CHAPTER I

ROLE OF NGOs IN ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
## CONTENTS

**CHAPTER I**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background Review</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope of the Study</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Issues</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives of the Study</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Hypotheses</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Requirement and Data Source</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverage of the Study</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical Framework</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Framework</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Development</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-governmental Organizations</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Help Groups</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro Finance</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic Farming</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watershed Development</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainwater Harvesting</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Framework</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trends in Development Theory</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Scheme</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations of the Study</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

The development of mankind was the major concern of economic thinkers and policy makers of all the time all over the world. It was natural for them to have a hard look at the achievements and failures in the pursuit of development. The efforts of the mankind in this direction succeed and the development is materialized only when various socio-economic problems like poverty, unemployment, gender inequality, illiteracy etc. are completely eradicated.

The conventional agent of development in most of the countries was the state. Formulation of policies and implementation of various programmes for achieving the economic development of the country was considered to be the prime responsibility of the state. There was a widespread belief over the past four decades that development was a primary task of the government. The people have been expected to put their faith and resources in to the government in return for which the government promised to bestow up on the people the gift of development. This belief arose out of the false assessment of the capacity of the government in materializing development and also due to the lack of awareness about the varied nature of the term development. Even in the last decades of the 20th century, in many of the world countries, the government at different levels (national level, state level and at the local level) had assumed almost the total control over the commanding heights of the economy but miserably failed to alleviate poverty and unemployment. It was very well recognized by the different
writers on development that the state action alone can not be successful in alleviating poverty and unemployment and also in improving the status of the disadvantaged groups in the society.

Like many other developing countries, India also has organized various rural development programmes since independence but they have only partially succeeded. Various rural development and employment programmes like the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGPG) were launched in India since early 1980’s. They were formulated with the various objectives of providing employment, creating productive and durable assets and improving the overall quality of life in the rural areas. They had other objectives as well like improvement of wages in the slack season, stabilization of wages at the stipulated minimum wage level and raising the agricultural output as well as demand for labour in the long run.

The success of the above programmes depends on the extent to which assets in agriculture and other related sectors are actually created. The nature and incidence of unemployment and poverty are decided by the functioning of the labour market and also some other factors in the rural economy. It was generally noted that in the agriculturally developed regions of the country there was the high wage rates but it coincided with higher levels of unemployment and lower levels of work participation. In the agriculturally backward regions of the country, there was the low wage rates and also high unemployment. Therefore it is suggested that there should be diverse orientations for the rural development programmes in the backward regions and in the developed
regions of the country. Intervention through the rural development programmes should ensure adequate employment to the workers at the minimum wage rate. For this the benefit from rural development programmes should reach those who participated in the process of creation of assets in the relevant area. This, to a large extent, depends on the nature of agencies who are assigned the responsibility of executing the work and also on factors like the allocation of adequate funds – commensurate with the dimension of the problem of poverty and unemployment specific to the region – and proper institutional arrangements to ensure effective planning, implementation and monitoring at different levels.

However, the various development and employment programmes in India, initiated by the government since independence, have not reduced poverty and unemployment substantially. The problems of hunger, malnutrition, unemployment, ill health, gender inequality, illiteracy etc. continue to persist in the different parts of the country, even though the intensity of such problems has been reduced in the recent years. The development experts felt that the various rural development programmes failed to produce satisfactory results due to the lack of adequate involvement of the people for whom the programmes were meant. There was the need for micro level institutional arrangements to involve the people in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of such programmes. In the 1980s the development role of the civil society was very well recognized. Firstly, the private business and the market forces were rediscovered. Equally important but more recent came an acknowledgement that NGOs have an important development role in their own right. Gradually, there came the primary understanding
that government, business and NGOs have essential roles in development along with the organizations which may be referred to as the ‘fourth sector’ – the people’s organizations. Any organization that is non governmental and non profit is generally considered to be an NGO or VO. Today, many writers on development and various agencies working in the field of development consider Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) to be more successful in reaching out to the poor and in alleviating poverty. NGOs can play key the role in motivating the people and supervising the distribution of resources with a view to ensure its proper utilization. They organized projects matching to the local conditions and supplied local know how on the various factors affecting productivity and marketing. Development practitioners, government officials and foreign donors consider that Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), by virtue of being small, flexible, innovative and participatory, more successful in reaching the poor and in poverty alleviation.\textsuperscript{3} This led to the expansion and diversification of the activities of NGOs and government and external donors have come up to fund them extensively.

The term Non-governmental Organizations or NGOs has been used to refer to any organization that is not at all a direct division of any national or state government and which is voluntary in nature. Presently, they are considered as highly significant vehicles of development. A Voluntary Organization is a social entity which is committed to activities and programmes oriented towards change in the prevailing set of conditions – social, economic, political or cultural.\textsuperscript{4} They work for a specific type of change in the society leading to community development and which may be visualized in various fields like alleviation of poverty, generating employment to villagers, ensuring
sufficient fertile land to the village people, providing adequate irrigation water, better education, health care and eliminating social or caste discriminations.

NGOs in most countries carry out a variety of programmes aiming to provide the basic needs of the people in the country, even though they do not have a clear idea of the term ‘development’. The role and relevance of NGOs in a developing country like India, have increased substantially in the recent years on account of several reasons. Firstly, a major shift took place in India in the approach to development since 1991 with the launching of the ‘New Economic Policy’ – a policy with which there occurred a change to the market derived growth and development. It is very important that state, the conventional agent of development, is being overtaken by the emerging international institutions and the market forces. Moreover, the modernization or catching up with the advanced countries, which was the classic aim of development earlier, is in question because, modernization is no longer an obvious ambition of many societies at present. Modernization seems to be unattractive in view of ecological problems, severe consequences of technological advancement and many other similar issues. Along with the decisive shift in the approach to development, there arose a lot of problems like the ecological and social imbalances, lack of purchasing power, lack of opportunities to acquire the purchasing power, lack of requisite skills to utilize the opportunities and the lack of proper educational facilities to acquire changing skills. The above problems can be successfully tackled if there has been proper and effective organization of the people especially that of the weaker sections in the society. The NGOs have been successful in organizing the poor properly and effectively and in enabling them to receive the benefit
of economic development. NGOs are cost effective and efficient service providers as compared to public agencies and the government. They have been successful in reaching those poor people who were not yet reached by the market process or by the state. Secondly, the popularity of NGOs with the government and other official aid agencies increased in the recent years as a response to the recent development in economic and political thinking.

There have been some favourable signals from the international financial institutions for increasing the participation of the NGOs in the development programmes in the developing countries and the UDCs. The NGO initiative was seriously studied and applauded for their timely and constructive interventions in the development projects in the Third World. They were being conceived as social and cultural catalysts for initiating change in the attitudes and perceptions of the people, for bringing people in to the modern stream and socially empowering them to redesign their own life ways and practices to confront the social and economic backwardness. The development policy of aid agencies like World Bank and aid transfers from them came to be dominated by the ‘New Policy Agenda’ which gave a prominent role the NGOs in poverty alleviation, social welfare and the development of the civil society. Thirdly, various international donor agencies and consortia discovered NGOs as the most effective instrument for promoting their interest in penetrating the Third World economies and particularly their rural interiors. NGOs are somewhat stable groups with defined activities and programmes and have, barring some exceptions, an urge and also an exposure to horizontal and sometimes vertical linkages within and across their chosen sectors of activity. They have
an image different and less threatening than that of the private industries or government bureaucracies. Under the above circumstances, it can be understood that when the various rural development and employment programmes or projects are undertaken, the full benefits of wage to the workers, the quality of assets and non escalation in the cost of the work could be ensured if NGOs are involved extensively in executing the works. The advance payment on the work / project could be made to them and they can take the responsibility of executing the work and paying the minimum wages (partly in kind and partly in cash) in accordance with the specifications. Besides they could motivate the beneficiaries of individual assets and involve them fully in the creation of these assets. All the materials possible and required could be manufactured with the full participation of beneficiaries. It leads to more gains in employment and income to the beneficiaries. If NGOs are involved in executing the rural development programmes, there can be more scope for increasing wages in the agricultural off season as they employed local labour and since they are non profit organizations. Moreover, the identification of beneficiaries could be done with people’s knowledge and participation and therefore, the leakages due to the selection of non poor beneficiaries could be plugged. This will eliminate the other implementation problems like ensuring the quality of assets and organizing the individual beneficiaries in getting the sanctioned assets completed as NGOs are a body of people devoted to the welfare of the poor and not subject to the external control of any donor agency or governmental agency. NGOs are mostly internal organizations with the active involvement of volunteering people in a particular area or locality. Their small size, independence and the focused value commitments give them a capacity for social and
institutional innovation. Moreover, they serve as the forums for defining, testing and propagating ideas and values.

**SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

NGOs have gained recognition in the modern economic societies as new channels of education, empowerment and economic dynamism. Voluntary action was both historically and philosophically conceived as intrinsic to that of a mediation role on safeguarding the local resources and protecting the local interest and rights. The role and relevance of the voluntary sector was clear from the fact that the people and the societies conscious about development have recognized and accepted the voluntary organizations as much more efficient and less expensive in promoting development. The voluntary organizations specialize in the integrative people’s power and they have a value commitment to the society which is its distinctive strength. A healthy voluntary sector is characterized by a substantial number and variety of independent voluntary organizations representing an array of distinctive and often conflicting commitments. The voluntary sector is considered as an independent, autonomous and vibrant sector which can work on social and development problems of the country with the freedom that the government institutions do not have and a sense of commitment and concern for the people that the business sector do not care for. Development needs a capacity in wealth creation and entrepreneurship and substantial inputs of creativity, innovation, self direction and the voluntary action. The voluntary sector has the advantage in mobilizing voluntary social energy and in stimulating the social innovation. The realm of the individual voluntary organizations are small and therefore they are able to define positions more clearly, to
press for innovative solutions and experiment in ways that government finds difficult. Moreover the strength of the voluntary sector is found in the diversity of its constituent organizations and their capacity for independent action. Voluntary agencies can reach out and form alliances more easily than the other types of organizations even though the alliances often become unstable.

There was a wave of voluntarism throughout the world in the 20th century with a quite distinctive role in promoting development. NGOs provided an opportunity for different classes of people, especially the weaker sections, to organize systematically for collective action in order to secure their minimum basic needs. They provide a strong public opinion in this regard through advocacy for common good. Moreover government and the funding agencies now insist on people’s participation in the planning and the implementation of development projects.

There has been a large number of NGOs or voluntary organizations in the different parts of Kerala working to promote economic and community development in a sustainable manner through people’s participation and voluntary action. Initially, the development perspective of NGOs in Kerala was of charity and welfare. It was the most traditional approach under which they provided the materials and assistance to the needy people. Though this approach was influential and popular, it did not have the inbuilt power to solve the problems in the society which were chronic, vast, socio economic and political in nature. Consequently, in the recent years there occurred a major shift in the development perspective of NGOs in Kerala. The current role of NGOs is to provide a set up or institutional arrangement for promoting people’s initiative and active
participation in the development process and in the efforts towards national integration. With a view to realize the above objectives, the NGOs today work to educate the people to make them to understand the root causes of poverty, to assist them to overcome the problem of poverty by organizing themselves through a participatory and democratic process and to motivate the people for their own survival and well being.

The number of NGOs has increased substantially in Kerala in the recent years due to their popularity with the government and the official aid agencies. Again the development policy of international aid agencies like the World Bank has come to be dominated by a ‘New Policy Agenda’ which gave a prominent role to the NGOs in poverty alleviation, social welfare and the development of the civil society. Moreover, the ‘New Economic Policy’ implemented in the country since 1991 identified markets and the private sector as more efficient in providing various goods and services and in achieving rapid economic development. This was equally applied to the community and social services provided especially to weaker sections in the society with NGOs gradually taking over this role from the state. Therefore, it is significant to study the role of NGOs in the economic and community development of Kerala.

BACKGROUND REVIEW

At present, three categories of agencies have been working in Kerala in the field of community development, viz, Panchayat Raj Institutions, Kudumbasree and the NGOs. PRIs consisted of District Panchayat, Block Panchayat and Grama Panchayat. The majority of development funds from the government has been flowing through the PRIs. They have been entrusted with the duty of bringing about the development of the
poorest and the marginalized sections of the society. Among the PRIs at different levels, only the Grama Panchayats have been in direct touch with the local people and they have been able to carry out community development interventions at the local level intending to bring about the up lift of the poor and weaker sections of the population. However, the community development interventions of Grama Panchayats have been subject to several limitations like the lack of sufficient sanctioned funds, lack of timely availability of funds and the shortage of technical experts for the preparation of project reports and for the implementation of the projects. Because of these limitations, the community development interventions of Grama Panchayats have not been successful to the desired level.

Kudumbasree has been a massive movement in the state sponsored by the government in to bring about the up lift of the poor and weaker sections of the population by promoting the thrift based micro finance. It has the three tier federal structure with the Neighbourhood Groups at the grass root level, Area Development Societies at the ward level and the Community Development Societies at the Panchayat level. In March 2005, there were 1.5 lakh NHGs, 13915 Area Development Societies and 1050 Community Development Societies (CDS) under Kudumbasree in Kerala.\textsuperscript{10} CDS intended to bring about community development by providing employment to women of high risk families through the women managed micro enterprises, medical care and through the activities of the thrift and credit societies. Kudumbasree has been organized as the women centered programme in Kerala for the eradication of poverty.

Kudumbasree mission has been identified as one among 15 best practices in governance in India by the Planning Commission and UNDP.\textsuperscript{11} Still there has been
several limitations for the Kudumbasree interventions in the community development of Kerala. The movement has not been deeply rooted in the backward districts of Idukki and Wynad in Kerala where the community development interventions are highly required. Again, Kudumbasree has been a women centered programme for poverty eradication and therefore, could not provide a comprehensive package for the uplift of all the poor and weaker sections of the population. Further, as a government sponsored movement, it has been subject to many of the limitations of government activities at the organizational and implementation levels. Moreover, Kudumbasree has been a thrift and micro credit based community development programme and for the success of the programme, the effective bank linkage has been required. However, the NHG - bank linkage rate has been very low especially in the Idukki district and it was only 29.92% in 2004-05.12

The third category of agencies working for community development in the state of Kerala has been NGOs. They have been referred to as the non-profit voluntary organizations which have come up with community development interventions intending to bring about changes in individuals and in the society. NGOs have certain advantages in making the community development interventions in the society compared to PRIs and the Kudumbasree movement. NGOs have great organizational flexibility, an informal work style, close engagement with the grass root communities and also they can deliver services to the people at lower costs.

There have been four strategic orientations of NGO intervention in community development. NGOs provided relief and welfare services to the poorest and the weakest sections of the population to alleviate immediate suffering which has been
known as the first generation strategy. The community development interventions made by the NGOs to build entrepreneurial capacity for generating self employment and income generation activities have been known as the second generation strategy. NGOs working to bring about changes in the existing institutional set up and policy framework through generating knowledge, awareness and competence among the weaker sections of the population, has been known as the third generation strategy. The NGOs working to facilitate people’s movement by which people achieve development by themselves has been known as the fourth generation strategy of NGOs. Thus, the NGOs can make the development interventions in the society from a more advantageous position compared to the other institutions engaged in community development. The development interventions of NGOs have been based on the alternative approach to development in which it has been held that development should be society led and the development transformation should be equitable, sustainable and participatory in nature.

PDS has been a major NGO making the development interventions in the Idukki district based on the principle of alternative approach to development. Since its establishment in 1980, PDS has been working in the field of social transformation and the community development of the tribal people, and the poor and weaker sections of the population in the Peermade Taluk. PDS has been highly successful in organizing and implementing development programmes and projects with the participation of the people at the grass root level. The presence of PDS has been strongly felt in a large number of areas like community development, women development, micro enterprises development, human resources development, organic farming and watershed development.
The Peermade Development Society has been actively engaged in various programmes and activities intending to bring about the uplift of the rural poor and the weaker sections of the population in the Idukki district, especially that in the Peermade Taluk. Most of the institutions promoted by and working under PDS have been located in the Peermade Taluk of the district of Idukki.

The efforts undertaken by the Peermade Development Society towards the tribal people have been of special significance. PDS has undertaken a lot of programmes for the organization, development and empowerment of the tribal people, other poor and weaker sections of the society and that of women in order to bring about the economic and community development of the locality. It has been strongly felt by the researcher that while examining the role of NGOs in the economic and community development of Kerala, the case study approach would be the best approach and the best NGO unit that may be selected for the case study would be PDS. It is because the programmes and activities of PDS have been so varied and manifold to include a lot of activities. Thus, the study has been accomplished rather as a case study of the economic and community development activities of Peermade Development Society.

**SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

In 1990s, there occurred a strong tendency towards innovation and change in values, institutions and technologies. It is the result of new and sophisticated idea that, if transformation and the economic development of the society is to take place, it must come as a consequence of voluntary action, an act of human commitment to collective survival, driven by a vision that transcends the behaviours conditioned by the existing
institutions and cultures. The voluntary organizations or the NGOs are the instruments through which the citizen volunteers establish an identity and legal recognition for the collective endeavors. NGOs provide their organizational support system and their means of aggregating resources for endeavors that require more than individual action.

The NGOs have a variety of strategic orientations. Some of them provide relief and welfare services to alleviate the immediate suffering of the people who are subject to a multitude of economic and social backwardness. Some other NGOs engage in community development interventions in order to build capacity for self-help action. Another category of NGOs seek to change specific institutions and policies in support of more just, sustainable and inclusive developmental outcomes. Yet another category of NGOs interact in order to facilitate broadly based people’s movements driven by social action based on the principles of sustainability and environment protection. Thus the greatest change and innovation took place in the realm of the civil society and most particularly in the realm of voluntary sector – of the citizen volunteer and organizations that are formed and led by citizen volunteers.

The NGOs have the advantages of organizational flexibility, informal work style, close engagement with grassroots communities and delivery of services to people at lower costs. They work to bring about a peculiar type of transformation in the individuals and the society and it is the society led equitable development transformation based on the fundamental principles of sustainability and people’s participation. NGOs are cost effective in providing community assets, they are efficient service providers and they are successful in reaching out to those weaker and downtrodden sections of the
population who could not be reached by the market mechanism or by the state in the process of economic development. Again NGOs have come to be an integral part of the thriving civil society by opening up channels of communication and participation and by providing training grounds for activists. NGOs could do development better and they could also influence the perceptions of the individuals towards what constituted better and sustainable development.

NGOs occupied a major role in achieving economic and community development of Kerala on account of several reasons. Firstly, there was a shift in the development perspective of NGOs in Kerala from charity and welfare to sustainable development and later to empowerment. The charity and welfare approach can never tackle the root causes of various socio-economic problems. The current requirement is the involvement of NGOs in promoting individual initiatives and active participation in development process and in the national integration. Secondly, there was a shift in the role of NGOs from direct implementation to that of supporting grass roots organizations. The NGOs, working to materialize the objective of sustainable development and the empowerment, could do it better by facilitating the formation of agencies known as Grass Roots Organizations (GRO) at different levels and they are called target groups. Such a formation of GROs does not mean that NGOs are withdrawing from the field of their prime activities. Thirdly, even though the NGOs have improved their credibility and legitimacy, they needed to adopt a dual strategy of collaborating with the government and simultaneously opposing its wrong policies. The NGOs could collaborate with the government in different ways and it can be visualized in their activities undertaken in the
common interest of all the members in the society. The scope of the study has been due to the fact that,

* NGOs can enable the people to access the government programmes.
* NGOs can directly access the government programmes for the benefit of the poor and the marginalized in the society.
* NGOs can advocate and lobby the government and the individuals to change their perceptions as to what is sustainable and better development.

The present study has been designed as the case study of the Peermade Development Society (PDS), a major NGO working in the Peermade Taluk of Idukki district in the field of economic and community development. The area selected for the study has been Peermade Taluk in the backward district of Idukki, where the community development interventions of PDS mainly take place. The study has covered the PDS community development interventions over the years from 1997-98 to 2004-05. Even though, PDS was established in the year 1980, its community development interventions through the formation of Self Help Groups began only in the year 1997-98 and therefore, the study has been carried out for a period of eight years from 1997-98 to 2004-05.

**RESEARCH ISSUES**

The modern development thinking has identified three types of third party organizations working in the process of development of any society. They are, the government, the business sector and the voluntary sector. All these three types of third party organizations have distinctive competencies essential to a dynamic self sustaining development process.
The development of any society depends on mobilizing competencies of all the three in a complementary manner. Government has been always the instrument of the society or people for maintaining stability and for reallocating resources from one group to another for the development purposes. Business sector is its instrument for mobilizing the private entrepreneurship to produce and distribute goods and services in response to market forces. Again, voluntary sector is its instrument for ensuring a constant process of self assessment, experimentation and change in accordance with the evolving values of people in the society.

The NGOs or the voluntary sector organizations have a distinctive role as catalysts of systems change. They are the instruments through which citizen volunteers or people’s organizations establish an identity and the legal recognition for collective endeavors. The people’s organizations are of special importance to the people centered development vision.

NGOs have been basically constituted to accomplish the various social services and responsibilities like providing the social services to the poor, mobilizing resources for the community development through the various channels and positively contributing to sustainable community development by promoting awareness among the people, providing skill development and capacity building, providing empowerment and encouraging sustainable utilization of available resources. The following research issues have been raised in the present study with reference to the functioning of Peermade Development Society (PDS) in the field of economic and community development services in the Peermade Taluk of the backward district of Idukki.
* How much PDS has been efficient in providing the economic and community development services to the poor and needy compared to the other agencies providing the similar services.

* Has PDS been able to realize the objectives for which it has been basically constituted.

* How far PDS has been successful in carrying out its community development programmes and activities.

* How much PDS has contributed to the economic and community development by creating awareness, providing training and capacity building, promoting the women empowerment and achieving a sustainable and equitable development.

* How far PDS has been successful in organizing the poor and weaker sections of the society in obtaining resources for development from the government and also from other channels.

* How far the contributions of PDS in the process of economic and community development comparable to that of the contributions of the Grama Panchayats and the Kudumbasree.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The NGOs are generally considered to be more efficient in providing social services to the poor and in promoting community development. The present study has found it crucial to examine the various aspects of NGO activity and to study how these interactions with the civil society at different levels ultimately pave the way for the achievement of the economic and community development of the state. The present
study has set the following objectives with reference to the functioning of PDS in the Peermade Taluk of Idukki district in the field of economic and community development.

* To examine how much PDS, the local NGO, has been efficient in providing social and community development services to the poor and needy.

* To examine whether PDS has been able to achieve the objectives for which it has been basically constituted.

* To study how far PDS has been successful in carrying out its community development programmes and activities.

* To study how much PDS has contributed to the economic and community development by creating awareness, providing training and capacity building, promoting women empowerment and achieving a sustainable and equitable development.

* To examine how far PDS has been successful in organizing the poor and weaker sections of the society in obtaining the resources for development from the government and also from other channels.

* To compare the contributions made by PDS in the process of economic and community development with that of the contributions of the Grama Panchayats and the Kudumbasree.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The present study has set three hypotheses, relating to the functioning of PDS in the field of economic and community development, which may be empirically tested with the help of supporting data. The research hypotheses of the study have been the following :-
* PDS has been more efficient in providing the economic and community development services to the poor and the weaker sections of the population.

* PDS has been playing a crucial role in achieving economic and community development by creating awareness among the poor people, promoting employment, self employment and income generating activities through micro finance, micro enterprises development, human resources development and by promoting women development and empowerment.

* PDS has been able to better the quality of life and living standards of the poor and the marginalized people by popularizing and promoting eco friendly organic farming practices in agriculture.

**METHODOLOGY**

Large number of NGOs have been working in Kerala in the field of economic and community development. There has been no uniformity in the state with respect to either the pattern of organization of NGOs or the development interventions they make. The development interventions of the various agencies are highly required in those places and localities which remained socially and economically most backward. Therefore, the geographical area selected for the study of the relevance of development interventions of NGOs, was Peermade Taluk which has been the most backward Taluk in the backward district of Idukki. The largest NGO engaged in promoting economic and community development in the Peermade Taluk has been PDS. Again, the development interventions of PDS have been mostly confined to the Peermade Taluk where majority of the population comprised of tribal people and socially and economically marginalized
sections. Therefore, the present study has been designed as a case study of the economic and community development interventions of PDS in the Peermade Taluk. PDS has begun its economic and community development interventions in the Peermade Taluk in an extensive and highly organized manner from the year 1997-98 onwards and secondary data have been available on the economic and community development interventions of PDS from the year 1997-98 onwards. Therefore, in the present study, the economic and community development interventions of PDS have been examined for a period of eight years from 1997-98 to 2004-05.

DATA REQUIREMENT AND DATA SOURCE

Since the study has been designed as a ‘case study’, both primary data and secondary data have been required for the study. PDS intended to bring about the uplift of the poor and weaker sections of the society and therefore had development interventions in such societies. While conducting the survey, the people in such societies would be not able to provide the complete information required for the study. Therefore, the published secondary data from PDS have been used in the study. However, secondary data alone would be insufficient to disclose the necessary information and make the study complete. Therefore, primary data on the economic and community development interventions of PDS have also been collected through a field survey.

The secondary data have been collected from both the published and also the unpublished data records of the Peermade Development Society. For comparing the economic and community development interventions of PDS with that of the various governmental and the non-governmental agencies which have been working in the field
of economic and community development, the secondary data have been collected on the development interventions of Grama Panchayats, Kudumbasree and co-operative banks in the Peermade Taluk.

The secondary data on the economic and community development interventions of the Grama Panchayats in the Peermade Taluk, have been collected from their annual development and project reports. The secondary data on the disbursement of micro credit by the co-operative banks and the rates of repayment on such small loans in the Peermade Taluk have been collected from the annual reports of the co-operative banks. Further, the secondary data on the micro finance operations of Kudumbasree units in the Peermade Taluk have been collected from the district Kudumbasree office, Idukki.

Again, a field survey was conducted and primary data have been collected on the advantages of organic farming from a sample size of hundred family units engaged in organic farming practices. The non-probability sampling design has been used in the selection of a sample size of 100 family units. A total of 705 families have adopted the organic farming practices in the Peermade Taluk and they have been spread over a wide geographical area and therefore, the criterion of selection sample family units has been accessibility. From among the population consisting of 705 families which have adopted organic farming in the Peermade Taluk, 100 easily accessible and most convenient family units have been selected to constitute the sample size and information and data have been collected on the advantages of organic farming from the 100 sample family units.

The primary data have been collected by conducting personal interviews with the members of the selected sample family units using interview schedule. The
questions in the interview schedule have been carefully designed in order to bring out the required information on the different aspects and the advantages of organic farming. The questionnaire used for conducting the survey has been given in the appendix.

**COVERAGE OF THE STUDY**

In Kerala, the NGOs are largely involved in activities in the various fields like poverty alleviation, organizing the poor and weaker sections in the society to access the resources and development, agricultural development, women empowerment, crafts development, technology transfer, integrated watershed development, employment and income generation etc. The present study pertains to the NGOs working in the fields of economic and community development in Kerala. Generally, the NGOs undertake the activities in a lot of fields like charity and relief, poverty alleviation programmes, women development and empowerment, awareness creation, provision of social services like education, health care, housing and sanitation, the sustainable agricultural development, watershed development, human resources management, entrepreneurship development, and community development activities like micro financing and rural credit. In Kerala, the number of NGOs involved in these activities is very large and they are spread throughout the state. It is relatively difficult to cover the economic and community development activities of various NGOs spread throughout the state and the activities of NGOs are manifold. Therefore the present study is designed in the form a case study of the activities of a major NGO and the study is confined to a single district. The case study is made on the activities of a major NGO, Peermade Development Society (PDS) in the Idikki district and it is undertaken because of the fact that Idikki district is one of
the most backward districts in Kerala and that the NGO presence and activity is so prominent in the district. Peermade Development Society is one of the major NGOs in Kerala and its activities cover the entire district of Idikki and also spread over to the other parts of the state and the country.

Since Idikki is one of the most backward districts in Kerala requiring community development interventions in a big way and Peermade Development Society is a major NGO involved in the economic and community development in the Idukki district, particularly in the Peermade Taluk, the interventions of PDS in the economic and community development has been examined as a case study. PDS has been undertaking activities in a lot of fields like training cum human resource development, agriculture and animal husbandry, eco-restoration, organic farming and the bio-technology, the integrated watershed development, research, innovation, health development, women development, rural credit and income generation activities, Ayurvedic and the traditional medicines, the housing and social welfare, tribal development, micro enterprises development, organic pests and disease management, and the natural resources management. The present study has been confined to the interventions of PDS relating to the Community Development, Women Development and Sustainable Natural Resources Management. The researcher has felt that these three activities have been very important to the sustainable economic and community development of the state. In the Community Development, four areas of interventions by PDS have been examined in the study and they are:-

* Micro finance

* Micro enterprises development
* Human resources development and Training
* Housing and social welfare

Under Women Development, the interventions made by PDS for the socio-economic and the structural development and the empowerment of women, have been described in the study.

Under Sustainable Natural Resources Management, two major interventions of PDS have been examined and they are:
* Organic farming
* Integrated watershed development.

The study has been confined to a period of eight years from 1997-98 to 2004-05 because, the well organized secondary data on the development interventions of PDS have been available only from 1997-98 onwards. In order to compare the development interventions made by PDS in the Peermade Taluk relating to the various fields with the similar interventions made by the various governmental and non-governmental agencies like the Grama Panchayats, Kudumbasree and co-operative banks in the Peermade Taluk, secondary data have been collected on the activities of these agencies. Secondary data on the activities of Grama Panchayats in the Peermade Taluk in the field of Housing and Social Welfare have been available for a period of five years from 2000-01 to 2004-05 and therefore, secondary data for five years from 2000-01 to 2004-05 have been taken for comparison. The Kudumbasree movement was started in the Idukki district only towards the end of 1990’s and data on Kudumbasree have been available only from 2000-01 to 2004-05. Therefore, the secondary data in the field of micro credit and finance by the
Kudumbasree NHGs in the Peermade Taluk have been taken for a period of five years from 2000-01 to 2004-05 for comparison. Again, as co-operative banks have been largely engaged in the disbursement of micro credit among the poor and weaker sections of the society, the secondary data on the disbursement of micro credit by co-operative banks in the Peermade Taluk have been taken for a period of five years from 2000-01 to 2004-05 for comparison.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The primary and secondary data collected have been refined and presented in the form of statistical tables for easy observation, comparison and analysis. Further, for the better understanding and easy analysis of the variables in the data, various methods of diagrammatic presentation of the data in statistics like time series graph, simple bar chart, multiple bar chart and the Lorenz curve have been used. The presentation of data in the form of graphs and charts has enabled easy understanding of the trend growth in the variables and other relationships among the variables.

In order to make the analysis of the both primary and secondary data and to establish the trend growth rate and other features of the variables observed in the data, various statistical models such as simple linear regression model and simple correlation model have been used. To test the statistical significance of regression coefficients, the one tailed and two tailed ‘t’ Test have been used. The ANOVA test has been used for the analysis of variance of the samples and for comparing them for variance. The statistical significance of the equalities and inequalities in the values of the variables have been tested using the technique of Testing of Hypothesis. Again, for testing the correlation and
also the independence between the values of the variables, the chi square test has been used. To make the analysis of the inequality in the distribution in the values of variables and explain it, the Lorenz Curve has been used. Further, in the study, certain other types of data have been subject to the analysis using the Index Wise Description method.

**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The various concepts and their definitions used in the present study, their meaning as understood in the general situations and their implications as applied in the context of the present study, have been given in the conceptual framework.

**Development**

Development may be defined as the organized intervention in collective affairs according to a standard of improvement. What constitutes improvement and what is the appropriate intervention may vary according to the culture, class, historical context and relations of power. Development is an approximation of modernization and the modernization is the rational transformation of the social, economic and political order of the society.

The classical economists regarded development as the appropriate relationship between agriculture and the industry. According to Cowen and Shenton, the term development referred to remedies for the shortcomings and maladies of progress. The modern economic thinkers regarded development as approximately equal to that of economic growth with mechanization and industrialization as parts of it. In the present study development is understood as a process by which attention is being given to the different sectors of the economy including that of institutional framework, provision of
infrastructure such as power, transport and communications and solution of problems in population and agriculture. The lineages of development are quite mixed. It includes the application of science and technology to collective organization and also managing the changes that arise from the application of science and technology. Development virtually included an element of reflexivity and it ranges from infrastructure works (roads, railways, canals, dams, ports) to the industrial policy, the welfare state, the new economic policy, the colonial economics and the Keynesian demand management.

Development serves as a mirror of changing economic and social capacities, priorities and choices. Thus in any economic society, development means more than the economic growth and includes a transformation of the society towards the solution of the problems of rural/urban disparities, the regional inequality, ethnic mobilization, unequal distribution of income and wealth and the population growth.

**Community Development**

Community development, which was a subsidiary theme in colonial times and modernization, received a new emphasis with the alternative development. Community development is a process of change from traditional way of living of rural communities to a progressive way of living; a method by which people can be assisted to develop themselves on their own capacity and resources; a programme for accomplishing certain activities for the welfare of the rural people; a movement for progress with a certain ideological context. Community development programme was the first intervention strategy of directed change at the national level to enable the rural society to experience transformation in its social and economic life. The essential element of community
development is the participation by the people themselves in the efforts to improve their level of living and the provision of the technical and other services so as to encourage initiative, self-help and mutual help. The movement combines a faith in democracy and social justice on the one hand and in service and technology on the other. In the present study the term community development is used to mean a process which is based on the faith that the rural people have the capacity to improve, if helped. The state should create favourable conditions and give direction through self exerted leadership and group effort. It is based on the villagers’ needs and the community has to be the basic unit. The community development programme laid emphasis on building of infrastructure in the rural areas with the participation of the rural communities and promote rural development in a planned manner.

**Sustainable Development**

In the development scenario, there is a conflict arising out of the recognition that growth in material well being has its implications on the environment. As a result, there emerged the concept of sustainable development. The sustainable development can be characterized by the presence of :-

* conflict between human well being and the protection of the nature.
* conflict between the poor and the rich.
* conflict between the interests of the present generation and the interests of the future generation.
* conflict between a local and a global focus.

As result of these there emerged a conflict between those called ‘technicists’ (both social
and natural scientists) who are looking for the technical solutions to the environment problems and those called ‘humanists’ who look towards the realm of politics for the solution.

Sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising on the ability of the future generation to meet their own needs. Sustainable development is development which is environmentally sustainable, economically sustainable and socially/culturally sustainable. In the present study, the term sustainable development is used to mean a development that takes place without damaging the environment and that the present generation does not compromise on the needs of the future generation. It is the real economic development with increased productivity and efficiency, making the economy self sufficient, self reliant an improving the quality of life without affecting the balance of the nature. The need for sustainable development emerges from the concern for environment. The economic growth of the countries in the future is likely to be endangered if the limited resources are exhausted by way of reckless exploitation.

Non Governmental Organizations

The diversity in the nature of NGOs stand in the way of presenting any simple definition of them. The term NGO is really a catchword for an enormous variety of structures pursuing diverse strategies, of widely different sizes, aims, missions and defies definition because of this diversity. NGOs include many groups and institutions that are entirely or largely independent of government and that have primarily humanitarian or cooperative rather than commercial objectives. An NGO is a non profit making service
oriented/development oriented organization, either for the benefit of members (a grass root organization) or of the other members of the population (an agency).\textsuperscript{20} It is an organization of private individuals who believe in certain principles and structure their activities to bring about development to communities they are servicing.\textsuperscript{21} NGO is an organization or group of people working independent of any external control with the specific objectives and aims to fulfill tasks that oriented to bring about desirable change in a community or area or situation.\textsuperscript{22}

NGO was considered as an organization committed to the root causes of problems of trying to better the quality of life, especially for the poor, the oppressed and the marginalized in the urban and the rural areas.\textsuperscript{23} Any organization which is not established by intergovernmental agreement shall be considered as a Non Governmental Organization.\textsuperscript{24} NGOs could be understood as a team of people with the similar interest, freely joining hands to bring about improvement or changes in the society through the organized and collective efforts.\textsuperscript{25}

NGOs refer to non governmental organizations that attempt to address the concerns of the unprivileged and the underserved in the Third World through the development activities such as agricultural assistance, primary health care, provision of basic services and education.\textsuperscript{26} The non governmental organizations are any of those organizations which are not a part of any government agency and which have not been established as result of an agreement between governments. NGOs can be the research institutions, professional associations, trade unions, chamber of commerce, the youth organizations, religious institutions, senior citizens associations, tourist bodies, private
foundations, political parties, Zionist organizations, funding or development international and indigenous agencies and any other organization of a non governmental mature.\(^{27}\)

NGO is an organization not affiliated to political parties and generally engaged in the working for aid, development and welfare of the community.\(^{28}\) NGOs are organizations established by and for the community without or little intervention from the government; they are not only a charity organization, but work on the socio economic and cultural activities.\(^{29}\)

NGO is an organization that is flexible and democratic in its organization and attempts to serve the people without profit for itself.\(^{30}\) An NGO is a social development organization assisting empowerment of people.\(^{31}\) An NGO is an independent, democratic, non sectarian people’s organization working for the empowerment of economically and or socially marginalized groups.\(^{32}\) An NGO can be any organization that is not a direct division of a national government and which can act as a highly significant vehicle for development.\(^{33}\) An NGO is an organized collection of persons formed to serve some common interest; it is independent of the state and membership is voluntary.

Thus NGOs can be understood as indigenous groups organized regionally or nationally and included charitable, religious non profit organizations that mobilize private funds and others for development and promote the economic and community development. In the present study, the term NGO is used to mean any voluntary, flexible, independent, non profit organization of the people working for economic and community development and assisting in empowerment of economically and socially marginalized groups in the society.
In Kerala, there have been a large number of NGOs working in the various parts of the state intending to bring about social, cultural, economic and the community development and empowerment of the weaker and marginalized sections of the society. Kerala Sasthra Sahithya Parishad (KSSP), Environmental Resources Research Centre (ERRC) Trivandrum, The KJP Research Foundation, Trivandrum, The Mithranikethan, Trivandrum, Programme For Community Action (PCO), Trivandrum, The Peermade Development Society, Peermade, The Malanad Development Society, Kanjirappilly, Dale View, Trivandrum, The Solidarity, Manathavady, Santhigram, Trivandrum, Arshabharat, Wynadu, Kottayam Social Service Society, Kottayam, Sandhya Development Society, Pala, and Loyola Extension Services, Trivandrum are some of the major NGOs making the development interventions in the different parts of the state. However, there has been no uniformity among these NGOs in the pattern of organization or functioning. These NGOs have largely organized the programmes and made the development interventions according to the goals envisaged in their constitution and also on the basis of the needs of the people in the locality where they have been working. The development interventions of NGOs are highly required in those places and localities which remained economically and socially backward.

Development Society, Rajakkad and Habitat Technology Group, Munnar are some of the leading NGOs working in the Idukki district. Of these, Peermade Development Society has been the largest NGO working in the district of Idukki.

**Self Help Groups**

Self Help Group is a homogeneous group of poor, women, users etc. This group is voluntary one formed on the areas of common interest so that they can think, organize and operate for their development. SHGs organize very poor people who do not have access to the financial system in the organized sector. An SHG is an informal association of 10 – 15 people who voluntarily come together for the business of saving and credit and to enhance member’s financial security as primary focus and on the other the common interests of members such as the area development, awareness, motivation leadership, training and associating in other social intermediation programmes for the benefit of the entire community. An SHG is a group of people that meets regularly to discuss the issues of interest to them and to look at solutions of commonly experienced problems.

In the present study, the term Self Help Group is used to understand the same meaning as above. An SHG is understood as an informal association of a small group of people who have voluntarily come together to think, organize and operate for their development and the enhancement of their financial security by promoting savings, credit and the access to the financial system in the organized sector.

**Micro Finance**

Micro finance refers to the small savings, credit and insurance services extended to the socially and economically disadvantaged segments of the society.
Micro finance refers to the entire range of financial and non-financial services including skill upgradation and entrepreneurship development rendered to the poor for enabling them to overcome the poverty. Micro finance is the provision of financial services to the low income households.

In the present study, the term microfinance has been used to understand the provision of savings, credit and the other financial services of very small quantity to the socially and economically disadvantaged and low income households for enabling them to overcome their poverty.

**Organic Farming**

The term organic farming may be understood as a method of farming which excludes completely the application of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, insecticides etc. and has been primarily based on the principles of using natural organic inputs and biological plant protection methods. The proper practice of organic farming methods will eliminate or reduce the water pollution and will help conserve water and soil on the farm thereby enhancing sustainability and agro bio diversity.

**Watershed Development**

The term watershed development has been used in the study to represent a holistic approach including programmes for soil and moisture conservation, rainwater harvesting, afforestation, horticulture, pasture development and the upgradation of the community land resources. The immediate effect of watershed development programme is an increase in the ground water and the bio mass. It leads to socio economic changes in the specified area, especially in agriculture and animal husbandry. The term watershed
management is getting wide popularity in India and it is used to mean the storage and the reharvesting of the rain run off by appropriate management of natural and man made watersheds.

**Rain Water Harvesting**

Rain water harvesting is a technique of increasing the recharge of ground water by capturing and storing rain water in structures such as dug wells, the percolation pits and check dams. Rain water is stored in ground water reservoirs by adopting artificial recharge techniques to meet the household needs through storage in tanks.

**THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

There occurred some major changes in the orientation of development thinking in the long run from that of state led and market led development to that of civil society led and the people centered development as a result of which emphasis has been shifted to strategic groups and actors oriented participatory approach to development. The long term shift in the orientation of development thinking which led to the prominence and the proliferation of NGOs in the field of development has been explained under the theoretical framework of the present study.

**Trends in development theory**

Earlier, development represented modernization or catching up with the advanced countries. But it is not an obvious ambition at present. Modernity no longer seems so attractive in view of the ecological problems, the consequences of technological changes, the over utilization of the available natural resources etc. Westernization is no longer attractive in a time of revaluation of local culture and cultural diversity.
At present, everything that development used to represent appears to be in question or in crisis. Development may be defined as the organized intervention in the collective affairs according to a standard of improvement. What constitutes improvement and what is appropriate intervention may vary according to culture, class, the historical context and relations of power. These issues are actually negotiated in the development theory.

In the 19th century, in England, development referred to the remedies for the shortcomings and maladies of progress. It involves questions such as the growth of population, job loss, social questions and the urban squalor. Accordingly progress and development contrasted and the development differed from and complemented progress. Later, in the colonial period, the term development referred mainly to colonial resource management to make the colonies cost effective and later to build up economic resources with a view to attain the national independence.

In the modern development thinking and economics and as worked out in many of the developed countries of today, the core meaning of development has been economic growth. In the course of time, mechanization and industrialization became part of it. Later, when development thinking was broadened to encompass the modernization, as well, economic growth was combined with the political modernization, i.e. the nation building and social modernization such as the fostering of entrepreneurship and building up of achievement orientation.

However, with the onset of the alternative development thinking, a new understanding of development came to the fore which has been focused on social and
community development. With the human development in the 1980’s there came the new understanding of development as the capacity building. In this view point of human development, the term development meant enabling. The core meaning and definition of development in the Human Development Reports of the UNDP is the ‘enlargement of people’s choices’.

Two radically different perspectives on development came to the fore in the 1980’s and 1990’s. The Neo liberalism, in returning to the Neo classical economics, really eliminates the foundations of development economics; the notion that development economics represent a special case. What matters is to ‘get the prices right’ and let the market forces do their work. Development in the sense of governmental intervention is anathema, for it means that market distortion. The central objectives of economic growth is to be achieved through structural reforms, deregulation, liberalization, privatization etc. In effect, the conventional meaning of development (i.e, economic growth) is retained but the agency of development switched from state to market under neo liberalism. Thus, neo liberalism is an anti development perspective, not in terms of goals but in terms of means.

Post development thinking also puts forth an anti development perspective. It is more radical as it applies not merely to means and technology but also managing the changes that arise from the application of technology. Development virtually included an element of reflexivity and it ranges from infrastructure works (roads, railways, canals, dams, ports) to industrial policy, the welfare state, the new economic policy, the colonial economics and the Keynesian demand management.
In all the previous development thinking, the conventional unit of development was nation. The economy development statistics and the measures used by international institutions are still the country statistics. However, while the nation remains the central domain of development, gradually the development is becoming a multilevel, multi scalar series of efforts simultaneously taking place at the levels lower than the nation, at the national level and at levels beyond the nation.

Below the national level, there are community development, local economic development and micro regional development. Community development received a new emphasis with alternative development thinking. Local development in its various forms connects with the questions of rural/urban disparities, the urban development, regional inequality, the new regionalism, ethnic mobilization and the new localism with a view to endogenous development and in reaction to globalization. Beyond the nation, there are questions of macro regional cooperation and the global macro economic policies. Macro regional cooperation concerns the conventional issues of economies of scale, increase of market size, regional standardization and inter firm cooperation as well as the horizons of regional development banks. A third scale of development action is the world: the local, national and macro regional decision making interface with macro policies on the part of international institutions and the UN system.

After development thinking has been more or less successively state led, (as explained by the classical, modernization and dependency theories), market led (as explained by neo liberalism) and society led (as explained by alternative development thinking), it is increasingly understood that the development action needs all of these in
a new combination. Inter sectoral cooperation and partnerships are highly necessary for human development.

The international development cooperation has been changing in several ways that emphasis has been shifted from projects to programmes and from bilateral to multilateral cooperation. The trend prevailing at present is towards, on the one hand, the formal channels of development and on the other, informal channels. Development effort in the informal channels are gaining momentum with the emergence of the alternative thinking and with the spread of Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

The emergence of alternative development thinking and the proliferation of NGOs have been associated with the long term trends in the development theory. The long term trend in the development theory has been towards a shift from the classical and modern structuralist perspectives that emphasize the role of macro structures to a more agency oriented perspective. The classical and the modern development thinking were fundamentally structuralist and their emphasis was on the large scale patterning of social realities by structural changes in the economy, state and the social system. Towards the end of the 20th century, there occurred a shift from structuralism to constructivism, i.e, from an account of social realities as determined and patterned by macro structures to an account of social realities as being socially constructed. Constructivism, has well been emphasized by Shultz, Berger, Luckmann and Max Weber as a post structuralist and post modernist theory.41

Shift to constructivism has its implications like emphasis on agency by which the development thinking has become more regional or local oriented and also the
concern for differentiation and diversity by which new qualifications of development have proliferated like sustainable development, people friendly development and pro poor development. There has occurred the agency orientation in development thinking and the emphasis has been shifted on to strategic groups and actors oriented participatory approach to development. Thus, the NGOs have emerged more relevant presently in the sphere of economic and community development as they have established links with the people at the grass roots level.

CHAPTER SCHEME

The present study comprises of seven chapters. The first chapter is the Introductory chapter and in it the topic of study has been introduced and familiarized and also the relevance, scope and the coverage of the research study have been described. The Research Design and the methodological aspects of the study also have been described in the introductory chapter.

The second chapter is the Overview of Literature in which the review of various books and articles on the Non Governmental Organizations and their activities have been made. Also, the books and the articles on the critical appraisal of the various activities of NGOs have been reviewed in this chapter.

The third chapter has been basically a background review of the Peermade Development Society. In this chapter, the beginning, growth and the structural aspects of Peermade Development Society have been discussed.

The fourth chapter is Community Development which deals with the community development interventions of Peermade Development Society in the Idukki
district in general and that in the Peermade Taluk of Idukki district in particular. In this chapter, the secondary data on the various community development activities of PDS have been analysed and interpreted in order to substantiate the role of PDS as an NGO in the economic and community development of the locality.

The fifth chapter is Women Development which comprises of the women development and empowerment interventions of PDS. Even though, women development and empowerment are parts of community development itself, they have been discussed in a separate chapter because, PDS has given a special focus on the women development and empowerment and for this a separate Women Development Department is working in the office of Peermade Development Society for organizing and implementing various activities relating to women development.

The sixth chapter is Sustainable Natural Resources Management and in this chapter, the various interventions of PDS for providing sustainability to the natural resources in the rural areas by promoting organic farming and watershed development in such areas, have been discussed with the support of data.

The seventh chapter is Summary, Findings and Suggestions and in this chapter a summary of the work done in the research study, the findings by the researcher and the suggestions based on the findings done in the study.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It has been felt that the study has got certain limitations. First of all, the period of study has been limited to eight years from 1997-98 to 2004-05 due to the non-availability of data for the years prior to 1997-98. Secondly, the study has been limited
mainly to the Peermade Taluk of Idukki district due to the inability to cover the almost vast geographical area of Idukki district. Thirdly, there has been certain limitations with respect to the availability of secondary of data because of the lack of expertise on the part of the people involved in the collection, compilation and the storing of the data on the various programmes and projects organized and implemented by PDS. Fourthly, as far as primary data was concerned, the people have been half reluctant to disclose the complete information in the process of primary data collection. Fifthly, the people in the Peermade Taluk, who have been covered in the survey, have not been so familiar with keeping of proper accounts regarding the output, income expenditure etc and they could convey only the approximate changes in the values of the variables projected in the study. In spite of all these limitations, all the efforts have been made to accomplish the stated objectives of the study and to make the study genuine.
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CHAPTER II

AN OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE
CONTENTS

CHAPTER II 48 - 85

AN OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE

An Overview of Literature 1

Research Gap 84
CHAPTER II

AN OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE

The role of the state in the field of production and in various service activities is diminishing in an era of trade liberalization and globalization. Alternatively, the role of the civil society is gaining relevance and importance in social, economic and community development. With the declining role of the state in social welfare and social services, NGOs are increasingly gaining attention and are looked upon as alternative agencies in promoting awareness, change and development in the society.¹ They are extensively involved in alleviating the poverty and promoting sustainable and equitable development. They are in a position to provide social services to different sections of the society where as the state fails to provide such services. NGO approach to development is based on the principle of people’s participation.

The emergence and growth of the NGOs in the recent times is largely attributed to the serious disjunctions and distortions in the development paradigm itself where the poor and the marginalized received the least attention.² NGOs are important linkages between the people at the grassroots level, civil society and the state. They have been instrumental in creating awareness and implementing development programmes in agriculture, watershed development, women’s empowerment, education, health and family welfare. They are the representatives of the alternative modes of development.³ With the relevance of NGOs in the social sectors rising so fast, several institutions and agencies working in the area of development, including those belonging to UN family, are focusing on how best involve the NGOs in their operations and collaborate with them on a sustainable basis. Presently, national governments and various development agencies
realized that economic, social and community development can be achieved only with the full involvement of the people at the grassroots level and therefore, NGOs, which represent the people at the grassroots and accountable to them, have to be involved in the development activities on a large scale. There were some favourable signals from various international financial institutions for increasing participation of NGOs in development programmes in the developing countries. The NGO initiative was being seriously studied and applauded for their timely and constructive intervention in the development projects in the Third World. Serious efforts are being made to draw on NGO knowledge and the experiences regarding the strategy framing and deciding on prioritization of programmes and projects. Most of the writers on NGO roles concentrate on this aspect.

Despande (1986) studied and highlighted the importance of Voluntary Organizations or NGOs in achieving nation’s economic and community development. It was observed in the study that two totally different opinions have been drawn by the public about the voluntary agencies. Some people praised the contributions of voluntary agencies and found them to be sincere, dedicated and successful in making a dent into the problems of poverty and exploitation, in taking education to hitherto neglected regions and sections of the society, in giving relief to families affected by the natural and social calamities, in releasing the bonded labourers and so on. Some others considered them as the foreign agents, who in the pretext of helping the poor, undermined the process of national integration and social formation. The author found that, though small in number, the presence of NGOs has been strongly felt due to their effectiveness in organizing the downtrodden and enabling to articulate their grievances.
Kothari, 6 (1986) examined the context in which the role of NGOs became important in the economic and community development of the country. In the socio-economic sphere major reversals of policy were underway and the long established and cherished institutions of the state were withdrawing. The crucial segments of the economy were handed over to the private sector through policies of liberalization, and privatization. In such a context, the government truly wanted to involve the NGOs in the development efforts which enabled them to come together on a platform irrespective of ideological and other differences and materializing the motto ‘reaching out to the people’. The following observations were also made in the study:

* Even though government could do better in heavy investment sector, NGOs could do much better in the small investment interior development programmes.

* The international donor agencies have discovered the NGO model to be the most effective instrument in promoting their interest in the developing countries.

* The government did not succeed in delivering development to the people and therefore there was the preference for more autonomous development agencies like Non-governmental Organizations.

* The UN and other international donor agencies highly distrusted the national government in reaching out to the target population.

* The NGOs could, without inducing a shift in the development strategy, speed up development because of their flexibility, efficiency and amenability to privatized and individualized initiatives.
Franco and Chand, 7 (1991) pointed out that development should mean

* a sustainable increase in the economic independence of the poor
* strengthening the cohesion of the community by reducing rather than increasing the inequality.
* creating the organizational power of the community.

The authors observed that the NGDOs could play a major role in achieving such a development as they were legally constituted non profit organizations working at the local level for the development of the poor. They displayed three characteristics in that they did depend on the government, they played a transformational or developmental role and they undertook unfamiliar tasks.

Sharma, 8 (1992) studied and highlighted the transformation potentialities and limitations of social action groups. The study was focused on social action groups working for the cause of the poor and deprived sections to enable them to be equal partners in development and in radical transformation. They were non-government non party organizations generally labeled as NGOs representing an alternative strategy for development and social transformation and operating at the grassroots levels based on spontaneous initiatives. The author saw three agencies capable of social transformation, namely, the state, organized movements and the grassroots action groups. However, the author found that at present state has turned out to be an ineffective agency of structural transformation, and the organized movements met with little success in initiating the process of restructuring the society. Therefore, the author argued that the emergence of grassroots action groups became very important for social transformation as they have
evolved a distinct methodology for working with the disadvantaged people and it was the methodology of critical intervention, creative action and participatory mobilization.

Galab, (1993) examined the role and relevance of various rural employment generation programmes of the government and suggested that the close participation of the voluntary agencies would enhance their effectiveness. Making the case study of Anantapur district in A P, the author observed that very high levels of unemployment and poverty existed even after the implementation of the rural employment programmes. It was suggested in the study that the full benefits of reasonable wages to the workers and the quality of assets along with the non escalation in the cost of the programmes could be ensured if NGOs are involved in executing the works. Moreover they could motivate the beneficiaries of individual assets and involve them fully in the process of creation of these assets. Further it was noted in the study that there can be the plugging of the leakages if the identification of beneficiaries was made with people’s knowledge and with the help of NGOs as they are non profit organizations.

Arora, (1994) looked into the theoretical and practical aspects of people's participation in various economic and community development programmes exploring the success of the joint forest management systems in eleven states in India promoted with people’s participation. The study pointed out an increasing accent on people’s participation in both official policy discourse at national and international levels and non official political discourse at the level of NGOs and local voluntary agencies and organizations. The study highlighted that people’s participation became a reality in the context of increased interest shown by the NGOs in organizing the
people to assert their rights on forests. Also the author made an apprehension that the people might become indifferent and the state might revert back to its earlier position in case the NGOs leave the scene.

Stephen, 11 (1997) observed that voluntarism was a strategy for development with opportunities for all as its goal. The voluntary organizations, which could be termed as NGOs, were of various types and with much difference in their plans, aims, ideologies and activities. The author highlighted that development was a process where people unitedly and voluntarily struggled to liberate themselves from all forms of enslavement and create better living conditions for themselves and for others. The fundamental role of NGOs was to educate the people to be critically aware of the causes of poverty and to assist them to overcome it by organizing themselves through a participatory and democratic process. The relevance of NGOs was clear from the fact that conscious people and government have accepted and recognized them as more efficient and less expensive means in promoting development.

Sinha and Ghosh, 12 (1997) examined the importance of literacy campaign and land literacy in achieving better community development and highlighted the role played by the NGOs in this field. Literacy Mission launched by the government and the various literacy programmes undertaken by the other agencies especially NGOs were intended to boost the process of empowerment which enabled the people to participate in the process of economic planning and development. In the changing scenario of world economic and trade relations, sustainable development could be achieved only with a basic knowledge of the level of resources possessed by the community and with a
balanced or normal exploitation of resources. In the agricultural sector programmes like watershed development would be very important and for the success of such programmes the full involvement of the local people and NGOs was necessary. The study also cited the panchayat level Resource Mapping programme initiated in Kerala by Kerala Sathra Sahithya Parishad (KSSP) and Center for Earth Service Studies (CESS) with a view to promote community involvement at grass root level planning and development.

Tandon and Ananthakrishnan, 13 (1997) examined and pointed out the voice reflected by NGOs in United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) 14 and also observed that the environment problems and the North South relations sounded more in UNGASS which obstructed the negotiation on major issues. The authors pointed out that the NGOs have played a highly significant role in exposing the unsustainable pattern of contemporary production and consumption. The study also suggested that if NGOs wanted to play a more meaningful role in the future they need to problematise their innocence, do deeper thinking and try to understand the basis of increasing distrust between the North and the South. It is because the NGOs seemed to rotate in a world of their own and they possessed little or no understanding of wider issues.

Suzuki, 15 (1998) pointed out that NGOs have emerged as a distinct organizational type and gained attention as a major alternative to government sponsored development. The author observed that the literature on development swiftly shifted a good deal of its focus to NGOs and attempted to understand the various aspects of their functioning. The term NGO could be used in a very broad meaning and it includes a huge number of organizations with differences in missions, operations and funding schemes. The author
further pointed out that NGOs could undertake two types of activities – organization centered and programme centered. The organization centered activities focused on taking care of the organization by acquiring resources, maintaining the staff and maintaining a safe environment for the organization. The programme centered activities gave focus on accomplishing the goals of the organization. The author further suggested that a balance should be there between these two types of activities undertaken by the NGOs.

Rajasekhar, 16 (1998) analysed the role of NGOs in bringing about more successful rural development in India. The author observed that the rural development programmes of Government of India were not successful in reducing the poverty and unemployment. The reason for this was the lack of involvement of the people for whom the programmes were largely meant. The author suggested that the NGOs, being small scale units and flexible, innovative and participatory, were more successful in reaching the poor and in poverty alleviation. Empowerment of the poor people for the achievement of sustainable development was the mission of most of the NGOs. There were radical changes in the field of economic and political thinking especially after the launching of ‘New Policy Agenda’ in 1991 which gave a prominent role to the NGOs in alleviating poverty and in promoting social welfare.

Mencher, 17 (1999) studied and highlighted the relationship between NGOs and socio-economic and political set up in which they existed at different levels. The study pointed out that NGOs could effectively function as agency of change if they focused on what they were entrusted to do; to help local people in acting for themselves. An NGO could be any organization that is not a direct division of a national government and which
could act as a highly significant vehicle for development. The author observed that NGOs had a striking presence and they expressed their varying perspectives in all the six major international conferences in the recent ten years and subsequently the different national governments had to take a different stance sensing the perspectives of NGOs and hence the state-NGO relationship underwent structural changes. Moreover, NGOs have tried to play a larger role in the formulation of national policy and connect various social issues and problems to the people who worked in the process of framing national policies. With NGOs taking leadership in the developmental roles, the meaning of development to the local people changed altogether. The villagers or the local people recognized the need for alleviation of poverty, acquiring higher education and decent health care, lessening of the cast, social and gender discriminations and getting power and it was what development meant to them. The study also examined the structure, size, organizational pattern and the historical background of NGOs, the sources of NGO funding and the NGO relationship with the state.

Iyengar, (2000) studied and highlighted the role of NGOs in the achievements and failures of the development work of the mankind examining NGO role, achievements and failures in the economic development of Gujarat. The author observed that the NGOs have their experience of resounding success and regrettable failures in the development work in Gujarat. Gandhiji’s call for constructive work for development changed the tenor of the voluntary activity in the country completely. Voluntary action in India has been grounded partly in a Gandhian response to development and partly in a struggle against the large hegemony of micro organizations (political parties, trade unions) which often
discourage the people’s participation. The author found that there was the proliferation of NGOs throughout the country as there was the organization of community development programmes and national extension services in the line of Gandhian rural construction and also due to extensive sponsorship offered to NGOs in the development programmes. The author was of opinion that the state could not succeed in alleviating the status of the disadvantaged and in solving the social problems and tensions to any one’s complete satisfaction. Moreover there has been a conscious decision to reduce the role of the state to remove unnecessary regulations and controls. The NGO initiatives in the area of awareness, mass mobilization and organization around critical issues were to lead towards a better problem identification and solutions that involve the active participation of the local population. The author suggested that the state should give recognition and the sufficient encouragement to NGO initiatives.

Patel, \(^{20}\) (2001) pointed out that Voluntary Organizations performed a variety of functions in every society similar to those of various economic and political institutions irrespective of the stage of economic development the society has achieved. In India, the voluntary organizations, with diverse functions and purposes, serve a vast and assorted population of informal workers and large sums of money from public and foreign sources are expended by them. The author noted that since the voluntary organizations did not exhibit the characteristics of either public or private sector organizations, the concept of yet another sector - variously called third sector, independent sector, voluntary sector or non profit sector- is necessary to encompass all voluntary associations. NGOs being good partners in development gained much importance in the development process. The author
found the contextual factors like religion and tradition with their influence in a limited manner and factors like Gandhian influence, ideology of the left and systems failure with their influence in a big way contributing to the proliferation of NGOs in India. Moreover government wanted to involve them in implementing various development programmes. Again the philosophy and strategy of international development community began to change and the foreign donors started to focus their attention on NGOs as supplementary vehicles for development. They began to channel large amounts of developmental aid to those organizations which worked directly for the poor and it led to rather mushrooming of voluntary organizations in the different parts of the country.

Aswathi, 21 (2001) pointed out that it was not the investment alone or faithful implementation of the governmental programmes that led to the economic and social development of the society, citing the example of Ralegan Sidhi, a village in Maharashtra. The author observed that social development towards an ethical and egalitarian society preceded as well as accompanied the economic development in Ralegan Sidhi, giving it a special place in the development scene. Ralegan achieved a remarkable progress under the leadership of Anna Hazare, a local resident, who had a great vision and also a lot of capabilities and initiatives. The author attributed the success of Ralegan to four reasons.

* The entire development effort was financed through government loans and assistance which could be normally availed by any village in India and a matching mobilization and voluntary contribution of the local people.

* A strengthening of the moral fabric and bringing of the people together were made under the leadership of Anna Hazare because he felt that the individual morality and the
moral reconstruction of the society were essential for laying foundations of any socio-economic development process.

* The guiding principle of economic development was ‘growth with equity’ whereby eradication of social discrimination and achievement of greater economic equality could be materialized.

* ‘Shramdan’ was an essential component in the implementation of every programme in the village. The author further noted that in India when the poor people were deprived in any way socially, economically, politically and culturally with the limited access to the information education, skill and health, the Ralegan experiment could be followed.

Shah and Iyengar, 22 (2001) pointed out that the government systems were too rigid and standardized to evolve and implement plans that would meet the highly varied requirements of the country. A new approach and style of working seemed necessary for evolving programmes and implementing them in a participatory manner to meet the requirements of the local people with more accountability and transparency and better quality of development and service delivery. As a result, many NGOs came to the scene and government and other funding agencies began to insist on the involvement of NGOs in planning and implementing the development projects and programmes. The author observed that there has been conscious efforts on the part of NGOs to ensure the quality, cost effectiveness and accountability. The NGO presence in the development scenario could meet certain other requirements as well.

* NGOs did quality work and it pressurized the government to improve its quality of work and performance.
The close interaction between NGOs and the government on the financial and procedural matters made the government agencies to modify their own systems and procedures so that they become flexible and locally relevant.

NGOs worked informally in a friendly manner to meet the needs and priorities of the people with people’s participation and in that it became a supportive role.

The NGO work promoted sustainability at various levels and positions, namely, institutional sustainability, technical and financial sustainability and the environmental sustainability.

Pulavarti, 23 (2001) observed that the rapid growth in the number of voluntary organizations working in the field of development has generated widespread debate about their roles and their performance. The author made the case study of an NGO, Sumangali Seva Ashram in Bangalore district, with the focus on its contributions to the processes of social change. SSA was a major NGO working primarily with women and sought to formulate and implement various programmes for the economic and social development of women at the grass roots level. It was found in the study that due to SSA activity, the awareness, consciousness, self-image and the self-confidence could be increased among women. They got better contact with the bureaucracy in the government and they were able to face and answer many problems with confidence and sense of accomplishment. Further, it was highlighted in the study that due to NGO activity two kinds of results could be generated – tangible (in terms of how many people became literate, how many government loans given etc.) and intangible (increased awareness, consciousness, self-image and self-confidence) which led to the empowerment of the people.
Ramachandran,\textsuperscript{24} (2001) observed that leakages of development funds of the government, the scams, scandals, corruption and misappropriation of resources have led to a gradual erosion of public confidence in the traditional agents of development. It led to an increase in the significance of the role of NGOs in the development process. The author noted that responding to Gandhiji’s call as well as inspired by ideas of socialism, social and religious reforms and communism, many voluntary organizations emerged in the different parts of the country and involved genuinely in voluntary welfare and reform work. There has occurred a change in the face of NGOs in the early 1980’s that they focused more on people’s mobilization instead of development projects. However, by late 1980’s the international development climate and growing professionalism created a demand for organizations that could provide professional support to grass roots groups. Also the donors found it easier to fund a few NGOs rather than a large number of small organizations and consequently NGOs were encouraged to upscale their work. It was further noted that having created a large infrastructure with many workers, voluntary organizations had no options but to take on large development projects which alienated them from the local people and put them under tremendous pressure.

Kothari,\textsuperscript{25} (2001) observed that after fifty years of state sponsored and directed effort in resolving problems, people’s problems remained unsolved. The state lost its capacity and legitimacy which forced the development thinkers to think of voluntary action. Earlier, the government was seen as the key to social change and improving the life chances of the masses of people. However the failure of the government in providing
genuine development to the people gave an image to voluntary action in India. Voluntary action was initiated by diverse individuals and groups with the distinctive features that it was autonomous, relatively independent and self propelled. It was further pointed out in the study that a large part of innovative and creative endeavours in many fields in the country was voluntary in nature and emerging into specific movements. (environment movement, women movement etc.) and macro formations dealing in broader networking issues.

Nair, 26 (2001) examined and highlighted the role of financial markets and services in alleviating poverty through micro finance institutions where NGOs played a major role. Micro finance institutions were defined as those which provide thrift, credit and other financial services and products of very small amounts mainly to the poor in the rural, semi urban and urban areas for enabling them to raise their level of income and improve the living standards. The author found that in micro finance approach to poverty alleviation, NGOs could be the most preferred intermediaries as they were particularly good providers of socially oriented financial services. By the end of 1990’s about 800 NGOs were participating in the SHG - bank linkage programme organized by NABARD. Again, several other NGOs have developed micro finance functions either with assistance from the internal donors or exclusively on the strength of individual savings. The rise of NGOs doing business in micro finance has opened the flood gates of aid in the selected pockets in India. Even the World Bank wanted to involve NGOs as representatives of civil society and allow them a free ride even in matters like of use of financial resources. The author observed that the relevant question was how to enhance the capacity of the
NGOs in carrying out the financial services function and how to best instill in them the best industry standards. It was noted that many NGOs have completely changed their strategy of intermediation from issue based activism to financial delivery and the NGOs were found at varying stages of their evolution as financial intermediaries.

Das, 27 (2001) observed that the state lost interest in development and right issues and in its place voluntary sector or civil society organizations have emerged because of their credibility and importance. It has become difficult to think of a World Bank project or a government programme without a very visible NGO component. Similarly, in all national and international deliberations regarding policy formulation, NGOs emerged as a strong voice representing people’s concern. Even the regional and state level consultations on policy and programme matters rarely took place without NGO participation. The author further highlighted that the credibility and acceptance of the NGOs have increased in the development sector and it led to a mushrooming of NGOs in different parts of the country.

Wazir, 28 (2002) pointed out that there was wider and ever widening acceptance of the fact that NGOs acted as far better agents of change and innovation than top heavy government bureaucracies. The author highlighted that even the Government of India acknowledged the above fact as it set up parallel constructions resembling NGOs in order to implement on an experimental basis. The ability of NGOs to respond flexibly and with speed and their innovative, non-bureaucratic and low cost approach made them appealing to international donor agencies and local governments alike. It was further noted that the donor agencies tended to favour NGOs and at the very least they insisted on inclusion of NGOs when funding large scale governmental programmes.
Vysulu,\textsuperscript{29} (2002) made a comparison between local self governance and the NGOs in bringing about development in the rural areas. It was pointed out in the study that NGOs and the like agencies were not substitutes to government even though NGOs and such organizations have done good work in many parts of the country. The Prognosis of some recent writers on development that government was a failure in bringing about the development and hence the NGOs should take over such a role, was challenged in the study. The author argued that often NGO working went corrupt and local self government bodies were not allowed to blossom. Moreover the NGOs the and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) did not have the constitutional status and hence they have some constraints while the local self government institutions have a constitutional status. It was suggested in the study that the best way of expanding social opportunities and bringing about sustainable development, was to allow the local self government institutions to function in the relevant areas under their jurisdiction.

Chopra,\textsuperscript{30} (2002) examined and highlighted the precise nature of creation of social capital and the role it played in furthering the development intervention at the local levels. The author examined the nature of interaction between the new institutions and older formalized networks with a view to bring about enduring development. Social capital was defined as those social organizations such as trusts, norms and network that could improve the efficiency of the society by facilitating coordinated actions. Again, it was described as the networking that helped to create linkages which in turn forged rules, conventions and norms governing the development process. An evolving and increasing stock of social capital was a necessary input in the sustained process of development.
The study identified that the strengthening of informal institutions like NGOs through the inputs of technology and financial and human capital from across the different sectors constituted an essential input in operationalising the concept of sustainable development. The appropriate institutions, that enabled the people to realize their expectations with respect to the quality of life, made development more comprehensive and sustainable and it was made possible by social capital. In the light of evidences from different parts of the country, it was highlighted in the study that the unique sharing mechanisms evolved by the NGOs, have created initiatives and enabled the people to achieve comprehensive and sustainable development. Thus the social capital led to sustainable development and it was the input of grass roots organizations. The author emphasized the role of NGOs in creating social capital which in turn led to comprehensive and sustainable development.

Roy, (2002) identified and highlighted the village community as the natural unit for organizing development. Over the last two decades focus was made on community development and the community participation in development became even more prominent. The author found that the participatory mode of development was the most acceptable one and it actively involved the people it represented in its development planning, monitoring and evaluation. The formulation of integrated programmes that viewed people as agents of change and which have comprehensive vision of social cohesion was critical to realize participatory development. It was further specified in the study that the practice of development, having identified the rural community as the site for intervention, has to mediate through agencies working at that level. Here the role of NGOs was identified as most important. Both the operational NGOs and advocacy NGOs
worked to bring about community development by people’s participation. It was also found that the role of Community Based Organizations (CBOs), an operational category of NGOs, were exclusive in participatory development as they were not self servicing and they put the responsibility of self development and self management up on the initiatives organized from below. CBOs have a special advantage in participatory development as they were membership based and there existed a unity between the members and the beneficiaries.

Mahanty, 32 (2002) looked into the role of NGOs in conservation programmes and also examined how the internal dynamics of governmental agencies and the relationships between NGOs, agencies and donors could influence the conduct of conservation programmes. The author examined these issues through a case study of India Eco-development Project at Rajeev Gandhi National Park based on the field work conducted during 1998 and 1999. It was suggested in the study that there should be community involvement and power sharing in park management as a prerequisite for resolving the conflicts and inequities. The institutional constraints have posed real difficulties in facilitating and power sharing and meaningful local participation. The NGOs should be included in the institutional framework for the management of parks and related activities. It was further found that the NGOs could effectively scrutinize the government policy and promote public debate on contested issues and they have linkages with broader social movements.

Wit, 33 (2002) examined and highlighted the importance of empowerment participation and enabling in poverty alleviation and achieving community development.
It was a case study of poverty alleviation efforts in Bangalore. The study suggested that conditions should be created under which communities and NGOs or private sector organizations could involve themselves in the task of development and in which the communities could identify and prioritize their needs leading to better match between what the people needed and what they actually obtained. The author found that the Bangalore Urban Poverty Alleviation Programme was very successful, the core strategy of which was empowering the poor with special focus on the most vulnerable group including women. Close relationships between governmental and non governmental organizations and the slum communities was brought up which led to the convergence or merging of various urban poverty alleviation programmes and resources from both governmental agencies and NGOs could perform two types of tasks – on the one hand, set up and guide slum development team and monitor their performance and functioning and on the other, they could perform the role of management and decision making.

Fowler, 34 (2003) pointed out that the NGOs associated with the international development (NGDOs) faced a future scenario where they could no longer rely on a system of concessional aid as reference point for their role, work and continuity. Most of the NGOs worked as intermediaries to promote sustainable development, social justice and enduring improvement in the circumstances of the poor and the excluded groups. The author noted that the basis of operation of most of the NGOs was aid and there was a decreasing volume and distribution of aid finance. Consequently, the role of NGOs changed as explicitly value based agents of personal change, whose major task was to foster cooperation and collaborative spirit on the basis of human relations in an
increasingly interdependent world. This NGDO role is a vital answer to the global trends that shifted power from public to private domains and hence demanded a responsible use of private power for the self development of all.

Edwards and Fowler, 35 (2003) observed and highlighted that NGOs have become a force for transformation in global politics and economics. With globalization the shifting pattern of poverty and insecurity within and between countries that called for more sophisticated strategies and interventions, increasingly connected across the borders of geography and sector, causes and effects. Hence the NGOs have to play important role in disbursing the aid and in helping to ensure that the new global rules for trade, human movement, financial and environmental governance were both fair and effective in combating injustice. The authors further observed that NGOs were not only the prime providers of relief, humanitarian assistance and specialized services but also mediators between civilians, government and even the military in complex political emergencies. Most of the NGOs were intermediaries in the sense that they worked between the grass roots or community level and other levels and sectors of the society providing a range of support services.

Sharma, 36 (2003) noted that NGOs have paid attention to the problem of engendering as a part of development. Development should imply not the exclusion but the inclusion of marginalized people, their efforts, experiences, dreams and hopes. For NGOs development signified a concern for the people rather than the projects and focused on training, awareness raising, social organization, capacity building and the institutional development. The NGOs employed a variety of methods to pursue their
goals – protested against and rejected the policies of the state, tried to alter development discourses by raising serious concern about the environment and sustainability in the achievement of development, concern about women, about traditional people and their knowledge base, about cultural diversity and about civil rights, justice and equality. NGOs organized people and adopted simple locally relevant and effective development models. The author noted that the role of NGOs have increased in the recent years on account of three reasons. Firstly, NGOs represented a force towards a democratic and pluralistic society, offering alternative development and empowerment at the grass roots level. Secondly, NGOs possessed particular strengths in the work related to poverty alleviation and sustainable development. Thirdly, NGOs offered a prospect of enhancing the efficiency of the public sector service delivery.

Sarangi,³⁷ (2003) pointed out that in the Indian context, NGOs, as a social and political phenomenon, emerged in the 1970s and early 1980s. This happened at a time when the democratic state which stood for the welfare of the people utterly failed its people in fulfilling their basic minimum needs. The author observed that in the mean while the Indian Economy was relatively open for penetration by IMF/World Bank and loot of natural resources by MNCs. The failure of the national government, IMF / World Bank / WTO devastation and the loot by the MNCs compounded the problem. It was in this context that multinational agencies stepped in through the network of NGOs and these sub contractors propagated the philosophy of grass roots democracy, participatory development, alternative development etc. The author argued that the alternative activity and the collaboration approach not only obfuscated the reality but also hampered the
emergence of people’s initiatives and the funds flowing through the alternative activities created a set of power brokers at the local level.

Narayanan, 38 (2003) highlighted that the conventional growth oriented top-down development strategy did not succeed in extending the benefits of development to the marginalized. Such development programmes viewed people as objects of the process of development and in it the various agencies provided things and services they could rather than what people needed. Such a failure occurred because the policy makers, administrators and the donor agencies did not understand the local realities. The need for understanding local realities led to the gradual emergence of the concepts of participation and empowerment in the development literature and at present these twin concepts have been positioned at the center of both the radical and the mainstream perspectives of development. The author highlighted that participatory approach to development gave an enhanced role to non-state actors in development like NGOs. Voluntary organizations have been mobilizing the participation of marginalized people and it could be successful only with the state assistance. The NGOs have demanded the establishment of a variety of participatory institutions and the state has responded positively establishing such structures and mechanisms to involve the local community in decision making. It was also pointed out that the NGOs functioning in the rural society organized the weaker sections and made them aware of empowerment and participation by conducting training programmes on leadership development and capacity building. The NGOs even tried to alter power relations at the micro level in favour of disadvantaged sections. Thus a
strong NGO presence was desirable in the development scenario to ensure the uplift of marginalized and disadvantaged sections in the society.

Prasad,\textsuperscript{39} (2003) observed that for about last fifty years of development, planners and policy makers in India assumed that the state would provide the leading role in formulating and implementing the enabling policies for poverty alleviation. As per the experiences of the country, working of the political and the administrative machineries were having constraints and therefore a new understanding began to emerge and focus shifted to the development activities of locally rooted participatory micro development organizations. This shift was evident in the increasing attention being given to the NGOs or voluntary organizations in asserting positive values of participation of the poor in development and bringing about social changes within a democratic political framework. The author observed that the core elements behind the success of NGOs were people’s participation and participatory development was made possible only through the social mobilization. Social mobilization was defined as the process of dialogue, negotiation and consensus building for action by the people, community organization etc. to identify, address and solve a common problem. The goal of social mobilization was to raise the status of the poor in a society through capacity building for self awareness, development and self realization where the role played by the NGOs was very important.

Ahmad,\textsuperscript{40} (2003) pointed out that there should be a systematic change in the country that aimed at generating certain types of developments where governmental agencies and NGOs worked in tandem for a speedier breakthrough in specified areas of rural development while confronting the challenges of a global economy. The author
suggested that there should be the decentralization of economic decision making power so that the delays in the implementation of development projects could be avoided. For sustainable rural transformation, the government should create a conducive economic, social and political environment in which the development of rural areas could take place through a mix of initiatives. The author observed that NGOs could be catalysts of rural economic transformation and therefore the NGO sector should be encouraged to play a greater participatory role in the development of the rural economy. Since the ultimate responsibility of rural development was with the government, the initiative should come from it to include the NGOs right from the stage of planning and policy formulation. The author also made the following observations about the NGO roles in development.

* NGOs could deliver goods more speedily and efficiently as compared to the indifferent bureaucracy.

* People accepted and appreciated the apolitical approaches of the well trained and professional NGOs in delivering goods.

* NGOs could understand the ground realities related to rural economic and social transformation as they were closer to the target groups.

Success Story,\(^4\) (2003) highlighted how the involvement of NGOs and Self Help Groups (SHGs) led to the success of various governmental programmes citing the case of success of a similar governmental programme in Tamilnadu. The Credit Cum Subsidy Scheme (CCSS) announced by the government of Tamilnadu aimed at the construction of houses for the people living marginally above the poverty line in the
Kanyakumari district of Tamilnadu, subject to a ceiling. In a situation where banks and other financial institutions were reluctant to give loans to the beneficiaries, some NGOs and self-help groups under them entered the scene and extended money and loans to the beneficiaries for constructing the houses. The CCSS worked like a magic and with the help of some NGOs and Nehru Yuva Kendra about 300 houses were constructed in the Kanyakumari district.

Prasad,42 (2003) observed that the social mobilization was a participatory process where people got educated, organized, motivated and enabled to undertake social enquiry and analysis for understanding their life situations and taking decisions and actions to change it for their well being. In the different phases of social mobilization, it was necessary to identify and study the functioning of NGOs and other development partners and seek their support for possible collaboration. The author suggested that there should be an institutional framework for social mobilization in which the NGOs and the other development partners could be included. The quality, size, resources, expertise, credibility and spread of NGOs were critical at this phase of social mobilization. The basic principle of social mobilization was that whatever output achieved in the society must be consolidated through a better facilitation, supervision and monitoring of the activities of the beneficiaries under the project interventions and here the NGOs and other voluntary agencies had a very important role.

Hebbar and Acharya,43 (2003) looked into the direction of change in the existing social institutions and those established in India after independence and also the obstacles to forming effective social institutions in the country. The study classified the
social institutions in to three, namely, those which are intrinsically part of the traditional common society, state sponsored institutions and the modern popular people centered institutions like SHGs, NGO promoted groups and other spontaneously organized groups. Even though a public controlled economic development would distribute the gains evenly and empower the downtrodden politically and socially, the macro level agenda had a lot of contradictions and disagreements with the micro level realities which would require decentralization of decision making power. In the light of this the role of NGOs increased in the government and community endeavors and growing need was felt to strengthen the cooperation and trust between the people and social groups. The authors suggested that there should be the formation of Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and NGOs should undertake empowerment through education under various programmes.

Tiwary, 44 (2003) evaluated the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of NGO work making a study of two NGOs in West Bengal and Jharkhand respectively in the field of joint forest management and rural development. The study examined the organizational structure, the funding opportunities and the work philosophy of the two organizations. Some of the constraints faced by the NGOs in their respective areas of work also were highlighted. However, the author argued that the voluntary agencies, with flexible organizational methods and models, were credited with using innovations in experimentation and providing entry points for radical works. NGOs were particularly suited for motivating and organizing the village communities for protection, afforestation and the development of degraded forest land. The author pointed out that the NGOs were expected to perform better than governments in promoting participation and converting
aid money in to development. The study made the following observations also.

* There was often a mismatch between the villagers’ expectations and the NGOs strived to do in the process of development.

* The size and area were very important for the NGOs to be successful. A large and specialized NGO has created a more sustainable presence in the villages.

* The villagers, on involvement with institutions from outside, strongly and heavily demonstrated expectations for multi sector and integrated rural development agendas to be included in the NGO plans.

* For NGOs to have an impact, a mere populist agenda must give way to the readjustments that considered a more strenuous regime and that sought new allies and a legitimacy.

James, (2004) remarked that there was rather a proliferation of a large number of organizations which were variously called Voluntary Agencies, Social Action Groups, Grassroots Organizations, NGOs etc. Their activities were centered around participatory development as an alternative to the mainstream growth path followed by the government. The sudden rise of NGOs to international respectability was due to a large number of interpenetrating developments having economic, political, cultural and ideological ramifications at a global level. There was the collapse of the welfare state concept due to the rise of Neo Liberalism since 1970s. Today NGOs have evolved in to an inalienable adjunct of neo liberal globalization projecting themselves as an alternative paradigm to the state led socio-economic development of the past decades.

Pawar, Ambekar and Shrikant, (2004) pointed out that with the declining role of the state in social welfare and social services, NGOs were increasingly
gaining attention and prominence and were looked upon as alternative agencies in promoting the awareness change and development in the society. NGOs are important linkages between people at the grassroots, civil society and the state. They have been instrumental in creating the awareness and implementing development programmes in agriculture, watershed development, women’s empowerment, education, health care and family welfare. They were thus the representatives of alternative modes of development. The authors further noted that the NGOs working in the different fields in the country have an important role in development and their approach to development was based on the principle of people’s participation.

Punalekar, 47 (2004) highlighted that a Voluntary Agency or an NGO was a social entity committed to activities and programmes oriented towards change in the prevailing set of conditions – social, economic, political or cultural. In India NGOs have increased in number in the recent years and they have entered increasingly in to various fields of development spanning different sectors and social segments, both in the rural and urban areas. The author further noted that the NGOs were essentially conceived as efficient agencies for the management of development activities, even though they were without much say in the core principles of decision making or policy. The emergence and growth of NGOs in the recent times was largely attributed to serious disjunctions and distortions in the development paradigm itself, where the poor and the marginalized received the least attention. NGOs were being conceived as social and cultural catalysts for initiating change in the attitudes and perceptions of the people, for bringing the people
in to the modern stream and empowering them to redesign their own life styles and practices to confront social and economic backwardness.

Gurusamy,\(^48\) (2004) pointed out that in a vast country like India, which is marked by the existence of innumerous socio-cultural, economic, educational, political and religious problems, the development of rural areas and people occupied a significant place in the efforts towards planned and directed social change. The government alone was not able to solve these multidimensional problems. Any meaningful attempt in the direction of rural development should ensure economic growth with equitable and distributive social justice. The real and everlasting development did depend up on the willing cooperation and the wholehearted participation of the people in such endeavors routed through social action groups/self help groups and voluntary organizations. NGOs or Voluntary Agencies could be understood as groups of persons who have organized themselves in to the legal cooperative bodies and they were initiated spontaneously and governed by their own members without any external control.

Durgaprasd and Madhuri,\(^49\) (2004) studied and highlighted the initiatives, successes and challenges relating to partnerships and networking for health development and found that the bottom line of all prosperity and health in future would be vested in a development process and outcome that was essentially facilitated by what was called development partnerships and networks. The burning issues of individual human rights, entitlements and empowerment began to form the core of positive assertion, bargaining, negotiation – all aimed at partnership and network based support for sustainable rural health development. The study pointed out that government, aid agencies, NGOs and
other community based organizations should come together and act for promoting and sustaining achievement oriented societies. The NGOs were found very successful in this field. The authors suggested that while resource sharing, which was an important aspect of partnership and networking, critical care should be taken to ensure that communities, NGOs and government did not end up in an unhealthy competition because of resource scarcity.

Vasan, \(^{50}\) (2004) observed and highlighted that NGOs have emerged as an important element of contemporary Indian society. The author pointed out that NGOs have employed more women at the field level than many other sectors and the positive impact of this was for women, apart from being a source of income, NGOs provided a space for exposure to new ideas and possibilities outside the traditional restrictive social sphere. However it was observed that the NGOs gave only very low benefits, wages and salaries to their employees. The question of minimum wages, benefits such as insurance and health care, safe and dignified working conditions etc. were very rarely raised in the NGO sector since majority of employees were conveniently classified as volunteers, project staff or part timers and their payments labeled honorarium rather than a wage or salary. At the same time it was noted that NGOs got increasingly professionalized at higher levels where incomes were not restricted by argument of voluntarism and social service. It was suggested in the study that NGOs could bring about radical changes in the society and achieve better economic and community development, if there was much accountability for NGOs and responsibility was assigned to them.
Shamshad, 51 (2005) observed that at present there has been a great deal of interest in the voluntary sector and its possible role in development. It was because of the complexity of the development problems and the need for reaching out to the poor. The author emphasized the critically significant role of NGOs especially at the grassroots level as they have contacts with the people and respond to their needs effectively. It was noted that NGOs were relatively a new phenomenon and they were groups of persons organized on the basis of voluntary membership without state control for fulfilling some common interests of citizens. The main characteristic of an NGO was the highly needed human touch with encouraging people’s participation and promoting the development of rural entrepreneurship for solving the problems of unemployment and for the uplift of economically weaker sections. The author found that only a few NGOs have succeeded fully in India in imparting skills of income generation and macro entrepreneurship development among the weaker sections of the society, among women, tribal people and the others.

Srivastava and Tandon, 52 (2005) made a study about the non profit sector in India and highlighted its importance in the social and economic development process in the country. The study observed that the recent years witnessed rather an upsurge of voluntarily established organizations both within and outside the formal sector. These organizations are engaged in a wide spectrum of activities cutting across economic, social cultural and scientific domains. These organizations, which were termed NGOs in a general way were engaged in education, health care activities, loan schemes for providing self employment and macro credit plans for sustaining household enterprises and their
encompassing the issues of larger national concern, governance, advocacy, generating awareness of the various laws and regulations and addressing the basic needs of the marginalized sections of the society. The study pointed out that the number of non-profit organizations in India in the year 2000 was 1.2 million and as much as 51% of their receipts were self-generated rather than from government and foreign sources as grants and loans and the NGOs involved nearly 19.2 million people in the social and economic development process.

Srivastava, \(^{53}\) (2005) pointed out that the NGOs could bridge the distance between the affected masses and the international decision making carried out at WTO. It was highlighted in the study that the NGOs could bring about some democratic content in the sphere of international policymaking. It was in a context where WTO has come to increasingly play legislative and regulatory functions which were traditionally in the domain of the nation state and where decision making structures were further getting removed from the people whose lives were affected by policies which emerged under the influence of WTO. Many of the intergovernmental agencies gave prominent roles to NGOs even though the nature of these engagements differed from agency to agency. ILO, UNICEF and UNDP worked with the NGOs at the local level to implement their programmes and disburse the funds while the UN agencies like ESCO and UNFPA have granted a contributive role to the NGOs. The author established in the study that the NGOs have become indispensable in the activities of intergovernmental organizations in connection with the implementation role.
Rego, ⁵⁴ (2005) observed that the third sector initiatives deploying the concept of civil society was increasingly involved in the process of development. There emerged a consensus that public, private and civic roles have come to be crucial to growth and development. Author found that in India a large number of grassroots level, participatory, problem solving non-profit organizations like Panchayat Raj institutions, cooperatives, voluntary organizations and self help groups have been providing valuable services to society with the help of grants and donations received from various sources. It was pointed out in the study that NGOs which came under third sector were in transition, restructuring into diversified organizational forms and strategies which reflected in their functions, management and resources. The author made the following observations also.

* The role of voluntary agencies was seen as direct benefit background services and social benefits. Their new agenda included programmes on health and in the areas of women empowerment and environment.

* The financial strength of the voluntary agencies with reference to their goal was considerably weak.

* Voluntary agencies are to a large extent depending on government grants.

* There was a wide gap in the financial sources of different voluntary agencies.

* The financial transactions of voluntary agencies were rarely audited.

Kumar, ⁵⁵ (2005) studied the different aspects of rural development and pointed out that rural development was based on two fundamental concepts.

* Effective management of existing local resources, both material and human, with the goal of achieving optimum output.
Active and full participation of the people in the area or the locality without any sort of discrimination.

The above two concepts were not realized in the state policy of development especially in the rural development. The government organizations like Panchayat Raj Institutions have a country wide institutional network but they lack those potential for development. The NGOs are efficient and equipped with these two features but they lack the potential in other dimensions. The last two decades witnessed the tremendous growth of NGOs both at the national level and at the international level. The study pointed out that approximately there were 1.2 million NGOs working in the different fields in India.56

The author found that the NGOs or the Voluntary Agencies could be found in different structural forms like Associations, Organizations, Institutions, and they collectively fall under the category, ‘third sector’. The failure of the state and the corporate sector created a space for the third sector. Panchayat Raj Institutions and the voluntary agencies were the two important agencies in the rural society for local development and both of them together could effectively attain the larger goal of people’s empowerment and the integrated rural development. The author stated that conventional voluntarism was characterized by charity, relief work, philanthropy and social reform and thus was based up on idealism. Modern voluntarism, even though incorporates some of the elements of conventional voluntarism, is based more on ideology. It aimed at the achievement of development and that of social justice rather than mere relief and welfare.
and it strived to change the social, economic and the political position of the poor and weaker sections especially that in the rural society. The author pointed out that it was the modern voluntarism that encompassed the aspect of sustainability in the process of rural development and the utilization of the local resources.

Biswas, (2006), studied and pointed out that there was a proliferation of NGOs in India in the 1980s and 1990s because of the domestic and global policy changes and the economic liberalization and integration of the Indian Economy into the market driven global economy. The NGOs were considered as an entrenched part of the socio economic system and an institutionalized force in fighting the socio economic tensions and problems and in achieving the economic and community development of the country. From the VIII Five Year Plan onwards, the thrust of the Planning Commission has been to open up a space for the NGOs consistent with liberalizing the country’s economy and ushering in the era of public – private partnerships. The study further noted that as a result of introduction of the New Economic Policy in India, in 1991, massive inflows of aid into the country began especially from international financial institutions like World Bank, IMF and ADB and such funding was tied to structural conditions like market friendly restructuring and privatization of public enterprises and utilities. As a result of the domestic policy changes in the economy and increased flow of international funding into the country, there was a proliferation of NGOs throughout the country and they received foreign funding on a large scale. The study noted that during 2003 – 04, 147000 NGO groups were registered in India with the Ministry of Home Affairs and they received foreign funding worth Rs. 4856 crores.
By examining the literature on NGO activities spread in various fields and sectors, it could be understood that the majority of writers on NGOs found rather a proliferation of NGOs in the developing countries and particularly in India. The works undertaken by the NGOs were varied encompassing almost all sectors of the economy. Much literature is available on the NGO activity in most of the states in India. The NGOs have taken a leading role in the economic and community development of India in a context in which the traditional agents of development were on the path of withdrawal.

In Kerala also it could be seen that the NGOs have undertaken a lot of works and projects leading to the economic and community development of the state. However, not much literature has forth come on the NGO activity in Kerala. The NGOs in the state have organized and implemented various programmes relating to women empowerment, health care, education, poverty alleviation agricultural development, watershed development etc. leading to the economic and community development of the state. In this study, the researcher wanted to examine and evaluate the interventions made by the NGOs in Kerala, in a context in which much literature has no forth come relating to NGO activity in the state and that the NGOs have taken a leading role in the economic and community development in the different parts of the state.

**RESEARCH GAP**

The NGOs have contributed in a big way to the economic and community development of the state of Kerala. However, no serious study has been observed by the researcher relating to the economic and community development interventions of NGOs in general in the state. There have been several serious and well organized studies made
on the working of NGOs outside the state and many such studies have been reviewed in the present study. Therefore, it has been strongly felt that a look into the economic and community development interventions of NGOs in the state became highly desirable. The NGOs in Kerala have much difference among themselves in the pattern of organization, in the style of making development interventions, in providing development services in the locality where development interventions were required and also in the pattern of raising development funds. However, the development interventions of NGOs have been highly required and have become successful in those places where the people have been marginalized and remained the most backward. In the present work, an attempt has been made to make a case study of Peermade Development Society, a major NGO making the development interventions in Peermade Taluk of the backward district of Idukki, for the uplift of the socially and economically marginalized and weaker sections of the society in the locality.
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