child by comparing with media personalities, which led the child to avoid schooling.
3. DIVERGENT FINDINGS FROM FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (DFGD)

The following are divergent findings drawn from the members of Focus Group Discussions conducted at 16 blocks.

Poor sanitation and hygiene in the school environment has made the children to be out of school. This was also reflected in the decline in the enrollment rate of the school in Thuriayur block. Teachers were not available in schools located in remote village areas to cover the tribal children who were out of school. Children with chronic ill health and severe disability seemed to be dropped out and had not enrolled in schools due to inadequate special school facilities in their areas. Children out of school in Thathiangarpet block are found to be mentally retarded hence they are not enrolled in regular schools. Due to absence of counseling facilities at school the teacher was unable to deal with children’s problem. In few schools at Thathiangarpet block, children parliament was functioning with 5 representatives from five classes, who were well performing students, fixed with the responsibility to meet the out of school children in a friendly manner and make them to rejoin the mainstream education.

C. CONCLUSION OF TRIANGULATION METHOD

In conclusion, the above described findings of the study by using triangulation method has enabled the researcher to discover that there were majority of similarities and a very few discrepancies between quantitative (interview schedule) and qualitative data (case study and focus group discussion). This strongly proves that the quantitative data was positively supported by the qualitative data. Therefore, this exhaustive study about the situation of Children out of school in Tiruchirappalli district shows that it is highly reliable one to proceed further with the suitable interventions, suggestions and conclusion in this regard. The highlights of the convergent and divergent findings (triangulated) are also presented in a diagrammatic form based on the objectives of the study.
Majority of the members across the district opined that the number of boys and girls between 10 and 150 were out of school at block level particularly high in rural areas and this varied from one place to another. Members of Musiri block revealed that the rate of children out of school was very low in their block.

 Majority of the members (in urban and rural blocks) confirmed that the boys between the ages of 11-14 years remained dropped out from schools since they go out for places of work to earn a living. If the elder girl child goes to school it prevents the parents from going for work, since there was no one to look after younger siblings at home.

Mostly there were 4 to 5 children in nuclear family and the parents believed that education will be useful for boys only and not for girls.

Most of the families of out of school children were from social-economically backward community, who has uneven monthly income starting from Rs. 500

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**
Vast majority of the children out of school were in the age group of 11-14 years among which sizeable (more than half) number of out of school children reside in rural areas

More than half of the boys were out of school compared to the girls.

Majority of the children who were out of school belong to nuclear families

Majority of the of the respondents earn a family monthly income of below Rs. 3000 per month

**CASE STUDY**
A child, who had not enrolled in school, resided in the rural area for many years.

Male child dropped out school while studying 6th std in Government School.

Nuclear families had led to lack of attention by the parents on the schooling of the child.

The parents were fortune tellers and earn a very little income that they are unable to meet the demands of the family.

**CONVERGENT FINDINGS**

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION**

Majority of the members across the district opined that number of boys and girls between 10 and 150 were out of school at block level particularly high in rural areas and this varied from one place to another. Members of Musiri block revealed that the rate of children out of school was very low in their block.

Majority of the members (in urban and rural blocks) confirmed that the boys between the ages of 11-14 years remained dropped out from schools since they go out for places of work to earn a living. If the elder girl child goes to school it prevents the parents from going for work, since there was no one to look after younger siblings at home.

Mostly there were 4 to 5 children in nuclear family and the parents believed that education will be useful for boys only and not for girls.

Most of the families of out of school children were from social-economically backward community, who has uneven monthly income starting from Rs. 500

Figure no.11 - 246 (a)
(2 a) VARIOUS FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO “CHILDREN REMAINING OUT OF SCHOOL”

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Majority of members opined that the children studying in private schools were talented but children studying in Government schools were careless and not interested in their studies.

Majority of the members viewed that out of school children have fear to go by road to school in the absence of a transport facility.

Majority members stated that the out of Children had fear for exams. They found to have no recognition among their peer group and they felt ashamed when their teacher beat him/her in front of others.

Majority of the members felt that parents failed to be responsible and caring for their children to continue schooling.

Majority of the members viewed that the parents had to face difficulty in admitting their children in school during migration to other places and they were also unable to get welfare assistance from government without the ration card identity.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Almost half of the children who were out of school were not interested in studies.

More than half of the children have inadequate transport facility to reach their school, which are located at least 2 - 4 km away from their residence.

Sizeable (more than half) number of children, who were out of school, had dropped out due to fear of examination and followed by more than one third of these children feared the teacher.

More than half of the children, who were out of school were deprived of love and care from parents.

Migration of parents had affected the child’s continuity of schooling. One fifth of the children have stopped education due to frequent migration of parents.

CASE STUDY

Out of school child was not having interest in studies. While truant the child engaged in playing with friends, watching movie, etc.

Child avoided schooling due to long school hours and the long time taken to travel, since her home was not close by.

Teacher was partial towards the children, who were performing well. Child got offended, when the teacher compared their performance with their other fellow class mates. Fear of exams forced the child to remain out of school.

First born female stopped schooling at the age of 13 years in order to take of their siblings.

Girl child felt insecure and was scared to be alone in the absence of parents during migration. The Child with her mother migrated from Kerala found difficulty to get admission in regular school due to non availability of migration certificate, ration identity card, etc. Even the mother was unable to get welfare assistance from government without ration identity card and without her father, who had left the family due to extra marital relationship.

CONVERGENT
There were out of school children, whose parents were bed ridden or ran away due to illegal affairs or not alive, were deprived support of their parents. Ignorance of parents and villagers about child rights is found to be a key factor leading children to be out of school.

In spite of advising the parents to send their children to school regularly, absenteeism was found in schools.

Majority of the members recorded that children remained out of school due to very poor income in the family and lack of awareness on education.

Functioning of the schools was imperfect, even children did not understand Tamil language, which was one of the subjects but children had the skills of questioning in the class room. For more number of children there are few teachers only. Student – teacher ratio is inappropriate.

Addiction to alcohol and drug used by parents was reported as a reason for their children to be out of school. Addicted fathers used to beat and prevent their children from going to school and forced them to earn. Majority of Members reported that there were lots of wine shops, which had been opened in recent years.
IMPLICATIONS OF “CHILDREN NOT GOING TO SCHOOL” FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILY

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Majority of the members stated that the parents were working for particular season of six months to 8 months and remained idle for the rest of the days and they depend on children’s wages, as they have discontinued schools.

Out of school children found difficult to continue their studies after a long gap with the students, who were younger than them.

As parents had to leave for their job early in the morning, they do not monitor whether their children were going to school. These children often went to work or to play other than to school. Members revealed that majority of the family members did not involve in helping the child to exercise their rights.

Children were found to be with low self-esteem and motivation, resulting in no positive goals in life.

Majority of the out of school children were not covered under health checkup regularly. This had resulted in parents to look after their unhealthy children and this in turn prevented them from attending work for their daily living.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

More than half of the children, who were out of school had faced burden of their families

Nearly half of these children did not have literacy skills.

Vast majority of the parents of out-of-school children have poor monitoring practice towards development of children

Nearly one third of the children, who were out of school, had not decided anything about their future plan and one fourth of the children wish to become drivers, mechanic, etc.

Majority of the families of out of school children are becoming less productive to manage the cost of living

CASE STUDY

As the parents had availed loan, the child had to work daily to pay back the loan availed. Idleness of the parent resulted in the child shouldering the family responsibilities.

The child faced difficulty to read, write and concentrate.

The child felt lonely at home and used to fight with parents frequently, to get the attention of the parents towards the child’s needs.

Influence of adults resulted in developing unhealthy and immature habits of adults. Child also tends to develop no high expectations in life

The child had become anemic, since there is no nutritious food available regularly at home like that of the food provided in school. Child was taken to hospital by the parent to improve the child’s health condition.

CONVERGENT FINDINGS

Figure no.13 - 246 (d)
Members recorded that though the rate of child labour was reduced to an extent, majority of the children, who were out of school were engaged in child labour practices with poor wages (Rs.10 to 75 rupees per day) and had to work for long hours (more than 10 hours per day) than adults. Majority of the children, who were out of school were engaged in unskilled labour like beedi rolling, brick kilns, hotels, grocery shops, goat rearing, etc. Some children are wandering or going for fishing and girl children are engaged in household work in their own house. Beggary among children was prominent in Thathaingarpeth block.

Members witnessed that local employers at industries and other work places exploited children by engaging them to work in their work places.

Majority of the members’ perception was children, who were not clever become easily dropped out and engaged in unhealthy activities due to inadequate monitoring mechanism by the parents as well as the school at rural areas.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
More than half of the children, who were out of school had engaged in unhealthy activities like child labour, begging, steeling, etc. A small percentage of them were engaged in domestic work, living on the streets begging.

More than half of the children were exposed to long working hours (8 to 12 hours a day) and were at various work places which were unsafe and hazardous.

More than half of the children opined that the unhealthy activities carried out by them at present were not acceptable to them.

CASE STUDY
Life was engrossed in child labour practices once the child was out of school. Child was attending school for 3 days in a week and next three days she was taking care of siblings in the absence of parents. After dropping out from school, the begging practices were motivated in child by the parents, who are traditional beggars.

Child, who had practiced unskilled labour, met with an accident and got injured a finger while working.

Family circumstance has driven the child to practice unhealthy activities in their young age.

CONVERGENT FINDINGS

Figure no.14 a - 246 (e)
Focus Group Discussion

Members reported that the parents had received supplementary income through their child's work. Members of Manikandam block reported that children were less interested to study and going for fishing and other works to earn money in order to meet their own expenses.

Parents were unaware about child rearing and the rights of the children, since they were struggling for their day to day living.

Majority of the members stated that the children left their schools, when they faced adjustment difficulties in their school.

Members reported lack of skill among parents to support their children, who were out of school, to accomplish good education instead they were becoming unskilled labour.

Interview Schedule

Half of the parents of out of school children opined that their children generating income for the family and they lacked interest in education and more than one third of the responses seem to indicate parents' inability to mentor their children as a reason for the non-schooling of their children.

Vast majority of the parents perceived that their children were worried about their parents' incapability.

Majority of the parents responded that their children found it difficult to get along with others.

More than half of the parents were unaware about their child's achievement.

Case Study

Parent need the child to earn a living and was found to be inefficient to mentor the child and sort out difficulties.

Child's lackadaisical attitude was a hurdle to join school and the parent unable to deal with the child.

Child was a slow learner, when she was studying in school.

Engaged in household work and sibling care on full time basis.

Convergent Findings

Figure no.14 b - 246 (f)
Majority of members reported that family members of children out of school availed benefits such as ration card, assistance for flood / accident compensation, assistants for antenatal mothers, government hospital assistance, exemption from bank loan, etc. However, the equal preferences were not given for all families of out of school children in major welfare programmes such as Tamilnadu Adhi Dravidar Housing and Development Corporation Limited, Group house, Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), etc. As a result of this, majority of the families of out of school children did not receive the required welfare packages and were unaware about the details of government programmes.

The scholarship programmes were not common for all students, who belong to socio-economically backward, schedule caste / tribe, most backward and other backward community irrespective of the locations like Town Panchayats, Municipality and Corporation. Adhi dravida welfare department has provided stipend (ooka thogai) for all girl students in elementary school during 2005, 2006 but now the stipend is given to only limited number of children in a particular category and in some schools.

Interview Schedule
More than half of the parents were aware of the welfare measures provided by the government while nearly one third of the parents stated that they are unaware of the welfare measures offered by government for poor families.

More than half of the parents had availed at least one or two of the assistance provided through the government programmes. More than one third of the respondents’ parents revealed that they had not availed any assistance under Government schemes for their family except schooling, stipend and scholarship.

Case Study
Inadequate support of government schemes to the child’s family and in turn poor support of parents to the child had made the child to be never enrolled in school.

A 13 year old girl child, who was in the 8th standard in the government aided middle school, with the help of stipend amount received from government, had to discontinue her studies the next year, as she had not received stipend amount.

Focus Group Discussion
CONVERGENT FINDINGS

Figure no.15 - 246 (g)
Focus Group Discussion

Perception and Participation of Community

Members revealed that in some of their villages, the village leaders along with the SSA teacher, the BRTE and NCLP teacher were advising the parents of the out of school children about the importance of schooling, and the assistance they could receive from them. Majority of members revealed that for the past two years they had taken effort to identify children, who were out of school and admitted at least 20 of them in schools.

Majority of members stated that imperfect functioning of the Village Education Committee (VEC) was often reported. For the last few years, students’ enrolment in Government school was found to be decreasing in Thotiam block

Suggestions

Members stated that the accountability to be fixed with School Management in order to meet the basic needs of parents, who were below the poverty line and the transparent measuring scale to be applied to track whether the government schemes reach the poor parents in need.

Interview Schedule

Perception and Participation of Community

One fifth of the children had stopped schooling because of poor encouragement from their community members.

More than half of the parents have never received any assistance from the community for their children to attend school continuously.

Suggestions

Majority of the members stated that the families of out of school children should be provided with necessary assistance under the government programmes, which has to be strictly monitored by local community leaders.

Case Study

Perception and Participation of Community

Caste system and cultural issues like girl attaining puberty prevented the child to attend school.

Child was not covered in school health programmes since he was out of school. This has made the family to fully depend on government assistance.

Suggestions

The child wanted the parents to be economically balanced with the support of government.

Convergent Findings
FEW ASPECTS OBSERVED AS DIVERGENT FINDINGS BASED ON THE ENTIRE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Poor sanitation and hygiene in the school environment has made the children to be out of school. This was also reflected in the decline in the enrollment rate of the school in Thuraiyur block. Teachers were not available in schools located in remote village areas to cover the tribal children who were out of school. Children with chronic ill health and severe disability seemed to be dropped out and had not enrolled in schools due to inadequate special school facilities in their areas. Children out of school in Thathiagarpet block are found to be mentally retarded hence they are not enrolled in regular schools. Due to absence of counseling facilities at school the teacher was unable to deal with children’s problem. In few schools at Thathiagarpet block, children parliament was functioning with 5 representatives from five classes, who were well performing students, fixed with the responsibility to meet the out of school children in a friendly manner and make them to rejoin the mainstream education.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Sizeable number of children said that they enjoyed the experience of going to school but at the same time they were not interested in studies. This shows that though children liked the school and not liked the studies, there are other factors which contribute for them for remaining out of school. Majority of the children have reported that their health conditions were not hindrance for them to attend schools. More than half of the children had not experienced any bullying incidents at school, while more than one third of the children, who had been bullied in school, did not continue their school education.

CASE STUDY

Though the school environment was not conducive to study, the child used to play with friends and sometimes the teacher used to tell stories or sings songs, which was interesting for the child to attend school. Poor health condition of the child was a barrier for children to continue their schooling. Students were teasing the child by comparing with media personalities, which led the child to avoid schooling.

DIVERGENT FINDINGS

Poor sanitation and hygiene in the school environment has made the children to be out of school. This was also reflected in the decline in the enrollment rate of the school in Thuraiyur block. Teachers were not available in schools located in remote village areas to cover the tribal children who were out of school. Children with chronic ill health and severe disability seemed to be dropped out and had not enrolled in schools due to inadequate special school facilities in their areas. Children out of school in Thathiagarpet block are found to be mentally retarded hence they are not enrolled in regular schools. Due to absence of counseling facilities at school the teacher was unable to deal with children’s problem. In few schools at Thathiagarpet block, children parliament was functioning with 5 representatives from five classes, who were well performing students, fixed with the responsibility to meet the out of school children in a friendly manner and make them to rejoin the mainstream education.
SUGGESTIONS

Children out of school are unique and they differ from each other in terms of their origin, socio-economic situation and their current living condition. This present study has projected the situation of children out of school in Tiruchirappalli District. However, the commonalities shared by children out of school are as same as the experience of any other child out of school. Needless to say that presently, enormous effort has been taken to strengthen the school and education systems whereas the families of children out of school are in the dark state. This shows that whatever effort is taken to mould the children in school all goes in vain due to poor base at home, where the children need to spend their ‘after school time’ for learning. Based on the findings of the study about demographic characteristics, factors responsible, implications, parents’ perception, access of government schemes and community participation relating to children out of school and their family, the following intervention and suggestions have been framed out in order to ensure that all the children out of school and their family are escalated towards better quality of life systematically.

SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION

School Counseling Services

The children who are at school or tend to become out of school or presently out of school have many personal problems. These problems need to be handled by a professionally qualified Social Worker (as School Counselor) for the betterment of the children to continue school. For this purpose, School Counselors may be posted for all schools and there should be one School Counselor for each of the 50 students. The role of a counselor will help in sorting out the issues relating to children that affects them from continuing education. The counselor will put emphasis on the child centered friendly approach between teachers and students as well as teachers and parents with special reference to children who come under first generation education group or disadvantaged section.
Family Counseling Services

Parents centered friendly approach need to be introduced in order to make the parents, who have negative perception about the education, to understand the importance of education and child rights. The Government schools may extend their tie up with the existing Family Counseling Centres in different places in the district, (which are run by Central Social Welfare Board of Government of India) in order to provide counseling to the poor parents of children out of school. The professional Family Counselor will facilitate for healthy interaction between (tough) parents and teachers in the areas where the prevalence of children out of school is high. Sensitizing and educating the fathers and mothers is necessary since their illiteracy and ignorance increase the probability of their child being out of school. In the study, it was found that most of the fathers of children out of school were addicted to alcohol / drug and they were not bothered about their children’s schooling. This issue seems to be increasing for the recent years both in rural and urban areas, as the growing number of liquor shops show the way for the ignorant fathers to have easy access to alcohol consumption. The children, who performed well in education, were forced to become dropouts from school because of the drunkard fathers, who were directly or indirectly putting their children in distress in early childhood period itself. Further, in most of the families, both the parents were going for work in early morning and they do not mind about whether their children were getting ready to attend school. Thus, the Group counseling to the parents of disadvantaged children may be introduced in order to make the ignorant parents to understand about child rearing and child rights, to enliven their skill towards child care and to facilitate them to bring their family involvement in the education and schooling of their children.

Family Welfare Services

There are lots of government welfare measures available for the down trodden families but the major schemes have not reached the families of all the disadvantaged children due to the ignorance of the parents, which can be harmonized by the professionally trained Social Worker (as Family Welfare Coordinator), as a liaison officer. For this purpose, there should be one Family Welfare Coordinator placed at
each Panchayat Union or Block to look after the critical needs of the families of disadvantaged children. The role of coordinator is to assess and set right the issues relating to the well being of the families of children out of school. Handhold support or referral services can also be provided to the parents of disadvantaged children in order to orient them for healthy living standard. Proper guidance at the right time to be given to the families of children, who are tend to become out of school due to sudden crisis situation in the family, in turn to access the government welfare measures available for them without any hurdle or delay or mishandle. The available government welfare measures should reach the distressed families in time so that the major consequences to the family as well as to the children can be avoided.

**Community Welfare Services**

At community level, the general public and the local leaders are less concerned towards the problems of out of school and their families and they are unaware that it affects the whole community in the long run. In order to deal and coordinate with community people relating to out of school children consistently, a professional Social Worker (Community Welfare Coordinator) is to be placed at regional wise in every district. The role of Community Welfare Coordinator, in practical, will facilitate for achieving the target fixed by the government for the welfare of poor families by sensitizing the local village leaders, who are keen in dispersing the welfare assistance to the known and same caste people and leaving the poorest families as unattended. Further, the caste system and cultural belief in rural areas have restricted the children particularly girls to continue their school or even to enroll in school. These gaps can be addressed by the Community Welfare Coordinator sequentially to make the community people including local leaders to realize the issues and to play a vital role to settle the issues relating to schooling, children out of school and their families and thereby to prevent the children becoming out of school.
GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

This study has provided evidence that the aim of universal elementary education continues to be escaped and under achieved. There remains an incomplete agenda of universal education at the upper primary stage. In general the number of children from socio-economically disadvantaged sections, who drop out of school before completing upper primary education, remains high. The standard of education attainment is not always completely satisfactory even in the case of children who complete elementary education, which are evidenced in the present study. The absence of adequate attention to improve the wellbeing of the family of children out of school, parents involvement in children’s education and individual attention for children’s learning improvement have resulted in not yet achieved the goal of universal education for the children below 14 years at all levels. Therefore, to take effective steps for “Sustainable Inclusive Education and Provision of Welfare Measures for all Children out of School” the following suggestions are given.

Standard Operating Procedure

Assess the needs not addressed till now for children who are out of school combined with existing education service at all the schools and benefits of welfare packages to reach the children out of school and their family. Review the secondary data available like number of schools, students’ attendance, number of discontinued education, average length of stay, number of children’s family benefitted by all welfare measures, etc. In sequence, identify the strengths and gaps from the bottom to the top level of line departments’ services as well as in terms of civil structure, manpower, transportation, teaching aids, learning materials, etc at schools in order to put forward the required facility and accessibility of welfare programmes at community level particularly for child disability, child poverty, child migration, etc. Sketch out the Standard Operating Procedures for various activities of mainstreaming and preventing the out of school children at school and community level.
Convergence of Services

Conduct a sensitization workshop amongst the policy makers of the department of Health, Education, Factories, Social Welfare, Rural Development, Municipal Administration, Labour, Public Works and Highways, Police, Information and Public Relations, Adi-dravida Welfare, Revenue, Social Defence, NGOs’ and other organizations in order to make them understand the basic support required at grass-root level and to provide necessary inputs to achieve the objectives framed. Give attention simultaneously on providing education as well as family welfare for all the children out of school according to their diversified nature of survival. Converge the services of related departments and bring the welfare measures available for disadvantaged families of children out of school under a single roof so as to avoid the exclusion and duplication of rehabilitating children out of school and their family.

Social Work Intervention Cell

Establish a Social Work Intervention Cell at the Directorate of School Education to bridge the gap at all levels between the stake holders of School Education Department and other line Departments that offers welfare measure for socio-economically backward families. To begin, identify the requirement for the establishment of social work interventions like case work, group work, community organisation, counselling services, child guidance clinic, etc. For which qualified school based counsellors, qualified community based family welfare officer, etc. can be employed in order to deal with the issues of the children who are out of school and their families in rural and urban pockets.

Individual Tracking System

Prepare a comprehensive computerised school management information system combined with welfare management information system covering the details of all categories of children below 14 years and their family particularly the weaker sections. This should be a single line monitoring system for all the children particularly socio-economically backward group irrespective of disabled, migrant, orphan, etc. In order to address this, a country / state wide web based tracking can be
developed, which helps to track the records of access to education and family welfare measures to each and every child and backlog existing in implementation can be found and corrected through corrective action by the department concerned then and there for better results. This facilitates for tracking the status of all the children (individually) even if they are migrated to other districts / states and it also helps to spot out the children, who are hidden for a long time.

Legal Action

The Government should take more effective steps for proper and stringent implementation of the existing laws relating to children rights and protection in all aspects in order to save the children, who are hidden and at risk.

Training need Assessment

Find out senior and potential trainers from within the school and local community. To carry out training needs assessment of the workforce of various categories at all schools and local community in relation to achieving the mainstream education for all the children out of school and utilisation of welfare packages by all their family. Develop training module based on the training need assessment and to conduct training of trainers for the workforce. Later, the effectiveness and impact of such training can be analysed through student (mainstreamed out of school children) satisfaction surveys, their family satisfaction survey and school utilization rates coupled with analysing the welfare packages availed by the families of out of school children.

Information, Education and Communication (IEC)

Create signage, work instructions, manuals etc. necessary for the schools and local body for optimum utilisation of all the education and welfare services available. It is necessary to perform internal audit, social audit and self-evaluation of the system in operation as per standard operating protocols and procedures on a regular basis for sustainability.
Life Skill and Soft Skill Education

The life skill education as a subject to be included in the curriculum at all levels of education. This will in turn build up an individual efficiency to excel well in studies and survival. Likewise, the soft skill education at Government School and Government aided School should be effective on par with private schools. This enables the poor children to come out from the uneasiness in reading tough subjects like English language.

Special Coaching Centres

Since, more children are out of school in rural than urban areas, the establishment of special coaching centre with the help of educated youngsters with the qualification of 12\textsuperscript{th} standard and above will pave way to coach the slow learners as well as the children who are deprived of coaching at their homes. On the other hand, the children who tend to drop out because of inadequate learning atmosphere at home and incapable mothers may be facilitated to continue education without interruption. Further, the children who are severely disabled need to be protected with special care by providing required / basic services adequately in the remote villages. The parents should be sensitized properly to make use of the existing services for the differently challenged children (disabled).

Extracurricular Activities

Adequate space and facility for playing is very essential for the children to attend school regularly. A variety of games and sports in schools will serve as a means to attract the children to be inside the school premises and prevent them from going outside during school hours. ‘Play time’ should be allotted in the daily schedule of the schools, so that the children, who are less interested in studies may engage their concentration in games or sports and show their talent in extracurricular activities instead of dropping out of school. Further, there should be a special screening test to identify the talents of poor children in various sports / games / cultural / art activities and the selected children may be provided with required training by the government. This helps the poor children, who are disinterested in
studies, to take up the other interested field and to become expertise in other extracurricular activities for a healthy living condition.

**Vocation training**

The children out of school, who are identified as over age and not in touch with school life for many years, may not be willing to continue education at the age of 13 - 14 years with the little children. They require either special coaching individually or vocational training to improve their skill according to their interest. Initially, these children can be taught separately to improve their reading and writing skill and to clear the 10\textsuperscript{th} Standard examinations. Later, they may be motivated to undergo vocational training. This type of vocational training should be a professional one, for which the schools can have a tie up with the existing vocational training institutes in order to rehabilitate them as well as to make them eligible for placements in companies concerned or to start their self-employment.

**Rewards to Parents**

In all Government Programmes there should be a clause for the parents, who seek assistance, to provide the proof of their child who is enrolled and studying in school. Government should stop assistance temporarily for the families of children not going to school. The welfare measures such as ration cards, etc. should be provided only to the restricted families, who send their children to school continuously, with the proof of their children’s current educational attainment up to the age of 14 years. The underprivileged parents, who have contributed to their children to complete atleast 10\textsuperscript{th} Standard education until 14 years or above, can be rewarded with cash assistance of Rs. 50,000/- for improvement of their self employment or business.

**Community Competency**

The community should be capable enough to sort out the issues relating to cultural bias (such as caste systems, etc.), which are the reasons for the children remaining out of school. The Village Education Committee (VEC) and Parents Teachers Association (PTA) need to be reinforced to work for the universal
education. Special cash award can be given to the Community Leaders every year for the contribution towards 100% enrollment as well as changing their Panchayats as “out of school children free zone” by preventing the children dropping out from schools, improving school activities and providing maximum assistance given to the families of disadvantaged children under major government welfare programmes.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring improves and follows up the sustainability of every activity and outcome through web based tracking system for all the children and their family especially socio-economically backward groups in order to prevent the children being out of school. This evaluation confirms an appropriate level of performance or it discovers disparity in implementation / results. If there is any discrepancy, it paves way for the opportunities to improve service.

Therefore, the output of “Sustainable Inclusive Education and Provision of Welfare Programme for Children out of School” is to assess, sort out and follow up that whether each child out of school receives such a mix of education and remedial welfare services based on the need of their own self and their family. As an outcome, it gives the best possible achievements in the holistic development of the children out of school and also prevention of children becoming out of school.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

The following aspects in the line of universal education and wellbeing of children out of school are recommended for further research in future.

1. It will be useful to study the delivering mechanism related to management gaps at various levels for effective use of limited time, budget and human resources for universal education and prevention of children becoming out of school.
2. To address the migrated children’s continuity of schooling, the quality of education in terms of relevance and language to migrated children, who are out of school can be analysed.
3. The research on the role of Non-Government Organisations in extending access to learning to the most vulnerable, hidden and unreached children at risk can be undertaken to reinforce the services available for vulnerable children.

4. It is essential to explore the conditions which influence non attendance of the hidden children, who are at risk.

5. The impact of village education committee in terms of teacher motivation and performance, child friendly approach, relations with village level committees, relations with the parents and the broader community can be examined.

6. A study can be done on the input relating to family welfare packages for children out of school at micro level for enhancing progress towards Universal Primary Education.

7. The research on high proportions of children who complete primary education without having acquired basic literacy results in the non-continuity of secondary education can also be undertaken.

**CONCLUSION**

The present study brings to light the current portrayal of out of school children, their problems, needs, situation of life, their parents’ perception, community participation and accessibility of welfare measures relating to children out of school.

With regard to findings, the convergent between quantitative (interview) and qualitative methods (case study and focus group discussion), most of the answers were similar to one another based on the objectives of the study. On viewing the divergent findings between quantitative (interview) and qualitative methods (case study and focus group discussion), only very few aspects were dissimilar. Therefore, the study on the situation of Children out of school in Tiruchirappali district proves its reliability to present the following conclusion of the study.

Greater part of the out of school children were between 11 and 14 years, reside in rural areas, dropped or pulled out due to personal and family reasons and only few were pushed out due to reasons pertaining to their teachers and schools. To some extent there were more boys than girls and most of them were from nuclear families.
Children were more or less from the category of Most Backward Caste, Scheduled Caste / Scheduled Tribe and Backward Caste group of people.

Regarding the factors contributed for children remaining out of school, more than half of them have expressed multiple answers. Basically, the out of school children were not interested in studies, they had faced inadequate transport facility between school and home, scared of examinations that followed feared of teachers, deprived of love and care from parents and abused by parents or teachers or strangers / employers. They also do not have adequate care to their learning in schools, experienced extreme poverty and their parents have not motivated them to attend schools regularly were reasons stated by the out of school children.

About the implications of children not going to school on the child and family, the results says that the predominant one was parents’ poor monitoring practice towards development of children and followed by families are becoming less progressive to manage the cost of living and also they do not have proper recognition in the society. Majority of the children (out of school) have faced burden of their families and do not even have literacy skills. Consequently, the children out of school do not have healthy future plans. Their exposure to work reflected in their aspiration to become workers like driver, mechanic, self employer, etc and not to learn further.

Pertaining to situation of children out of school, high proportion of the out of school children engaged in unhealthy activities like child labour, begging, stealing, domestic work, living on the streets, etc. for 8 to 12 hours at unsafe environment and which were not acceptable to them according to their outlook. Parents also confirmed that their wards were exposed to bad habits and they were unable to provide complete support for their ward’s education. Parents opined that generating income for the family, lack of interest in education and parents’ inability to be a mentor for their children were the dominating reasons for non-schooling. As a result, the parents were unaware about their child’s achievement. To a larger extent, parents perceived that their children (out of school) faced difficulty in getting along with others in school (when they attended school) and worried about their parents’ incapability, In addition, the parents’ felt that both the parents as well as the children themselves are responsible for the children’s education.
In relation to the awareness and access towards government initiatives on welfare activities, though the parents were aware of few welfare schemes of government like natural calamity relief package, self help group activities, etc. they were not conscious about the many other major programmes like Prime Minister Rozgar Yojna (PMRY), National Bank for agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Tamilnadu Adi Dravidar Housing and Development Corporation (THADCO), which are available exclusively for the disadvantaged section. Likewise, even though the parents have availed at least one or two of the assistance such as ration card facilities, stipend and scholarships for their children while studying, etc. the benefits of government’s major welfare programmes for poor parents have not reached majority.

With respect to community participation in schooling, fairly the parents expressed that they have by no means received any assistance from the local community for their children to attend school continuously and the encouragement from local community for the children’s education seems to be irregular.

Practically, the parents suggest that, scholarship and stipend amount can be given to all the socio economically backward children. Child centered approach to be in effect for the student’s insight on subject and the approach of staff members to sort out each and every individual issue is mandatory. Further, the families to be provided with necessary assistance under the government programmes and it has to be strictly and closely monitored by local community leaders along with school authorities in a transparent manner.

In order to exercise the child rights in respect to all disadvantage children, the programmes and interventions need to be planned along with its stakeholders at the grass-root level giving major thrust not only to school system but also to family welfare packages. It is important that the efforts to widen access to primary education must recognise the different types of out-of-school children such as children who are never enrolled in school, admitted late in school (may be over aged) and potential dropouts (may leave school gradually or abruptly).
Based on the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data of this research, the findings show different contexts, proximate determinants of out-of-school situation and the remedy important to plan policies aimed at stopping the number of children being excluded from education and basic rights. Further, the researcher has suggested the need for Social Work Intervention and the Sustainable Inclusive Education with Welfare Measures (for the children out of school) and also recommended the areas for further research. Thus, the research provides clear understanding about the situation of children out of school in a comprehensive manner. Besides, it provokes the thought for strengthening the concurrent initiatives with different strategy in a single roof by the Government covering both the preventive and protective actions with special reference to the children of disadvantaged section including child labour, differently challenged (disabled), deprived of parents support, etc. As a result, the entire approach of the Government may be planned in such a way to reach the expected outcome, a holistic healthy progress of all the children (out of school), who belongs to weaker sections in the society.