CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study:

In post-independent India, the concept of social welfare has assumed considerable importance, particularly in view of the fact that a large section of the population, both in the rural as well as in the urban areas, are living under conditions of squalor, misery, uncertainties of employment and income, unattended for children, and a host of other problems which have assumed grave proportions in spite of the concerted efforts made in the direction of minimising the startling social inequalities, exploitation of the disadvantaged groups, and to assure a certain minimum regarding their future expectations. However, one cannot be very sure whether such efforts have borne fruit in bringing about even the minimum of changes in the fatalistic attitudes of the common mass of people.

Frustrations in different contexts seem to plague the society. The rationale of social regeneration and collective well-being adopted by the government in the context of a rational plan of development at
various levels—Community, region and the nation—seem to fall short of the expectations, explicit or implicit, of those who are supposed to be the beneficiaries of such plans and programmes. There seems to be a chasm existing between what the government does, and what the people desire. It has led to the gradual erosion of trust and confidence in whatever the public agencies do. This lack of trust and confidence in what the public agencies do for the people, is perhaps, one of the strongest reasons why the common mass of people, being bound by tradition and usage, are turning more and more to such sources of comfort and solace as family, kinship, community, and religion. This tendency is to be expected in a situation where the planning for welfare is done on a highly centralised basis.

Religion has been viewed as a whole system of beliefs and sentiments which provide the necessary solace and comfort to those who are distressed and disadvantaged in society. Thus, apart from the purely spiritual function which religion is recognised to fulfil, there is also the social function of religion whereby religion has claimed and received, to a greater or lesser extent, authority and control over social welfare,
education, recreation etc., as these institutions bore on some aspect of religious life.

Theoretical Orientations:

What are the implications of an enhanced interest which people show towards the traditional institutions, including religion? Do the people let religion influence their routine activities? If so, do they really wish that religion, as conceived by them, should be a definite force in shaping the secular activities, especially in the context of ever-growing influence of urbanism and industrialization? Does such commitment to religion assure them of certain advantages which they would not derive in the absence of such commitment? In other words, does religion provide the necessary support to secular activities by making them more meaningful and acceptable to one who is a believer?

All societies exist in a universe of dynamics. They change over time. The rate and mode of change varies from society to society depending upon the rapidity with which changes take place in the fields of science and technology, ideologies, values,
institutional structures and functions. The traditional Indian society is undergoing transformation in several spheres under the impact of such processes like industrialisation, urbanisation and modernisation. Change and continuity seem to coexist, and the element of continuity is to be discovered in the factor of religion.

It is often debated whether religion has any influence on the secular institutions or not. The more popular view that the influence of religion on the secular institutions is practically non-existent seeks support from the reported views of Karl Marx and other thinkers of the nineteenth century. While the advances in modern science and technology were considered as the product of rationality, religion itself was considered as antithetical to this overt manifestation of rationality. From this point of view religion was relegated to the sphere of ignorance and superstition.

In fact, the retarded economic growth of the developing countries like India, it was suggested, was principally due to the dominant influence of religion. But one can easily discover that such a view is built
upon the presumption that religion does have an influence on the secular institutions. The interpenetration of the 'religious' and the 'secular' is brought out by S.C. Dube when he states:

"... no society is completely secular, nor all the basic teachings of religion dysfunctional. Many characteristic attitudes, dispositions, values and cultural orientations that emanate from religious traditions are, perhaps, worth preserving. A secular society would not preserve them off-hand."

The crucial role of religion in secular matters was stressed in the writings of Max Weber and Emile Durkheim. Their views found increasing acceptance in the present century which has resulted in an increasing interest in religion. But the positivists like Spencer, Fraser and Taylor have suggested

that in matters of religion men do not apprehend a reality outside themselves but rather come to imagine, because of certain mysterious aspects of human existence, spirits, gods and supernatural forces. E.B. Taylor, for instance, defined religion as "a belief in spiritual beings." Such institutionalized ignorance and superstition as bases of religious life upheld by the positivists was strongly opposed by Durkheim.  

He argued that religious beliefs and practices are rooted in society itself, that is, in the nature of human interactions and not in ignorance and superstition as the positivists maintained. The religion of primitive man, Durkheim states, is the symbolic expression of his awareness of the social system on which he depends not only for the material necessities of life, but for psychic needs as well. According to Durkheim, religious institutions embody in symbolic form some of the most profound insights of men. The form which the religious symbols take may

change, but there is something basic within them that does not change and lasts so long as human societies continue to exist. Hence religion continues to play a key role in the affairs of man and society because of its socially useful functions.

The determinists like Karl Marx and Freidrich Engles, stressed that the structure of society is an economic creation, and that changes in social structure are essentially a sequel to economic changes. MacIver and Page, citing Marx and Engels, state:

The cultural life of man, his intellectual, aesthetic, spiritual life, his creeds and philosophies, and the social forms which their vehicles, are the reflections of the economic order.

Marx and Engels insisted that "the legal code, family systems, cultural forms, religious doctrines, and all the rest are only the reflection, expression or translation of economic relationships." 6 For the

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economic determinists, the economic institutions of society are the ultimate source of all social change. Changes in all other institutions represent nothing more than adjustments to prior changes in the economic institutions on which they are dependent for their very existence.

Max Weber offered a significant challenge to the economic determinists. In his famous essay on the Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Weber poses the problem of the relation between religious beliefs and practical ethics, particularly the ethics of economic activity. He sought to demonstrate that without the protestant reformation modern western capitalism would never have developed in the present form. The Protestants were encouraged to think of their occupation as a calling, as a means, by which they could realise the grace of God. The driving force behind economic enterprise is not the spirit of greed but a spirit of dedication and commitment to work.7

Weber observed that the emergence of the spirit of capitalism was due to the protestant ethic in general, and more especially due to the religious ethic of Calvinism and Puritanism. Thus, according to Weber, economic institutions are not the uncaused cause of all social change. Rather they are a part of a complex social system in which change may originate at various points, with significant consequences for all the other parts of the system. Weber was careful to point out that he was not trying to replace economic determinism with a theory of religious determinism; his goal was to challenge what he regarded as the unrealistic and over-simplified theory of social change advocated by the economic determinists. 8

Weber was successful in establishing the relevance of religion to social process by taking up a comparative study of world religions, one among which was a study of the Religion of India. His main problem was to discover why religion did not provide the necessary support for the development of the spirit

of capitalism in countries like India, while it did assist in the emergence of such institutions in the West. His main conclusion was that religion, as such, was not an inhibiting factor in the establishment of capitalist institutions, but it was the rigidity of the social structure, contributed largely by the rigidity of the family structure, that thwarted the growth of capitalism.

In the face of these views expressed by thinkers like Max Weber and Emile Durkheim, one cannot perhaps, infer the demise of religion in the modern world. Besides, there is the fact of religion taking manifold shapes and forms, leading to the rise of new faiths, and new directions of religious endeavour. Religion has become a force to be reckoned with in modern societies. In this connection, one cannot be indifferent to the view that much of the social aberrations of the contemporary world could be traced to the weakening of the influence of religious beliefs and ideas in human activities. This view, perhaps, gives rise to the fairly widespread conviction that religion is a crucial factor in the understanding of the process of social transformation in contemporary life.
The theories of secularism and urbanism suggest that the influence of religion and religious institutions on secular activities is substantially reduced or even eliminated altogether. Wilson\(^9\) contends that through the process of secularization, religious thoughts, practice and institutions lose much of their social significance. Dube observes that in modern industrial societies the hold of religious belief over different aspects of life declines, although interest in religion as a phenomenon persists. It sheds much of its collective and communal overtones and becomes largely a personal concern.\(^{10}\)

But one of the important findings of Gerhard Lenski's empirical study of six hundred residents of Detroit is that religious organizations remain vigorous and influential in contemporary American society (which is supposed to be very materialistic). The major finding of his study is that religion in various ways is constantly influencing the daily lives of the masses.

of men and women in the modern American metropolis. Moreover, through its impact on individuals, religion makes an impact on all other institutional systems of the community. Hence the influence of religion operates at the social as well as the personal levels.11

The present study is an effort to examine the role of religious organisation in the fulfilment of goals specifically in a secular setting taking under purview the divergent view-points and research findings presented in the preceding pages.

The religious tradition in India has varied sources. We come across many religious institutions having a long tradition of social service in the socio-religious history of our country. In fact, early charities and welfare services were channelled through the religious institutions. To illustrate, the Virasaiva religion, originating as a Bhakti movement, and gradually consolidating itself into a Saivite sect, it has been endeavouring to provide

certain welfare services through the institution of its monasteries, known locally as 'mathas' or maths. While most of these institutions are basically meant to provide devotional services and propagation of the tenets of Virasaivism, some of these institutions, at least, include in their programme of activities certain provisions for social services and educational advancement. Such centres continue to play their role as centres of social service even today.

In the promotion of social welfare, the role of Virasaiva maths in general and of Jagadguru Peethas (Major seats of religious power and control) in particular, in this part of the country, needs a special study, particularly when the Virasaiva maths are found to be somewhat cosmopolitan in their approach towards admitting students, recruiting personnel, and treating devotees and clients. The heads of these religious organisations are realising the need for changing the structure and functioning of their organisations so as to put them into the main stream of national life.

The present study, being an analysis in depth
of the role of a Virasaiva Math in promoting social welfare in Dharwad district, assumes importance, particularly in a period like the present, characterized as it is by a certain disenchantment with the past and avowed secularism.

Earlier Studies:

As at present, there are very few studies undertaken by social scientists with the specific task of assessing the role of religious organizations in terms of their strengths and weaknesses in rendering social welfare services and of identifying the factors that motivate these organizations to participate in social welfare work. The study of Sadashivaiah\textsuperscript{12} is in the field of Sociology of Religion; it refers to the basic tenets of Virasalivism and traces the ideals of Virasaiva monasticism. The study of Sadyojata Swamiji\textsuperscript{13} reflects mainly a historical perspective.


by tracing the origin and development of specific Virasaiva maths and provides a detailed account of the organization of maths in general in Karnataka. Another study that draws our attention is the one undertaken by Shivarudrappa\textsuperscript{14} which again is a historical survey of maths with a particular stress on education. Yet another study of historical nature is the one recently completed by Tonnemane\textsuperscript{15}. This happens to be a historical account of a math written mainly on the basis of available unpublished documents like Kadatas maintained by that math.

**The Research Problem:**

The main stress in a welfare state is on the provision, development, and promotion of social welfare services. In the task of providing such welfare services, not only the state and the Central Governments

but also the voluntary welfare organizations and institutions are involved. The welfare services provided by the voluntary institutions and organizations include those provided by religious institutions which have been, by tradition, associated with providing the necessary succour to helpless persons like the aged, the destitutes, and the orphan in the community while at the same time attending to the religious needs of its own circle of believers.

In the context of a modern secular state a study of the role of religious organizations in the promotion of social welfare assumes considerable importance. The main focus of the present study is on the appraisal of the role of religious organization in the promotion of social welfare. The key question which underlies this investigation is: what are the factors and forces that induce or inhibit a religious organization to take up or abjure the field of welfare activity meant for specific classes of people? How are the needs and expectations of such classes of people ascertained and established? And what type of institutional arrangements are made for meeting such needs and expectations? There are, further, such
questions as: whether the promotion of social welfare activities by a religious organization is dysfunctional; whether the undertaking of such welfare activities by a religious organization comes into conflict with the religious aspirations and religious goals of those who identify themselves with the religious organization. If a religious organization continues to be actively associated with welfare activities, what steps are taken to establish the justification for such activities. These are some of the questions which are meant to be taken up for investigation by the present study.

In undertaking this investigation, the researcher is familiar with some of the conflicting views regarding the social relevance of religion. On the one hand, we have the well-known views of Émile Durkheim and of Max Weber who tried to establish through their own specific investigations the relevance of religion and religious ideas to society and, on the other, the contrary view of Karl Marx who considered religion as just the opiate of the people.

Through an appraisal of the role of a religious organization in social welfare, the present
study is an investigation into the crucial problem of discovering whether such a social relevance is established by the religious organization which is actively engaged in the task of promoting social welfare. Any possible discordance between the welfare ideology and the pursuit of religious goals will be inquired into.

**Scope and Aims:**

The present study views social welfare activity as a process leading to the attainment of goals of social development, and in the context of a developing country like ours, this perspective of social welfare activity seems to be pertinent. The intricate relationship between religion and society has come under close scrutiny in several sociological studies of the present century, and thus, the principles underlying the sociology of religion seems to be relevant in a study of this kind. The field of social welfare itself is largely built upon some of the sociological insights of a host of scholars who have provided the necessary framework for an understanding of the underlying forces in the developmental process.

There is no denying the fact that social
development is a result of numerous forces generated within society and of forces which impinge on society from outside. The religious factor is an integral part of culture, and as such, has certain potency in determining the way in which the social transformation is brought about.

In order to view the religious factor in a specific societal setting, and in order to provide the necessary framework for a study as this, it was thought necessary to concentrate on a single religious organization, and to examine the extent of its involvement in, and commitment to, the goals of social welfare. It is not the purpose of this investigation to hold a brief for the people at large and to find fault with the decades of planning that our country has gone through but, on the other hand, to highlight the needs and aspirations of the people who are subject to privations of various kind, and to examine why they feel as they do.

The present study starts with the religious factor—what religion means to those who see in it a way of redeeming their lives, not necessarily through
the pursuit of spiritual goals, but in the context of goals and values which could be defined as 'secular'.
The chief objectives of the present study is to examine how far a voluntary organization like a religious organization is capable and competent to provide social welfare services, and to estimate the nature and magnitude of such services.

To achieve this objective, it has been attempted to cover the aims and goals of the religious organization which has been selected for detailed study, as also its historical development, organizational structure, leadership, and other related aspects, besides a detailed analysis of the social welfare programmes and services provided through its different agencies. In relation to these programmes and activities, an attempt is made to examine such aspects like recruitment of personnel, mode of assessing their performance, and their position in the local community.

Methodology:
The present study pertains to the social
The directory maintained at the Office of the Assistant Charity Commissioner, Belgaum division, covers the public trusts registered by the Hindus, Jains, Muslims, Parsis and the Christians.

With the enactment of the Central Wakf Act, 1954, all the Muslim public trusts registered by the Assistant Charity Commissioner were transferred to the Wakf Board of Karnataka with its headquarters at Bangalore. A list of Wakf Boards of Dharwar district was obtained from this office.

The total number of religious institutions run by trusts corrected upto 1977 are as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>2911</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jain</td>
<td>34</td>
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<td>Muslim</td>
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Out of 2911 Hindu public trusts, 2803 trusts run either a math or a temple, the remaining 108 trusts are formed for charitable purposes. The Bombay Public Trusts Act of 1950 defines 'Charitable purpose' as under:

(i) Relief of poverty or distress,

(ii) Education,

(iii) Medical relief, and

(iv) The advancement of any other object of general public utility but does not include a purpose which relates:

(a) exclusively to sports, or

(b) exclusively to religious teaching or worship.

The trusts that administer temples or maths are formed by any one or a combination of the following objects:

(i) Worship of the deity

(ii) Worship of the Gaddagi

(iii) Management of the math

(iv) Management of the temple or mandir

(v) Maintenance of Nandadeep
Out of thirty-four public trusts belonging to Jains, twenty-nine are formed with the object of either the worship of a deity, or, the management of a mandir or a Basti, or, to perform other religious duties. The remaining five are formed for charitable purposes.

The main object of the three Parsei trusts is to maintain the burial grounds at Dharwar, Hubli and Gadag.

Of the eleven trusts formed by the Christians, seven are religious institutions and the rest of them are charitable institutions. The Christian religious trusts are located at Dharwad, Hubli, Gadag-Betageri, Motobennur, Shagoti and Tumrikopp. The objects of these institutions (churches) are to provide places for the Christians to pray and to celebrate the holy days, and to help the poor members in times of need.

The religious institutions established and run by the Muslims in Karnataka are governed by the Mysore Wakf Rules, 1964 framed under the Central Wakf Act, 1954.
A 'Wakf' means the permanent dedication by a person, professing Islam, of any movable or immovable property for any purpose recognized by the Muslim law as pious, religious or charitable.

Charitable trusts created with the object of starting a school, or a college, or constructing a mosque, or establishing a hospital are not prohibited under the Muslim law.

There are several religious and charitable institutions in different parts of Dharwar district, mostly in the villages and small towns, which are not formed into trusts and registered under the Bombay Trust Act. Further, a large number of trusts have a meagre income which restricts their activities, and does not enable them to widen their sphere of activities.

From a scrutiny of the religious and charitable organizations of the district, it was found purposeful to choose the Math at Hubli for the present study. This organization was selected in view of the considerable interest which this organization has shown in providing various types of social welfare services,
and also in providing the necessary support, monetary or otherwise, to several welfare programmes taken up by other voluntary organizations. Another reason for selecting this religious organization is its easy accessibility.

The primary source from which the field data were obtained are the persons who are directly involved in the management of the religious organization, and also the authorities of the various agencies functioning directly under its supervision and control. The actual collection of data was done through personal interviews with the help of an interview-guide, which was specially framed for the purpose. The information so collected was checked with the information available in the books and records available with the Math, wherever necessary. Both published and unpublished records and documents were used for this purpose. The persons and families benefited by the welfare activities of the Math were also interviewed for case material.

In addition to the personal interviews, relevant data were also obtained through observation. The observational technique was used to collect information
in regard to the following: the daily activities of the Math, the rituals and other particulars connected with the daily Pooja of the Gaddige, certain festivals celebrated in the Math, the daily activities of the inmates of the Boarding home and hostels, and of the Sadhakas.

The investigator accompanied the Swamiji to visit the Cooperative Hospitals at Ghataprabha. The Swamiji and the Chief Medical Officer were kind enough to take the investigator around the hospitals. The Swamiji explained to the investigator the circumstances under which the hospital was built, and also explained the type of services that are being rendered by the hospital. This occasion was also used to visit the branch math at Shiradhana, a village near Ghataprabha and the branch math at Ghataprabha itself, and their working arrangements were recorded. On another occasion, the investigator visited the village of Bidnal, on the outskirts of Hubli, in order to interview some of the beneficiaries of the Math.

The actual field work was done during the period from April 1976 to May 1977. Intensive field
work was taken up during the summer vacation of 1976 and of 1977. In the vacation period, it was possible for the investigator to stay in the field for extended periods. On two occasions, a stay of a fortnight each in the Math was made to make relevant observations and also to conduct personal interviews with the Jagadguru and other personnel connected with the Math.

The main hypothesis underlying this study is that the provision of social welfare services by a religious organization is not dysfunctional, in the sense that they are likely to weaken the religious base of the organization under purview. Such services may, in fact, be thought of as assisting the religious organization to consolidate and strengthen its position in the community. This hypothesis is based on the present-day trends towards modernization in every sphere, the religious organization, on its part, making efforts to keep pace with these trends by greater commitment to the goals of social welfare.

Conceptual Orientation:

As this work pertains to social welfare activities of a religious organization, some conceptual
clarification regarding the issues concerning social 
welfare seems to be pertinent. Perhaps, the concept 
of 'social welfare', as normally used and understood 
in the professional field of social work may not find 
suitable application when viewed in the context of 
the welfare activities of a voluntary organization. 
In professional social work, a distinction is established 
between "social services" and "social welfare services". 
The term "social services" imply all such services 
that are meant for the general population, like health, 
education, housing, recreation etc., in providing 
which the government as well as the voluntary agencies 
are concerned. On the other hand, the term "social 
welfare services" denotes such of the services as are 
provided through either governmental or voluntary 
agencies to special categories of persons who are 
identified in relation to specific social, economic or 
physical disabilities. However, according to Banarjee 
the concept of 'Kalyan' (social welfare) was not 
restricted to a particular class, as for instance, the 
poor, or persons identified by a definite handicap like 
illiteracy, blindness, or mental deficiency. Banarjee 
puts forth the plea that the concept of 'Kalyan' 
embraces everyone, rich and poor, high and low.15

15. Banarjee G.R., Papers on Social Work, Tata 
School of Social Sciences, Bombay, 1967, p. 60.
Perhaps, in the context of our society in which only a small section of the population can claim to live in comfort and decency, it becomes really hard to maintain the invidious distinction between 'social services' on the one hand, and 'social welfare services' on the other. Perhaps, in the context of our society, the concept of 'social welfare' has a far wider relevance than is the case in developed societies. The need for 'social welfare' is almost universal in our society, and hence, we may dwell upon the issues concerning 'social welfare' which have a relevance to the present study.

The term 'social welfare' has been defined in a number of ways by different authors. There is hardly any unanimity among them regarding a specific definition of this term. The divergence of opinion in this respect becomes clear if we consider a few definitions.

United Nations Organization defines social welfare as "a dynamic activity that has grown out of, and is constantly influenced by, evolving social, economic, political and cultural trends, and for that very reason could acquire fixed meaning only at the price of failing
to meet new situations." The social, economic, political, cultural and religious factors strongly influence the moulding of welfare programmes, but such programmes get momentum only when there is a sound ethico-religious base.

According to Lally, "Social Welfare as an organised function is regarded as a body of activities designated to enable individuals, families and communities to cope with the problems of social change." He says further that "social welfare should play a major role in contributing to the effective mobilization and deployment of human and material resources of the community."

Wilensky and Lebeaux define social welfare as "those formally organised and socially sponsored

18. Ibid., p. 2.
Institutions, agencies and programmes which function to maintain or improve the economic conditions, health or interpersonal competence of some parts or all of a population. They explain social welfare in terms of residual and institutional aspects thus:

The residual aspect implies that social welfare institutions should come into play only when the normal structures of supply, the family and the market, break down. From the institutional viewpoint, in contrast, the welfare services are viewed as normal, "first line" functions of modern industrial society. When family life is disrupted, or economic depression occurs, or when the individual cannot make use of normal channels of need fulfilment because of old age or illness, a third mechanism of need fulfilment is brought into play i.e., the social welfare structure. This is considered as a residual agency, attending primarily to emergency functions, and is expected to withdraw.

when the regular social structures — the family and the economic system— are able to resume their normal functions. In view of its residual and temporary character, social welfare thus conceived often carries the stigma of "dole" or "charity". 

In order to explain their "institutional" viewpoint, Wilensky and Lebeaux quote Friedlander's definition:

Social welfare is the organised system of social services and institutions, designed to aid individuals and groups to attain satisfying standards of life and health, and personal and social relationships which permit them to develop their full capacities and to promote their well-being in harmony with the needs of their families and the community.

It implies no stigma, no emergency, no abnormalcy. Social

20. Ibid., p. 138.

Welfare becomes accepted as a proper, legitimate function of modern industrial society in helping individuals achieve self-fulfilment. The inability of the individual to provide full protection for himself, or to meet all his needs in family and work settings, is considered a "normal" condition; and the helping agencies achieve "regular" institutional status.

Richard Titmus* suggested three highly generalized models of social welfare. They are —

(i) The Residual Welfare model
(ii) The Achievement-Performance model, and
(iii) The Institutional-Redistributive model.

The first two models nearly correspond to the residual formulation and the third model to the institutional formulation as suggested by Wilensky and Lebeaux.

* In his address to the International Conference of Social Work (The Hague, 1972) entitled "Developing Social Policy in Conditions of Rapid Change: The Role of Social Welfare".
According to Bornet, "Social Welfare is special services supplied and material assistance given by all or part of society to a human being thought to be in need." This seems to be a comprehensive definition of social welfare. However, it does not specifically point out who the "needy" are. Finding it difficult to develop an adequate connotative definition of social welfare, Zald attempts to give a common sense viewpoint. He says, "In common parlance, social welfare often refers to the helping of individuals or groups who, for one reason or another, are 'needy'; that is, those who are unable to attain a defined minimum level of living or of personal functioning. Furthermore, the common conception of social welfare suggests that the adult or child is in some way incapacitated so that he cannot attain this minimum level of functioning by his own effort or the efforts of his family or friends."  

Some attempts at explaining the term "social welfare" have been made in the Indian context. Banarjee

pints out the meaning of social welfare as conceived in ancient India, quoting Sanskrit words, 'Kalyan', 'Mangal', and 'Bhadram'. These terms she says, for lack of appropriate English equivalent have been translated as social welfare, but they have a far wider content than the English word 'Social Welfare'. They imply all-round 'good'. Ancient seers knew that the body, mind and spirit formed distinguishable aspects of an inseparable unity. Human nature was all of a piece and the unification of the three was the true aim of Mangal or Kalyan (Social Welfare).²⁴ Moorthy explains 'welfare' as a total concept comprehending physical, mental, moral and emotional well-being and having significant application in the individual, familial and community dimensions. He states further, that 'welfare' could be considered as a state of living of an individual or a group or a community in desirable relation to the total environment, animate and inanimate.²⁵

The object of social welfare, according to the National Planning Commission of India (First Five Year Plan) is

²⁴ Banarjee G.R., op. cit., p. 66.
the attainment of social health which implies the realization of such objectives as adequate living standards, the assurance of social justice, opportunities for cultural development through individual and group expressions, and readjustment of human relations leading to social harmony. A comprehensive concept of living standards will include the satisfaction of basic needs like food, clothing and shelter as well as normal satisfaction of family life, enjoyment of physical and mental health, opportunities for the expression of skills and recreational abilities and active and pleasurable social participation. The achievement of social justice demands cooperative and concerted effort on the part of the state and the people."

"Social Welfare", according to Gore, "has always sought to serve the needs of 'the forgotten' individuals and groups in a society at any given point of time; it has done so largely within the framework of the society in which it has functioned but in so doing it has selectively emphasised certain values -- progressively, 

charity, love, human dignity, equality and social right, and de-emphasised certain others such as rugged individualism, competitiveness and survival of the fittest. Social welfare has thus been a force for change helping all the time the emergence of more humane values."

A common element that could be identified from the definitions of Wilensky and Lebeaux, Lally and Friedlander is that social welfare is an organised system of social services and institutions meant to help the people. These people may be 'handicapped', or, under-privileged, or, they may comprise almost the entire population itself. The nature of social welfare could be conceptualised under residual and institutional aspects as outlined by Wilensky and Lebeaux, and, further developed into general models of social welfare as done by Richard Titmus. Social welfare is viewed as a legitimate, normal function of a modern industrial society. The voluntary organisations, therefore, along with the governmental agencies are providing various

types of services to the people without undue
discrimination based on caste, creed or community.

Bomet defines 'social welfare' in a rather
restricted sense, limiting social welfare to mean
'special services' given to man in 'need'. Zald and
Gore define social welfare with a relatively wider
connotation. According to Zald, the needy individuals
are those who are unable to attain the minimum level of
living or of personal functioning and they require help.
Gore stresses on the need to serve 'the forgotten'
individuals and groups on certain value-foundations.

'Need' has become the 'normal' condition of
life. This recognition on the part of all organizations
engaged in welfare work has encouraged them to organise
welfare services over an increasingly wider spectrum of
social life encompassing communities and regions. Social
welfare could be taken as a comprehensive term, especially
where one is concerned with the welfare activities of a
voluntary organisation. The distinction between 'social
services' and 'social welfare services', then, appears
to be narrowed down to the minimum, implying that the
welfare of all and the welfare of the new are inter-linked,
and that they could be brought under a common conceptual
frame.