

Chapter II

ROLE OF NGOs IN INDIA

2.1 Introduction

The NGOs in India are those private, non-profit, self-governing organizations who are voluntary in nature and registered with the government. They have a deep-seated ethical basis for altruism. They tend to be relatively conservative and service-oriented. They seek small improvements in people's lives. They promote non-violence and generally avoid party politics and discourage party affiliations. In India, they have a rich and vibrant history. They have originated since the ancient times. Both the colonial and post colonial governments have played a key role in shaping them. The NGOs in India can be set up and have to be registered under various Indian laws and under different legal entities. These are –

Registered Societies

Societies Registration Act, 1860 is a central act for the registration of all the not-for-profit organizations. Almost all the states in India have adopted this Act to create state level authorities for the registration of various non-profit organizations. According to this Act, any seven persons who submit the Memorandum of Association with clearly stating the name of the society, its objectives, addresses, occupations of the members and also the first governing body to be constituted can subscribe a society.

Public Trust

NGOs can be established only under a Public Trust Act. Public trusts are created for public charitable purposes. A trust can be registered in one state, but it can operate in different states.

Private trust

A private trust, which is created under and governed by the Indian Trusts Act, 1882, aims to manage the assigned trust properties for private or religious purposes. A private trust does not have the privileges and tax benefits that are enjoyed by public trusts or NGOs.

Non profit companies (Section 8, Companies Act 2013)

The Companies Act, 2013 confers corporate personality to associations which works for promoting cultural and charitable objectives. But it exempts them from undertaking some cumbersome activities required to regulate business bodies but which are difficult to get compliance from non-profit companies.

According to section 25(1) of the Companies Act, 1956, if the Central Government is satisfied that the association which is going to be formed as a limited company with the objective to promote art, science, commerce, religion and charity or other useful objectives, has an intention to use its profits or other income in achieving or promoting its objectives, and if it satisfies that it will prohibit the payment of its income to its members, then the Central Government will by license, direct to register the association as a company with limited liability. However, it will not add to its name the word “Limited” or the words “Private Limited”.

2.2 Role of NGOs in India

The role of NGOs in India can be discussed with special reference to its evolution at different periods of time.

2.2.1 Ancient and medieval India

Social service has always been an integral part of Indian culture since the ancient times. *Rig Veda*, the ancient Aryan Scriptures, which was written in 1,500 BC promoted the values of *dharma* (personal obligations), *jeev daya*, voluntarism and philanthropy. *Sewa* and religion existed side by side and raised the concept of *dharma* which means helping others. For the attainment of *moksha*, giving of Dana was believed to be necessary. Both at the individual and social domains, this dana occupied a supreme position.

In ancient and medieval India, the spirit of voluntarism was expressed in different ways. The state under different rulers undertook several voluntary work. During the rule of Emperor Ashoka, a group of volunteers called ‘Gopas’ was organized for social welfare work. During the Gupta period, workshops were organized for the training and rehabilitation of handicapped persons. During the Mughal period, there was a separate department to supervise charity and help the poor. In the later part of the 16th and 17th centuries, India faced severe famines. The kings responded positively to such situations with the help of royal charity doles. Philanthropists and other rich and ruling classes extended their help to the indigent. During this period particularly before the 19th century, whenever there were emergencies like famines and floods, charity with a voluntary spirit took place outside the religious channels irrespective of caste, class, creed or gender differences. There were several tangible forms of voluntary action in traditional India. People planted saplings through the pathways for the benefit of passers-by, digged tanks and wells for the purpose of drinking, offered food to the poor and nomads, supplied buttermilk to itinerants passing through villages, and allowed traders and strangers for spending the night while travelling.

“*Dharmasalas* (rest houses) were built in the country. During the same period there was a system of *adheenams*, mostly in the southern region of India. Under this system, the community organized and established centers of learning and research wherein free food and accommodation were provided to those who needed them. Communities raised funds through their own organizations to distribute grants to hospitals, schools, and orphanages. The system of *madhukari*, under which students supported themselves by taking food from households on a rotation basis, was in practice. Similarly, arts and culture received the attention and patronage of the public. Prominent personalities in villages evinced interest in the development of arts and culture. They patronized centers of learning that were associated with places of worship. The rich Indian traditions of culture and music owes greatly to these voluntary services for their growth and development” (Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade 2006 : 40).

2.2.2 Voluntary Work during British Period

The social work by voluntary workers during the British period can be discussed under the following heads-

2.2.2.1 Social Reforms

During the 19th century, voluntarism gained a new stimulus with the need for social reforms. The social reformers of this period fought against the age-old customs or several evil practices that were firmly rooted in the religious doctrines. Child marriage, sati system, polygamy, widow remarriage etc. are the issues which attracted the much needed attention. The social reformers were largely influenced by modern western thought. They began mobilizing the people against all the evil practices. Thus, a social reform movement with a spirit of liberalism was spearheaded by the most often highly educated citizens.

Among the early social reformers, the most prominent one was Raja Rammohan Roy (1772-1833). He founded Atmiya Society in 1815. He also founded the Brahma Samaj in 1828 and propagated the ideal of *ek dharma, ek jati, and ek bhagavan* (one religion, one caste and one God). He pleaded for the abolition of caste distinctions and the customary practice of Sati. Dwarka Nath Tagore, Devendra Nath Tagore, Sasipada Banerjee and Keshab Chandra Sen were his followers of Bengal. Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883) was another prominent social reformer who founded Arya Samaj in 1875. The Arya Samaj stood against caste discrimination and child marriage. It encouraged widow remarriage with a view to bring egalitarian status to women. It took steps to bring an end to the closed-door policy of the followers of Hinduism against those who left the Hindu fold earlier, adopted other religion and now wanted to return to their original faith.

Other social reform organizations include Rama Krishna Mission which embarked on several humanitarian programs. “Dadabhai Naorji played a pioneering role in the furtherance of education of girls and women in the western parts of India. With secular objectives and striving for the emancipation of untouchables and educating girl children, Satya Shodak Samaj in Pune was founded by Phule in 1873. Ranade, the founder of Prarthana Samaj, supported the movements of widow remarriage and women’s education. Pandit Ramabai toiled for the education of women. Aiming at providing education and emancipating women from their hardships, Karve founded the All India Seva Samiti in 1914” (Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade 2006 : 42).

Christian missionaries also undertook several voluntary action through charity and relief work. Missionaries such as Baptist, Anglican, Wesleyan, Roman, and others undertook several voluntary work in different parts of the country. They set up orphanages and institutions for the old and infirm. They also established a network of educational institutions across the country. Remote and inaccessible areas were also covered in their attempt to provide education for the tribal people. Not only education, dispensaries and hospitals were also established by them not only in tribal areas but also in the plains as well. Missionaries, by staying with the tribals in their natural surroundings tried to organize them in order to save from the exploitation that they had been subjected to for a long time. Thus, establishment of dispensaries, hospitals, welfare centers including rehabilitation institutes, constructing roads and other infrastructural facilities and helping women to move up in the society were all part of voluntary activities of missionaries in India. Between 1860-1940, Christian Missionaries also formed agricultural colonies and new villages with a view to improve the socio-economic conditions of the people. Quakers, an international group influenced by a new interpretation of Christian faith served the country, particularly during the period of famines between 1895-1896 and 1899-1900.

Voluntary action in India also aimed at the welfare of socially handicapped children. Charitable institutions set up in the twentieth century focused their activities on the prevention of vagrancy, delinquency and begging. “Children Aid Societies in Madras (1925) and Bombay (1927), for the first time in the country, worked for the prevention of child delinquency and treatment of juveniles and adolescents. These attempts led to the enactment of relevant Children Acts in the country” (Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade 2006 : 44).

The establishment of Servants of India Society was the foundation of secular voluntary action in India. In the beginning of the 20th century, religious thoughts gave way to more rationalistic principles which was a turning point in the history of voluntarism in the country. Since then, reform activities with religious principles have been supplemented through non religious and secular way with the intention of transforming society. Among the diverse culture, caste and religion, it was necessary to adopt secular action to prevent the domination of one group by the other. The increasing national awareness and the spirit of nationalism also cherished the secular ideals of voluntary action.

Voluntary workers in India also worked for the “fallen women” by establishing organizations like the Madras Vigilance Association (1924-25). This became instrumental in the enactment of Madras Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act, 1930. As a result of this Act, the Madras government set up shelter homes for women. There were also associations such as the Association of Moral and Social Hygiene. (1928)

2.2.2.2 Before Independence of India

Before independence, the freedom movement gave a further boost to voluntary action. The feeling of nationalism and the desire for independence brought the people together for the freedom movement. The secular nationalism preached by the Indian National Congress, Hindu Nationalism by Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim nationalism of the Muslim League duly influenced the growth of voluntary organizations in their own way. However, the emergence of Mahatma Gandhi on the political platform opened the way for principle-based voluntary work in India.

The then-prevailing social situation and the subjugated secondary position of women in Indian society compelled the women workers to form voluntary associations in order to protect their rights. Enlightened leaders like Saroj Nalini, Sarojini Naidu and Annie Besant undertook significant steps towards organizing women. In 1917, the first all-India women’s organization namely the Women’s Indian Association was established with Annie Besant as its President, Margaret Cousins as its Secretary and Sarojini Naidu as a member. In 1926, the All India Women’s Conference, known as Akhil Hind Mahila Parishad was formed.

Rabindranath Tagore wanted the villagers to take up the responsibility of rural development by themselves. He established a welfare society in Patisar (now in Bangladesh) and carried out public works with his own money along with the voluntary support of villagers. Later on, by winning the able support of Leonard Elmhirst, a British agriculturist, Tagore started to experiment with his ideas on rural reconstruction. In 1922, the Institute of Rural Reconstruction was established in Sriniketan. “Like other reformers characteristic of the period, Tagore intended to reform Indian society by the selective application of western ideals to the development of rural communities” (Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade 2006:45). Sriniketan extended its activities to include village-oriented education, village health cooperatives, and socio-economic surveys.

Within the campus of Sriniketan, innovative ideas were transformed into action. The boarding school for boys, *shidsha sastra* and trained village boys in skills were directly related to favourable economic activities. The school considerably shaped the character of the boys with humanistic and modern values. The boys learned the cooperative endeavors by keeping poultry, animals and various village crafts.

The religious bodies also undertook relief and charity work to help those who are poor and indigent. They established schools, hospitals, orphanages and undertook several social service activities with significant voluntary involvement. The Societies Registration Act, 1860 gave a legal status to voluntary organizations. It opened up a new era in the growth of registered voluntary organizations. This Act made the voluntary action a formalized one and brought it under state supervision.

2.2.2.3 Impact of Gandhi on NGOs

Most of the NGO movement in India was born because of the call of Gandhiji in the 1920s and 1930s to the youths to work for the rural poor, untouchables and tribals. “Gandhiji’s strong adherence to high social ideals and his pragmatic approach inspired sincere and conscientious workers to follow him with a genuine sense of dedication” (Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade 2006:46). Thus, voluntary action in India got firm root with the Gandhian response to development. Gandhiji had a faith in the potential of rural India. He was in favour of total restructuring of village life. “He wanted a self-reliant and self-governing village community with faith in moral principles of truth and non violence” (Chandra and Trollope 2015 : 5).

Gandhiji created a large network of institutions and a group of voluntary social workers for the villages. A large number of constructive social welfare programs were initiated for the removal of the evils of Indian society. His constructive programme started from 1915 to 1945 which includes charkha, khadi, gramodyog, basic education, removal of untouchability and prohibition. This Constructive Programme of Rural Development was first tested in Champaran in 1917 and in Wardha in 1938. In Champaran, it was used against the European planters. The European planters made the Indian peasants cultivate Indigo and sell it at prices arbitrarily fixed by the Europeans. The success of Gandhiji’s powerful weapon satyagraha motivated many volunteers to undertake several social work.

The workers of Constructive programme were known as constructive workers. Gandhiji made his workers to follow the principles of non-violence, truth, non-stealing, celibacy, non-possession, manual labour, control of the palate, fearlessness, equal respect for all religions and the spirit of brotherhood. The workers also paved the way for the formation of voluntary organizations such as Adim Jati Seva Sangh and Bhil Seva Mandal (1922) in Gujarat. Gandhiji also established twenty one institutions in different states. In 1906, Vittal Ramji Shinde established the Depressed Classes Mission Society of India. Gandhi Niketan Ashram in Madurai (1940), Kasturba Seva Mandir in Punjab (1943), Navajeevan Mandal in Orissa (1946), Gram Nirman Mandir (1951), Shram Bharati and Gram Bharati Sarvodaya in Bihar (1952), Raniparaj Seva Sabha in Gujrat (1952), Kerala Gandhi Smarak Nidhi (1957) came into existence with the influence of Gandhian ideals and vision. The organizations established under the influence of Gandhian philosophy were mainly devoted to village activities. Agriculture, khadi, cottage industries, dairy, education, untouchability and prohibition were the areas of activities of these organizations.

2.2.3 After Independence

Soon after attaining independence, a large number of organized voluntary action came into existence. Organizations with disparate purposes started to work in almost all over the country. In the initial years of independence, many people who had participated in the freedom struggle or in allied national programs gave life to the idea of voluntary associations with the objective of nurturing the spirit of nationalism. They actively worked for nation-building. After the death of Gandhi, his followers met at Sevagram in March, 1948. A decision was taken on a fellowship of brotherhood under the Sarvodaya Samaj and a coordinated organization named Sarva Seva Sangh was established for all constructive work institutions. Some freedom fighters who got inspiration from Gandhian social ideals, formed or joined voluntary organizations to work for the development of the nation. These organizations worked for the weaker sections and also in areas of preventing cow slaughter and prohibition.

Acharya Vinoba Bhave also attempted to transform rural India which took shape in the form of Bhoodan and Gramdan movements. *Gramdan* conceived equitable distribution and dedication from all elements was the key to it. The landholders have to offer land to the landless. Vinoba Bhave widened the concept of *dan* further by incorporating other forms of *daan* for the

benefit of the whole society. *Sharamdan* (gift of labor), *Samptidan* (gift of money, income or wealth), *Bhudhidan* (gift of mental abilities for the realization of Sarvodaya ideals) and *Jeevan dan* (dedication of life) were also other forms of dan which focused on the conscience of individuals to make them work for those who are in need. In 1957, the *shantisena* (peace army) was also organized for all those who took pledge to work for truth and non violence.

2.2.3.1 Governmental Efforts and NGOs

After attaining independence, many changes appeared in the functioning of the government. The government undertook several social welfare activities both in rural and urban areas. However, realizing its inability and limitations, the government started to woo NGOs to involve them in its developmental activities. Since the First Five-Year Plan, the government has been making deliberate attempts to involve NGOs in the process of development. In the First Five-Year Plan (1951-1956), Rs. 40 million was allocated for voluntary organizations. During this period, Bharat Sevak Samaj was established. The main function of this Samaj was to assist voluntary organizations by identifying new areas for voluntary action and also to encourage people to use their time, energy and resources voluntarily for the developmental activities of the nation. The Third Five-Year Plan (1961-1966) recognized voluntary action as an aspect of public cooperation. The grants in aid in the Fifth Plan (1974-1979) was Rs. 830 million. The Seventh Plan (1985-1990) allocated a sum of between 1 and 1.5 billion for voluntary organizations. In the Seventh Plan document, a separate chapter, “Rural Development of Poverty Alleviation Programmes- Involvement of Voluntary Agencies”, was incorporated which signifies the growing importance of voluntary sector and the recognition that it earned from the government. During the Seventh Plan, the government made a serious efforts to involve voluntary agencies in various development programs.

The Seventh Plan emphasized on professionalizing voluntarism and introducing professional competence and managerial expertise to make voluntary agencies meet the basic requirements of government. In order to simplify the process of providing financial assistance to voluntary associations, the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances in 1987 set up a high level committee of representatives from the voluntary sector. The Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-1997) continued to emphasis the role of voluntary organizations, specifically in rural development. It also brought out an action plan with an objective of bringing a

collaborative relationship between voluntary organizations and the government. The plan aimed at the creation of a nation-wide network of NGOs. With the objectives of facilitating the working of this network, the Planning Commission formulated three schemes which related to the creation/replication/multiplication and consultancy development. The plan also aimed at making an effort for evolving a system to providing one window service to NGOs who are working in the area of integrated development. “The plan also envisaged setting up a national grid of voluntary institutions at the central level to provide them with a forum” (Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade 2006:49).

Soon after independence, the government also undertook steps to set up institutions with the intention of promoting voluntary social welfare in the country. The establishment of Central Social Welfare Board was such an example. The Board was set up in 1953 and registered under the Charitable Companies Act of 1956. The Board provides technical and financial aid to voluntary organizations. In 1954, State Social Welfare Advisory Boards as a branch of Central Social Welfare Board were opened in all states and Union Territories. The Board specially focused attention on the most vulnerable segments of the society i.e. women and children. It provides maternity and health care services in rural areas and help to start *Balawadis*. “In due course the Board has become one of the major grant giving government institutions to NGOs” (Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade 2006:50).

The National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development was constituted with the objective of training voluntary workers and supporting their activities. The National Social Service Scheme began in 1969 and it started to provide a volunteer force of young students to work for the development of the weaker sections of the society. Nehru Yuvak Kendras were also opened in district quarters. It offered large opportunities to rural youths to participate in various creative activities and community services which include eradication of illiteracy, education, health, sanitation programs and land reforms.

During the severe Bihar famine in 1963-1967, the Freedom from Hunger Campaign office was formed under the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. Later, this became the People’s Action for Development India (PADI) in 1973 through which the government provided funds to NGOs. In 1983, a new organization called the Council for Advancement of Rural Technology (CART) came into existence with an objective to improve rural situation by introducing

innovative and appropriate technology with the support of voluntary organizations. Later on, in 1986, the PADI and CART merged together and became the Council for Advancement of People's Action of Rural Technology (CAPART). The main function of CAPART is to encourage, promote and assist voluntary action in the implementation of projects and to strengthen and promote voluntary efforts in rural development with a focus on introducing new technological input. "CAPART finances voluntary agencies for a number of schemes in the areas of drinking water, housing, afforestation, programs for women and children in rural areas, health, adult education and literacy" (Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade 2006:50).

The support and recognition that is given to NGOs by the government has always varied from time to time and it totally depends on the thinking and attitude of the party in power. Support from the government often takes the form of allocation of grants and tax benefits to NGOs. The Janata government during its rule at the centre between 1977-1979 granted exemption from income tax for donations given to voluntary agencies for rural development programs. During the emergency in 1975-1977, the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act came into effect which also covered the NGOs receiving foreign funds. Under this Act, the agencies had to submit financial statements containing the details of the amount of money they had received, its source and utilization. The government also constituted the Kudal Commission to look into the affairs of voluntary organizations. However, it turned out to be a political vendetta. As a result, tax exemption given to voluntary organizations was reversed and the receiving of funds from abroad by NGOs was also curbed. In 1984, Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) was amended which made it a requirement for all agencies to register with the Ministry of Home Affairs before accepting funds from abroad. The agencies were also required to submit their audited accounts to the ministry.

2.3 Top 10 NGOs in India

In India, NGOs have been continuously working to solve various social issues concerning children, women, senior citizens, environment etc. Following are the top 10 NGOs of India who have worked in its true spirit after taking up a particular cause.

1. Samman Foundation

Samman Foundation was established in the year 2007. Its main objective is to empower the downtrodden sections of the society and to connect them with the mainstream society through education, training and financial support. Samman also works for rickshaw-pullers by organizing them to provide opportunities to earn livelihood. They also work in areas like women empowerment, health services, employment generation, micro credit and children's education.

1. Goonj

The main objective of Goonj is to solve the clothing problems of the underprivileged sections of the society. It received the NGO of the Year award in 2007 at the India NGO Awards. Its various initiatives are-

Vastra Samman- Goonj has a belief that if the old clothes are reused, then it can solve the clothing problem of the poor.

Not just a piece of cloth- Goonj has been making an effort to establish partnerships between rural and rich urban schools.

Rahat floods- It also initiates Rahat floods annually for collecting relief materials to help and aid the flood affected victims of West Bengal, Assam and Bihar.

Rahat winters- Rahat winters is another initiative which is undertaken every year to solve the problem of winter clothing of the underprivileged sections.

2. Akshaya Trust

Akshaya Trust works for the helpless, forsaken, mentally ill, old, sick and the road side destitute who live in Madurai. They provide them love and affection, healthy food and rehabilitation opportunities. Their main objective is restoring the dignity of human being.

3. Smile Foundation

Smile Foundation was formed in the year 2002. It comprises of corporate professionals who aim to provide universal education and healthcare services to the underprivileged and thus

changing their lives forever. Smile Foundation has an aim to set the foundation for making the downtrodden emerge as productive assets for setting the foundation of nation building.

4. Udaan Welfare Foundation

The mission of the Udaan Welfare Foundation is to empower lives of the downtrodden. Their main attention are children, destitute women, senior citizens and environmental protection. Various health and education initiatives involving children and destitute women have been launched by them. They also run a cancer chemotherapy centre as one of their main projects.

5. Pratham

Pratham is another largest NGO working for educating the underprivileged children in the slums of Mumbai. Their team consists of people from various fields who are expert and has unique perspectives. They work together for bringing a bright future for the children. Pratham works for increasing the enrolment of children in schools and also for increasing their learning levels. They also work for those children who are unable to attend school. They try to make them receive education in a proper way

6. LEPRA Society

LEPRA Society actively works to promote quality health care services through various initiatives. It supports various health programs organized for the prevention and control of diseases like AIDS, Leprosy and Tuberculosis etc. Their programs mainly focus on poor communities comprising mainly women and children.

7. Deepalaya

Deepalaya is a development-based NGO. It works for the poor and the downtrodden, especially the children. "It has successfully made inroads into slums of Delhi and initiated rural development in Haryana and Uttarakhand" (Gajera 2015 : 40). Deepalaya collaborates with both governmental and non-governmental agencies in their works and try to make interventions in the state's policy making. Their main areas of attention are education, healthcare, gender equality, vocational training, empowering other NGOs with same vision and upliftment of the differently-abled.

8. Uday Foundation

Uday Foundation is based in New Delhi. It provides support to those families of children who are suffering from critical disorders, congenital defects and other diseases and syndromes affecting their health, growth and education. It has launched various projects relating to health for the common man. It wants to provide children a right to live with dignity. In other words, Uday Foundation is like a parents support group who handles the problem of saving the lives of the children.

9. HelpAge India

HelpAge India was established in 1978. It has been continuously trying to raise resources in order to protect the rights of senior citizens of the country. They work in collaboration with local and national government to implement policies which would be beneficial to the senior citizens. They want to make the senior citizens to be aware of their rights to make them play an active role in the society. They are continuously working to make the society aware of the concerns of elder persons and also trying to promote better understanding of these issues.

Along with these, there are two model Indian NGOs – Astha Sansthan and Varishth Nagrik Sewa Samiti. Astha, a Hindi word symbolizes faith. Astha believes in the abilities, strengths and knowledge of the people which are being suppressed by the dominant forces. It was formed in the year 1986 by Om, Ginni Srivastava and five other people in the city of Udaipur, Rajasthan. Astha works for those who are economically marginalized, living under feudal traditions, gender stereotypes and environmental degradation. It also wants to make the people claim their human rights i.e. right to life, right to work, right to have land and livelihood. It has founded many organizations and forums with regard to implementing awareness and action plan. These are Tribal Development Forum, Tribal Women's Awareness Society, Association of Strong Women Alone and National Forum for Single Women Rights.

Varishth Nagrik Sewa Samiti was established in May, 1998 in the town of Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh. It wants that all senior citizens of India live a full and active life and live healthy physically, mentally and spiritually. Its main objectives and activities are –

- 1). “To organize the senior citizens of India in the form of a body and inculcate in them a feeling that they should do something for the society.
- 2). To emphasize upon the retirees that they should not remain idle and explore new ways to utilize their talents and capabilities.
- 3). To create awareness among the senior citizens that their physical, mental and spiritual health is very precious and their life style should be such that all these three may be maintained at optimum level.
- 4). To reach the needy and deprived section of the senior citizens and to provide them medical help, clothes and other necessities of life even in the remote corners of rural areas.
- 5). To try to revive the ancient tradition of Vanaprastha and make it relevant to the present day conditions. The original spirit of Vanaprastha was to repay the debts which one owes to the society and which were incurred in his student life (Brahmacharya Ashrama) and working life (Grihastha Ashrama).
- 6). To help the talented but poor students in every way because they are the future citizens of the country.
- 7). To organize seminars and lectures on the issues related to the senior citizens and to encourage the members of the Samiti to participate in them.
- 8). To observe religious and national festivals.
- 9). To organize Kavi Sammelans and Bhajan Sandhyas.
- 10). To organize outdoor tours and excursions for the members” (Chandra and Trollope 2015 : 164, 165).

2.4 Conclusion

In the beginning years of voluntarism, voluntary action was clearly noticed in welfare, charity and reform activities. Since 1950, voluntary activities were seen in relief and

humanitarian work. At the end of 1960s, voluntarism became more radicalized in action and programs and thus its complexion changed. A number of organizations increased during this period, particularly organizations working for human rights and issues affecting the neglected communities. Since the 1960s, the socio-political situation and the failure of state agencies in delivering goods and services have led to the formation of several organizations, particularly in the field of development. Activists who thought that the state had failed in tackling poverty, inequality and injustice moved to villages and set up several organizations. The state's development strategy became neither appropriate nor effective for tackling the grave issues the country was facing. The poor people of rural and urban areas were suffering while the dominant caste and the ruling classes were getting a substantial share of benefits and resources. Due to this developmental failures, the poor organized themselves to fight for justice. Action groups struggled hard to organize the poor, the exploited and the socially deprived and disadvantaged sections of the society and tried to bring consciousness among them. The leaders were from the urban areas and educated intellectuals mostly belonging to middle class families. Towards the 1980s, the focus was shifted from welfare activities to LEIG activities. Thus, voluntary activities in India has been undergoing a change in its nature and direction, first from charity to reform activities and now turning to multifarious developmental activities.

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