SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Famines and droughts, starvation and migration have become part of the lives of people over the years in many parts of the world, particularly in the third world countries. Hence, there is a growing need for research in these regions for understanding social processes at large, and adaptive mechanisms that people have evolved in tiding over crisis situations.

The attention of anthropologists was invariably drawn towards scarcity situations since their major focus is on poor tribal and rural populations. Nevertheless, roost of the studies conducted were in famine-stricken pastoral and nomadic communities of Africa. This is not to deny totally their contribution but only to say that very few studies are conducted by anthropologists in the drought-prone areas of several parts of the world.

The existing literature on drought focusses various perspectives from different disciplines. All these studies have contributed for understanding the problem of drought, in several drought-prone regions of the country in their own limited sphere. Despite their invaluable contribution, there are some more aspects on drought that are still unexplored and need a thorough study. Most of the studies conducted in drought-prone regions have focussed more on economic variables and less on socio-cultural aspects. Even among them, there are not many studies based on intensive field work at local / regional level. Hence, in the present study an attempt is made in this direction.
Earlier studies have treated drought in isolation. But, drought has to be dealt along with several other factors that contribute to the social and cultural change. Drought is a stimulus for social and cultural change, and recurrent droughts in the study village are the causes for social transformation.

In the African studies, gradation of different sections of people has been ignored in the drought studies. Any study on India has to take into account the local hierarchical and other divisions to comprehend the reality better. The present study was conducted in Anantapur district of Rayalaseema in Andhra Pradesh. Of all the drought-prone districts of Rayalaseema, Anantapur is the worst drought affected district, where conditions of desertification have also set-in. The study village Kadmalakunta shares much with roost of the dry zone villages of Rayalaseema. This is a multi-jati village with significant variation in land-ownership, occupation and income. Analysis in the present study is based on each jati and land categories and emphasis is also placed upon the poorer sections of the village. Further, inner dynamics like land leasing, land transfers, and decline of Jeetha system, which form the core factors in social change, are also taken into consideration in the context of both short-term and long-term consequences of drought.

The approaches followed by non-anthropologists emphasize more on proving or disproving the hypotheses based on certain models. Anthropologists view the problem of drought from cultural ecology perspective. The findings of the present study are more or less in tune with some aspects of the models discussed in the introduction chapter. In the study village, better cropping methods like rotation of crops, mixed
cropping, adapting to high yield varieties, reducing consumption pattern, expenditure, social and cultural obligations, sale of livestock and so on comes under 'adjustment', as observed in Berry's (1976) model. Further, 'Reaction', as defined by Berry, is not found in the study village. However, 'withdrawal' can be seen in the form of seasonal migration, adapting to non-farm activities and effective utilization of CPF's.

In the study village, more inclusive responses to drought occur after more superficial and less inclusive responses had been attempted, as mentioned in the Minnis (1985) model. Initially adjustment in consumption patterns, local borrowings, reducing expenditure and so on are adapted in the study village. Later on sale of livestock, removal of jethas by landlords, seasonal migration within the district and so on are attempted. In the later stages, seasonal migration outside the district and state, sale of land and permanent assets are being taken up. In further stages, a few families had to permanently leave the village. Thus, depending upon the intensity of drought, the responses appeared in the study village.

James Scott (1987) points out that suitable crops should be evolved in the given circumstances. This is very much true in case of Kadamalakunta, where people have adapted self insurance strategies. When there is a possibility of minimum security, people do not migrate permanently. Contrary to Sahlin's (1964) and Finan's (1988), sharing at community level during crisis periods has not been found in the present study. When drought occurs, every household tries to look after itself and adapts accordingly. However, participation at community level could be seen during the period of festivals and other ceremonies, rituals etc. Most of the African studies emphasize upon early and later responses where drought
is not a recurring phenomena. This approach is not applicable in the present study. This is because, if drought comes once in 10 or 15 years then one can find early and late responses but when it is a recurring phenomena, no such thing can be observed.

In the study village, for most of the years, seasonal migration has taken place only for subsistence. In the past five years, it is also resorted to for improving their living conditions. Thus, seasonal migration is undertaken not only in drought years but even in normal years. A few seasonal migrants, who have bullocks and bullock carts, are able to earn additional money and improve their savings. Contrary to the expectations, it is not only the landless but even landholding households have permanently migrated from the village. The reasons for permanent migration varies from one household to the other. A distinction need to be made among the seasonal migrants, on the basis of proper utilization of income to cross the "poverty line". The households in which there are more dependents (i.e. children and aged) and who are indebted to money lenders are unable to cross the poverty trap, while those who are more enterprising, like taking up sheep-rearing, non-farm activities, taking bullocks and bullock-carts along with them to the place of migration, are able to come out of it.

Drought had induced farmers to think of innovations in the cropping pattern and accordingly farming practices, are well adapted to suit the harsh environment. For instance, crops with different maturation periods are cultivated in rotation to cope with erratic rainfall. Similarly, mixed cropping and inter-cropping are also adaptations to the prevailing conditions. The knowledge of seasonal migrants also helped in shifting
from one variety to another variety of grain, which gives a higher yield as an adaptation to the local environmental conditions. This was evident with the shift from local variety of jowar to the 'Raichur jowar', which is a high yielding variety, that were brought by seasonal migrants as part of their wage labour.

Patron-client relationship acts as buffer, to a certain extent, during drought periods. Though land lease, credit giving etc, between patron and client, apparently seem to be economic transactions, have a lot of social significance underlying it. Adjusting consumption of food is an important adaptation during drought years. But, the adaptations among big and medium farmers are quite different from that of small, marginal and landless categories. In case of later, adjustment involves reduction in number of meals taken in a day (from three meals to two meals a day), solid food to liquid food, shift to coarse grains, and eating various kinds of forest leaves. This being so, medium and big farmers resort to reduced consumption of milk, pulses, sugar, vegetables and foodgrains. In addition, liquidating assets, resorting to share cropping, borrowing for consumption as well as production are the other commonly observed adaptations. For additional support, households turn to jati and kin members, neighbours and hereditary patrons.

Not meeting certain obligations like gift giving to sons-in-law are considered as socially legitimate during drought period. Several socially and culturally important occasions also are deferred or postponed. Social visits and expenditures are curtailed to a large extent. Sometimes, people are forced to violate the existing customs while tiding over the crisis situations, which ultimately have lasting impact in their living pattern.
For instance, among the Madiga jati, the obligation to make available abundant liquor to all people present on the occasion of marriage became so much a liability on part of the bride groom party during droughts that the jati council ultimately decided to abandon liquor giving.

Several adaptations that have taken place in the study village over a period of time have both short-term and long-term implications for the people. The implications include: permanent migration, increase in the area of land under cultivation, increased leasing activity among seasonal migrants, significant change in land transactions, lower strata of people organizing themselves into pressure groups like Rytu coolie sangam, jati groups like valmiki sangam etc., effective utilization of CPR’s and increase in non-farm activities. The other implications of seasonal migration include that of children abandoning schools and consequently discontinuing education, vulnerability to ill-health and accidents at the place of migration, leading sometimes even to death and suffering for the dependents.

A clear distinction could be observed between the relatively rich and poor in resorting to sale of assets. Big and medium farmers try to sell the livestock during droughts because of non-availability of fodder, while small and marginal farmers are forced to resort to the means or selling draught animals to meet their consumption needs as well as to get little money that could be utilized for seasonal migration. Though cultivator jati households have purchased more amount of land per capita than any other jati households in the village, it is also true that the purchasing power of the agricultural labour jati and Scheduled jati households has increased. One of the reasons being that the seasonal migration has given enough exposure to use land more productively.
Change in the hereditary relationships and diversification of traditional occupations is an important consequence in the process of coping up with drought. For instance, in case of the carpenter household, a hereditary relation was replaced by a contractual relation. This is because farmers have adopted agricultural implements made of iron, instead of traditional wood-made ones. This shift in implements made the carpenter household to diversify the occupation into making windows, doors, tables etc. Similarly, Kummari jati household diversified its occupation into making earthenware materials such as toys which are commercial value.

Seasonal migration has its impact on the social fabric of the village. At the place of migration, a few married women and unmarried girls eloped, unable to cope with the situation and subsequently, families got divided down giving severe jolt to the existing value system in the study village. A few households had to resort to the worst means of living by begging. Though Madiga jati people resorted to this initially, later on even other jati members, whose social status was high also took recourse to it.

Women play a crucial role in dealing with droughts. In fact, they adapt well according to the household needs and also suggest adjustment mechanisms that are quite suited to the households in the periods of drought. This is evident in terms of negotiating small amounts of credit, maintaining social bonds and kin relations, generating additional source of income, offering themselves in agricultural and non-agricultural activities, along with responsibility of domestic work and child care. In terms of stress and strain caused due to drought, women are the most affected. They undergo sexual harassment at the places of migration, receive insufficient care during pregnancy and are at a disadvantage while adjusting consumption patterns.
The beliefs on droughts are important in the sense that they reflect deep conventions which are being followed from age old times to this day. For example, the uncertain and erratic rainfall has created a kind of fear that exists always in the minds of people. Since droughts are seen as resulting from intervention of a divine force, it is obvious that people have evolved methods of appeasing these forces in their own ways. The rituals that are practiced in the study village to appease the rain god include: exhuming the buried people, hundred and one pot ceremony, Banalu velladam along with a few other rituals seeking rains. Moreover, these practices indicate the anxiety of farmers regarding prospects of rains and good crop years.

Many government programmes are reaching the village with varying coverage and impact. These include: subsidized credit, Public Distribution System (PDS), Land distribution and few other schemes like sheep, bullock and bullock carts distribution. The government programmes that take drought relief measures into consideration are IRDP, JRY, DPAP and DWACRA schemes at district, mandal and village levels. Postponement of land revenue collection and, opening of free fodder centres are other governmental measures to mitigate the drought conditions. NGO’s play a critical role in making people realize these schemes better by way of increasing their awareness. In the study area RDT (a voluntary organization) has taken up various developmental schemes keeping the thrust on education, health, women and ecology.

Both governmental and NGO’s have been contributing to the development of drought-affected people. However, one does not notice any significant impact on the living patterns in the study village. Compared to
governmental programmes, the impact of ROT programmes on the people is more visible. This is due to the fact that, unlike the government agencies, the ROT personnel are in constant touch with the people. Though government policies intend to help the poorest among the rural poor, the actual process of implementation does not match accordingly. Needs and priorities of local people should be taken into consideration in implementing both short-term as well as long-term measures, in backward areas like Anantapur.

The study illustrates the overriding importance of seasonal migration and the role of external influences in adjusting to sharp drought-induced shortfalls in income. The role of seasonal migratory process in conditioning human welfare in times of crisis has been clearly established (Breman, 1985; Agarwal Bina, 1990; Bardhan, 1977). However, seasonal migration is not merely confined to the landless, marginal and small farmers but extends even to the medium and partially Dig farmers during severe drought conditions. In this aspect Kadamalakunta is different from other studies. At the same time, it is to be pointed out here that upper jati people prefer selling some of their assets or mortgage gold ornaments to seasonal migration because it results in loss of prestige and social status. That is, seasonal migration becomes the ultimate resort for the upper jati persons.

It is also observed that households fall upon adjusting consumption patterns and liquidation of assets to see them through the drought. This is in tune with several other micro studies in the Indian context (Swaminathan et.al, 1969; Montgomery, 1977; Prahlada Rao et.al, 1987). In Kadamalakunta, compared to children and aged people, women are the most affected while adjusting consumption patterns.
In *similarity* with other studies, patron-client and hereditary relationships got *affected* over a period of *time* due to recurring drought situation (Torry.. 1987; Bose and Jodha, 1965; Chauhan, 1967; Dasgupta, 1987). Traditional *jeetha's* have turned into attached agricultural labourers. Consequently, there is marked change in the patron and client relations in the sense that social bonds are not as *strong* as they used to be. Also, most of the traditional jatis had to diversify their occupations. For instance, *Kummarar*, Kuruva, Boya and Vaddera *jatis* took up occupations which were unknown to them earlier. Indeed drawing *upon* CPE's in scarcity situations, that has been focussed in the recent micro studies (Jodha, 1986; Dasgupta, 1987), could be observed even in the study village.

Findings from the study village also indicate that drought-relief *measures* undertaken by government during droughts served very little purpose and the kind of thrust incorporated in their policies do not reflect in the *implementation*, which is pointed out in some other studies also (Chen, 1987). Long-term policies are neglected, once there is an improvement in the situation. Drought and related factors are influencing social fabric of the village. For instance, dominant position of upper jatis is declining and the reasons for it are several. This is partly due to drought, due to the efforts of governmental and NGO's, due to seasonal migratory process. Drought has to be considered *along* with other dimensions in analyzing the social change in any *region\village*, because it is multiple factors that alter the structure of the *village* and not drought *alone*.

Previous anthropological studies were conducted mostly in the societies with low level of technology and development (mostly poor tribal
societies of Africa). In such societies, there are glaring effects of drought and their main concern was only with regard to food rationing or social storage systems. Hence, these studies were inclined in one particular direction. The present study, conducted in a different social and ecological setting, focusses on occupational and spatial mobility, a less frequently encountered adaptation in the African studies. Governmental and NGO's efforts, which received less attention in other anthropological studies were covered in the present context along with various other stimuli of change. Though, the adaptation from different drought-prone areas exhibit certain similarities, the local and regional differences, and the nature of external influences will lead to a specific blend, and does not allow broad generalizations. Each drought situation is unique and hence responses and adaptations also vary.

Rural households, both rich and poor, have adapted suitably to cushion themselves against the uncertainties of nature. Given the gradual erosion of traditional hereditary relationships, increasing pressure on CPR's, available resources and the absence of viable need-based government programmes, residents of Kadamalakunta have to rely increasingly on their own initiatives in adjusting to shortages. Though radical transformation is not foreseen in the near future, significant change could take place, because of change in inter-jati relations, gradual economic changes, occupational diversification and break down of traditional socio-political authority. Thus, drought is also an agent of social change. Though people suffer, it makes them to be more active and enterprising, since they are on the look out for new opportunities to overcome the effects of drought.
The following suggestions based on this study may go a long way in mitigating the sufferings from the drought in the study region as well as in other drought-prone areas: There is a greater need for proper co-ordination between long-term and short-term programmes of the government. For instance, quick relief measures taken for the supply of fodder, fuelwood, drinking water and other scarce resources during severe drought years by government should be properly co-ordinated in continuation with the long-term measures of social forestry, watershed development programme and so on. More specific programmes like construction of check dams, maintenance of livestock in the drought-prone areas that cater to the local needs which induce people's participation are necessary. Similarly, specific programmes to the landless, women, children and other deprived groups are to be taken up since the existing rural development programmes do not address directly to the particular problems of these groups. The drought-relief measures should be routed through village panchayat\local self-governments for reaching to the most needy in a better way. For example, supply of fodder directly to the villagers instead of dumping at raandal\regional centres, will serve the actual purpose if the task is entrusted to village panchayats. Wages should be paid more in terms of grain as in JRY. In other words, Programmes evolved for drought-prone areas should take into consideration the socio-cultural, economic and ecological situations\conditions, and strategies for their implementation should be evolved in consultation with the people, taking local needs into consideration.