INTRODUCTION

The proposed research on "Contribution of Non-Governmental Organisation to the Development of Tirunelveli District" attempts to trace the history and contribution of Non-Governmental Organisations to the wholesome development of the society in and around Tirunelveli.

Tirunelveli is a city in the Indian State of Tamil Nadu. It is believed to be of great antiquity and has been in existence since the Sangam period. Stone Age tools have been recovered from the town which was ruled by the Pandyas, Cholas, the later Pandyas, the Vijayanagar Empire, the Madurai Naiks and the Nawabs of the Carnatic. In 1801 the region came under the control of the British and remained so till the Indian independence in 1947.

Tirunveli District has played an important role in the solemn growth of the social and polical history of Tamil Nadu. Even during the British rule the spark of freedom struggle was lit up by many heroic deeds of Pulithevan and Kattabomman, the Poligars of
Nelcattansevel and Panchalamkurichi respectively. They were the forerunners of freedom Struggle in 1751 and in 1799. These heroic personalities were followed by V.O. Chidambaram Pillai who started the 'Swadeshi Navigation Company' against the British Navigation Company. The heroic songs were composed and sung by Subramoniya Bharathi, a great poet of Tirunelveli. Another hero who had gone to the extent of murdering Collector Ash of Tirunelveli District was Vanchinathan.

These personalities formed voluntary organisations for political action and mass mobilisation for the struggle of independence. Pulithevan and Kattabomman formed Non-Governmental Organisations. Pulithevan's Organisation was known as 'Western Poligar Association' and Kattabomman's Association was termed as 'Eastern Poligar Association', V.O.Chidambaram Pillai's organisation was called 'Swadeshi Association', where as Vanchinathen's Organisation was known as 'Extremist Association'.

Likewise, in Tirunelveli District Christian Charities and Missions also formed Non-Governmental Organizations. An Italian
missionary scholar who visited south India in 1711 was Constanzo Beshi familiarly known as Veeramamunivar. He led the Jesuit Madura Mission, purely a Non-Governmental Organisation. He mastered Tamil language. He compiled several Tamil dictionaries. His greatest poetical work is "The Thembavani" (Ornament of poems as sweet as honey). He translated Thirukkural into Latin.

In 1838 Caldwell a missionary, came to Tirunelveli and was consecrated as Bishop of Tiruneveli in 1877. He had a voluntary organization known as 'Propagation of Gospel Mission'. He studied the ancient records of Tirunelveli and wrote the Book. 'A Political and General History of the District of Tirunelveli'.

Another great missionary scholar who came to Tiruneveli was G.U.Pope. He was born on 24th April 1820 in England. In 1839 he came to South India and settled in Sawyerpuram in Tirunelveli District. He translated Tirukkural Thiruvasakam and Naaladiyar into English.
Thus Tirunelveli was a centre of Non-Governmental Organisation even during the seventeenth century. But these Non-Governmental Organizations were formed and developed with the intention of attainment of freedom or with the aim of enriching the Tamil language. No doubt these missionaries founded schools and colleges in the latter half of the 19th century. But Tirunelveli remained economically backward. Almost, all sections of the people are living in this district.

Voluntary Originations have to come forward to uplift the condition of the poverty stricken multitudes. Voluntary action is autonomous and flexible. It is initiated by a group of like minded people to change and transform the socio-economic life of the people especially the weaker section based on social justice and not merely for charity or relief. Initiating the action the group may work formally or informally. When the group works formally, it comes to be known as voluntary organization.

The volunteer means a person who comes forward on his own, without force and compulsion by others and does serve for the
betterment of a person, group and community without expecting any return for the services. The volunteer should have the qualities, such as a sense of love and excitement, very high commitment and productivity, change in social outlook, shift from cynicism to optimism, strong will for dedication, determination and devotion for the voluntary movement.

The term Non-Governmental Organisation is popularly used to denote association working outside the formal administrative framework of the Government. Voluntary work when done in an organized form blooms into an organization with set aims and objectives and plans to mobilise the support of the needy who are out to seek help, succour and direction for their development. It is a two way process, the volunteers identifying the needy on the one hand and the needy seeking help from them on the other. They strive to promote the lives of the oppressed, powerless, deserted and poverty stricken in the rural areas.

Non-Governmental Organizations are at present looked up as an important instrument for the promotion of developmental
activities particularly at grass root levels. Some Non-Governmental Organisations are helping weaker sections of the society such as small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes while certain other Non-Governmental Organisations are drilling tubewells for supply of water, setting up schools and colleges in rural areas, undertaking work to provide better nutrition developing programmes in family welfare and population control and organizing Vocational training to enable the students to set up their own outfits.

Voluntary action in social welfare in India in earlier times was based on caste and religion. Buddhism and Jainism had contributed to the concept of Dharma in the form of pure service. These ideals were put into practice by Ashoka and it can be presumed that voluntary actions had their genesis during his days. In the medieval period Christianity had achieved a lot in human service. The Hindu religion established charities and religious institutions as social service organizations. During the ancient and medieval times voluntarism operated freely and exclusively in the
fields of education, medicine, cultural promotion and even succour in crises like droughts, floods, epidemics and foreign invasions. Philanthropy was widespread. The role of voluntarism continued during the early Mughal and British periods.

The works of voluntary agencies in social development were taken as systematically organized endeavours only in the nineteenth century. Prominent among them were Atmiya Society (1815), Prarthana Sabha, Royal Asiatic Society (1834), Arya Samaj (1875), Theosophical Society (1883), Indian National Social Reform Association (1897) and Ramakrishna Mission (1898). During this time the Christian Missionaries also played a vital role in the realm of health and education. They also rendered pioneering work in the field of social welfare by setting up of orphanages and institutes for the handicapped.

During this time a number of non-religious bodies took keen interest in the social welfare activities. The 'Servants of India Society (1905) laid the foundation of secular voluntary action in India. Yet another tradition was Gandhi's 'Constructive work'
programmes. In Tamil Nadu, Spenser Hatch undertook a programme to develop the rural poor in an around Marthandom in Kanyakumari District under the auspices of the Young Men's Christian Association in 1929.

The Christian and Gandhian approaches continued to predominate even after independence. Welfare approach was dominant in voluntary agencies in the 1950s and sixties. The setting up of the Central Social Welfare Board in 1953 was a milestone in the history of voluntary action. Its main function was to provide financial support for setting up of new voluntary organisations.

In the late 1970s and earlier 1980s the liberal flow of foreign fund played an important role in the mushroom growth of voluntary organisations in Tamil Nadu and Bihar. The Non-Governmental Organisations received explicit recognition from the Government during this period. With the failure of the state in reaching the poor and the marginalized, the Non-Governmental Organisations in India have come to play a very important role.
Tirunelveli District has played a pivotal role in the social and political history of Tamil Nadu. In Tirunelveli District Christian Charities and Missions established, schools, colleges, hospitals and welfare services for the poor in the latter half of the 19th century in Palayamkottai, Nazereth, Sawyerpuram, Meignanapuram, Muthalur and Thuthukkudi.

In addition to Christian missionaries many Non-Governmental Organisations have been founded to eradicate the miseries of the destitutes. Though there are many Non-Governmental Organisations in Tiruneveli yet certain prominent Non-Governmental Organisaitons are doing yeomen service to redress the grievances of the poverty stricken multitude.

Tiruneveli has been an economically backward District in Tamil Nadu. Water problem has been acute in many places in Tiruneveli District. Apart from the areas on the banks of river Tambiraparani, the interior areas suffer for want of water. Many people are unemployed, destitute children are common, forsaken ladies are uncared for, widows are neglected, diseases have become
an accepted norm everywhere and the hygienic conditions stare in the face of the downtrodden

To ameliorate the sufferings of the people of Tirunelveli District, the Non-Governmental Organisations, such as Tirunelveli Social Service Society, (TSSS) Social Change and Development Organisation familiarly known as SCAD, Saranalayam Non-Governmental Organisation, Vaanmuhil Organisation, Arumbugal NGO, Peace Trust NGO Purachi Trust NGO, Nava Jeevan NGO, Siva Trust NGO, Vidyarambam Trust NGO and Educational and Economic Empowerment Trust NGO have been doing their best to improve the life conditions of the people of Tirunelveli District. The primary aim of the dissertation is to highlight the services rendered by these Non-Governmental Organisations for the betterment of the downtrodden people of Tirunelveli District. Thanks to their dedicated services Tirunelveli District has been marching ahead of other districts in many areas. Hence the research work 'the Role of NGOs in Tirunelveli District' has been selected for study.
Scope and Purpose of this study

Non-Governmental Organisations have emerged as third sector today, next to the Government and the Corporate sector in Tirunelveli District. Non-Governmental Organisations occupy a prominent place in every walk of life. Their work is people – centred and hence they reach the unreached rural poor and live and work with them. They have multiple roles like organizing, educating, motivating, guiding, awareness, creating, training, capacity building empowering, advocating and lobbying to bring about desired social development in the District. They have wider scope to promote Self Help Groups and micro-financing system in the District. Their roles have contributed a lot to the social, economical and cultural mosaic of the District. If a study is attempted to bring to light these aspects of these organisations that would go a long way in the history of the Non-Governmental Organisations of Tamil Nadu in general and their contributions to Tirunelveli in particular.
The findings of the present study will add to the knowledge about the Non-Governmental Organisations and their role in social upliftment. The study will throw light on the different aspects of the functioning of the Non-Governmental Organisations. It will also be a valuable feedback to the organisations and planners in the form of beneficiary opinion about the organisations and their programmes. The findings of the study will be of immense use to all who are connected with the issues of development of the society and strengthening of Non-Governmental Organisations.

**Hypothesis**

The hypothesis of the study is to determine the contributions made by the selected organisations in the field of Socio- Economic and Cultural Welfare in a historical perspective. It envisages the nature of activities and programmes undertaken by the selected organisations for the wholesome development of the society in Tirunveli. It is to explore their comprehensive programme – outlook in child development, family welfare, education, health, environment and community development. It is to examine the
strength, weakness, opportunities and threats in their programmes and to find out whether the benefits of such programmes have been ploughed back on the target associated with the community. It is too analyse whether the Non-Governmental Organisations in Tirunelveli District have attained any sustainability or on the path to sustainability. It is to trace and assess the noble deeds done by Philanthropists and their commitment to the society. The assessment is to study the present status of Non-Governmental Organisations in Tirunelveli District and the future scope for the Non-Governmental Organisations in the thrust areas.

**Methodology**

The proposed research work, 'Role of Non-Governmental Organisations in Tirunelveli District' has been based on primary and secondary sources. The primary data is generated through interview schedules designed for the chief functionaries of the Non-Governmental Organisations, as well as their beneficiaries. In addition unstructured interviews were held with the Chief officials of the related bodies and social workers of the Districts, The
directors, co-ordinators and the staff of almost all the ten Non-Governmental Organisations in Tirunelveli had been interviewed. In presenting this dissertation the Interview type Methodology has been primarily adopted. Various Government officers, Collectors and notable persons were also consulted in bringing out a coherent account of this study. The second type of methodology followed has been the discussion type methodology. Many reliable pieces of information could be ascertained through discussions. Various periodicals, magazines and hand outs issued by the Non-Governmental Organisations of Tirunelveli District had been widely perused and in arriving at conclusion. Analytical methodology has also been followed. Authentic facts have been brought out by means of inductive and deductive processes.

Survey type of Methodology has been adopted to bring out statistical analysis.
Survey of Source Materials

Primary Sources: Personal interviews with the organisers, Directors, sponsors, Government officials, notable public servants and the beneficiaries form the basis for the primary collection of source materials for the study of the dissertation. The institutional documents maintained by the various Non-Governmental Organisations in and around Tirunelveli also constitute principal source of information for the study.

To find out various facts of the formation of the Non-Governmental Organisations and their dimensions of contributions to the society, a survey method was adopted. With a well constructed questionnaire for organisers and beneficiaries, the required information was gathered and analysed. Field visits were performed to the social welfare institutions such as rural industries, hospitals, schools and colleges, orphanages and old age homes and organisations such as Self Help Groups and primary pieces of information were collected. In addition to this, annual reports,
constitutions and press notes associated with different Non-Governmental Organisations were perused for the study.

The primary sources that are available in Tamil Nadu Archives Chennai, help us trace the origin and growth of Voluntarism in India and Tamil Nadu. The Five Year Plan reports and proceedings of the Government, mainly Government Orders and Administrative Reports pertaining to the Departments of Education Social Welfare, Health and Agriculture provide information about the supports extended to the Non-Governmental Organisations from the Government.

**Secondary Sources**

Perusal of Secondary sources such as Encyclopedia of social change in India, Encyclopedia District Gazetteers of India (South zone) human Resource Index and other published works on NGOs and by NGOs are of much use for this study. The Souvenire like Golden Jubilee Souvenire, Silver Jubilee Volumes and Anniversary
volumes – Sourvenirs – of the respective organisations provide elaborate information about their achievement.

Dailies such as, The Hindu, Indian Express, Dinamalar, Dinamani, Dinathanthi and Dinakaran and journals such as the Indian Journal Public Administration from Delhi, Social Welfare (Delhi), People's Action (Delhi) and Kurushetra from Delhi replenish the researcher with the information pertaining to the services of the Non-Governmental Organisations.


The available secondary works namely John Clerk's, "Democratizing Development" N.C. Narasimha Reddy's, "The Role of Voluntary Organization", D.Rajasekar's "Development Programmes and NGOS", D.Paul Choudry's, 'Social Welfare
Administration Through Voluntary Agencies", A. Thomas's "NGOS and the Limit to Empowerment", Vinita Viswanath's, "NGO and Women's Developments in Rural South India", Joel Bhose's, "Voluntary Action by N.G.O.s and Rural Development", Lydia Suhut and Luc Schut and Luc Verhey's, "The Role of NGOS in the Promotion and Protection of Human Right's, Devasahayam's, 'Children's Rights', R.N. Pati's "Rehabilitation of Child Labour in India, M.G. Inamadar's, "Women and Social Transformation" provide us sufficient information about the study of Non-Governmental Organisations in Tirunelveli District. Hence a micro-level study, "Contribution of Non-Governmental Organisation to the Development of Tirunelveli District” is attempted.

**Chapterisation**

The present study 'The History of the Non-Governmental Organisations and their Contribution to the Development of Tirunelveli District' is based on the careful study of the source materials on the lines of the aforesaid objectives. Keeping in view
of the growth of Non-Governmental Organisations and their contribution made towards the development of the society in various fields this study is constituted with ten chapters.

**Introduction**

An attempt has been made to explain the meanings of 'voluntarism', 'Voluntary organisations' and 'Non-Governmental Organisations'. This introductory threshold highlights the need and importance of Non-Governmental Organisations. While giving a conceptual framework for the study, the importance and scope of study, the period taken for study, the area of study, the review of literature, the objectives, methodology, hypothesis and the source material that have been used in this study are mentioned in the Introduction.

**The First Chapter**

The First Chapter deals with the origin and growth of Non-Governmental Organisations throughout the world. There existed Non-Governmental Organisations with different perspectives. The
earlier Non-Governmental Organisations had the aim of forming societies for the progress of religious and political developments. Only after the formation of United Nations Organisations concrete steps were taken to legalise the activities of Non-Governmental Organisations. Since then, Non-Governmental Organisations have begun their multifarious activities in helping the poor people throughout the World. Financial assistance was provided by the philanthropists and wealthy nations. Thus began the activities of Non-Governmental Organisations throughout the world.

**The Second Chapter**

The Second Chapter dwells on the origin and growth of Non-Governmental Organisations in India. To understand the evolution and growth of voluntary movement in India truly in a historical perspective, an attempt has been made here to trace such of those voluntary efforts both in India and in Tamil Nadu with the assumption that it would help to understand the Voluntary organisations, their need and necessity and their contribution to the society by and large. The Non-Governmental Organisations such as
Arya Samaj, Brahmo Samaj, Ramakrishna Mission in North India and the Theosophical Society in Chennai and the Self Development Organisation in Kerala were the forerunners of Non-Governmental Organisations in India and Tamil Nadu. Gandhian concept and Vinobha Bhave's Bhoodan Movement also crystalised the growth of Non-Governmental Organisations in India.

The Third Chapter

The Third Chapter narrates the origin and growth of Non-Governmental Organisations in Tirunelveli. Since the subject for the study is based on Non-Governmental Organisations in Tirunelveli this chapter analyses the origin and growth of the ten prominent Non-Governmental Organisations in detail. To redress the grievances of the people of Tirunelveli District ten Non-Governmental Organisations toil hard. These Non-Governmental Organisations in Tirunelveli are, Social Change and Development Organization, Saranalayam Trust, Vaan Muhil Trust, Arumbugal NGO, Peace Trust NGO, Purachi Trust NGO, Navajeevan NGO, Siva Trust NGO, Vidyarambam Trust NGO and Educational and
Economic Empowerment Trust NGO. Owing to the steps taken by these Non-Governmental Organisations the living conditions of the poverty stricken multitudes have improved much. The origin, aims and objectives, management, fund-raising and contributions made by the aforesaid NGOs in the various fields of development like education, health care, women empowerment and child development have been provided. Literacy is the essential condition for the national development.

The Fourth Chapter

Describes the services rendered by the Non-Governmental Organisations towards the educational development in Tirunelveli District. During the later part of the nineteenth century Christian missionaries came forward to form Non-Governmental Organisations in the attire of 'Mission Formations'. Many foreign scholars, G.U.Pope, Beschi and Caldwell contributed a lot to the progress of education in Tirunelveli District. Many schools and colleges were founded by them and thus the missionaries were the forerunners of educational development in Tirunevlei District. The
set up created by the missionaries was continued by the Non-Governmental Organisations which were started in Tiruneveli District in the beginning of the Twentieth century. A praiseworthy progress in the field of technical education thanks to the efforts of the Non-Governmental Organisations for the poor destitute children in Tirunelveli District is highlighted in this chapter. The educational institutions established by the Non-Governmental Organisations contributed towards the educational development are specified. A note on the efforts of the Non-Governmental Organisations in the Non formal education and adult education is also mentioned.

The Fifth Chapter

The progress of the country is measured by the social and health services provided to the people. The health and medical services extended to the people of Tirunelveli District by the Non-Governmental Organisations are described in the fifth chapter.
The contributions of the Non-Governmental Organisations towards maternity health and family welfare are also specified. The awareness campaigns conducted by the Non-Governmental Organisations on sanitation and cleanliness are also mentioned. The hospitals and health centres established by the Non-Governmental Organisations in Tirunelveli District and their valuable services extended to the people of Tirunelveli and the suburban areas are also presented. This chapter also describes the programmes implemented by the Non-Governmental Organisations to reduce HIV related denial, stigma and discrimination and enable the people to live with HIV and AIDS and to provide access to health care and support. Mention has also been made in this Chapter regarding the care and treatment accredited to leprosy patients.

The Sixth Chapter

The sixth chapter brings forth the efforts made by the Non-Governmental Organisations towards the progress of women. From the ancient times women have been discriminated in society. The
chapter describes at length the greater attempts made by the Non-Governmental Organisations for the progress of women by facilitating them to organize Self Help Groups. Through the formation of Self Help Groups Non-Governmental Organisations' educate them, train them in vocational skills, motivate them to set up micro enterprises, promote women leadership and empower them. The activities of the NGO in motivating the women to participate in Panchayat Raj is also mentioned. The concept of empowering women rather than developing them is also narrated. Children are the important asset of any country. Child labour was prevalent in Tirunelveli District. The strenuous efforts taken by the NGOs almost prevented the employment of child labour. This chapter also deals with the programmes implemented by the NGOs and contributions made by them to prevent the child labour, to educate them through formal and non-formal education and rehabilitate the children. The chapter also specifies the contributions made by NGOs to reduce the school dropouts through awareness campaigns. The centres such as creches, balwadis,
homes for children and short stay homes established by the NGOs
to provide good environment for the children are also mentioned.

The diverse ecosystems and the natural resources, source of
livelihood for many are under threat of exploitation. Deforestation
for commercial causes are devastating the core of the ecosystem.
For the last two decades the global concern for protecting the
environments and preserving the ecological balance on the earth is
increasing.

The Seventh Chapter

The seventh chapter deals with the various programmes
organized by the NGOs in protecting the environment. It also deals
with the efforts of the NGOs in sensitizing the people in handling
the wastes to reduce pollution through various mass actions.
Community actions initiated by the NGOs to keep environment
clean in the urban and rural areas in also highlighted.

In Tirunelveli District except the Tambiraparani river basin,
agriculture mostly depends on the irrigation sources like wells and
tanks. Most of the cultivable lands are rainfed in nature. Drought, use of fertilizers and pesticides have made agriculture unremunerative.

**The Eighth Chapter**

The eighth chapter deals with the activities of NGOs in promoting sustainable agriculture. It highlights the various programmes implemented by the NGOs in promoting the sustainable agriculture through multicropping system, soil conservation, upgrading soil fertility, integrated farming, protection of biodiversity, integrated pest management, post harvest technologies and marketing of agricultural produce.

**The Concluding Chapter**

The concluding chapter of this dissertation brings in the tantamount activities taken by the NGOs of Tirunelveli District to bring about a radical change in the life of the people of this District. The concluding chapter also mentions the benefits which the people of the rural and urban areas of Tirunelveli District experienced.