Chapter – I

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE
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Social Development today has emerged as an important concern in contemporary society. Most of the parameters of social development are getting attention more than ever before. The success of the World summit on social development is a proof that economic upliftment without social emancipation is no more considered to be genuine development. It is a very important fact that the human development paradigm, which puts people at the center of its concern, is now a universally acknowledged strategy for the development of a nation. The growing consensus among development thinkers is that the people are and should be the starting point, the center and the goal of each development intervention. (Cernea: 1985 ix) The real wealth of a nation is its people both men and women, and the purpose of development is to create an environment to enable them to enjoy long healthy and creative lives. However the harsh reality is that "in no society do women enjoy the same opportunities as men".

For countless centuries women in India had been subordinated to men and socially oppressed women have been pushed aside from the race of development in the name of customs, traditions and religion. The various religions practised in India as well as the personal laws based on
them consigned women to a status inferior to that of men. Women had no important existence of their own. She existed for men and always played second fiddle to them. In India women were supposed to have no personality of her own apart from their ties to their husbands. They could not find any other expression to their inborn talents or desires except as housewives. Actually they were seen as just adjuncts to men. As a result, they have been denied the opportunities for their social, economic and political development leading to lower status in society. As women comprise nearly half of the total population of the country, this denial has contributed in no small measure to India’s continuing under-development. In terms of three main indicators of development, namely, life-expectancy, educational attainment and income. India occupies a dismal ranking of 134th among 174 countries (Ibid: 53).

Therefore, if development is to have any meaning women must also be given their due place, perhaps even more consciously in the development particularly because of their already relatively more disadvantaged status.

In advanced countries, women have been powerful agents of social change. According to a World Bank report (Gender Equality, 1995, 28) increase in women’s well-being yields important intergenerational benefits and productivity gains in future.
Present position of rural women:

After independence many changes have taken place in all spheres of life, scientific and technological. The impact of industrialization and urbanization have made a perceptible change in Socio-Economic and political scenario of Indian society. Consequently ideas and values, manners and customs, life and culture have undergone a drastic modification resulting in changes in the age-old tradition of Indian civilization. But this thrust of change is not uniform among all the sections of population as the major share of technological development was shared by the urban mass. In spite of this technological and scientific development, the age-old social values of gender discrimination are still persisting in our country. Various women liberation movements were launched to eradicate this gender bias but domination of males is still in vogue specifically in the rural areas. This age-old value of male supremacy is still prevalent. Women are not getting proper status for performing their specific role in society. In the field of economy and education the female population specially the rural areas is lagging much behind.

Women constitute one half of our population but they occupy a place much below that of men. It may be surprising to note that women contribute two thirds of the total human labour but they own one tenth
of the world's property and income. It is amazing to note that the services of women are not properly utilized even today after fifty years of the independence of the country.

Thus before going to the subject, it is useful to review the socio-economic conditions of the women in general and rural women in particular.

The demographic composition of rural women reveals the following important facts.

The total female population of the country has increased from 407.1 million in 1991 (48.1 per cent of the total population) to 497.74 million (48.3 per cent of the total population) as per 2001 census. In terms of the percentage the increase of 0.2 seems marginal. In terms of the absolute numbers while males increased by as high as 92.1 million, women increased by a lower number 88.6 million. The growth of female population during the decade 1991-2001 was 21.79 per cent. The increase was 0.86 percentage points higher in the case of males and 0.45 percentage points higher in the case of total population. Thus the demographic imbalance between women and men is found to persist and is alarming when one sees the child (0-6 years) sex ratio, 927 in 2001, which is even less than the normal sex ratio. (Tenth five year plan 2002-07).
Unlike the demographic profiles of most other countries, men outnumber women in India by an impressive margin in 2001, there were only 933 women for every 1000 men. Given India’s impressive progress in health care and nutrition during the long past five decades. One would have expected a steady decline in the number of ‘missing women’ in the demographic composition of the country. But the contrary has happened. There emerges the mystery of 25 million ‘missing females’ in India according to Menon-Sen and Shiva Kumar (2001).

In most of research studies it has been cited that the main reason for the rather large disparity between the number of men and women is the parental preference for sons since they are considered as the proverbial old age insurance. Daughters are generally treated as net economic liability mainly because of the prevalence of the pernicious dowry system in most parts of the country. Coupled with the fact that the economic importance of women’s contributions to the household is, by and large, ignored, this preference for male child results in the gross neglect of female child. In the extreme case, it leads to the deplorable practice of female infanticide. In recent years, assisted by the abuse of sex determination tests, it assumes the form of sex selective abortion of female foeticide. Further the female child in India has the double misfortune of not only being the victim of infanticide and foeticide but
also to suffer on account of the neglect in the intra-household allocation of healthcare nutrition and related needs. It should not be surprising, therefore that she faces higher incidence of infant and juvenile mortality too as argued by Dreze and Sen (1995).

In India in the beginning of the last Century female literacy was just 0.6 per cent. Then after independence the situation improved it but even today we see a wide gap between male and female literacy levels. This gap in the context of rural women literacy can be seen from the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male per cent</th>
<th>Female percent</th>
<th>Common percent</th>
<th>Literacy among rural women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>27.16</td>
<td>08.66</td>
<td>18.33</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>40.37</td>
<td>15.33</td>
<td>28.30</td>
<td>10.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>45.95</td>
<td>21.47</td>
<td>34.45</td>
<td>15.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>53.46</td>
<td>28.47</td>
<td>41.43</td>
<td>20.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>64.13</td>
<td>39.29</td>
<td>52.21</td>
<td>30.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>75.08</td>
<td>54.16</td>
<td>65.38</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India

It is evident from the above analysis that some improvement is there in female literacy but it is very low in rural women, illiteracy among Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes women of rural areas is still widely prevalent.
In India wide gap between male female literacy in rural and township areas is a symbol of gender inequalities. Differences between the literacy levels can be well understand from the table below.

Table - 1.2
Rural-urban residence and gender wise literacy rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Gender Inequality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>5+</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>15.33</td>
<td>40.39</td>
<td>25.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>22.46</td>
<td>10.13</td>
<td>34.26</td>
<td>24.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>54.43</td>
<td>40.46</td>
<td>65.98</td>
<td>25.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>5+</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>34.45</td>
<td>21.97</td>
<td>45.90</td>
<td>23.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>27.89</td>
<td>15.52</td>
<td>39.55</td>
<td>24.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>60.22</td>
<td>48.89</td>
<td>69.83</td>
<td>20.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>5+</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>41.43</td>
<td>28.47</td>
<td>53.46</td>
<td>24.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>34.04</td>
<td>20.66</td>
<td>46.73</td>
<td>26.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>64.85</td>
<td>54.40</td>
<td>73.92</td>
<td>19.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>7+</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>43.67</td>
<td>29.88</td>
<td>86.50</td>
<td>25.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>36.00</td>
<td>21.70</td>
<td>49.60</td>
<td>27.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>67.20</td>
<td>56.30</td>
<td>76.10</td>
<td>20.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>7+</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52.21</td>
<td>39.29</td>
<td>64.13</td>
<td>24.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>44.69</td>
<td>30.62</td>
<td>51.87</td>
<td>27.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>74.08</td>
<td>64.05</td>
<td>81.09</td>
<td>17.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India

It is clear from the above table that the gap between males and females is less in urban as compared to rural areas As per 2001 census total literacy in India is 65.38 per cent Among this 75.85 for men and
54.16 for women. It is obvious that almost half of female population is illiterate. Though for the first time after a decade there is 14.8 per cent hike in female literacy in urban areas but illiteracy is still a problem among women of backward and weaker sections of rural areas.

Education:

Just as elsewhere education is one of the most important determinants of development of women in India. The economic and social returns of women are greater than those of men, according to the Sixth Report of the parliamentary committee on empowerment of women on educational programmes for women 2001-02 education helps the girl in getting better work opportunities and improved productivity. In addition it also would ease the population pressure.

The primary level female Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) increased from 64.1 in 1980-81 to 85.2 in 1999-2000. In the meantime middle level female GER increased from a low 28.6 to 49.7 pointing towards the massive gender gap that still characterized the elementary education scene in the country. An estimated 60 million children are still out of schools. Of these overwhelming majority are the girls as high as 35 million. Particularly notable is the considerably lower GER in respect of girl students in highly populated states like Bihar (54.6 per cent) and Uttarpradesh (59.9 per cent). Although the dropout rates for girls at
primary and middle levels reduced significantly from 62.5 and 79.4 respectively in 1980-81 to 42.3 and 58.0 in 1999-2000 the rates are still higher than those for boys. The dropout rate in respect of girls is very high in some of the states. Such as Bihar (63.44 per cent) West Bengal (55.59 per cent) and Rajasthan (57.2 per cent). It is a widely acknowledged fact that girls engaged in household work such as fuel and fodder collection, fetching water and sibling care, choose to drop out of the school especially in rural areas. Advent of innovative incentives like free mid-day meals, free uniform for the girl students etc., significantly improve the GER in many states in recent years. But the state government capacity to sustain and improve upon such incentives has been increasingly challenged by the growing fiscal crunch which is often the outcome of the lopsided priorities resorted by them. Other notable reasons for the females dropping out of the schools are parent's indifference due to the reluctance to invest in “parayadhan”, a euphemism for the women’s status as the net economic liability. Crippling poverty levels, lack of single sex school, unsafe travel and lack of facilities such as women teachers etc. were found to affect girls schooling unfavourably.

Though the number of women with higher education has increased from 1.32 million (33.0 per cent) of the total population in 1990-
primary and middle levels reduced significantly from 62.5 and 79.4 respectively in 1980-81 to 42.3 and 58.0 in 1999-2000 the rates are still higher than those for boys. The dropout rate in respect of girls is very high in some of the states. Such as Bihar (63.44 per cent) West Bengal (55.59 per cent) and Rajasthan (57.2 per cent). It is a widely acknowledged fact that girls engaged in household work such as fuel and fodder collection, fetching water and sibling care, choose to drop out of the school especially in rural areas. Advent of innovative incentives like free mid-day meals, free uniform for the girl students etc., significantly improve the GER in many states in recent years. But the state government capacity to sustain and improve upon such incentives has been increasingly challenged by the growing fiscal crunch which is often the outcome of the lopsided priorities resorted by them. Other notable reasons for the females dropping out of the schools are parent’s indifference due to the reluctance to invest in “parayadhan”, a euphemism for the women’s status as the net economic liability. Crippling poverty levels, lack of single sex school, unsafe travel and lack of facilities such as women teachers etc. were found to affect girls schooling unfavourably.

Though the number of women with higher education has increased from 1.32 million (33.0 per cent) of the total population in 1990-
91 to 3 million (39.8 per cent of the total population) in 1999-2000 in terms of absolute numbers the gender gap has actually increased substantially from 2.67 million in 1990-91 to 4.58 million in 1998-99.

Health:

Women’s access to health care is both the outcome and a determinant of her status in society. Broadly termed, four sets of factors are found to influence women’s access to health care. They are need (i.e. the extent of ill health) permission (i.e. the social factor which dictate whether women can seek health care outside the home) ability (mainly economic condition) and availability extent of health care service for women) Chatarjee (1990).

It is true that the life expectancy at birth in respect of females has been rising steadily in India from 55.7 years in 1981 to 65.1 in 2001 eventually surpassing even the male life expectancy of 62.3 years. But most often gross measure such as the life expectancy is misleading. Actually greater survival of older women (60 years and above) than men of the same age group compensates the lower survival rates of younger females. The estimated longer life expecting of the females thus disguise their higher mortality at younger ages (below 35 years). The higher mortality of female in early life accounts for the highly Skewed sex ratio characteristic of the Indian subcontinent and is a symptom of the bias
against females. “Since women typically have a survival advantage in the older age groups even in India, this relationship suggests that the decline of male female ratio in the 30+ age group is partly attributable to the mortality decline effect. This does not mean that the decline in male female ratio in India is some kind of natural phenomenon, reflecting little more than the decline of mortality. Indeed, in other regions of the world the decline of mortality in the twentieth century has actually gone hand in hand with an increase in female male ratio, reflecting sustained improvement in the survival chances of females relative to males (Dreze & Sen, 1995).

Kerala has the lowest female death rate among all the states in India and has achieved fertility and mortality levels approaching those of the developed countries.

The Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) defined as the number of maternal deaths in the age group 15-49 years per one-lakh live births has been treated as one of the indicators of women access to health care. Although MMR steadily declined in the country from 468 in 1980 to 407 in 1998. It still is very high and therefore a matter of great concern. The maternal mortality rate is the highest in the most populous state of Uttarpradesh (707) followed by Rajastan (670) Madhya Pradesh (498) Bihar (452) and Assam (409). About forty per cent of the expected
mothers did not receive any medical attention in that states. In 1995-96
more than 32 per cent attention during childbirth even as late as 1998-99,
health professionals assisted only 42.3 per cent of the deliveries.

Most of the maternal deaths take place due to treatment by local quacks and untrained persons under unhygienic and unsafe conditions. Moreover lack of appropriate care during pregnancy and childbirth, especially the inadequate services for detecting and managing complications, seems to result in most of the maternal deaths. These can be successfully prevented through better healthcare and nutrition. A significant proportion of these female deaths also reflects women's reproductive burden exacerbated by the burden of both domestic and paid work and their concurrent poor nutrition. This also is an indicator of the poor health of Indian women. As per the National Family and Health Survey-II (NFHS-II) in 1998 maternal mortality in India resulted primarily from hemorrhage (29.7%) anemia (19.0%) sepsis (16.1%) obstructed labour (9.5%) abortion (8.9%) and toxemia (8.3%). Other causes of high morbidity among women are reproductive tract infections (RTIS) and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) besides their high vulnerability to cancer malaria and tuberculosis and other diseases due to their lower access to health care facilities. That material deaths in
India can be prevented to a significant extent by educating women and increasing their access to healthcare has been widely acknowledged.

**Labour participation:**

National Sample Survey on employment and unemployment in India during 1999-2000 estimates the female workforce about 124 millions. This constituted about 31 per cent of total workforce of which more than 88 per cent belonged to rural areas. The female workforce participant's rates are a low 29.5 per cent in rural areas and 12.4 in urban locations.

Women's participation in the workforce increases their family income. Economic independence helps women to participate more effectively in intra-household decision-making and have better access the healthcare. Moreover where women are potential wage earners, chances of female children receiving a higher share of the household resources improves than where women are considered as an economic liability. Economic productivity of women in adulthood is an important determinant of women's health and survival level of their children. This also influence female mean age at marriage as well as child bearing pattern. Lower fertility results in lower mortality in women and enhances workforce participation as women are freed from pregnancy and childcare responsibility. Researches show that educated women in
the age group 35-55 have low fertility rates and higher labour force participate rates, women’s participating in the labour force also brings about change in awareness and attitudes, which enhances access to various educational and healthcare programmes. Female mortality appears to correlate inversely with female labour force participation (Chatterjee, 1990).

Economic status:

It is a challenging task to measure women’s contribution to the well being of the society. The unpaid household labour of a woman is generally ignored as what she creates is the ‘use value’ and there is no reliable method to calculate its economic value. Even if women were to have joined the labour force and produced the ‘exchange value’ through their paid employment it is unlikely that we may be able to assess their real contribution as there exist. Sometimes vast male female wage differentials in all the sectors of Indian economy.

Within the workforce, two kinds of wage differentials have been found to exist in India. In the informal sector where most women are employed, there is evidence of their directly being paid lower wages than men. This is especially true in the agriculture sector and in the urban informal sector where little effective monitoring and control exist as a disincentive for the double standards in the organized sector. Where
equal remuneration laws are more directly enforceable, pure wage
discriminates (Differential pay for the same job) has not been found to
exist. However, differential levels of education and differential returns
to that education implies that women are usually less skilled than man
and thus can attain only lower level jobs even within the organized
sector leading to high wage differentials between males and females
(Bhan, 2001) wage differences among men and women have also been
noticed in the manufacturing sector.

The existing minimum wages regulations should have been
enough to ensure that employers do not discriminate between men and
women in payment of wages. The truth, sadly, is different. Women's
wages are on the average, about 30 per cent lower than men's wages.
There is no infrastructure for implementation of minimum wages
legislations in the unorganized sectors like agriculture and home based
work, where women workers tend to concentrate given their low levels
of education and skill.

**Drudgery:**

Sustained in-halation of kitchen smoke from the use of fuel
wood/dung cakes affects the health of women unfavourably known as
chulas. The firewood or dung-cake based stoves are almost a silent killer
of women especially in rural areas. Even at the advent of the millennium
almost four-fifths of the household fuel requirements in rural areas are met by these traditional sources, the share being as high as 87 per cent in the case of Madhya Pradesh. Maharashtra recorded the lowest share about 71 per cent.

Safe drinking water and improved sanitation play a major role in the overall well-being of both men and women but the drudgery impact of their absence on women is disproportionately high. According to the 54th round of National Sample Survey July (1999) around 50 per cent of the rural households were served by tube wells / hand pumps. 26 per cent by wells, 19 per cent by taps. Only about 31 per cent of the rural households were reported to have their source of water within their premises, the rest had to go out to fetch drinking water trekking longer distance in some areas like Rajasthan, which is drought prone. Moreover, seasonal disruptions of the supply are often frequent, especially in the prolonged summer months. Women both in rural and urban areas have to bear a disproportionately higher physical burden of fetching water as a result of its non-availability and also its not uncommon poor quality. In addition to this women and children are particularly vulnerable to the ill effect of water contamination, which has a significant bearing on such aspects as infant mortality rate, death rate, longevity and productivity.
Total Fertility Rate (TFR), which is the main indicator of the prospects of population stabilization, could also be treated as a measure of drudgery the women undergo. Lower the TFR, less is her drudgery. In India there are large inter-state differences in TPQ. The states of Kerala and Tamilnadu have already attained TFR of less than 2-1 almost a decade ago. Others like Andrapradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharastra, Orrissa, Punjab and West Bengal have TFR between 2.1 and 3.0. But the less developed states of Uttarpradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajastan have TFR over 4. "While looking at the factors that explain the varied performance of states in India in bringing down their respective TFR. It turns out that economic developments are social sectors attainment in education and healths have played a significant role. It also appears that factors influencing the decision making process at household level, such as participation of women in decision making due to their empowerment brought about by the spread of education or other specification have had a decisive role to play. The level of fertility has been generally found to be higher at lower educations of the parents (National Human Development Report, 2001).

Welfare and empowerment of rural women:

Welfare and empowerment in the context of women are different but interrelated and overlapping concepts. The words welfare or
development come to mean exclusively as socio-economic development measured in terms of income, literacy, health, savings employment etc. In contrast empowerment connotes strengthening of groups and individuals through interaction in all levels of social organizations. It is a social psychic and to certain extent an external process. It has to grow over a period of time in the case of socially and economically poor and disadvantaged groups at the individual, family and community levels and between both the sexes. Empowerment of women results from women assessing what they are and where they are. It is not wrong to use these two terms synonymously in the context of women. In the case of women empowerment, both the attitudinal empowerment and material advancement are necessary. It is to be noted that economic betterment is a necessary but not sufficient condition for women empowerment. Besides economic or material advancement, attitudinal change along with awareness about their inherent potentialities and capacities is necessary for empowering women.

In India welfare of women has become one of the nations primary goals since Independence while empowerment has come to forefront in the country’s political agenda only in 1980s. Ever since there has been growing concern for the empowerment of women. It is realized that the real development of the country cannot take root if the women who
constitutes nearly half of the country's total population remains backward and are denied equal rights and participation in the political as well as development process. Even though the govt. has been making concerted efforts for the up-liftment of the women in all the fields ever since the beginning of independence in accordance with the directives of the constitution no much was delivered in this direction. It is against this background that the government realized the need to empower women in order to enable them to play their role in the ongoing development process and also to get due share in the benefits of this process. Of course there are a host of factors inhabiting the women from taking active part in the development process. In fact, the efforts for women's development were started with the conventional approach that would not only improve their position but also empower them to enjoy the benefits of planned development. In reality, however, such sequence of improvement in the conditions of women did not take place even after implementation of several programmes and schemes under various strategies during various five-year plans. Apart from this, the position of rural and tribal women living in the remote areas became still worse. It was only during 1980s that the government realized that the conventional strategies implanted for the development of women have failed and hence needed reshaping and reassessment. The result of five
decades of planning also has shown that the provision of economic assistance alone cannot improve the condition of women. This fact has changed the mindset of the policy makers, which lead to the evolution of a new strategy during 1980s that promises to deliver a new life to women, especially to those millions who live below the poverty line by empowering them socially, economically and politically.

For the all-round development of women there is a greater need to educate her and education is considered as the most important component of human resource development. Its importance in improving the status of women in society is well known and widely acknowledged. It helps the women to develop her personality enriches her and adds to her awareness and self-esteem. It gives her access to new information and foster new and innovative ways of thinking. It opens up options for her outside her gender roles of daughter, wife and mother (Anju Bhatia 2000)

Education helps not only in building up her individual personality and awareness but also her productive capacity and ability to perform her share of work more efficiently. If women are in labour force, even a little education greatly increases a women's earning a literate women who has not even completed primary school commands higher wager then an illiterate women while middle school qualifications can double a
women’s returns to labor (Gender & poverty in India 1991:217). A survey conducted by National Sample Survey Organization found that technical training for literate women brings earning three times than those of illiterate women, though they too can double their earnings with technical training (ibid) It is through education that women can move out of agricultural labour and into the manufacturing and service sector of the economy.

In addition to the economic aspects the social externalities linked to female education are very much important. In developing countries, like India there is enough evidence to show that high female literacy rates are associated with low rates of population growth, infant mortality and maternal mortality besides higher rate of life expectancy. It also leads to better hygiene, improved nutrition, practices better family health and smaller family size thereby contributing to better living.

A simulation study of 72 developing countries showed that with all other factors held constant, a doubling of female secondary school enrollment in 1975 would have reduced the average fertility rate in 1985 from 5.3 to 3.9 children per house hold and would have lowered the number of births by 29 per cent (Subbarao and Raney 1993) studies of individual country have found that one additional year of female
schooling can reduce the fertility rate, on an average, between 5 and 10 per cent (Summers, 1994).

Education is the key that opens the door in life, which is essentially social in character. The level of education of women is an important indication for the understanding of the present and further status of women in a country.

However, education itself is not enough and cannot be viewed in isolation. Other welfare services in areas of opportunities for employment and political empowerment, health and nutrition, childcare are no less important for her overall development. All these services and activities must go hand in hand for a holistic approach towards rural women’s welfare & development.

For the total well-being of an individual health is significant hence it is most vital in one’s life. It has been observed that poor health and nutrition reduce productivity and chances of reaping gains from investment in education. A study of 6 villages in Andra Pradesh found that disabling conditions caused by malnutrition and prevalence of diseases reduced female labour force participation by 22 per cent (Chatterjee 1991). Women’s health is important because it also has intergenerational consequences. Children of mothers who are malnourished or sickly face a greater risk of disease and premature

Women’s well being is also closely linked with child care services because the primary responsibility of child rearing rests with a woman. A large portion of her time is utilized for this purpose. Therefore the availability and access to childcare service would give her an opportunity to utilize that time for her self-development.

The level of economic equality and independence are the real indicators to measure the status of women in any society. Therefore, the prospects for gainful employment is another area which influences women’s well being and status to a great extent. Women’s earnings not only foster self-confidence in her but may also provide her with bargaining power within the household, which can be used to improve education, health and nutrition of children. Further the survival chances of female children appear to increase as the employment rate of women rises and earnings differential between men and women decreases.

Hence it is obvious that the total development of women is imperative for the development of society and the nation.
Efforts towards women's welfare:

Free India's commitment to a socialist, secular and democratic order require the state to inspire and institutionalize change in tune with its national objectives. An important instance of this is found in the induction of such provision in India's Constitution and in the introduction of institutional mechanisms not only to protect the interest but also to promote the welfare of the women.

Several efforts were made to initiate measures for women's welfare and change. Social reformers initiated several social reform movements of national spread or of local concentration during the pre independence era, such attempts continue even today.

The status of women in independence India occupies an important role and all efforts are being made to give women a significant place so that she can play an important role in the up-liftment of her own self and the society at large. The Government realizing the importance of women development, enshrined the principles of gender equality and justice in the Preamble. Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of India Constitution aiming the specific legal measures initiated towards the end were the Hindu marriage and divorce act 1955, the Hindu Succession Act 1956 and the Dowry prohibition Act 1961; More recently enactments such as Equal Remuneration Act 1976 the Indecent Representation of women
(prohibition) Act 1986; and the commission of Sati (prevention) Act 1987 were brought to the statute book. The National commission was established 1992, to monitor the matters relating to constitutional and legal safeguards provided for women and look into complaints involving deprivation of the rights of women. Acknowledging that the empowerment of women can best be achieved through their full participation in the political field the 73rd and 74th constitutional Amendments Acts (1992) provided reservation of one-third of all seats and posts of chairpersons for women in institution of local governance both rural and urban.

In the education field also the government enunciated numerous measure over the years to improve status of women through various commissions, committees and policy documents. In its report (1950:393) Government of India University Education Commission (1948-49) (Vol. I manager of publication New Delhi, the University Education commission) had observed that “if general education had to be limited to men or women the opportunity should be given to women, for then it would be most certainly passed on to the next generation”. After the report of the National Committee on Women’s Education (1958-59). New schemes like condensed course for adult women and Bal Sevika Training Programmes were launched. Incentive schemes such as
providing free textbooks and scholarships for girls were begun. In order to promote enrolment and retention of girls in schools in backward areas, schemes to give uniform and attendance scholarships were introduced. The National Education Policy (1967-68) of the Indian Ministry of Education and Social Welfare (New Delhi) contained further policy initiatives in this regard. The national policy on Education (1986) gave over-riding priority to the removal of female illiteracy and laid emphasize on women’s participation in vocational, technical and professional education. It emphasized that education should be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. In order to neutralize the accumulated distortion of the past, the educational system should play a positive intervention-list role in the empowerment of women (Anju Bhatia 2000:43).

On the socio-economic front the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) was set up in 1953 and given responsibility for promoting and developing welfare services for women and children. Specific outlays, which were progressively increased, were provided in the successive five-year plans for health, nutrition, education, training and social programmes for women. The declaration of Women’s Decade (1975-85) by United Nations gave further boost to these efforts. In 1976 the Women’s Welfare and Development Bureau was set up as a nodal point...
within the Government of India to coordinate the measure for women's welfare and development and to initiate policies and programmes for accelerating growth and development of women. In 1977-78 the government appointed the working Group on Employment of Women.

It was for the first time in the planning history of India, the Sixth Plan (1980-85) document included a chapter on women and development (Sixth five year plan 1980:423). The plan emphasized economic independence for women, along with access to health and family planning services. A programme called Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas. (DWCRA) introduced specially to help women to take up and conduct income generating activities was launched in 1982. In 1985 a separate department for women and children was set up in the ministry of Human Resource Development Women Development Corporations were set-up in 1986-87. The national perspective plan for women (1988) noted that allocation of more funds for women within the existing structure of development did not ensure more efficacious development of women. It envisaged a combination of approaches, which included the creation of new structures to absorb women in to the field of progress and the enhancement of women’s component existing development programmes.
Women welfare in various plans:

In the earlier plans, women development efforts were guided by welfare orientation. Development in the conditions of women was conceived as advancement in different fields through the implementation of various programmes and schemes. During the First and Second plan period few welfare measures were undertaken with the association of Voluntary Organizations while the governmental agencies were not involved seriously. In line with the strategy adopted during the First Five Year Plan the Central Social Welfare Board was established in 1953 to assist and coordinate the activities of the various Voluntary organizations working in the area of development of women, particularly, the rural women. It was latter felt that unless education and health levels among the women are improved, they could not make any progress in their conditions. Accordingly, the Third and Fourth Five Year Plans laid stress on the promotion of health and education among the women. In the sphere of health, a number of schemes were taken up to promote maternal health services to women along with general health facilities in these Plans. Similarly, schemes aiming at the provision of scholarships, establishment of schools exclusively for girls, free supply of text books, grant of fee concessions etc., were implemented on a massive scale for improvement of education among the women. The Fifth Plan
made a shift from welfare to development of women to increase their capabilities for playing an active role in the development process. Accordingly, several developmental programmes were implemented for improving the earning capacity of women by providing them employment opportunities in the agriculture and allied sectors like dairying etc. This plan emphasized on the integration of development, programmes to improve the overall position of women, particularly, the rural women. The Sixth Plan adopted a multi disciplinary approach with focus on health, education and economic betterment of women. The main thrust of this Plan was to enhance the social and economic position of women in order to help them to cross the poverty line. In the Seventh Plan beneficiary oriented programmes were taken up in different sectors for providing employment and income generation opportunities for women so that their economic position would be improved resulting in their overall development.

The Eighth Five Year Plan strengthened the strategy already laid down in the Sixth and Seventh Plans for the development of women. It focused on the empowerment of women to make them equal partners and participants along with men in the development process. The plan adopted a holistic approach towards the development of women as opposed to the restricted approach adopted by the earlier plans. This
plan gave top priority to the economic empowerment through the provision of employment opportunities and skill training to the women, particularly, for the rural areas. The provision of proper nutrition and health facilities to the poor women was also stressed in this Plan. The Ninth Plan (1997-2001) evolved certain new and novel strategies for the promotion of welfare and development of women. The plan advocated that empowerment of the women first starts with awareness and confidence and their transformation would follow in due course. In accordance with this strategy, the Plan suggested the reservation of certain seats for women in the Parliament and Legislative assemblies of various states. The Plan also proposed the reservation of jobs for them in public sector including higher civil services. This plan also proposed several new initiatives for the health and educational development of women. The plan emphasized on free education to girls up to the college level and also greater vocational training to them. The plan ensured participation of women in industrial development, and proposed the setting up of development banks for women entrepreneurs for providing them assistance to start small scale industries. However, the most novel feature of this Plan is the incorporation of special component to ensure the flow of 30 per cent of the total plan funds to the women development programmes. By earmarking 30 per cent of funds in all the programmes
for the development of women it is hoped that “trickling down” from the above would take place resulting in the socio-economic betterment of the women and ultimately their empowerment.

An analysis of the women welfare schemes incorporated in different plans reveals that these plans have rightly accorded highest priority to the health and educational development among the women in order to improve their social and familial status and make them aware of their rights guaranteed by the constitution and also play their role as mothers and wives effectively. These Plans have also rightly gave top priority to the provision of various services for the protection of health of mothers and children. The first five plans have almost continued the same strategy of concentrating more on education and health programmes. The Sixth plan broke a new ground by shifting the focus from welfare to development as it realized that even after the implementation of five plans the women remained backward and the goal of gender equality was far away, and also the share of women in the benefits of planned development was very meager. From this plan onwards-economic prosperity for empowering the women for bringing them in to national activity as equal partners along with men has become the main objective of the Five Year Plans in so far as the women are concerned. In accordance with this objective the subsequent Plans
focused on the empowerment of the women, both political and economic and introduced several initiatives in this direction.

**Policy initiatives and documents:**

To backup its various schemes and programmes initiated for the development of women in various Plans, the government prepared several policy instruments to guide its efforts of women development in the form of action-plans and policy documents. The National Plan for Action for Women (1976) was drafted to guide the women development efforts. In 1988, the National Perspective Plan for Women was adopted which suggested a long-term holistic approach (1988-2000) for women's development. The National Commission on Self-Employed Women and Women in Informal Sectors appointed in 1988 made a number of recommendations for the development of women in the informal sector by providing them legislative protection, training for skill development, marketing and credit facilities. The National Policy of Action Plan for women (1991-2000) adopted in 1991 suggests a plan of action for ensuring protection and promoting development of children, with special gender sensitivity aimed for the girl children and adolescent girls. In addition to these women-specific policy initiatives, several general National Policies contain women welfare component. These policies include: the National Policy on education (1986) the National policy on
Adult education (1983) the National population Policy (1993) etc., which proposed several measures for the development of women in the respective fields.

With an idea of creating a national level autonomous body to address the women's issues and to act as a watch dog of their interests, the National Commission of Women was instituted in 1991 with an objective to watch and monitor the implementation of various constitutional and legal safe guards provided for women and also to make necessary suggestions for their effective implementation. Further, it also looks into the complaints regarding the violation of rights of women. The commission has taken up a number of activities like the formulation of expert committees to advise on issues related to women. To look into the complaints made by them against the violation of their rights, to promote awareness among the women about the various legal measures enacted for the protection of their rights and so on. The legal literacy manuals (1992) were prepared to educate the women about their rights and safeguards and also about the provisions of various enactments existing for their protection, including the marriage laws, anti-dowry acts, rights to property acts, and also those providing them protection against rape, various types of harassments including sexual abuses and so on. These manuals were written in various regional
languages in very simple style and were distributed among the women through various governmental and voluntary agencies.

Another innovative initiative taken by Government is the creation of the Integrated Child Development Services, (ICDS) which provides a package of services to the children and mothers living in the most backward rural and tribal areas and in urban slums all over the country to improve their health and nutritional status. Started in 1975, the ICDS was gradually expanded to cover the entire country. By 1997, this Programme implemented 5164 projects in about 3663 blocks and 260 urban slums in different states, which benefited around 20 million children and 3.50 million women through their services. The ICDS Projects located in certain States like Orissa, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh etc., are getting financial aid from the world Bank for taking up several innovative schemes.

Apart from the special policy initiatives, the Government has created several agencies and also initiated certain measures to strengthen the administrative mechanism for the effective implementation of all those initiatives. The Central Government had set up in 1992 the Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD) in the Ministry of Human resource Development exclusively for attending the development of women and children. The Department is conceived as a
nodal agency for formulating policies and programmes for the
development of women and children. It coordinates the activities of
various governmental agencies and NGOs engaged in the development
of women. The department concentrates on the implementation of
programmes in the area of employment and income generation, gender
sensitization, welfare and support services and so on. In accordance with
the Eighth Plan strategy the Department laid emphasis on the
employment and income generation activities for the economic
empowerment of women.

The Central Government has launched the Indira Mahila Yojana
(IMY) in August 1995 as a mechanism to coordinate and integrate all the
ongoing sectoral programmes of women development and to facilitate
their convergence for the improvement of the economic conditions of the
women. The Employment Guarantee Scheme was introduced in 1990, to
provide employment to at least 50 women each day who belong to the
SCs, and STs living below the poverty line. In 1993, the Mahila Samrudhi
Yojana was launched for the social empowerment of rural women. The
support for empowerment of Women Programme (STEP) is another
similar programme undertaken by the Central Government for the
economic empowerment of women by providing them employment in
different sectors.
All these policy initiatives and administrative measures have attained mixed success in achieving their goal of improving the conditions of women in the country. They have achieved certain level of development in their socio-economic conditions, which of course, is marked by unevenness. While the women among certain sections are fully benefited by various state sponsored initiatives and achieved significant progress in different fields, the women belonging to the weaker sections, particularly, the SCs and STs are sill backward and are not in a position to utilize the benefits of various developmental programme and schemes. Hence not only the economic betterment but also the expected socio-cultural changes did not take place in their lives. Of course, there are several reasons for the chasm between the stated goals and actual achievements in the field of women development.

Promoting the welfare of women and also empowering and enabling them to participate in the development processes are complex and complicated tasks, in view of their differential rights and status and the role assigned to them in the Indian society. It is a task that needs a multi dimensional approach, well designed and pragmatic strategies and policies, concerted and committed efforts and the involvement of Government, NGOs, media, enlightened public and so on. Particularly the women organizations and their leaders have a vital role to play in
empowering women. Above all, awareness among women themselves and a thorough change in their value orientation and psyche are essential for their empowerment. The strategy for women empowerment should focus far beyond economic prosperity to restructuring social relations and value systems in the society, which retrained and constrained women and their leaders for a very long time.

As an activist of women movement in India aptly pointed out that on the part of women confrontationist approach campaigning against men for what they are lacking and indulging in the rhetoric of holding the male chauvinism responsible for all their backwardness handicaps would hinder their efforts for the achievement of their goal of equality and empowerment. Such an attitude would arouse resistance among men who tend to look them as a menacing force rather than equal partners. Hence the women have to play their role subtly and with tolerance to achieve what they aim without upsetting the social relations in the society. Indian society can claim itself as a civilized society and its democracy as a perfect democracy only when gender equality is achieved in all the spheres of society.

The above review of development of women in general and rural women in particular from welfare to development then development to empowerment proved that the day to come may be optimistic for the
future of women in the country. Having featured the role of government as an agency for promoting development it will be now contextual to introduce the concept of NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION (NGOs) and their role in the women’s empowerment.
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION (NGOs)

The growth of NGOs have emerged as a reckoning force owing to their involvement in contemporary socio-economic development process and also for filling in the void created by the apathy and recalcitrance of two prime sectors i.e. public and private. NGOs have been considered as third sector, which have concentrated upon various issues of contemporary importance, such as women’s empowerment, ecology, environment, human rights, sharing of natural resources and so on. Their mission often is to bring about social transformation and uplift of deprived millions. These organizations seek to play the role of development catalysts and pressure groups to subject the power apparatus of the state to close scrutiny. These moralize people; encourage them to raise voices against the government-policies/decisions/laws ecologically damaging industries, local nexus of power and vested interests and in the process build-up a cohesive and unified force in the form of people’s protests, movements.

Hence NGOs have recently gained considerable attention as a vehicle of change. Development scholars have discussed their comparative advantage in reaching out to remote areas and having a capacity for innovation (Michael Cernaea 1998) Government programmes, which are the main mechanisms to reach the poor in most
developing countries are limited in their impact particularly with regard to women. For many years development policy neglected to focus on specific needs of women. Even when policy began to focus on women, indifferent implementation of programmes created certain inertia and apathy among the clients that prevented them from responding enthusiastically. Women, particularly rural women, have to be motivated to take advantage of programs since they are not used to participating in development activities.

The attributes of NGOs that make them more effective in development than government agencies include management flexibility against the administrative rigidity of government agencies, a greater responsiveness to local needs and committed leadership. These attributions are particularly important to reaching women since they have been ignored for so long and it requires more efforts to involve them in development interventions than men. Bilateral and unilateral donors have recognized the suitability of NGOs to target the poor more effectively and involve them as implementing organizations in projects. NGOs all over the world have a greater diversity of funding sources and opportunities for implementing programmes now than a few years before. A combination of a sharper policy focus on women particularly since 1975 and the beginning of the United Nations Decade for Women
and the limited effectiveness of government efforts has made the role of NGOs in implementing the programme for women very significant.

Non-Governmental implies that the organization not to be accountable to receive operational finance, such as staff salaries from a government department. This does not mean that it cannot collaborate with government to plan and implement programmes. In India however the term NGOs is often used interchangeably with "voluntary organization". Many "voluntary organization" in India are initiated by government employed functionaries and funded by government. For instance, some Mahila Mandals (Women's clubs) are initiated by village level worker; who is a government employee while other are initiated by individuals not government employed. Mahila Mandals established in both ways receive government funding but are officially referred to an "voluntary organization". To avoid confusion and to classify correctly the type of development organizations the term Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) is preferable.

Definition and meaning:

The term like 'association' and 'agency' are used synonymously with the term organization. The term 'voluntarism' which seems to be the basis of voluntary action and thereby of Voluntary organization derives its origin from the Latin word 'voluntas' means 'will' which
assumes various forms of impulses, passions or desires, which go beyond intellectual explanation

It is not easy to define voluntary organization in a simple manner. But we can describe the same its characteristics, types and functions. However the definitions have been given below which give an overall view of NGOs (voluntary organizations).

A voluntary organization is a social service and development institution motivated to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged in society, either through direct services to the people or through facilitative indirect services to the voluntary organizations or government, non-profit making and not undertaken to be fully funded for its maintenance directly or indirectly by the government (Drawn in National conference on the role of voluntary organizations in health care in India).

Banton (1968:357), an anthropologist characterized it as a group organized for the pursuit of one interest or several interests in common.

Sills (1968:362-63), a sociologist, identified it as group of persons organized on the basis of voluntary membership without state control, for the furtherance of some common interest of its members. He however excluded three type of similar associations from its purview (i) making a living association (like business firms trade associations,
marketing and consumer cooperatives association and labour unions.) (ii) religious organization and (iii) political parties.

Bourdillon (1945:2) also approved of this exclusion for the reason that religious bodies primary purpose is glory and service to God. Political parties purpose is to gain power and organizations which make provision for social well-being have primary economic motives behind them.

Johnson (1981:1) examined at length the various definitions and observed the following features: they are (i) method of formation, which is voluntary (ii) method of government, which is self governing (iii) method of functioning with at least some revenue drawn from voluntary sources and (iv) motives with the pursuit of profit excluded.

In the Indian context Chowdhary (1971:36) defined a voluntary organization as an organization which whether its workers are paid or unpaid is initiated and governed by its own members without external control.

Prabhakaran (1992:290) defined a voluntary organization as an agency organized or unorganized structured or unstructured which works for the welfare of a community in any given area of its own volition. It may be just an individual or a collection of individuals or it may have more for formal structure.
According to Gangreade (1987:220) the characteristics of voluntary organization are; it should be a registered under an appropriate Act; it has an administrative structure; it has definite aims and objectives; and it is initiated and governed by its own members on democratic principles without external control.

Voluntary organizations have certain inherent strengths stem from their basic characteristics. Being at the grass root level, they can have better rapport with the people, while functioning they can operate with greater flexibility and base their activities on felt needs of the people since they are not bound by rigid bureaucratic rules and procedures, they can be bold and innovative in approach. Being participatory in nature they can involve, the people of the community in decision-making.

The various definitions as well as the available literature on the subject bring out two principal characteristics of voluntary organizations. Firstly their efforts are directed towards betterment of society in any manner or field whatsoever. Secondly they are democratic in nature as they originate from felt needs of the people and are built around people's participation. Their purpose is to harness people's power for the benefit of the community.

Voluntary organizations are non-profit making agencies that are constituted with a vision by a group of like-minded people. Committed
for the uplift of poor, marginalized, underprivileged, unprivileged, impoverished, down trodden and the needy and they are closer and accessible to the target groups flexible in administration, quicker in decision making, timely in action and facilitating the people towards self reliance, ensuring their fullest participation in the whole process of development.

Characteristics and specialties of NGOs:

1) Voluntary: They are formed voluntarily, there is an element of voluntary involvement in the organization. NGOs are built upon commitment of a few persons.

2) Legal Status: NGOs are registered with the government under the societies Act Trust Act and few under Trade Union Act etc., NGOs are also registered under Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) with the ministry of Home affairs Govt of India. This is to get entitled for obtaining funds abroad.

3) Independent: NGOs are independent in planning and implementation of their programmer they are not bound by the hard and fast rules as in Govt institution.
4) **Flexible**: NGOs are flexible in interventions they are not bound by red tapeism and bureaucratic obstacles. In the name of audit objections they would not cease people's initiatives.

5) **Quicker in decision making**: NGOs take quick decisions in response to the needs of the community. As decisions are taken quickly their services are delivered timely to the people. NGOs could overcome the constraints of cumbersome procedures and act readily to the community demands.

6) **Non profits oriented**: NGOs are not run on profit motives. The surplus gain from economic projects if any are not distributed to the members or stake holders they are reused for development purposes.

7) **Not self-serving**: NGOs are constituted not for the benefit of the promoters. NGOs serve the poor and impoverished for their upliftment and not for that of NGOs themselves. The NGO members are nurtured by the response and cooperation of the people this offers a great deal of mental satisfaction to the NGO members which inspire them to do better and more.

8) **High motivation**: the member and staff are endowed with high motivation and inspiration to work for the cause of the poor their hours
of work are not clock bound, they strive tirelessly to achieve their purpose for the benefit of the target groups.

9) Freedom in work: workers enjoy their maximum freedom in their field work in organizing the community and carrying out the development schemes such freedom becomes a source of motivation to accomplish the task in spite of their less remuneration. They are not pinched by their bosses for petty mistakes.

10) Value driven: NGOs are driven by social valued and humanitarian principles and hence they try to promote a value based society.

11) Catalytic: NGOs facilitate the communities towards social action but they do not dilute and distort themselves in the process of intervention.

12) People-centered: People are the heart of NGOs they plan things with the people and implement same through the people. Thus they learn the best from the people and replicate the same with other groups.

Types of NGOs:

The number and type of voluntary organizations in existence today is extremely large and varied. According to Eldridge (1984:401) no operationally useful mode of classifying voluntary organization is available. Different writers have classified them in different ways. They
have commonly been classified according to their size, their internal structure, their dependence or independence on outside control, their functions, their sources of support, their location, the class and characteristics of their members, the bases of the incentives and the beneficiaries of their activities (Smith and Freedom 1972:2).

In the Indian context, Das (1988:41) classified the voluntary organizations working in West Bengal into four major types, namely, charity-Philanthropic-belief type; development charity mixed type; ideology-based Gandhian type and developmentalist and action group type;

In another classification, Sethi (1991:41) categorized voluntary organizations into four types, namely, those having characteristics derived from the independence movement; those based on Gandhian movements; missionary organizations; and professional organization created for economic and social development.

Deo (1989:47) proposed taxonomy of voluntary organizations according to which organizations had one of these three types of charters namely. Pre-modern i.e. relief and charity; and post modern i.e., promotional and education oriented and welfare oriented. Further each type fell into two structural categories, namely high and low while highly structured organization had division of labour and a formally
defined working relationship among members, the other had none of these features.

Thus eight types of NGOs could be distinguished as per the above categorization.

1) Charity NGOs: Charity is the earliest function of the NGOs. Giving something to others is their primary motto (e.g.) offering food, dress to the orphans and destitute etc, most of them believe that giving something to the poor is like giving same to God. Their activities are transitory in nature.

2) Relief and Rehabilitation NGOs: NGOs who are involved in providing relief and rehabilitation programmes fall under this type followed by natural calamities like flood, fire or epidemic diseases of by man-made catastrophe like war, genocide big submergence due to construction of dams etc. relief and rehabilitation services are provided by the NGOs. supply of food pockets to the flood marooned or to the victims of fire accidents, health services to the ailing, rescue operations are provided by such NGOs directly or in collaboration with the govt. authority.

    In fact many organization emerge in to the NGO sector followed by the demand of relief operations. The earthquake in Lathur region (Maharastra India 1993) is a classic example, which aroused many new NGOs on the one hand and called existing ones for their effective
performance mobilizing enormous resources, inside and outside the
country to meet irreparable loss on the other hand. Some NGOs
undertake house construction for the victims and thereby ensure
rehabilitation of the affected.

3) Service providing NGOs: These are inspired by welfare concern and
they largely provide service for the poor and marginalized, such as
mobile clinics, hospitals, schools, training programmes, non-formal
education, literacy etc. They provide these services with great sacrifice
and efficiency, with low expenses and commitment and dedication.
These services are flexible in responding to the needs of community.
Such service oriented NGOs operate in those areas where government
programmes are inadequate or non-existent.

A related category of welfare work is that, which arises in
situations requiring relief and rehabilitation. The work with refugees,
the work in situations of great crises and disasters, cyclone, famine, wars,
etc. The debate seems to indicate that in recent years most NGOs which
started with a service and welfare orientation seem not to get limited to
that but see it an a means to the wider focus of development work.

4) Social Development NGOs: This type of NGOs focus more on social
facets of the community, they believe that social awareness and people’s
involvement will bring about development. They lay more emphasis on people's component in the development programme, they organize community and impart social education. They sensitize and conscientize people and enable them to deal with their issues. They enhance people's management in all the economic development projects and promote people's leadership.

They ensure people's participation in the process of development. However they work in isolation in a given region or cluster without much interacting with other allied communities and NGOs.

5) Economic Development NGOs: This is another important type of NGO which believe that rise in income of the poor and the marginalized will bring about development for them "Economic gain is the social gain according to them". Hence these NGOs endeavour to provide employment opportunity to the farmer and women to mitigate poverty they implement various income generating projects mobilizing resource from the government and the funding agencies abroad. Scientific appropriate technologies are introduced to increase production and productivity so as to ensure more remuneration or wages to the denied.

They try to uplift Dalits, and oppressed women and oppressed by providing increased opportunities to fetch better income. These NGOs do not involve themselves in challenging social injustice. They will be
more of pro-government and pro-existing systems. But within the boundary or under a given situation they want to have betterment of poor.

6) **Empowerment NGOs**: These NGOs enable people to gain power and authority so that they access and control over resources. Many of these NGOs start with development intervention and the build strategies for organizing and empowering the people. In fact they try to enhance powerless to become powerful, they adopt macro approach to promote people's solidarity and cohesiveness, they attempt to influence Government policy in favour of the poor and downtrodden they play the role of advocacy and facilitate people's movement.

7) **Support NGOs**: These are the newly emerging NGOs, which provide a variety of support functions to different grass-root NGOs. The support functions vary depending on whether it is related to a sector like (health or education or forestry) or a general support. The work of these support institution has been to provide inputs that would strengthen the capacities of grass-root NGOs to function more effectively and impact fully. The work of support institution, therefore is comprised of training, evaluation, programme planning etc.
These type of NGOs provide conceptual clarity and professional and philosophical inputs to the NGOs, they open the eyes of NGOs to see their retrospect & prospects. While the NGOs bring about empowerment aiming the people the support NGOs are empowering those NGOs themselves.

8) Network NGOs: It is interesting that the 80s also marked the rise of networks of NGOs and umbrella or federation type of NGOs. The network are more informal with limited purpose and therefore, time bound associations of NGOs come together to work on a common issues or concern (like watershed development, Indigenous medicine, drug abuse, women's rights occupational health etc.,) Federations are more formal attempts of linking NGOs together such network NGOs are operating at state or national level have emerged. The main reason for their emergence and continuance is the need for bringing together the experiences in different micro settings to address an issue that requires collective strength advocacy and wider perspective. Thus many of these network NGOs have begun to play an important role in raising the issues towards changing the frameworks and strategies of development based on the experience of grass-roots NGOs operating in local setting.

So far, we have seen eight broad type of NGOs. But one cannot strictly say that NGOs come under any one of the particular types alone.
In practice the roles of NGOs are mixed and heterogeneous. An NGO involved in empowerment may also carry out economic development programmes and even relief activities during calamities. But their major focus may be confined to any one type.

Development of NGOs: Pre-Independence period:

There is sizable literature on the development and functioning of the voluntary organization sector in India. Some researches (Sen 1993, Bulati et al 1993) trace the history of voluntarism in India back to Vedic times, though most prefer to trace the development of modern voluntarism to the reformist movement in the late 19th century. However since the ancient days there has been a tradition of voluntary service in India. The responsibility of society towards individuals in distress and groups in need was shared equally by the community and rulers (Chowdhary 1971:9). In the Arthashastra, there is mention about the existence of workshop for destitute person (ibid) the Hindu religion laid down emphasis on charity and religion institutions such as temples were the centers of social service on a large scale. During marriage and distress, these institutions displayed sufficient responsiveness and took interest in dealing with problems affecting groups. During ancient and medieval times, voluntarism operated freely and exclusively in the field of education, medicine, cultural promotion and even succour in crisis like
Philanthropy was widespread. However the large scope of voluntarism did not mitigate the social inequities of the rigid caste system. This role of voluntarism continued during the early Mughal and British periods.

Christian missionaries began to work in the early 19th century with the support of the colonial rulers. In their zeal to recruit converts the missionaries brought educational and health services to people in urban and remote, often inaccessible, rural areas. In the 20th century Church led community development programmes like Marthandum experiment in Kerala (1929) which covered 40 villages, Quaker project at Hoshangbad in Madhya Pradesh started in 1930.

Following efforts of missionaries in British rule in the first half of the 19th century various social reform movements (both religious and secular) began to make their presence felt in Indian society. Most of these reform activities movements were led by concerned likeminded upper caste individual who have been exposed to western education. There were several organizations which worked with dedication towards removal of caste restrictions, improving the conditions of widows, orphans and destitute and for the education and welfare of women. The formation of Atmiya Sagha in 1815 by Raj Ram Mohan Roy was one such example which later allied with Christian Unitarians and started the
Unitarian Committee in 1821. The arrangements failed precisely due to the concern for the eroding Hindu base and Brahmin Sabha was established in 1928. Swami Shajanand’s Swaminarayan a sect (1800) and Manohar Dharma Sabha (1844) of Gajarat. Paramahans Sabha Prarthan Sabha and Hindu Dhrma Sabha in Maharandra shared this concern. Many literary educational institutions like Royal Asiatic Society (1834) and Dnyan Prakash Sabha (1840) also took shape at this time. In Bengal Samachar Darpon. Smbad Pravakar Tattwabodhin Patrika (1843) emerged as well (Desai 1966).

The landmark of the second half of 19th century was the failure of what is known as “first war of independence “ in 1857 and its implication on the social-political milieu. This was also the time of consolidation of British colonial rule over the political and economic life of Indian society. Systematic plundering of resources (eg. coal mines in Bengal first in 1820 and second in 1954) creation of communication links across regional boundaries (construction of railways began in 1852), establishment of jute and cotton mills, (Jute in Calcutta. Cotton in Bombay in 1854) spread of English education for induction of people with Indian origin into the lower ranks of colonial bureaucracy were highlights of this period.

Their trends of this period also consolidated themselves in institutionalized movements. Brahma Samaj (by the end of 1878, 124
branches and 21 periodicals were established in India) Satyashodhak Samaj (1873) Indian National Social Reformation Association (1897). The reach of these movements had transcended the linguistic and administrative boundaries of their origin. At the same time, purely political organization with limited programme had also started emerging in this period (i.e. British Indian Association in Calcutta) This may have promoted the enactment of societies registration Act of 1860 The Act required all organization formed for charitable purposes or aimed at the promotion of literature, fine arts or diffusion of useful knowledge including political association were allowed to register a society. The spread of such literary association contributed to the development of influential vernacular press, on the one hand, and beginning of alternative (nationalist) education on the other. Another feature of this period was the emergence of working class organizations (e.g. Bombay Association of Textile workers come in to being).

In such a socio-political environment the Indian National congress came up as an official platform for the expression of growing national consciousness in 1885.

During this period (1850-1900) spread of nationalist consciousness and self-help emerged as the primary focus of socio-political movement and influence the future course of voluntary action.
A number of non-religious bodies took the cause of social welfare in the early decades of the 20th century. Besides relief and rehabilitation programmes in times of natural calamities like earthquakes, floods, famines, they were engaged in various fields like education, health and labour welfare. The birth Servants of India Society (1905) laid the foundation of secular voluntary action in India (Gongrade 1987: 222) A few women’s organization like the Women’s Indian Association (1926) the Women’s Conference (1927) and the National Council of Indian Women (1927) were also established.

The fervour of national movement during that period fostered the spirit of self-help and autonomy through institution building in education, industry, business and trade National reconstruction on the basis of village self-government and village self-sufficiency was actively promoted by Mahatma Gandhi, which gave a fillip to the voluntary movement. Mahatma Gandhi also initiated his constructive programmes for securing justice for the underprivileged sections of society and helped in setting-up welfare organizations like the Harijan Sevak Sangh (1932) and the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust (1948) of all these Mahatma Gandhi’s massive “constructive work” programme for rural development (launched in Wardha, Maharashtra from 1922-28) which sent thousands of volunteers to work amongst the rural poor in the areas of
education, health and employment proved to be the most crucial. It played a major role in influencing the directions of voluntary sector in later years and shifted the focus of voluntarism from issue based actively to political content aimed at nation building.

Development of NGOs: During Post-Independence period:

Table 1.3 gives a bird-eye view of the growth of VOs during the pre independence period and a decade after. The data are based on the analysis of institution / agencies at the local level aided by the Central Social Welfare Board.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period (1)</th>
<th>Number of Agencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 1900</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901 - 1910</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910 - 1920</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920 - 1930</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930 - 1940</td>
<td>522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940 - 1950</td>
<td>1350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950 - 1960</td>
<td>3263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5764</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Reproduced from Chowdhary P. Voluntary Social Welfare in India Sterling Publisher, New Delhi 1971, p.43.

From the above table it can be noticed that there were as many as 107 voluntary organizations in the country prior to 1900. A notable growth in number of voluntary organization can be observed during the
period 1901-1940. While 1350 Voluntary organization get established in the decade 1940-50 more than half of them i.e. 3263 (out of 5754) were established during 1951-60 (i.e. virtually during the post-independence period). This rapid growth in the number of Voluntary organizations may have been due to the increasing awareness about social evils among the people in addition to the government's role as a supporter to these organizations immediately after independence.

The post-independence era witnessed a phenomenal increase in the number of voluntary agencies. (Muttalib, 1987:413) After independence leadership in voluntary action in India was provided by the social workers who had worked under the leadership of Gandhi. As a matter of fact, they were the ones who started the movement of voluntary action both in urban and rural areas, in the field of health education, social welfare adult education and rural development etc. (Chowdhary, 1987:492)

The important role of voluntary organization was recognized by planners in the first five year plan (1952) itself. The plan document mentioned that any plan for social and economic regeneration should take into account the services rendered by voluntary agencies and state should give the maximum cooperation in strengthening their efforts. The plan provided for grant-in-aid of Rs. 4 Crore for voluntary
organizations, which was placed at the disposal of the Central Social Welfare Board for encouraging voluntary organizations, especially in the field of women and child welfare. The setting up of central social welfare board (1953) proved to be a milestone in the history of voluntary action. One of its main functions was to provide financial assistance to voluntary organizations in order to develop them. Besides up to 1960, it also provided financial support for setting up new voluntary organizations. As result there was a rapid increase in the voluntary organizations during 1950s. The number of voluntary organizations rose by 117 per cent during 1953-61 (Lalitha & a Kohli 1982-24) out of about 3,000 voluntary organization which were started between 1951-60 about 2000 were established between 1954-57, the initial year of establishment of the Board (Chowadhary 1971:45) The third five year plan (1962) provided for total outlay of Rs 28 core for progress of Central Social Welfare Board (Third five year plan1962: 718)

In 1966 the National Institute for Research and Training in Public Cooperation was setup to study promote and strengthen voluntary action. The institute later come to be called National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development (NIPCCD) During this period an autonomous institution called People's Action for Development India (PADI) was also created to promote voluntary effort in rural
development. In 1983 a new organization Council for the Advancement of Rural Technology (CART) setup to improve conditions in rural areas through diffusion and motivation of technology with the help of voluntary organization. In September 1986 CART was merged with PADI to form the Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) to coordinate and catalyze the development work of voluntary agencies nation wide. CAPART had contributed positively to the role of voluntary organization in rural development acting as a force multiplier in the activities of such organizations and in the overall development of the rural areas. The main thrust of CAPART is in the areas of employment income generation, creation of community assets and fulfillment of basic needs like housing and drinking water.

It is an important fact to note that the Government continued to increase the plan allocation for the voluntary sector with each five-year plan. For the first time in the history of Indian planning the seventh five year plan (1985) document contained a chapter on voluntary agencies the plan attempted to involve the voluntary organization in planning and implementing the programmes of rural development of the government in big way. The plan also stress the need of professionalization of voluntarism by introducing professional competence management expertise and accountability in the working of these organizations the
plan emphasized the need to give greater attention to the mobilization of locally available human and financial resources, identifying people in the poorer and vulnerable occupations, upgrade their skill and give them the tools to make them economically self-sufficient as well as productive (seventh five year plan 1985:68)

The Eighth plan document (1992) gave a still greater emphasis on voluntary organization. It stated that people’s initiative and participation must become the key element in the whole process of development. Therefore the focus of attention will be on developing multiple institutional options for improving the delivery systems by using the vast potential of the voluntary sector (VIII five year plan 1992:17). It further envisaged creation of a nationwide network of voluntary organization and to provide one window service to the voluntary agencies working in the areas of integrated development. In order to give effect to the above policy, and action plan to bring about a collaborative relationship between voluntary organizations and government was drawn up. It stressed that the collaborative relationship should be at levels, namely district state, regional and national levels and should rest on the premise that one supplements and strengthens the other. According to the action plan to bring about a collaborative relationship between voluntary organizations and government
people have to be organized and be active participants of the development process, while the government can create a climate conducive to such organization the government by itself cannot organize the people this role has to appropriately left to the voluntary organizations.

During the last few year several NGOs have clearly shown that with the courage and conviction with dedication and perseverance and with a commitment to the welfare of people, much can be achieved despite all the constrains. There are plenty of success stories of the organizations. Majority of them have concentrated in providing livelihood, employment and income generation activities. Among them prominent names are the Self Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) and Ananda Niketan Ashram in Gujarat, Bharatiya Agro industries Foundation (BAIF) and Sarvangin Vikas Sanstha in Maharastra India Development Service and Manipal Trust in Karnatak. The Gandhi Gram Trust and Working Women’s Forum Tamilnadu, the comprehensive Rural Operation Service Society (CROSS) in Andra Pradesh. The Tagore Society for Rural development in West Bengal, Mahila Vikas Samithi, Banwasi Sewa Ashram and Dasholi Gram Swarajya Mandals in Uttar Pradesh. In the northeast the Nagaland Gandhi Ashram in Nagaland
and Ramakrishan Ashram in Meghalaya have done commendable work for upliftment of tribal population in the respective states.

In the developing countries like India importance of grass-roots NGOs is well understood, these now deal with issues like environment protection, gender equality, reproductive health care, human rights, sustainable development, development with equality, women empowerment, consumer awakening etc.

The state apart from private investments now has been going for assistance from the multinational agencies like the World Bank, Asia Development Bank, European community, United Nations development Project (UNOP), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) etc. However most of these agencies insist the involvement of VOs/NGOs.

The Statistical information pertaining to the number of VOs/NGOs based on report of govt. of India is provided in table.
Table - 1.4  
Ministry wise breakup of VOs/NGOs in India  
(As updated during Feb 2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Ministry</th>
<th>Number of Vos</th>
<th>Percentage To total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rural development</td>
<td>6470</td>
<td>41.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Human resource development</td>
<td>2082</td>
<td>13.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Justice and empowerment</td>
<td>2946</td>
<td>19.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Health and family welfare</td>
<td>1028</td>
<td>6.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Environment and forest</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>4.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Youth affairs and sports</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Non conventional energy</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Textiles</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>2.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Science and technology</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Road transport</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Statistics and programme implementation</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Trade affairs</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>State/Union Territories</td>
<td>795</td>
<td>5.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>15425</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (i) VOs/NGOs funded by each department are listed, ministry wise by the planning commission as furnished by the respective Departments.
(ii) State government are asked to furnish details of VOs/NGOs funded the them.
(iii) Figure in column (04) are computed
Source Website planning commission Govt. of India NGO Data base as obtained on 2003.

As updated during Feb 2003, the total number of VOs/NGOs adds up to 15425. It can be observed from this data that 41.94 per cent (numbering 6470 out of 15425) of the VOs listed under the ministry of Human Resource Development and Social Justice and Empowerment.
together constitute 32.60 per cent of the total number of VOs, on the whole. The data prove that approximately 75 per cent of VOs/NGOs can be found in the field of rural development, human resource and social justice and empowerment.

Developmental role of NGOs:

The role of NGOs in the socio-economic development of the country is remarkable. They have been contributing to national development for long traditionally the Voluntary organizations were social service organizations with changing times and human activities. The Voluntary organizations changed along with a widened base. The foregone discussion on their origin shows as how the organization on religion took reformation to national movements and currently they occupy a prominent place in fostering developmental efforts. Different roles played by the NGOs are briefly discussed in the following section.

1) Welfare activities.

The VO's were, basically formed as relief and service oriented ones. This traditional objective was in the form of individual practice of Dharma (individual service to the needy) and is still at the base of voluntary action. Providing education assisting the oppressed and the helpless the poor relief measures. Childcare are the activities undertaken
by VOs even today they make the delivery system of Governments more effectively by identifying the targets groups.

2) NGOs as catalysts.

NGOs bridge the local people and the state agencies by participating in various governmental programmes. Also by creating a sense of involvement among the people. Voluntary organization act as a vehicle of people's participation in promoting development.

3) Mobilizing local resources.

The NGOs are said to have a close proximity with the local people. They try to organize a community and integrate various groups for the common good. Familiarity with local situation and ability to influence such community helps the NGOs in mobilizing local resources (both men and material). Nanda (2000) organizing and mobilizing local resources are the two basic functions of VOs. "Thus the VOs can be called the organizer and mobilizes of local resources.

4) VOs in empowerment.

One of the most important roles of VOs in the development is empowerment of deprived classes, an economically and socially exploited section is considered to be the essential ingredient to ensure justice. This being attempted by VOs through awareness generation, organizing the masses, helping them to make decision in order to help
themselves etc. They continue to work for the issues like minimum wage, bonded labour, child welfare, women empowerment and various related areas. They are serving as locus of expression and of values in the society.

5) Rural Development.

Promoting rural development is another significant area of NGOs concern. NGOs that are dedicated towards rural development, motivate people's attitudes, through education training and decision making. This in turn, helps societies particularly those undergoing transaction and aiming at the rapid socio-economic development.

6) Promoting Entrepreneurship.

The NGOs through their programmes for training the women, young and other needy classes generates skills and build up their capacity to earn. These facilitate the poor and helpless raise status economically. The role of VOs in counseling, providing general assistance and lending financial support encourages entrepreneurship among those who lack the same.

7) Promoting human capital.

The NGOs have been helping in a big way in finding solutions to the problems of course within their limits such as illiteracy, morbidity, diseases, low level of public, hygiene, under nutrition and poor quality of
drinking water and thereby contribute in building up of human capital. This way the NGOs perform, by supplementing the government the function of human development.

8) **Supporting government programmes.**

Bridging the people and the government can be regarded as an important role of the NGOs in the process of development. They in their own way add to the funds sanctioned by the government by making use of locally available resources in fulfilling the objectives. Further by providing information about local conditions, priorities, local resources, the NGOs are assisting governments in local planning and goal setting.

9) **Establishing grass root links.**

NGOs perform another important role in development especially at local level in establishing grass root link. They have been putting efforts so as to reach the women, the depressed, the weaker, poor and exploited classes on the large scale in different ways. The NGOs are also trying their level best in organizing people at the grass roots.

10) **Advocating policy reforms.**

NGOs in India have been acting as representatives of the community to ensure grater responsiveness of the administration towards the latter's needs and aspirations. Their role in organizing
mobilizing sensitizing people at various levels so as to enable them to peruse self development is appreciable such attempts have been made in respect of women issues for uplifting women and environment protection. The NGOs influence policy reforms through monitoring the existing ones, their implementation campaigning public education and variety of other methods.

11) Research Activities.

Many of the NGOs now a days are engaged in research activities concerned with human welfare issues of women, environment, human rights and the like. Policy research experiments and pioneer works where sometimes govt. does not find ways are some of their contributions towards research field. Recently gender related issues and technology are also being included under the active roles of NGOs functioning.

NGOs in women development:

Looking at the role of NGOs in development in general it would be worthwhile to look into their specific role in women development. Voluntary efforts for the cause of women started towards the end of 19th century (in its modern form). They were by and large, the works of certain individuals dedicated to the cause of social welfare. Originations like Bramho Samaj, Prarthana Samaj, all were against the prevailing vices, in society. They fought against sati system, were successful in
preventing child marriage and encouraged widow remarriage and female education. Caste based associations, initiated exclusively by women, which have emerged deserved a special mention. Association like Brindavan Stree Samaj Andra Mahila Sabha and such other similar ones were started to provide shelter to the needy apart from making the widow and destitute literate and educated, thereby help them earn their livelihood. During the later years of freedom struggle Mahatma Gandhi upheld the equality of women. All India Women's Conference was one of the results of his efforts towards socio-economic development of women. After independence the planned development for the purpose of welfare had its impact on the social and economic development of women too. The Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) since 1953 has been providing Grant in aid, for promoting development of women and children. Assistance to voluntary organization lead to the growth of a number of women organizations proliferation of Mahila Madals (women clubs) was a striking feature of this period women organizations are formed to promote female education, protect women against working hazardous equality of pay health, nutrition. Women's Welfare and Development Bureau was setup under the ministry of Social Welfare in 1976. Women and child development sector has a tradition of selfless and dedicated voluntary action. The VOs developed a rich and
diversified initiatives for the development of women community. The Ninth five-year plan states, "these efforts (voluntary) have often demonstrated the success of alternative models of development and empowerment of women in the field of literacy, awareness generation, organizing masses into "Self Help Group" etc.

The Voluntary organizations whose central agenda has been the empowerment of women have proved themselves to have the potential for the same. Empowerment of women has become the goal of development projects and programmes since 1990. Creating awareness through raising individual and collective consciousness about women's conditions in family and community has been keen concern of the NGOs. This leads to mobilization of political and legal action. Similarly capacity building is another way the NGOs help women. Enabling women folk to participate in non-family groups, interact public sphere, ensure mobility, create mutual dependence, bring transformation in education, family, economic and social systems independence in making decision all help much in capacity building among the women folk at large. This can also be facilitated by providing with physical, technological, human, financial and organizational resources to the women.

The VOs have played the role of catalysts in the process of empowering poor women. The issues like gender equality, human
rights and justice have been their priorities. In the course of development of poor women NGOs have strategically linked the grass-roots women and organization. This allows NGOs to work closely with women at the grassroots thereby helping to bring about meaningful changes in their lives.

NGOs have two common approaches for promoting women development are (a) economic upliftment through employment income, generation activities and access to credit and (b) through integrated development programmes which are for strengthening women's economic status along with education, provision for basic needs and services, reproductive health etc. Consciousness and awareness rising is another approach by the NGOs having the potential to set in long lasting changes and deep implications in the position of women.

Added to the above NGOs have been encouraging Self Help Group (SHG). Women SHGs have been helping to change gender relations by empowering their members. These groups apart from providing credit are also imparting marketing skills, health care, etc., Experience has shown that what works for the poor women is not credit alone but credit plus strategy (Prasad K 2000).
A brief reference to the NGOs in Karnataka:

It would now be appropriate to refer, briefly, to the NGOs' scenario in Karnataka. A serious problem causing keen concern of the researcher in this regard is of non-availability of reliable data pertaining to the actual number of the VOs currently functioning in the state of Karnataka. However, the Researcher has made sincere attempt in this direction and succeeded in obtaining data pertaining to Ministry-wise break up of VOs/NGOs in Karnataka during February 2003 which are presented in table 1.5.

Table - 1.5
Ministry-wise break up of VOs/NGOs - Karnataka

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Ministry</th>
<th>Number of VOs</th>
<th>Percentage to total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rural Development</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>34.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Human resource Development</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>15.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Justice and Empowerment</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>31.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Health and family welfare</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>7.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Environment and forest</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Youth affairs and sports</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Non conventional energy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Textiles</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Science and technology</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Road transport</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Statistics and Programme implement</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Trade affairs</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>State/Union Territories</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>677</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Web site, Planning Commission, Government of India NGO Data Base as obtained on 20-03-2003

The data prove that the ministry of Rural Development (232), Social justice and Empowerment (212) and Human Resource Development (107), respectively have together identified about 82 per
cent of the total (677) VOs in the State, which is similar to that of the country as a whole (Table 1.5 of the Thesis).

Data pertaining to the district-wise distribution of VOs in Karnataka, provided by the KSSWAB and the Planning Commission, Government of India are presented in Table 1.6.

Table 1.6
District-wise distribution of VOs in Karnataka: 1999-2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>KSSWAB (Funded by)</th>
<th>Identified by Planning Commission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Bagalkot</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Bangalore</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Bangalore (Rural)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Belgaum</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Bellary</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Bidar</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Bijapur</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Chamarajanagara</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>Chikkamaglur</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Chitradurga</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Dakshina Kannada</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Davangere</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Dharwad</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Gadag</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Gulbarga</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Haveri</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Hassan</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Kodagu</td>
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<td>Shimoga</td>
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<td>Tumkur</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Udupi</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Uttar Kannada</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>357</td>
<td>508</td>
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(ii) Website, Planning Commission, Government of India as obtained on 19-06-2003
It can be observed from these data that there has been an increase in the total number of VOs in the State as a whole. It is also clear from the Table (column- 07) 25 per cent (174/675) are concentrated in Bangalore and Kolar (138/675 i.e. 20 per cent), the rest being spread over the remaining 25 districts of the State, proving the unequal distribution of VOs NGOs in Karnataka. The fact that the presence of sizable number of VOs even in the drought-prone parts of the State, Chitradurga (40) Tumkur (33) and Raichur (17) proves that the VOs/NGOs with diversified activities are gaining importance in the development of the State. The data also establish that increasing State assistance to the VOs (column 03 and 05) has encouraged voluntary activities and a growth in their number.

Theoretical perspective:

All theories of voluntarism whether social, psychological, theological or metaphysical which interpret various aspects of experiences and nature in the light of concept of the 'will'. These expressions of human will have been the subject of study mainly in three disciplines Sociology, Social Psychology and Pubic administration. Sociologists study the association as the part of the social system, social Psychologists are concerned with voluntary associations in the environment of their individual members and the student of public
administration with their organizational processes. However disciplinary restrictions provide the micro picture of voluntarism, but as a microanalysis of voluntary organization is only possible with inter disciplinary approaches.

There are limited theories on Voluntarism and NGOs. In order to gain a theoretical insight, some of the available theories have been reviewed here.

Talcott Parsons developed a Voluntaristic Theory of Action. In his book 'The structure of social action' (1937) he viewed voluntaristic nature of social world Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) or Voluntary Organizations are the constituent of this social world and part of his theoretical constructions indirectly. In his theory he further integrated, unit voluntary act to whole social system and explained unit act as actor's choice within normative order. Thus, his voluntary unit act is not absolute free and subjective rather directed by existing value system and normative order. He also demonstrates the relationship between objective conditions and adheres to norms and act in a particular way. Parsons theory of voluntary action was greatly dependent upon Weberian Rational Social Action.

Max Weber never used the term voluntarism in his writings, but when analyze social action and its four major typologies based on
subjective and objective choice of means to ends. Then indirectly he
deals with voluntary action as an individual choice with social
constraints and further differentiates social action from an action Social
action is guided and influenced by social norms and values. For him,
therefore, voluntary action is also a form of social action with limited
individual choice. This is very important aspect of voluntary movement
for people's mobilization and participation.

The influence of society on individual voluntary action and
behaviour are more explicit in Emile Durkheim's theory he used the term
'social fact' that how society influences all individual feelings, acting and
thinking, he explained the role of morality and 'collective conscience'
over the individual and binds them in social solidarity. Durkheim
viewed intermediatory groups were necessary aspects of socialist society
and functioned to connect the individual to the state. In market economy
there is a danger that individualism would result in 'anomie'. These
intermediatory groups / voluntary groups provided moral regulations in
societies where secularization has eroded traditional pattern of morality.

Individlistic society, which is composed of isolated individuals
pursuing their own narrow objectives, cannot survive for long.
According to him calculating individuals, pursuing their self-interest
undermined social solidarity. To overcome this danger society requires a
morality of cooperation and network of secondary institutions, with people to society. Thus trust would help to mediate to pursue self-interest by creating social bonds.

Alexis de Tocque Ville (1956) in his commentary of American society took particular note of the degree to which American formed groups to serve personal interest and to solve problems forms the most mundane to the most profound. Although American voluntary association emerged in nineteenth and twentieth century is the result of the friction between autonomous religious congregation and local government. Today these voluntary organizations are ubiquitous part of American society.

Theory of voluntarism:

Joel SGR Bhose in his book NGOs and Rural Development (2002) propound a "Theory of Voluntarism". In fact, voluntary organizations are the outcome and manifestation of such voluntarism. NGOs are promoted Chiefly by one or a few persons supported by a group of like-minded persons who have similar inspirations. Individuals make the organization. If individuals are good, organizations will naturally be good. This inner inspiration, a missionary zeal, inner drive, humanitarian concern, love for others, a divine or a social calling realized
within an individual, a burden within one’s heart to serve others, helping thirst etc. gain the shape of voluntarism.

Such inspirations are derived from religious doctrines or societal demands. Also voluntarism within a person is enhanced and influenced by great social thinkers and reformers like Mahatma Gandhi, Jaya Prakash Narayan, Karl Marx, Dr. Ambedkar, Mother Teresa etc.,

Education of certain disciplines like Sociology, Social work, Community development, social dynamics, liberation theology etc., also concretize the voluntarism of individuals who later on practice the same in a more professional manner. In certain cases deep frustration and extreme grief in individual turn them to become committed social workers.

Birds of same feather flock together similarly people of similar category of voluntary inspirations join together.

Those proceed to analyze the theory of voluntarism which describes the various categories of voluntarism.

1) Sacrificial voluntarism.

People with this spirit of voluntarism will strive to work for the uplift of the poor oppressed neglected and marginalized unto the last. They have clear "vision" and they dedicate their life itself as the means to accomplish the same. They continue to render their yeoman services
altruistically under any threat or crises. They live for other and are even prepared to sacrifice themselves for a noble cause. Persons like Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Dr. Ambedkar et.al can be enlisted under this category. There are many others, whose names might not have been made popular nor do they wish so, such persons bestowed with this kind of voluntarism may be honoured as the salt and light of the earth. They are mostly none but born volunteers. In some cases such people emerge in the course of life experience. ‘High thinking and simple living’ are their principles. They have strong will and profound commitment. Even death can not threaten their voluntarism. They are the crusaders of the oppressed and unprivileged. They need not to go to any educational institution to learn theories of voluntarism. Infact theories of voluntary work are evolved out of their experiences and impact created. They can bring about social transformation and change in government policies in favour of the depressed. People follow them as their leader or Guru’s (Teachers) and extended their support for their mission and still a few may even become disciples. They maintain a soul to soul rapport with sufferings and strive for their uplift. They are the personification of altruism. They are hardly one per cent. However, it becomes difficult for their successors to sustain the same wave length of voluntarism.
The disadvantage is that this kind of voluntarism fades, dwindles and even perishes along with such great people if the followers do not carry on the work with the similar spirit.

2) Professional and developmental voluntarism.

They are clear in the concept of development. They are aware of the vision and mission of the clear objective and appropriate strategies. Persons of this category are endowed with professional competence on one side and commitment on the other. Such people are prepared to forego monetary benefits for the cause of social objectives. They firmly believe that people’s development lies in people’s hands. They are not mere doers but facilitators. Their work is people centered and process oriented. They are gender sensitive, class, caste and gender concepts are interwoven in their dealings, only 10 to 15 per cent of such people are seen in NGO sector.

Their interventions are pivoted on capacity building of the people and hence they create sustainable people’s organizations, programmes and systems.

In some developmental organizations it is observed that there are two categories of people one, the traditional bureaucrats i.e., the power mongers, and the other charismatic personalities i.e., the professionals
and active workers. Seniority is the only criteria for the former while the sincerity is the latters.

3) Amateur voluntarism.

Persons who have concern for others but devoid of professional code and ethics may be enlisted under this category. They wish to do something for others. They think that doing anything for others is development work and they function as raw development workers. This is because they are inexperienced and untrained. They believe mostly in social service, relief and charity. On seeing other NGOs they misconceive that it is very easy to run an organization. They do not have their original thoughts of their own, nor any vision, mission or strategy. They simply imitate the other NGOs. In some cases the initial interventions may seen to be brighter. But in the long run they fade away. In some other cases, their role is unclear vague, inferior, invisible and unseen. In some exceptional cases, imitating social workers do better than the meek originals. The persons of this kind of people in NGO sector would be between 20 to 25 per cent. They become susceptible to external forces and vulnerable to threats. Such organizations governed by amateur voluntarism may tend to be constituency driven and donor driven and not the mission driven ones.
4) **Ventilatory voluntarism.**

Elites, opulent, and business magnates who are also interested in the welfare of the depressed and poor fall under this category. Their services are no doubt welcome and deserve appreciation though theirs are hobby like activities. They go from towns to the nearby accessible villages during their leisure or holidays and conduct health camps, supply medicines free of cost and give charities to the poor. Their activity is expression of their kindness towards others. Thus they ventilate their urban stress and so also fulfill social obligations. They are between 5 and 10 per cent among the voluntary workers. Usually they approach the media for coverage. Some times their advertisement will be more than their accomplishments.

With their resources they can do wonders and bring about a social change, if they have separate development wings monitored by developmentists. But there is no continuity and sustainability of their programmes. Theirs are sudden interventions with cheers and quick withdrawal owing to their own day-to-day pressure. They require orientation on people concerned development.

5) **Survival voluntarism.**

Voluntary work becomes primarily a bread winning profession for this category of people. Less committed, less motivated, less devoted,
less qualified come under this section. They are not very much concerned about the ideologies, principles, philosophy and concept of development, nor are they very much bothered to learn them. They are curious in mobilizing resources for their subsistence. It is unfortunate that 25 to 30 per cent of todays so called NGOs fall under this category. This category needs to be set right, mended, repaired, modified or severely dealt with so that voluntary sector could be protected from being handed by inferior, selfish, and anti-social personalities. Resources provides and the regulating authorities are required to play a just and judicious role in this regard. If so they can be corrected.

6) Pseudo voluntarism.

People of this category start NGO, with a deliberate by-motive of amassing money misusing the good banner voluntary organization. This is the growing problem of today in the NGO sector. Pseudo NGO persons need to be penalized and their NGOs should be scraped out.

The ‘culture of quality’ must be inculcated among NGOs. Just because NGO work with poor people their service is also need not be poor. Quality of service, performance, facilitation must become the centrality of their intervention. Quality in community organization, conducting meetings, community training programmes, information dissemination quality administration and managed documentation need
to become 21st century NGOs. This quality culture must percolate down
to the people’s organizations as an impact of NGOs intervention. Than
only true community development and transformation will take place.

In sacrificial and professional voluntarism quality of performance
is in built. Sacrificial voluntarism is most preferred. But it is seldom
available. Professional voluntarism is and if not can be made available
by continuous training and motivation. NGO persons work for and with
ordinary people but they are supposed to be extraordinary people with
something special in their interventions.

If true voluntarism is expressed in action, that are known as
voluntary action. Thus, Bhose concluded that, if voluntary actions are
carried out in an organized manner by a group of like-minded
individuals that would be called voluntary organization. This theory
gives an appropriate theoretical framework for the present study.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the previous section an attempt has been made to discuss the development from rural women's perspective with reference to NGOs. There are a number of studies undertaken both in the country and outside as to the role of women in the various fields of activity of women as a subject for the study has become very popular in the International Decade of women. To review all the studies pertaining to women may not be relevant in the context of this particular study. Hence an attempt has been made in this section to review some of the important and relevant studies done on rural women and NGOs. While reviewing the literature the main aim of role and influence of NGOs on rural women has been kept as an importance aspect.

However, a brief review of available literature relevant to the subject presented in following headings.

1) Contributions of NGOs in development.
2) NGO functioning.
3) Impact studies on NGO beneficiaries.
4) Women and NGO.

1) Contributions of NGOs in rural development.

NGO have a constructive role in creating welfare state. Their continued action is vitally necessary for its survival and growth. In this
regard the constructions of NGOs towards development has attracted the attention of scholars, researchers. Some of the studies are briefly reviewed here.

Singh and Prasad (1965) in their studies observed that the activities of voluntary organizations, like youth clubs, motivated by the NGOs resulted in the development of interest knowledge and skills of participants. This is due to planned efforts of NGOs.

Singh and Rao (1965) also suggested that the favourable attitude of youth could be fully utilized for youth development for taking up a variety of projects, which they like most as part of the youth club programmes.

Kulkarni (1969) stated that, voluntary action was taking place on a sizable scale in India and suggested involvement of voluntary agencies in planning and implementation of developmental programmes in big way as the Constitution of India gives full support and guarantee needed for voluntary action.

Shastri (1970) in his study on the role of voluntary organization in rural development and revealed that, no government department can be free from the outmoded rules in the foreseeable future. Only autonomous bodies such as Voluntary agencies committed to rural
development could be in a position to take up responsibility not only for production programmes but also for eradication of hunger.

*Pathak (1971)* observed that, nothing would be a better contribution to mobilization of voluntary agencies for social action than encouraging voluntary agencies to take up any work in right earnest. This way voluntary agencies will become self-reliant, so that they may accept the unfolding challenges of the future.

*Sugata (1972)* In his study about voluntary organizations in rural development stated that, the main task of voluntary organizations, is to be the watchdog of the people their guide philosopher and planner and to build social development in the rural areas. It is truth that, no government can build a society he said.

*Sud (1972)* is of the opinion that voluntary organizations have the potential for energizing the people and also putting the official agencies in to action hence they merited encouragement.

*Gonsalves (1975)* felt that the development of the whole community is not possible by government or by a single charismatic leader alone this can be achieved only by dedicated sincere and competent voluntary agencies.

*Jain (1975)* described that in the past 25 year the voluntary efforts has been most remarkable in the fields of relief and rural development,
much has been achieved through silence by voluntary efforts in the field of rural development.

Tenarian (1975) has observed that the voluntary organizations were playing a catalytic role in building up of prosperous nation, but they need financial assistance to meet their requirements.

Sen (1975) in his study stated that voluntary organizations are best suited for the task of planning and implementation to grass root level and one capable of giving good performances, even with modest financial resources and can also remove socio-economic evils by being close to the people.

Rajkumari (1977) felt that 'will' is the driving and motivating force behind formation and working of voluntary agencies, and when one properly organized the voluntary organizations canalize their will in the desired developmental direction and then the making can reap a very rich dividend.

Mathur (1977) explained that, the coverage of adult education and farmers functional literacy programmes entrusted by the state government to voluntary organizations was appreciable and recognized that, they were playing an important role in innovative and experimental programmes.
Mukeherjee (1979) observed that, programmes of voluntary organization were mostly based on needs of people leading to their economic development through supply of agricultural inputs training programmes, education etc.

Sharma (1979) revealed that the "Mouman Seva Ashram" is engaged in several social activities to carry out the Khadi and village industries programmes in rural areas with social objectives of generating employment and self reliance "Gram Swaraj Parishad" "Rangiya Parishad" runs a destitute home and adult education programme under its supervision. The Parishad also helps in Socio-Economic welfare of the poor village people.

Molly (1990) in his study found that there is lion's share of NGOs programmes in the selected organizations related to the factory type employment such as ready-made Garments Khadi and village industries candle making match box, carpentry footwear etc. The major production schemes especially on household basis, which occupied 24 per cent of total schemes, were animal husbandry, poultry sericulture, fodder cultivation kitchen garden and others. The major schemes for facilities like housing drinking water, sanitation health care, biogas plants, smokeless chulas, crèche, hostels marketing etc, were 26 per cent. Skill formation (10 per cent) included training to farmers training under
TRYSM, tailoring programme, literacy mission and training center, attached to production units.

Rani (1993) reveals that the NGO Chetana-Vikas was taking up diverse activities for women touching the different spheres and dimensions of their daily life. The organization offered to facilities the required training for development of catchment area. It also urged the women to come forward for the job and empowered to take decision on the quality of forthcoming future.

Shripathi (1993) conducted a study voluntary agencies to evaluate the functioning of agencies with reference to organization coordination and delivery system component and to evaluate the impact of their programmes on target groups considering the pre and post project conditions. The study showed that voluntary organizations are playing prominent role in rural development and their involvement in major rural economic sectors like agriculture, dairy employment is recognized. Improvements will have to be brought about both in the organizational structure as well as in the quality of service offered.

Antwal (1994) in his case study on “Manavlok” in Maharastra voluntary organization found that the organization is working on all-round development activities with special stress on sustainable agricultural development with the principle of equitable water sharing.
organizing women to take up socio-economic programmes which will help them to realize their own potential by taking up social forestry programme and awareness raising programmes intensive and extensive training to target groups and village level activities to develop leadership and managerial capabilities.

Singhal (1998) stated that wide ranges of services were offered by voluntary agencies. In rural development they provide production oriented economic activities such as khadi production, road construction, fishery, poultry etc. Social welfare activities covered old age homes, relief, health, crèches, family counseling, sanitation etc. Education related activities like primary level and adult education, awareness camps, condensed courses were taken up by large number of organizations. Many of the organization undertook training related activities.

Suresh (1998) made an observation that NGO had undergone various changed role such as charity, relief, welfare, empowerment. An NGO now a day not expected to deliver directly some benefits to people but to mobilize resources, initiate leadership and participate in development programmes for self-reliance.

Sahu (2000) felt that voluntary organizations have a great role to play in the socio-economic transmission of rural people; they could give a helping hand to the government and other agencies concerned with
rural development. The success of these organizations depends on the financial assistance provided by the governments and other funding agencies.

Shrivastava (2000) observes the role of Voluntary organization in rural development is assuming more importance, because of their special quality like innovativeness, commitment among workers for effective implementation, flexibility in approach to suit local condition, close contact with local people, high level of motivation minimum procedural practices, which are known to be missing among government functionaries.

From the above studies it can be concluded that the contributions voluntary organizations resulted in the development of interest knowledge and skills of the participants and all the activities are directed towards attaining employment and self-reliance of women members. NGOs have really made their efforts towards ensuring people's participation in planning, decision making and implementation stages of rural development programmes in general and welfare of rural women in particular.

2) NGO's functioning.

NGO have been performing a variety of functioning in their respective areas of operation. Many of them have adopted innovative
methodologies in planning and implementing their programmes, some of the studies carried in this regard are as follows:

**Rajashekharan (1984)** observed that the organization aimed to promote and organize people's institution at village level, getting them registered and training them in contact with the governmental and financial institutions with its own role being that of a facilitator. For this it organized different level meetings, which were attended by village people as well as government functionaries. These meetings helped in formulation of micro level schemes at the village level.

**Charyula et. al (1985)** in his study stated that the organization had evolved suitable criteria for selection of beneficiaries on the lines of Antodaya by which the poorest of the poor were given preference for the benefits. Further, the Gram Sabha at village level were given the responsibility of selection of beneficiaries as well as purchase of assets. The system adopted showed the reflection of community action and community participation in operation of various programmes.

**Srinivasan and Natarajan (1986)** indicated that the organizations studied had planned and implemented a package of programmes in an integrated way. They had set up hospitals, established health center, set up mobile health units and were engaged in health education, nutrition, and maternal and child health programmes.
Gomes (1989) found that voluntary organizations gave first priority to social development programmes like health, education, relief, slum improvement and seminars. The economic development programmes had next in their priorities.

Khan and Thomas (1989) made an observation that the range of voluntary action was wide and complex. In the context of rural development voluntary organizations acted as partners in government efforts, advocates and critics of programme planning and implementation and aimed at bringing about structural changes in rural community.

Rao and Francis (1993) in their study of a voluntary organization working in the field of education in Mahabubnagar district of Andra Pradesh, observed that it adopted both an interpersonal as well as mass appeal to contact the people. To motivate learners, cultural programmes consisting of songs, plays, etc, were liberally and effectively used.

Vijaya and Chand (1994) studied the case of an innovative project which was undertaken by voluntary organization in 104 tribal village of south Gujarat. The organization, in collaboration with the cooperatives, evolved a Tribal Village Worker Education Programme with the aim of training school dropouts as “bare foot” veterinarians. A total of 113 workers were trained under the scheme.
Sachchidananda and Prasad (1994) found that the organization provided human development inputs in terms of educational, motivational, and consciousness-raising programmes through the village Mahila sabhas, youth forums, and sports and cultural groups. The programmes of the organization were largely initiated in the village through the mechanism of mahila sabha. There were about 52 Mahila Sabhas. There were about 52 Mahila Sabhas in the area of operation of the organization with over 600 members.

Amudhsurabui and Vasantha Kumar (1998) found that there were variations among the two organizations in covering subject matter and use of resource materials. There was no significant difference between the State Department of Agriculture (SDA) and NGOs in using training methods and providing training environment and physical facilities.

Ponnuamy and Krishan Kumari (1998) revealed that farm and home visit was the individual contact method. Meeting and group discussions were group-contact methods, and folk songs and folk dances were the mass contact methods used by the NGO staff.

Rao (2000) revealed that training the rural youth under TRYSEM from the NGOs were better employed than the ones trained in government and public institutions. It was also found that the facilities
for training in some NGOs were much better than government and public institution.

It can be concluded from above studies that voluntary organization have been performing a variety of functions in their respective areas of operation. Many of them have adopted innovative methodologies in planning and implementing their programme. Some voluntary organization have attempted an integrative approach for an all round development of the people of the area. In the context of rural development, voluntary organization acted as partners in government efforts, advocate and critics of programme planning and implementation and aimed at bringing about structural change in rural area, and to bring a new atmosphere in the village community.

3) Impact studies of NGOs beneficiaries.

Studies on NGOs have also dealt with the impact of the programmes on beneficiaries the participation of beneficiaries in the programmes and opinion of beneficiaries about NGOs.

Impact is the positive or negative effect of an organization i.e., it measures effectiveness. In order to assess the impact of NGOs following impact indicators were selected.

a. Participation of beneficiaries.

b. Programmes for the development of knowledge and skill of the beneficiaries.
c. Opinion of beneficiaries about NGOs.

a) Participation of beneficiaries.

Studies on voluntary organizations have also dealt on the participation of beneficiaries in the programmes that organization as well as the impact of the programmes on the beneficiaries.

Rajshekharan (1984) felt that, if properly guided beneficiaries are interested in participating fully in programmes for their development.

Rao (1984) concluded that the beneficiaries of the organization have become more articulate, formed groups of their own and have developed increased awareness to fight against exploitation.

Charyulu et. al (1985) reported that, the implementation of Integrated Rural Development Programme by the organizations had made good impact in the project villages. In terms of physical assets, the village have gained by receiving agricultural implements, milch animals, birds for poultry, handicrafts, food, accommodation and shelter for women and children etc. The beneficiaries also reported change in their occupation more number of days of self-employment and additional income. Further, both organizations had involved the people at both planning as well as implementation stage of the programmes.

Srinivasan and Natarajan (1986) in their study of 20 voluntary organizations engaged in the delivery of healthy services of Tamil Nadu,
found that the beneficiaries considered the services rendered by these organizations as a great boon to them.

Nagaraja (1987) found that there was a considerable increase in the social participation extension contact and extension participation of the beneficiaries as a result of their participation in Shree Kshetra Dharmashtala Rural Development (SKDRDP) programmes. Most of the beneficiaries developed their lands as a result of technical and financial assistance from SKDRDP.

Suresh (1990) observed that the voluntary organizations were not working as participatory organizations to the extent desired. The rates of participation of beneficiaries were found to be very low in majority of organizations. The beneficiaries were also not taken into confidence at several stages of planning and implementation of programmes meant for them. The beneficiaries were also found to be not keen in getting represented in decision-making bodies and the planning process.

Shripati (1995) has conducted a case study of two voluntary organizations of coastal region of Karnataka to evaluate their working as well as to assess the impact of their programmes on target group. The result of the study showed that voluntary organizations are playing a significant role in rural development. Their involvement in major rural economic sector was recognized.
Chander (1996) conducted an in depth study to understand the modus operandi of three locally active voluntary organization in central Himalayan Region of Uttar Pradesh hills keeping people’s participation in focus. Participating Rural Appraisal (PRA) method was used for the purpose. The study revealed that voluntary organizations have really made good efforts towards ensuring farmer’s participations in planning and implementation stages of rural development programmes.

Velusamy and Manoharan (1998) reported that in women development programmes majority of the respondents participated and benefited in getting training on maintaining dairy animals and obtained loans.

Srhivastava (2000) stated that voluntary organization operating in the areas can also play a great role in securing people’s participation because of their easy access to rural minds and heart and first hand experience and knowledge of local needs problems and resources available at grass root level.

b) Programmes for the development of knowledge and skill of the beneficiaries.

Singh and Rao (1965) observed that the activities of voluntary organizations of youth clubs resulted in development of interest knowledge and skills of the participants.
Narayan Rao (1968) reported a significant positive correlation between education and knowledge of practice of agricultural and also between beneficiaries of NGOs and their income levels.

Sud (1972) concluded that voluntary organizations have the potential for emerging the people and also putting the official agencies into action and hence they deserve encouragement.

Reddy (1981) found that, the farmers served by the farmers service center NGO (experimental groups) significantly differed from those of normal block extension area with respect to knowledge of improved agricultural practices as required to control group. The knowledge level of farmers served by farmers service center were fairly higher and above mean. Further, he was of the opinion that most of the farmers in experimental group were aware of the voluntary organizations and its staff thoroughly. Facilities like input supply information on technical matters, plant protection services etc, being provided by NGO were availed by the maximum number of families. Cumulatively, farmers had a positive attitude about the voluntary organization in their area.

Nagaraj (1987) found out that shree Kshatra Dharmasthala Rural Development (SKDRDF) motivated their beneficiaries to adopt improved farm practices. There was significant association between educational
level, farm size, extension contact, and extension participation and adoption.

George (1988) found that NGO have played important role in bringing about change in rural areas and they were very effective in motivation. Their role needed further. Understanding appreciation and recognition while planning to promote technology for rural development.

It can be concluded from above studies that, majority of the participants leaders, and all others had favorable opinion towards different activities of NGOs. NGOs motivated all the people to take part in their activities starting from planning stage up to implantation stage. Some voluntary organization working in rural areas also played a great role in securing people’s participation because of their easy access to rural minds and knowledge of local needs problems and resources available at grass root level NGO beneficiaries improved their knowledge and skills after participating in NGOs activities in agricultural and allied field. And were strongly motivated to adopt the improved practices for their own benefit and welfare.

c) Opinion of the beneficiaries towards NGO.

Shastri (1972) in his study concluded that the beneficiaries expressed their attitude positively and the results of voluntary action by
voluntary bodies have been far more impressive than efforts in similar fields by official agencies.

Sabarathnam (1977) found that majority of beneficiaries (56%) were of the opinion that the agricultural inputs should be distributed to the farmers under the guidance of these non-government organization. Twenty per cent of the beneficiaries were fully convinced of the usefulness of these organization that any agricultural improvements is possible only through these local non-governmental organizations.

Khar and Jha (1978) reported that 72 per cent of farmers possessed favorable attitudes towards primary agricultural cooperative societies, while only 19 per cent and 9 per cent of them had favourable and highly favorable attitudes respectively.

Verma (1978) observed that all the respondents were aware of the Comprehensive Rural Operations Service Society (CROSS) and the activities it has taken up in their area and found its activities as useful for the weaker sections of the society, half of them felt that it had brought improvement in the standard of living of those to whom the programme were addressed. They were of the opinion that, the CROSS was nearer to the weaker section and their programmes yielded quicker results.

Natarajan (1980) conducted a study on agricultural development by a voluntary organization “Sangam” at Cuddapah district in Andra
Pradesh and he reported that the Sangam has helped many of the
landless agricultural labours who are the members of the Sangam to
become land owners, i.e. small farmers, these small farmers under the
agricultural programme were able to raise their income and thereby
enhanced their status and position.

Dhatrak and Sinha (1984) observed that great majority of
recipients were found to be infavour of schemes implemented by
Maharogi Sewa Samithi Dattapur district Wardha, Maharastra and
considered to be good one. Majority i.e. 68.88 per cent of recipient were
of the opinion that they were benefited by the schemes. 7.4 per cent were
neutral to their opinion but 8.7 per cent were of unfavourable attitude
towards the NGOs.

Nagaraj (1987) found that the local leaders opinion was favourable
towards the achievements of Sree Kshetra Dharmastal Rural
Development (SKDRDP) they felt that SKDRDP has helped the
beneficiaries to improve their socio-economic status.

Sureshkumar Venkataramaiah, (1992) revealed that the majority
of beneficiaries (50.50%) of the Javahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY) had more
favorable attitude while 46 per cent of them had less favourable attitude.
Majula and Belli (1994) reported that 53.33 per cent of farm women had favourable attitude towards watershed management projects and rest (46.67) of them had unfavorable attitude.

Verma (1994) said that voluntary organizations have established adult education centers to increase knowledge and literacy level of people especially the female group. According to evaluation studies done in Rajasthan and Jaipur district in particular it has been recognized and found that Nilayams have become an attractive center for rural people and enrollment number is increasing in every Nilayam. People are of the opinion that these Nilayams are for their own welfare.

Nath and Jhamakhedkar (1995) reported that Sanjivini caters to a wide range of problems, loneliness, interpersonal conflicts, depression, suicide, alcoholism and mental illness Sanajivini has been successfully resolving its problems and conflict for the last eighteen years.

Reddy (1996) assessed the opinions of the rural women towards empowerment and was quite positive, as the average side obtained by the beneficiaries was high compared to non-beneficiaries.

Seethalakshmi and Shanti (1998) reported that self-employment has improved women’s position in the home and in the community. Group formation has helped to diminish domestic violence. Moreover this collective work has allowed women to increase their self-esteem and
to plan, question and organize to confront inequality at both public and personal levels.

Shanthi (1998) conducted study on the role of voluntary organization in Rural Development in general and women development in particular. All the four organizations of the study are doing appreciable service to the poor and the socially depressed groups. All four organizations serve people who are least educated and deep rooted in customs and traditions.

4) Women and NGOs.

Vindhyya and Kalpana (1989) noted that all the programmes of Bhagavathula Charitable Trust (BCT) focused on women’s participation subsequent income earning activities served as an effective base for organizing and mobilizing the women, using the forum of the mahila mandal under Bhagavathula charitable Trust. It is interesting to note that the evolution of BCT from relief to development to focus on women took place in gradual stages in Marripalem, where the women in spite of their ‘Ghosha’ were the first one to take the initiative at every stage. It was felt that educating the women meant educating the entire family and earning of the women will automatically lead to changes in the power structure of the family and consequently in society as a whole.
Janet (1992) in his study indicated that the major active participants in NGO1 programme had been women. A number of Mahila Mandals were organized and started functioning and the positive interest from women was far greater than that of shown by men. Women are of the opinion that the organization offered them an alternative space and were beginning to recognize latest possibilities for change and development.

Kumawat and Sharma (1997) reported that the independent variables like education, social participation, frequency of contact achievement motivation, attitude and aspiration were positively and significantly related with socio-economic status of women under Nirman Sainath (NGOs).

Velsamy and Manoharan (1998) perceived that women beneficiaries participated in all activities of the NGO and found to have increased outside contact and knowledge about various development programmes after their participation in NGO programme.

Bhat (1999) reported that a few NGOs in India have succeeded largely in imparting skills of income generation and micro entrepreneurship development among the weaker sections of the society, women tribal, and other.
Mathiot (1999) revealed that most of the NGOs concentrated their efforts towards women centered development, primarily because they perceived women to be more responsible for their families and because they are more oppressed. These NGOs believed that grass root development work can succeed, only if women are central actors in this approach of women centre development and also reported that women development workers are seeking ways to keep away themselves from traditional norms and gain social respect and legitimacy for their work.

Jacob (2000) in his study reported that membership in the Niramalgram Vanita Dairy Central Society (NVDCS) a registered NGO of rural women provides women with an institution of their own which gives them an opportunity of income earning of their own as well as decision making, money from sale of milk reaches in the hands of women and it generates some amount of power and freedom for women and also reported that the annual income of the dairy especially that of low income groups has increased due to NVDCS support.

Choudhary (2000) felt that a large number of voluntary organization from the beginning have worked in the field of welfare of women and many new organizations have come up and have taken up various aspects of women development and empowerment. Their area of activities include creation of awareness about women affairs and
problems, reorganizing voluntary efforts towards new approach to women’s issues and problems.

Sundaram (2000) felt that voluntary organizations are the most appropriate agencies to empower women. By organizing Self Help Groups (SHG) and promoting literacy among rural women they can contribute to the greater extent towards empowerment of women. Also some voluntary agencies have exclusively taken up women’s issues and problems

Yadappanavar (2000) observed the activities performed by Sumangali Sava Ashrama in several areas including training in handloom, craft vocational training, screen printing, spinning, crèche, workers training, community services and economic services, health and sanitation women’s development social forestry, poverty alleviation and family counseling have helped to the greater extent for women empowerment.

Mohanan (2000) observed that the thrift and credit programme has been generally accepted by the NGOs as a powerful tool of poverty eradication and development. Not only that, several new NGOs have been formed for the promotion of micro credit among the poor particularly women.
The review of studies mentioned above revealed that, the development and functioning of voluntary organizations have been studied from various angles. The studies have covered almost the entire length and breadth of the country. While some studies covered a large number of organizations spread all over the country, others were confined to detailed case studies of just a single organization. The studies have clearly brought out that voluntary organizations have grown in India over the years but their growth has been uneven and not uniform all over the country. Many organizations have adopted novel and different strategies in planning and implementing their programmes. Some among them have adopted an integrative approach to the problem of the people and come up with a package of programmes for them while other have adopted the project approach confining their programme to a particular area. While some voluntary organization have sought the participation approach and involved the beneficiaries in their programmes, other have not done so. The impact of programmes on the target groups has been reported to be significant and positive. NGOs directed their efforts more towards women centered development programmes and also found a majority of women had actively participated in NGO especially in income generating programmes and micro entrepreneurship development programmes which helped to raise
their status of living and social awareness. In this way they are functioning in their unique way for the development of women.

However, the subject of voluntary organizations is extremely vast and complex. Moreover the voluntary organizations have gained tremendous importance in recent years in the task of ensuring national development particularly in the areas of welfare of women and children. The government has also recognized them as an important partner in the process of development. Hence, it is very much essential that their various facets are studied in detail so as to bring to light their strength and weaknesses.

The number of studies conducted, so far have not been enough considering the number of voluntary organizations functioning in the country and the importance they deserve. Further over a period time the VOs have undergone various changes in their character and functioning, which require to be examined. Hence the present study has been attempted to look at functioning of an important NGO in Bijapur district of Karnataka state.

Relevance of the study:

Development is intended to bring in a desired change in various aspects of social life, extending its effects to all other areas. It is not only confined to physical indicators but also covers social and cultural
dimensions. The task of development is so gigantic that it has been universally accepted that government alone cannot tackle the problems of development. Total success of plans and realization of development objectives by any government alone is almost an impossible task. The scope for trying alternatives has been conceived in the form of people's participation through formation of many groups and Voluntary organizations constituting the Non Governmental sector. In this context the present study is a sincere effort to highlight the developmental role of the NGO particularly in the welfare and development of rural women.

The review of literature presented in the previous paragraph reveals the dearth of studies in this part of the country. Hardly any study is found in Bijpaur district. In this context, the present study is relevant.

It will be an agreeable fact that the process of achieving rapid socio-economic development will also expedited through participation of NGOs along with the government in the contemporary socio-economic situation prevailing in the country. The prospective role of such organizations in a region will be more contextual at this juncture. Hence, the present study finds relevance and assumes place in the saga of sociological literature, as it relates to the understanding of the role of NGOs in this part.
The district of Bijapur being one of the backward and drought-prone areas of the state, it shelters a large number of NGOs, which are also growing in number. The degree of voluntary action naturally seems to be on an increasing trend. Thus a study on the contributory role of NGOs towards the welfare and development of rural women is sure to be contextual.