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PUBLICATION 7

WOMEN'S WELFARE IN TAMIL NADU

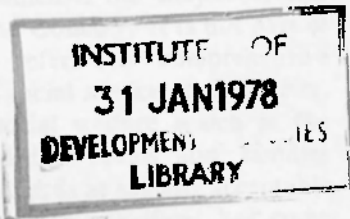


BY K. G. RAMA



PUBLISHED BY
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FOR
**MADRAS INSTITUTE OF
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

**WOMEN'S WELFARE
IN
TAMIL NADU**



K. G. RAMA

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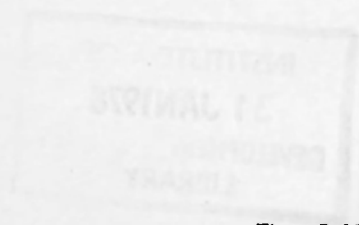
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P R E F A C E

WOMEN'S WELFARE in Tamil Nadu which is the subject of this study is a term unique to this State and Country. It is not part of the Welfare State concept which refers to comprehensive programmes, 'Cradle to the grave', of social services and security. Nor is it part of the concept of social welfare which is the obligation to help all disadvantaged individuals and families maintain their incomes and living standards at socially acceptable levels. In Tamil Nadu, the term 'Women's Welfare' has come to be used to refer to a series of *ad hoc* activities aimed at providing women with social, cultural and recreational amenities to the extent that the limited resources that have been allocated to them allow. On the average, in this State, Rs.15 lakhs have been spent every year during the Fourth Plan on these activities. The study starts with making explicit its 7 assumptions, ending with the assumption that Women's Welfare can mobilise women's resources for State development and increased individual well-being.

The study is based on primary data collected from interviewing some 600 women beneficiaries and 200 non-beneficiaries of the Welfare Programmes from both the urban areas of Madras and Coimbatore and the rural areas of Ramanathapuram and Dharmapuri, with a view to identifying their reactions to the current programmes and their felt needs for future activities in this regard particularly for the Fifth Plan.

One of the facts that emerges from the study is that there is no negative reaction to the Women's Welfare programme either among the beneficiaries or the non-beneficiaries. And on the whole the women who are not involved in the programme, the non-beneficiaries, as they are termed, are better off in terms of education and family income than the beneficiaries. There are two indicators which emerge concerning those who need the help and services of the programme. The first indicator is the family and per capita income. In this sample the monthly mean family income is Rs. 85.20 and the per capita monthly income is Rs. 16.25. If it is borne in mind that the State Planning Commission has establi-

shed Rs. 27.90 per capita per month in the rural and Rs. 34.87 per capita per month in the urban areas as the nutritional poverty line in the State, the women who participate in the welfare programme are then seen as those who are deeply enmeshed in the poverty sector. The second indicator is the amount of leisure time these women have to do other things, particularly to supplement their totally inadequate household incomes. About 60 per cent of those sampled spend less than half a day at their household chores and so are available for other income earning leisure time activities.

The Women's Welfare programme in Tamil Nadu consists of seven activities: (a) *Mahalir Mandrams*, (b) Craft Classes, (c) Training Classes, (d) Nutrition Programmes, (e) *Kulandaigal Kappagams*, (f) Women's Welfare Branches and (g) Production Units. The most popular programmes are *Kulandaigal Kappagams* first, nutrition programmes second and craft classes third. The whole programme is functioning much more as a feeding and nutrition effort than as one of training people and helping them to earn a living or supplement their meagre family income. The craft classes which are the main activities of the *Mahalir Mandram* centre around five crafts, with tailoring being the major occupational skill instruction. The period of craft training which, for most persons ranges from one to six months, is too short for skill acquisition. One conclusion suggested is that the crafts taught should be widened to the eight specialities requested, together with adjustments in the period of training, the equipment for the classes and marketing arrangements for the products.

This conclusion is related to the major finding of the study that the majority of women define their role not in terms of the traditional one of being a housewife and mother, but in terms of earning and supporting the family. Whether this self-image is due to the poverty background of the sampled women or whether it is part of the social change characterising all sectors of our society, the implication for Women's Welfare policy for the Fifth Plan is clear. It is that the major thrust of that policy should be to provide gainful employment for women and all else should be supplementary to it. Along with this imperative, is also the general feeling that the Government must provide this service

because it is its function, according to the women "to improve the status and welfare of women". This may sound tautological but is in effect the firm basis for the programme proposed in the study.

On this basis, the Women's Welfare programme recommended for the Fifth Plan has a more precise loci and a more defined foci. In view of the resource limitation faced by the State, it is recommended that the programme coverage in the first instance be limited to 83 lakhs of women who, in accordance with the State Planning Commission's definition and study, are living below the State's dietetic poverty line. Second for this group a more definitive programme of employment, training and education is recommended involving an additional outlay under this head of Rs. 151.61 crores. The employment programme is divided into 75 per cent self-employment and 25 per cent wage employment. Of the additional outlay recommended, Rs. 150 crores are loan finance to women craft workers, farm women and voluntary agencies, programmes for employment creation. This is entirely a self-employment effort, which together with a small provision of Rs. 1 lakh for setting up a marketing network for the products emanating from this programme will meet employment needs referred to earlier. With regard to the wage employment which is to cover the other 25 per cent of women in the poverty sector it is recommended that the Department of Social Welfare act as the coordinating canalising focus for mobilising resources under crash rural employment programme, the special minor irrigation programme, the PWD, Harijan and Slum Clearance Board programmes in rural and urban areas to provide the employment and income for this group. The second programme proposed is a network of training centres along lines of the Industrial Training Institutes. This is more a programme of reorganising and restructuring of existing facilities than one of starting costly new establishments. The existing 30 production centres, the *Mahalir Mandrams*, the Women's Welfare units and the I.T.I. should be restructured and reorganised as to provide the vocational and home management training as feeder services to the self-employment programmes that are proposed. For this training effort, a total plan outlay of Rs. 70 lakhs is proposed. The third programme proposed of education involving the adult literacy and

functional literacy of women and girls again calls not for additional resources but for leadership from the Department to ensure that some 25 to 30 per cent of the 40,000 adult education centres in the Fifth Plan are used for women learners. These proposals assume the continuation and intensification of programmes for nutrition, child care, maternity welfare, and family planning as set forth in the Fifth Plan. The three point programme of employment, training and education is recommended in the monograph as the decisive force for helping this poor group to lift their living levels initially to the minimum levels and later to above that level. The whole programme calls for leadership from the Department of Social Welfare with implications for its status, the quality of staff and its powers of decision making.

This study undertaken by K. G. Rama received the help and support of the officers of the State Government at all levels—at Madras and in the districts and blocks. It was financed by a grant from the Indian Council of Social Science Research. As in other studies of the Institute there was a certain amount of co-operation from the Institute's statisticians and economists in the study. The analysis and value judgements set forth in the study, however, are the responsibility of its author, K. G. Rama.

I commend the study to the Government of Tamil Nadu, the Minister, the officers of the Department and the district and block officials who are responsible for planning and execution of the women's welfare programme. To students of welfare activities, this case study might indicate some useful lessons.

Malcolm S Adveshiah

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“... But somehow or other man has dominated woman from ages past and so woman has believed in the truth of the man's interested teaching that she is inferior to him. But the seers among men have recognised her equal status.”¹

This study is based on the following assumptions :

- (1) that women are equal to men in rights and dignity,
- (2) that they are denied these rights and suffer discrimination in different forms,
- (3) that welfare activities can to some extent compensate for these denials and discriminations,
- (4) that women represent an important sector of human resources that cause national development,
- (5) that women's resources are being neglected and misused in the development process,
- (6) that welfare activities must respond to the felt needs of the deprived and discriminated, and
- (7) that welfare services can mobilise these resources for National and State development and increased individual well-being.

The Background of the Study

The welfare services for women in the State have been in operation for over two decades.

1. The Selected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, The Voice of Truth. Volume Six, Ed.: Shriman Narayan. Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.

The Women's Welfare Department in the State came into being in 1947. The Community Development blocks followed by National Extension Services were started in 1952-'54.

The State Social Welfare Board was established in 1954. The three agencies, viz., Women's Welfare Department, State Social Welfare Board and the women staff of the Community Development Programme were integrated into a single Directorate for Women's Welfare in 1961 because all the three agencies were undertaking development activities for women and children mostly in rural areas and because Panchayat Raj was introduced in 1961, which gave the Panchayat co-opted members the right to decide programmes and policies in the Panchayat Union/Community Development Blocks. The Government has recently issued orders to continue the merged State Social Welfare Board as an Advisory Board.

At the State level, the Director of Women's Welfare is the Head of the Department and is assisted by two Deputy Directors, one for programmes and the other for Child Welfare. During 1971-72, the Government also appointed a Special Nutrition Officer for implementation of the Special Nutrition Programme of the Government of India. At the district level, one District Women's Welfare Officer is in charge of the Departmental Programmes in her District.²

The Fifth Five Year Plan which started in 1974, envisages a 57 per cent increase in the funds allocated to Women's Welfare and Family and Child Welfare. It would be appropriate, therefore, to assess the effects of the services so far rendered on the beneficiaries and to ascertain from them the type of services they would like to have rendered during the Fifth Plan.

Objectives

The main objectives of the study are as follows :

- (1) to examine the socio-economic and educational status of the beneficiaries ;

2. Extract from the Report of Welfare Programme for Women and Children, issued by the Department of Social Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu, 1972.

(2) to establish the extent of awareness and utilisation of the existing Government welfare services, by the beneficiaries and their opinion about the services ;

(3) to identify the welfare services that are not made frequent use of and *per contra* the services which are needed on the basis of the views expressed by the beneficiaries and welfare workers ;

(4) to identify the lacunae, if any, in the administration of the services ; and

(5) to recommend to the State Government new or additional services to meet the felt need and to assign priorities for such services in the Fifth Plan period.

SAMPLE DESIGN

Universe and Frame

The universe for the study was the women who make use of the welfare services of the State Government. The size of the universe, i.e., the exact number of the women making use of the services was not readily available with the Social Welfare Department and it would have taken time to determine this, as information would have had to be collected from each block in the State. Thus, the formation of a frame for sampling purposes was ruled out as a time-consuming task.

Scope and Size of the Sample

Under such circumstances, to get a fairly representative sample for the State as a whole, it was decided to cover two developed and industrialised districts and two underdeveloped and rural districts. Thus, Madras City and the Districts of Coimbatore, Ramanathapuram and Dharmapuri were selected.

Taking into consideration time and resources limitations, it was decided to take purposive random sampling of 150 respondents from each district.

Entirely for the purposes of comparison, it was also decided to interview 50 women from each district, who were close to the locality where the welfare programmes are conducted, but were not making use of the programmes. These were called the "Non-

beneficiaries". But later, while the data collection was underway, it was found that it was not possible to get exactly 50 non-beneficiaries. So the number of non-beneficiaries interviewed varied from district to district. The largest number of 63 non-beneficiaries were interviewed in Coimbatore, 60 in Madras, 59 in Dharmapuri and 35 in Ramanathapuram.

Thus, the total sample size for the study was 800, out of which 583 were beneficiaries and 217 non-beneficiaries.

DATA COLLECTION

Tool of Data Collection

The data was collected through a structured, pre-tested interview schedule.

Pre-test

The pre-testing was done in one of the Slum Clearance project areas in Madras City. Each of the investigators, interviewed 10 respondents in one day. From the findings of the pre-test, certain modifications were carried out in the interview schedule.

Difficulties in Data Collection

The one major problem that all the investigators faced was the respondents' apathy in answering the questions. It took an amount of persuasion and explanation on the part of the investigators to elicit responses.

Another problem of the city investigators was the incidence of drinking in certain localities. Sometimes the respondents themselves were drunk. There were instances where the men in the neighbourhood were drunk and hampered the interview schedule investigators.

The question regarding the Family Planning programmes created some problems for the male investigator as the respondents were reluctant to answer these questions. However, the responses required were obtained by tactful questioning and on some occasions through the help of the organiser or *gramasevika* in-charge of the programmes.

Analysis Design

The data was completely hand processed. Mainly two way tables were prepared. The Chi square, correlation and medium tests were used to determine statistical significance of the data wherever needed. The data was tabulated separately for each district and later combined together for the sample as a whole. Certain tables were prepared separately for the non-beneficiaries.

Limitations of the Study

As mentioned earlier, the use of purposive sampling is a limitation as the data may not be representative of the universe. The study, however, can be considered as a pilot project which would help in formulation for the design of a comprehensive study in the future.

The study does not aim at an evaluation of the Women's Welfare Programmes. Evaluation is a much wider task which needs to collect and analyse various types of data against the base line. The present study's main focus is futuristic, that is, it is a sondage of the beneficiaries and their felt needs, and opinions about future welfare programmes concerning them.

Chapter Arrangement

This chapter, as the introduction to the study, deals with the scope and methodology. The second chapter analyses the socio-economic background of the sample. The third chapter analyses the welfare services that the respondents are making use of and their opinions about these services. The fourth chapter comments on the felt needs of the respondents, and the opinions of the welfare workers and offers certain general observations. The fifth chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations arising from the study.

CHAPTER 2

THE SAMPLE

This chapter discusses the socio-economic background of the sample of the study, namely, the 583 beneficiaries. Throughout the report in the tables the letters M, C, R and D, denote Madras, Coimbatore, Ramanathapuram and Dharmapuri respectively.

TABLE 1—Age-wise Distribution of the Sample.

Age (in completed years)	Districts				Total
	M	C	R	D	
18-20	8	6	67	20	101
21-25	41	32	36	45	154
26-30	44	56	28	31	159
31-35	25	30	15	26	96
36-40	13	10	11	4	38
41-45	4	2	4	7	17
46-50	4	1	4	8	17
51-55	1	—	—	—	1
No response	—	—	—	—	—
Total	140	137	165	141	583

The age distribution is represented as a curve in the diagram. The modal age of the sample is 25.8, which means that the age of the majority of the respondents is around 26 years.

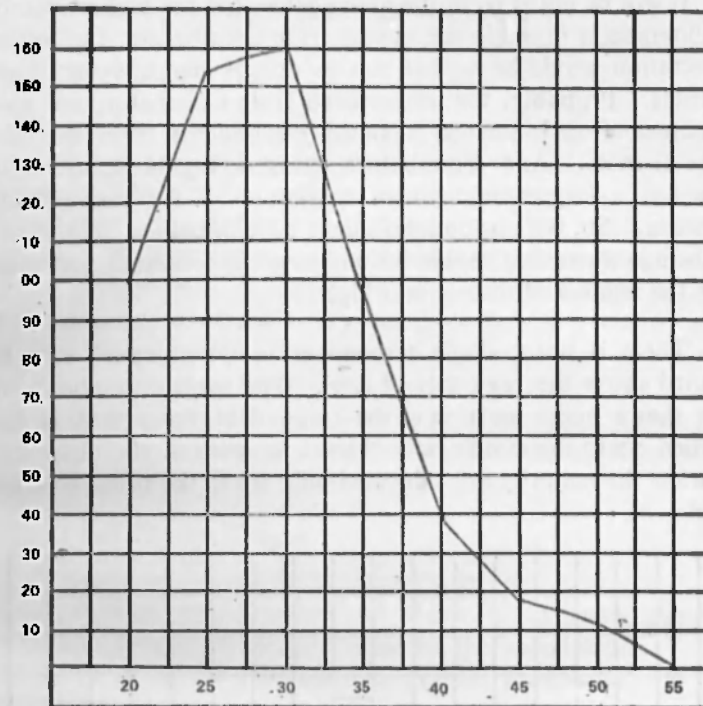


Fig. 1. Age Distribution of the Sample.

Educational Qualification

TABLE 2.—Distribution of the Respondents by their Educational Qualifications.

Educational qualification	Districts				Total
	M	C	R	D	
Illiterate	17	78	27	47	169
Literate—no schooling	11	2	0	10	23
Primary	19	22	49	39	129
Middle School	63	19	34	21	137
High School	26	13	44	24	107
Above High School	4	3	11	—	18
Total	140	137	165	141	583

It will be noted from the above table that the highest number of illiterates is found in the sample from Coimbatore. The normal expectation would be to find this in one of the underdeveloped districts. Probably, the respondents from Coimbatore are more conscious of their poverty than the respondents from the other three districts. And Coimbatore being a highly industrialised area has a larger employment market even for the unskilled labourer. So, the respondents might have opted for employment at the age when they should have been going to school and therefore the number of illiterates is high.

There is not a single respondent in Dharmapuri, who has studied above the high school level. The table also reveals the fact that a major portion of the respondents from Madras have studied up to the middle school level, whereas in the other three districts the majority are educated only up to the primary school level.

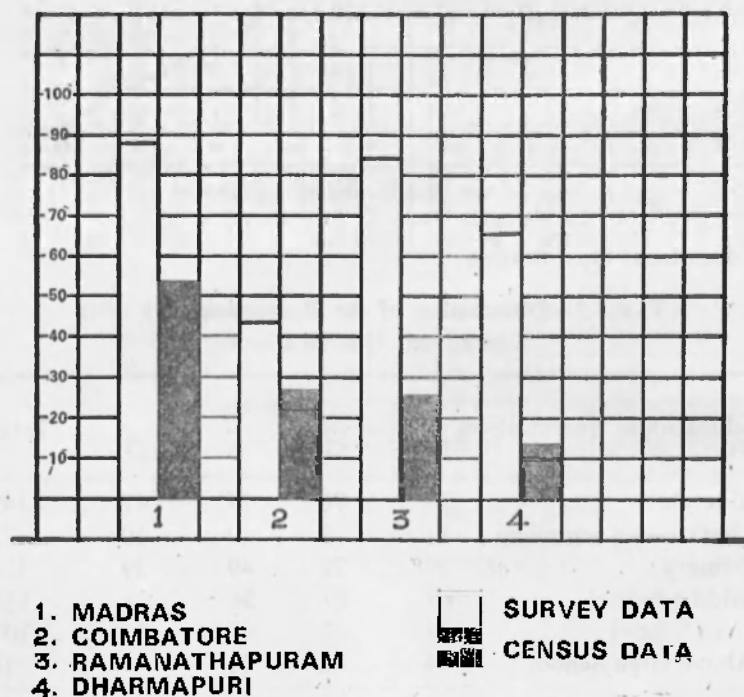


Fig. 2. Literacy of the Sample Districts (in percentage).

It is also significant to note that the percentages of illiterates are low in the survey data as compared to the census figures. Fig. 2 clearly shows this.

It appears from the diagram and the data that women with some educational background make more of the welfare programmes. These women perhaps have more knowledge accessibility, interest and information, that help them to utilise the programmes. This is not a wholly desirable feature, because the welfare programmes should reach all women in spite of their educational and economic background. In fact, it is women without educational qualifications who should make full use of the programmes, as they are the really ignorant and poor. If the welfare programmes do not reach these women, the purpose of the programmes becomes distorted in their being restricted to the educated groups.

Religion and Mother Tongue

As could be expected the majority of the respondents are Hindus, followed by Christians and Muslims. Similarly, Tamil is the mother tongue of 79.7 per cent of the respondents. The table below gives the religion and mother tongue of the 583 respondents.

TABLE 3—Distribution of the Respondents by their Religion and Mother Tongue.

Religion	Mother Tongue					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Hinduism	392	96	13	12	2	515
Christianity	36	1	—	1	—	38
Islam	15	—	—	—	15	30
Total	443	97	13	13	17	583

1. Tamil 2. Telugu 3. Kannada 4. Malayalam 5. Urdu

Marital Status**TABLE 4—Marital Status of the Respondents.**

	Age of Marriage (Years)						NA	NR	Total
	15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35				
Unmarried	—	—	—	—	—	116	—	116	
Married	96	288	51	2	3	—	—	440	
Separated	2	2	2	—	—	—	—	6	
Divorced	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	
Widowed	5	8	6	—	—	—	—	19	
NR	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	
Total	103	298	60	2	3	116	1	583	

The modal age for marriage of the sample is 17.5, that is, most of the respondents were married when they were around 17 years and 6 months.

FAMILY BACKGROUND**Total Monthly Household Income**

5 respondents did not specify the total household income. The following discussion refers to the remaining 578 respondents, who have specified their incomes. There are 5 respondents who have stated that they have no total monthly income at all. These respondents' families have no definite income through a regular job and therefore they cannot specify the total monthly income and that is what they mean when they state that there is no monthly household income. All these 5 respondents are from the city sample.

The following table gives the total household income and the total household size of the respondents.

TABLE 5—Distribution of the Respondents by their
Total Monthly Household Income and
Total Household Size.

Income (Rupees)	Total household size							Total
	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	11+	NA	
0	—	2	3	—	—	—	—	5
1-30	3	12	8	6	1	—	—	30
31-100	18	71	72	40	10	2	—	213
101-150	5	20	44	34	8	7	1	119
151-200	—	9	36	16	8	5	—	74
201-250	2	10	24	7	4	4	—	51
251-300	3	12	13	6	1	6	—	41
301-350	1	15	11	10	7	1	—	45
NR	1	1	1	2	—	—	—	5
Total	33	152	212	121	39	25	1	583

The single case of a respondent with no family and an income between 101-150 rupees is that of an orphan girl from Dharmapuri. The girl stays in a hostel. The mean household income of the sample is Rs. 82.80 and the modal household income Rs. 85.20 which is much below the poverty line. The mean household size is 5.1. Based on this, the per capita income per month of the sample is Rs. 16.25 which is again less than the per capita monthly income of the general population. The *Tamil Nadu Economic Appraisal 1973* published by the Government in October 1973 states that for 1970-71 the per capita annual income in the State is Rs. 644.

The table also shows that majority of the respondents live in a family having 5 or 6 members. This is associated with the data presented later on the type of family.

Type of Dwelling

The majority of the respondents (67.60 per cent) live in independent houses. This may be quite surprising taking into consideration the low income level of the respondents. But, all the city respondents live in tenements built by the Slum Clearance Board, while quite a few of the Coimbatore respondents live in

the quarters provided by the mills where their men folk are employed. It is not surprising that the majority of the rural sample live in independent houses, though they may not be modern or highly sophisticated. There is no association between the household income and the type of houses that they live in. 195 (33.15 per cent) live in huts, 22 (3.74 per cent) are houseless or live in some sort of a temporary structure and 1 (0.17 per cent) gave no response at all.

Type of Family

Irrespective of the urban or rural background, the nuclear family is the most common type of family, in which the majority of the respondents live. A nuclear family is defined as one in which the husband and wife live with any number of unmarried children or with no child at all. A joint family is that in which the patriarchal system is followed, where three generations of males with their families live or two or more married brothers live with their wives, children and their unmarried siblings. In an extended family, other relatives like married sisters, aunts, uncles or maternal grandparents live. In general, the extended families will be larger and the nuclear families smaller.

TABLE 6—Distribution of the Respondents by the Type of Family they Live in.

Type of family	Districts				Total
	M	C	R	D	
Nuclear	106	108	108	94	416
Joint	26	5	20	46	97
Extended	8	24	37	—	69
Not applicable	—	—	—	1	1
Total	140	137	165	141	583

The Number of Children and Adults in the Family

The majority of the respondents have two children and two adults in the family. An individual who is below 16 years of age is considered to be a child and above 16 years an adult.

TABLE 7—Distribution of the Respondents by the Number of Children and Adults in the Family.

Number	Districts								Total	
	M		C		R		D			
	Ad	Ch	Ad	Ch	Ad	Ch	Ad	Ch	Ad	Ch
One	16	2	13	6	35	6	30	5	94	19
Two	36	76	25	89	28	57	24	82	113	304
Three	32	20	25	27	39	40	19	24	115	111
Four	25	27	24	10	14	29	23	14	86	806
Five	18	5	19	2	10	19	13	10	60	80
Six	6	10	9	—	6	13	3	5	24	28
Seven and more	2	—	6	—	2	—	10	—	20	—
Not applicable	5	—	14	—	29	—	19	—	67	—
No Response	—	—	2	3	2	1	—	1	4	5
Total	140	140	137	137	165	165	141	141	583	583

Ad : Adult

Ch : Child

Total Number of Earners and Dependents

An 'earner' is defined as one who contributes to the total monthly household income regularly and a 'dependent' is one who does not do so. Here again the majority of the families have one or two dependents.

TABLE 8—Distribution of the Respondents by the Number of Earners and Dependents in the Family.

Total number of Earners and Dependents	Districts								Total	
	M		C		R		D			
	E	D	E	D	E	D	E	D	E	D
1-2	132	4	126	22	146	35	130	47	534	108
3-4	2	50	5	65	17	60	11	37	35	212
5-6	1	50	—	24	—	44	—	39	1	157
7-8	—	26	—	14	—	18	—	12	—	70
9-10	—	9	—	4	—	3	—	4	—	20
11-12	—	1	—	1	—	2	—	2	—	6
NIL	5	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	7	—
NR	—	—	6	7	—	3	—	—	6	10
NA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	140	140	137	137	165	165	141	141	583	583

E: Earners

D: Dependents

THE HOUSEHOLD

Head of the Household

The definition of the head of the household is as follows : an elderly member who is so considered by all the other members of the family. The husband in a majority of the cases is considered to be the head. However, in certain instances the respondent has considered herself to be the head and most of such respondents are married.

TABLE 9—Distribution of the Respondents by the Head of the Household.

Head of the Household	Districts				Total
	M	C	R	D	
Self	1	5	10	5	21
Husband	130	113	80	104	427
Father-in-law	1	4	6	15	26
Mother-in-law	—	—	1	2	3
Father	6	13	62	7	88
Mother	—	—	5	1	6
Son	2	—	—	1	3
Others	—	—	1	4	5
NR	—	2	—	2	4
Total	140	137	165	141	583

The question of the head of the household is important in considering the status of women in the family. Typically in a patriarchal society, a male member is invariably the head of the household. The word of the head is generally the final one but such a concept becomes increasingly meaningless, with the change in the family structures from patriarchal to the complex, that is, one in which both the man and the wife have equal roles to play. It is in fact important to note what the women themselves mean by the term "Head" and how much of authority the head has in the family. Because, as long as the women are under the rule of the man of the family, they may not be able to take independent decisions and any attempt to help these women will fail, if the men folk at home happen to be negative towards such help.

Taking this into consideration, the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they participate in taking decisions on important matters in the family. It was found that excepting in the cases of unmarried respondents, the others in most cases participate in decision making in the family. The type of participation is, however, not clear. The women could be merely nodding their heads and agreeing with the general feeling and tone of the one who is the head. These questions on the type and pattern of authority that women enjoy in the different types of families call for a more detailed investigation to arrive at a considered judgement on the status of women in this society.

Household Work

TABLE 10—Distribution of the Respondents by the Time Spent on Household Duties and the Mode of Spending the Leisure Time.

Time spent on house- hold duties	Mode of spending leisure time						NA	NR	Total
	Go to movies or Read	Study or Club	Attend Women's or sleep	Do nothing	Others				
Whole day	2	—	—	—	—	—	90	5	97
More than half a day	10	20	—	75	3	—	36	1	145
Less than half a day	108	130	74	19	—	—	3	—	334
Not applicable	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
No response	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	6
Total	120	150	74	94	3	—	130	12	583

334 (57.28 per cent) spend less than half a day on their domestic chores. Quite a considerable number of these 334 respondents, 108 (35.32 per cent) state that they go for work, while 130 (22.79 per cent) of them state that they spend their time by doing some extra and needed household work like stitching of clothes or in reading.

The next largest number of 145 (24.87 per cent) respondents spend more than half a day on their household duties but not the whole day.

The response, do something like stitching or read, is rather general. Perhaps these respondents may be doing something just to keep themselves occupied. Taking into consideration the educational qualification of the respondents it does not seem probable that these women have regular reading habits. It is not that the respondents have lied about the way they spend their leisure time. The response only means that they generally find something to do to spend their time.

Assuming for a moment that the situation is true of the women in the total population, one can see a picture of the quantity of human resources and working hours lost for want of nothing better to do. There is an urgent need, therefore, to create some useful opportunities for utilising the time that these women have. The task does not end with creating such opportunities rather it starts there and the real task is to motivate the women to make use of such opportunities.

According to the table, 49 (16.12 per cent) of the respondents have said that they do nothing and sleep during their leisure time. However 75 (79.78 per cent) of the 94, spend more than half a day on their household duties so their leisure time may not be too long.

Non-beneficiaries

A non-beneficiary is defined as one who is living close to the place where the welfare programmes are conducted, but has never attended any of the programmes.

As mentioned earlier there are 63 from Coimbatore, 60 from Madras, 59 from Dharmapuri and 35 from Ramanathapuram, making a total of 217 non-beneficiaries.

Beneficiaries and Non-beneficiaries Compared

These two groups were compared with regard to their age, educational qualifications, total household income and size. The findings are given in the following table ;

TABLE 11—The Significance of Difference between the Beneficiaries and Non-beneficiaries.

Variable	Value of $\chi_1^2/d.f.$	Probability
Age	5.9	.01 \angle p \angle .02
Educational qualification	10.5	.001 \angle p \angle .01
Total monthly household income	41	p \angle .001
Total household size	6	.001 \angle p \angle .01

The medians of the two groups for the four variables were compared and the table shows that the two groups are distinctly different from each other.

The percentage comparison of the two groups for the same variables is given below.

TABLE 12—Percentage Differences between the Beneficiaries and Non-beneficiaries*.

Variable	Beneficiaries	Non-beneficiaries
<i>Age</i>		
Below 30	71	51
31 and above	29	49
<i>Educational qualification</i>		
Illiterates	29	27
Literates—upto high school	68	71
Literates—above high school level	3	2
<i>Total household income</i>		
Nil	1	1
1-100	41	34
101-200	33	38
201-300	16	22
301 and more	8	4
No response	1	1
<i>Total household size</i>		
Below 4	32	39
5 and above	68	61

* The percentages are rounded to the nearest number.

The differences observed in the percentage distributions cause the statistically significant difference thus indicating that the beneficiaries differ from non-beneficiaries as far as their socio-economic background is concerned.

The next step is to analyse the reasons given by the non-beneficiaries for not attending the welfare programmes.

The non-beneficiaries gave 14 different reasons for non-attendance. Out of these 14, grouping together similar reasons, six categories of responses were obtained as shown in the following table.

TABLE 13—Distribution of the Non-Beneficiaries by the Reasons Given for Not Attending the Welfare Programmes (Multiple Response).

Reasons	Districts				Total
	M	C	R	D	
No knowledge about the programme	23	13	14	13	63
No time to attend	28	29	11	12	80
Not interested	15	17	3	9	44
Not permitted to go	2	1	4	21	28
Physical disability/ old age	1	1	3	4	9
Poverty	2	1	1	1	5
No Response	—	2	—	—	2

Taking the responses by each districts, the data reveals the major reason for non-attendance in each district.

In Madras, lack of time is the major reason, as also in Coimbatore, whereas for Ramanathapuram it is lack of knowledge and in Dharmapuri it is refusal by elders to accord permission to attend such programmes. Some of the respondents from Dharmapuri have stated that they work in fields and so this is one of the reasons why they have to obtain permission to attend the programmes.

These reasons given by the respondents show that none of the respondents have any negative feeling towards the programmes. Basically they would like to make use of these programmes, if they were made more beneficial or attractive.

In Chapter 3 where the beneficiaries and the programmes are analysed, the responses show that none of the beneficiaries has any unfavourable attitude towards the programmes.

To sum up, the majority of the beneficiaries belong to the age group 26-30, and few of them are educated above high school. The percentage of literates as compared to that of the census data is higher. A large bulk of them are married Hindu women speaking Tamil. The highest income specified is Rs. 350 per month. On an average, the families have 1-2 adults and one or two earners. The number of children and dependents vary from 0 to 10. The nuclear family is the most common, with husband as the head of the family. The majority of the women spend less than half a day on their household duties.

The non-beneficiaries appear to be very different from the beneficiaries, in so far as their socio-economic background is compared with that of the beneficiaries. However, they seem to have no negative feelings towards the welfare programmes.

CHAPTER 3

WELFARE SERVICES

Policy Statement

So far there is no well defined statement of social welfare policy in the country. There are a few statements in the Constitution, certain laws and reports of the Government which spell out the social policy.

The Fourth Five Year Plan states "uplift of the weaker sections of the community has always been recognised as the special responsibility of the State and the development of Social Welfare activities has, therefore, been an integral part of our plans."¹ This perhaps is the only authoritative policy statement on Social Welfare as at present.

Programmes Conducted

The report issued by the Department of Social Welfare, in the State, groups certain activities together and classifies the programmes into four categories as follows :

(1) *Training programmes*, including Secondary Grade Teacher's Training Course, Secretarial Course, Tailoring, Training of *Balasevikas* and *Mukhyasevikas* ;

(2) *Welfare programmes* including minimum programmes which cover *Mahalir Mandrams* in Panchayat Unions and *Mahalir Mandrams* in Police Lines, and composite programmes for women and pre-school children ;

1. Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-'74), Madras State, Drafts Outline.
2. Social Welfare Department : Welfare Programmes for Women and Children for 1972-73, Government of Tamil Nadu, March 1972.

(3) *Other items including* service homes for the socially handicapped women, hostels for working women, women's welfare branches and work centres and production units ; and

(4) *Child care* including the Integrated Child Welfare Demonstration Project at Poonamallee, Pre-schools, Family and Child Welfare projects and the Special Nutrition Programmes.

Programmes and the Respondents

The table below and the diagram indicate the welfare programmes known and utilised by the respondents of the survey.

TABLE 14—Welfare Programmes Known and Utilised by the Respondents in Each District.

Welfare Programmes	Districts								Total	
	M		C		R		D		K*	U*
	K*	U*	K*	U*	K*	U*	K*	U*		
<i>Mahalir</i>										
<i>Mandrams</i>	3	—	117	—	11	—	179	73	310	73
Craft classes	145	77	149	15	66	54	60	8	420	154
Training centres	20	2	—	—	77	2	—	—	97	4
Nutrition Programmes	43	34	78	40	—	—	57	52	178	126
<i>Kulandaigal</i>										
<i>Kappagams</i>	168	71	196	102	67	57	80	46	511	276
Women's Welfare Branches	145	9	69	2	48	38	—	—	262	49
Production Units	42	3	5	5	64	64	12	17	123	89
Total	566	196	614	164	333	215	388	196	1,901	771

The 583 respondents who are the beneficiaries, in total some 1901 responses referring to their knowledge about the welfare programmes. This makes it 3.2 responses per respondent, that is,

* The letter K denotes programmes known and U denotes the programmes utilised.

on an average, one respondent knows about three different programmes. Taking into consideration the responses to the

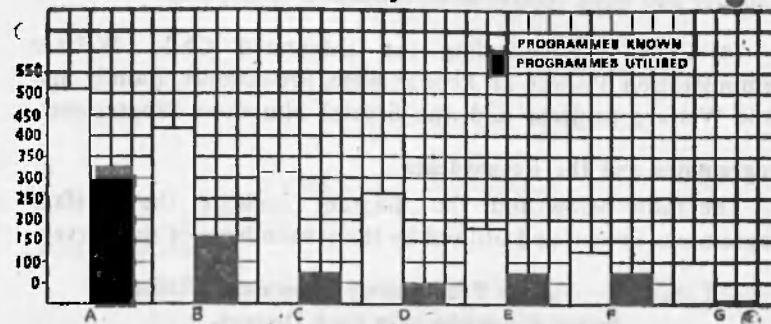


Fig. 3. Welfare Services Known and Utilised by the Respondents.
 A--Kulandaigal Kappagams; B--Craft Classes
 C--Mahalir Mandrams; D--Women's Welfare Branches
 E--Nutrition Programmes; F--Production Units; G--Training Centres

question on utilisation, on an average, each respondent is seen to use only one programme. The fact that each respondent knows at least about 3 different programmes shows that the information about the programmes is reaching the respondents quite well.

Source of Information

In all the four districts, the main source of information about the welfare programmes is the organiser, teacher or the *Grama sevika*, who is in-charge of the programme. There are also other sources like the neighbours, etc. as shown in the table below, but they are not of significance.

TABLE 15—Source of Information of the Welfare Programme to the Respondents (Multiple Response).

Source	Districts				Total
	M	C	R	D	
Organiser/teacher					
<i>Gramasevika, etc.</i>	116	54	144	142	456
Neighbours	14	52	12	1	79
Ladies club	2	32	1	1	36
Self or closely	8	—	3	—	11
From another participant	1	11	—	—	12
From work place	—	6	—	—	6
NR	5	1	1	—	7
Total	146	156	161	144	607

Here too, the multiple responses given mean that some respondents have had more than one source from which they learnt about the welfare programmes. In three districts, the majority of the respondents state that the organiser is the source of information. In Coimbatore, the responses are distributed differently. This may be because some of the respondents from Coimbatore are the family members of the mill workers and they live in colonies built for them. In such colonies information might spread equally through the organiser as well as the neighbours who have already made use of the programmes. The response "Ladies club" means that the respondents learnt about the programmes through local organizations in which they were members. The response "self or closely" means that the programme were conducted in a place close to the respondent's house and thus she learnt about them on her own.

Mahalir Mandrams

When asked about the activities of the *Mahalir Mandrams*, the respondents only stated what they do in craft classes, as this seems to be the main activity of the *Mandram*. Therefore, the responses to these questions are not presented and explained here, as they become repetitions of the response made with regard to craft classes.

Craft Classes

On the whole, for the four districts, 154 women are attending the craft classes. But there have been multiple responses to

questions relating to craft classes, so that the total number of responses recorded are 216.

TABLE 16—Distribution of the Respondents by the Craft Learnt by Them.

Craft learnt	Districts				Total
	M	C	R	D	
Tailoring and related	57	15	44	12	128
Wire bag	52	12	1	—	65
Basket weaving	17	1	—	—	18
Leather work	3	—	—	—	3
Doll making	2	—	—	—	2
Total	131	28	45	12	216

Though the majority of the respondents are receiving training in tailoring and related crafts, the demand to learn the same craft seems to be high.

TABLE 17—Distribution of the Respondents by the New Crafts They Wish to Learn.

New Crafts	Districts				Total
	M	C	R	D	
Painting	56	8	—	—	64
Doll making	46	4	2	2	54
Tailoring and related	14	—	37	—	51
Basket weaving	11	11	10	8	40
Cooking	—	5	—	—	5
Wire bag	—	—	2	1	3
Book binding	—	—	—	1	1
Knitting	1	—	—	—	1
Total	128	28	51	12	219

The table shows that painting is the craft that the majority of the women want to learn and this demand comes mainly from the urban sample. Basket weaving is the craft that almost an equal number of respondents from all the four districts wish to learn.

Period of Learning the Craft

TABLE 18—Distribution of the Respondents by Period of Learning the Craft.

Craft learnt and District	Period of learning						Total
	Less than a month	1-6 months	7-12 months	1-2 years	2-3 years	3+ years	
Madras							
Tailoring & related	5	23	10	10	2	5	55
Wire Bag	8	17	5	10	2	8	50
Basket weaving	5	2	1	—	—	—	8
Leather work	—	2	—	—	—	—	2
Coimbatore							
Tailoring & related	3	6	3	1	—	1	14
Wire Bag	1	6	3	1	—	—	11
Basket weaving	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
Leather work	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ramanathapuram							
Tailoring & related	11	15	19	6	1	—	52
Wire Bag	—	2	—	—	—	—	2
Dharmapuri							
Tailoring & related	2	30	6	21	—	2	61
Total	36	103	47	49	5	16	256

Period of Learning and Extent of Learning

TABLE 19—Distribution of the Respondents by the Period and extent to which the Craft has been Learnt.

District and period of learning	Extent of learning			Total
	Quite a lot	Just a little	Very little	
Madras				
Less than a month	—	7	11	18
1-6 months	22	17	35	74
7-12 months	6	8	2	16
1-2 years	13	6	1	20
2-3 years	2	2	—	4
3+ years	11	—	2	13
Coimbatore				
Less than a month	—	3	2	5
1-6 months	4	6	2	12
7-12 months	6	—	—	6
1-2 years	—	2	—	2
2-3 years	—	—	—	—
3+ years	—	—	1	1
Ramanathapuram				
Less than a month	3	3	5	11
1-6 months	12	3	5	20
7-12 months	19	—	—	19
1-2 years	6	—	—	6
2-3 years	1	—	—	1
3+ years	—	—	—	—
Dharmapuri				
Less than a month	2	—	—	2
1-6 months	27	3	—	30
7-12 months	6	—	—	6
1-2 years	21	—	—	21
2-3 years	—	—	—	—
3+ years	2	—	—	2
Total	163	60	66	289

There seems to be no association between the period of learning and the extent of knowledge gained. The main reason for

inadequate learning is lack of time. The next major reason is that the respondents discontinued the classes for sometime or have been irregular in attendance. Then there are reasons such as lack of proper teaching, and the disability to follow instructions.

Suggestions for Improving the Craft Classes

The most common suggestion was that more time during the day should be allotted for teaching the craft. The next common suggestion was that more equipment should be provided to the craft classes. A third was that people trained in the craft classes should be absorbed in production units. There were two more suggestions, one being that employment should be provided through the craft classes and then that teaching in the craft classes should be improved.

Kulandaigal Kappagams

TABLE 20—Districtwise Distribution of the Number of Children at Home and the Number attending the Kulandaigal Kappagams.

District and number of children at home	Number of children attending <i>Kulandaigal Kappagams</i>			Total
	Nil	1	2	
Madras	1	13	71	84
	2	2	—	3
	3	—	1	—
Coimbatore	1	31	71	102
	2	6	19	6
	3	—	—	3
Ramanathapuram	1	5	45	50
	2	5	1	10
	3	2	1	—
Dharmapuri	1	3	27	30
	2	—	1	16
	3	—	—	—
Total	67	237	38	342

Thus, out of 342 children that are between the ages of $2\frac{1}{2}$ and 5 years the eligible age for attending *Kulandaigal Kappagams*, 67 are not attending *Kulandaigal Kappagams* and 275 are attending them. The major reason for these children attending the *Kappagams* seems to be that the children are able to learn something in the *Kappagams*. The next reason stated is the availability of food in the *Kappagams*. From the responses it appears that the mothers of the children have a healthy outlook towards the *Kulandaigal Kappagams*. On the whole they are happy that the children are able to obtain some basic knowledge. The purpose of the *Kappagams* is primarily to prepare the children for the primary school, by developing a healthy attitude towards school education and a proper motivation to seek it. However, unless the mothers themselves are educated and/or understand the educational purpose and value of the *Kappagam*, they cannot inculcate such attitude and motivation in their children. There is the general suspicion that children are sent to the *Kappagams* merely to get the food free of cost. This suspicion is unproven at least in the case of this survey. The other reasons for sending the children to the *Kulandaigal Kappagams* are as follows :

TABLE 21—Reasons for sending the Children to the *Kulandaigal Kappagams*.

Reasons	Number of respondents
The children get educated	202
Free food is available	24
<i>Kappagams</i> are close to home	22
The children get used to school going	16
To get rid of the children	7
All the children in the neighbourhood are going	2
Cannot afford to send the child to any other school	2
Total	275

Now, the major reason for not sending the children to the *Kappagams* is that the child does not like going or refuses to go to the *Kappagams* (25, 38.4 per cent). The next reason is that the *Kappagams* are situated far from the house of the child (18, 27.54 per cent). The third important reason that the

children have joined other schools perhaps schools run by private individuals (7, 10.71 per cent) and also that these children are not allowed to go to the *Kappagams*. These happen to be the Harijan children. There are other reasons namely that the parents did not know about the *Kulandaigal Kappagams*, the admissions were over, (7, 10.71 per cent). Lastly, there is an interesting answer that is due to poverty the child is unable to attend the *Kappagam*. This response has occurred only once in 65 (1, 1.53 per cent).

Nutrition Programme

Nutrition seems to be a programme with vast potential with its concern for the mental development of the human being. This is a field where the State and private bodies alike should be able to provide the most urgently needed services.

In the survey, as noted earlier, 126 respondents are benefitted by the Nutrition programme, out of which 34 are from Madras, 40 from Coimbatore and 52 from Dharmapuri and none from Ramanathapuram.

Out of 34 in Madras 24 (70.6 per cent) receive Corn Soya Milk products, commonly known as CSM, and 10 (29.4 per cent) receive bread. In Coimbatore all the 40 are receiving Mid-day meals, and in Dharmapuri all the 52 are receiving the Corn Soya Milk products (CSM). Excepting one respondent from Madras, who has lost her card, no other respondent has any problem in receiving the nutritional items every day.

Nutrition for Children

All these 126 respondents have children who also benefit from the Nutrition programme. Here too excepting one response, which states that the problem in receiving the nutrition is that the place of distribution is far, no one else has any problem.

TABLE 22—Districtwise Frequency Distribution of Children receiving Nutrition.

Districts	Number of children					Total
	0	1	2	3	4	
Madras	—	—	28	10	—	38
Coimbatore	4	27	9	—	—	40
Dharmapuri	11	29	13	—	—	53
Total	15	56	50	10	—	131

Production Unit

More respondents in Ramanathapuram benefit from the Production Unit, than in any of the other three districts. Like Nutrition, this programme also seems to be universally popular. All respondents state that they are benefiting from the production unit.

From Coimbatore there are 5 respondents who are utilising the production units. These five are from the fruit preservation production unit. There are 10 from Madras and 12 from Dharmapuri and 73 from Ramanathapuram. The time period for which they have worked at the production unit and their opinions about the benefit derived therefrom are given in Table 23.

TABLE 23—Districtwise Distribution of the Respondents by the Time Worked at the Production Unit and the Benefits of Working So.

District & period of work	Benefits		Total
	Helps earn money	Help earn knowledge and skill	
Madras			
Less than a month	—	—	—
1-2 months	—	—	—
3-5 months	2	2	4
6-12 months	2	2	4
1-2 years	1	1	2
Coimbatore			
3-5 years	5	1	6
Ramanathapuram			
Less than a month	—	1	1
1-2 months	7	7	14
3-5 months	7	12	19
6-12 months	30	31	61
Dharmapuri			
3-5 months	1	1	2
6-12 months	8	2	10
Total	63	60	123

The analysis so far deals with the Welfare Programmes that are directly conducted by the State Government. There are also programmes that are not part of the Women's Welfare Programme that have effects on it. And it is to some of these that attention is now given.

The majority of the respondents from the three districts, excluding Madras, do not think that their family is large. Regarding the Madras respondents, the majority of them feel that their family is sufficiently large, and the need to use family planning methods is recognised.

TABLE 24—Distribution of the Respondents by their Idea about the Family Size.

Idea about the family	Districts				Total
	M	C	R	D	
No	52	102	166	150	470
Yes—No	2	2	4	2	10
Yes—Yes	125	70	22	38	295
Yes	14	4	5	1	24
NA	6	20	3	8	37
NR	1	2	—	1	4
Total	200	200	200	200	800

The response "no" means that the respondent does not think that her family is big. The response "Yes—no" means that she considers her family to be big but does not believe that family planning is necessary. This is a group of respondents who may be negatively disposed towards family planning. The response "Yes—yes" means that the family is considered to be big and that adoption of family planning was necessary. The response "yes" denotes those who said that their family is big but refused to say anything about family planning. The table shows that the respondents mainly fall into two categories. The first are those who do not consider their family to be big. Women belonging to this group should be given basic knowledge about the ideal or desirable size of family. Otherwise no amount of efforts to propagate family planning will succeed. The next category is those who believe their families to be big and believe that family planning methods should be adopted. This particular group seems to have a favourable attitude towards family planning and the facilities should be made available to them regularly.

Knowledge and Preferred Method of Family Planning

In all the four districts 174 respondents claimed that they did not know anything about any of the family planning methods. The remaining 409 (excluding the not applicables and no responses) gave 1264 responses (average 3 responses per respondent). Sterilisation seems to be the most well known method, followed by the Loop and then usage of Nirodh (31.36, 26.63,

16.83 per cent respectively). The next common response was oral pills (8.45 per cent).

It should be noted that a large majority do not seem to be in favour of family planning methods at all. Taking into consideration only those who have preferred any of the methods the following pattern of responses is evolved.

TABLE 25—Distribution of the Respondents by the Preferred Method of Family Planning.

Preferred method	Districts				Total
	M	C	R	D	
Loop	10	—	11	19	40
Nirodh	2	—	5	5	12
Rhythm	1	—	3	2	6
Pills	—	4	3	2	9
Abortion	—	—	—	—	—
Abstinence	3	1	2	2	8
Tubectomy	44	—	12	6	62
Vasectomy	25	1	5	5	36
Sterilisation	67	20	19	32	138
Total	152	26	60	73	311

The data from the table reveals that on the whole permanent methods of family planning are preferred to temporary methods and among the methods, the methods the women have to adopt seem to be preferred. This latter finding may be due to the fact that the sample consists only of women.

TABLE 26—Distribution of the Respondents by the Preferred Method of Family Planning and Reasons Thereof.

Preferred method	Reasons					Total
	Safe	Easy	Healthy	Convenient	Certain	
Loop	18	5	5	8	—	36
Nirodh	7	3	—	2	—	12
Rhythm	—	1	2	—	—	3
Pills	2	6	—	1	—	9
Abortion	3	—	—	—	—	3
Abstinence	1	—	1	2	—	4
Tubectomy	54	1	3	4	3	65
Vasectomy	21	—	—	7	—	28
Sterilisation	23	10	1	6	1	41
Total	129	26	12	30	4	201

It will be noticed that in the above table tubectomy is preferred to all other methods and the major reason for its preference is the belief that it is safe. The same reason applies to the other three methods, namely, vasectomy, sterilisation and to a lesser extent the Loop. Here perhaps the term safe does not refer to safety from the health point of view, but certainty against child birth. Next to such an assurance, the respondents seem to prefer the method which is convenient and easy. The last in order of preference seems to be the health reason.

School going Children

Though the respondents were asked questions about both the male and female children going to school, the focus has been entirely on female children not going to school, as generally more female children than male do not go to school. Most of the children who are of the school going age are going to school. The few who do not go to school do so because in the main they are not old enough to go to primary school. But these children are attending *Kulandaigal Kappagams*, wherever the *Kappagams* are present. So, there does not seem to be any lack of interest on the part of the respondents to send their children to school.

Occupation

Out of the 583 beneficiaries 340 (58.31 per cent) have stated that they want to take up job or change from the jobs that they are already working in, to better ones.

TABLE 27—Distribution of the Respondents by the Type of Jobs that they Prefer (Excluding not applicables and no responses).

Preferred jobs	Districts				Total
	M	C	R	D	
Any job	2	85	34	20	141
Tailoring	56	7	49	23	135
A job in a school or hospital	24	5	—	5	34
Job in an office or factory	7	1	4	3	15
Teacher/ <i>Balasevika</i>	5	—	1	2	8
Sweeper	3	—	—	—	3
Nurse	1	2	—	1	4
Total	98	100	88	54	340

The data reveals that there is a definite demand for employment among women. In a majority of the cases they are ready to accept any job, as long as there is a money wage attached.

To sum up, *Kulandaigal Kappagam* is the programme that is used by the majority of the women, followed by the craft classes and then the Nutrition programme. None of the respondents has any negative feelings towards the programmes. The majority are interested in obtaining employment and earning money.

Though questions on Adult Literacy and Social Education classes were included in the interview schedule not a single respondent mentioned anything about these, thereby indicating that they have no knowledge about these two activities and are not making use of them.

CHAPTER 4

WELFARE NEEDS

This chapter analyses the felt need of the respondents based on data from the earlier chapters and the answers to the questions that were directly asked of them.

Primary Role of a Woman

The respondents were asked to specify the primary role of a woman in society. Three types of responses were given to this question.

The response that has been given more frequently is that the primary role of a woman is to earn and support the family. This is a feeling that is far removed from the traditional role ascribed to women particularly of this group. The mission in a woman's life of being a daughter, wife and mother does not figure as the primary role. On the contrary, the need to earn and support the family has been expressed as the primary role by the majority.

TABLE 28—Primary Role of a Woman.

Primary role	Districts				Total
	M	C	R	D	
To be a housewife and a mother	63	35	90	75	263 (32.88%)
To be a subordinate to her husband and help him	16	6	3	28	53 (6.62%)
To earn and support the family	119	159	107	92	477 (59.63%)
No Response	2	—	—	5	7 (0.87%)
Total	200	200	200	200	800

Perhaps nearly 60 per cent of the respondents state that earning and supporting of the family is the primary role because the majority of them hail from a low economic class, where the values are very different from those of the middle or upper classes. But this is not all. The response must be seen in relation not only to the class to which they belong, but also against the socio-economic setting in which the poor are placed today. The daily rising prices, the growing scarcity of the most needed essential goods, the realisation that women can also work and earn, perhaps the overall social change, all of these also have contributed to the response. The response also seems to override distinctions of caste, age, education, etc. Also, the response means that there is a definite demand among the women for employment as a means of earning income and expresses indirectly, the need to improve their own status by improving their positions as economic agents.

Government's Role in Women's Welfare

On being asked as to why the Government should take an interest in the welfare of the women, the majority of the women replied that it is only means of improving their status and welfare. However, the sample from Coimbatore differed from the others, as a majority gave their poverty as the reason necessitating Government's intervention in women's welfare.

TABLE 29—Reasons for Government taking
Interest in Women's Welfare.

Reason	Districts				Total
	M	C	R	D	
To improve the status and welfare of women	120	2	87	78	287
Being poor, the women need help	9	125	—	29	163
To bring up the children well	1	26	2	2	31
The future of the country is in the hands of the women	26	2	1	—	29
Nobody but the Govt. can give help	6	1	1	14	22
Need assistance to support the family	3	8	1	2	14
Others	6	2	—	1	9
Reason not specified	21	25	1	26	73
Not applicable	5	8	103	16	132
No response	3	1	4	32	40
Total	200	200	200	200	800

The table shows the feelings of the majority of the women, namely, that their status should improve and that that is the purpose of the women's welfare programmes. Perhaps, these women do not comprehend the socio-economic and cultural implications of such feelings, particularly the forces of social change and their roles in it. What they are trying to convey may be that they want to have better lives socially and economically.

The next major reason has its base only in the economic situation of these people. Out of the 163 who have given poverty as the reason 125 are from Coimbatore and not a single one from Ramanathapuram. However, the sample from Coimbatore has a higher income level as compared to the two rural districts. Probably, the respondents from Coimbatore are more aware of their poverty and are anxious to alleviate it. The response

“bring up the children well” and “need assistance to support the family” are reasons relating to the families of the respondents. These responses show the concern of the women in maintaining a family at decent standards and giving a healthy and happy life to their children in the family. These are the truly feminine feelings of the respondents. The answers also reveal that the women are conscious of their direct responsibility for the good upbringing of their children.

The next response is a very interesting one. 29 respondents have stated that the future of the country is in the hands of women. This is one of the assumptions with which the study was started and those who have to realise this fact are the ordinary women. Many other persons—academicians, administrators and political leaders—believe and state that women must form the nucleus of and for change, and for development because it is they who can influence their family members and build the base for acceptance of change. But the limited extent to which this assumption is known and felt by sample of the women may be noted.

22 respondents state only the Government can help the women to improve their status. This response proceeds from the assumption that women do need assistance, because of the poverty of their lives. Though this response does not directly provide the specific reason as to why the Government should take up women's welfare activities, it points to the conviction of a group of people that it is a Governmental obligation.

There are 107 respondents who believe that the Government should undertake women's welfare programmes but do not specify their reasons for the feeling. This group is somewhat akin to the earlier one, which has explicitly expressed its faith in Government's capacity to work for the welfare of women.

There is a group of respondents numbering 132, who have expressed exactly the opposite view. These respondents believe that the Government should not take interest in women's welfare, for different reasons as shown in the following table.

TABLE 30—Reasons for Government not taking Interest in Women's Welfare.

Reasons	Districts				Total
	M	C	R	D	
No specific reason	—	7	103	14	124
The Government cannot do anything as it has not been able to do any thing so far	3	1	—	—	4
There is no need for women's welfare	2	—	—	—	2
Women will rule over men if their status is improved	—	—	—	2	2
Total	5	8	103	16	132

New Welfare Programmes

With regard to the question on the new welfare programmes that the respondents want to be introduced, the responses given by them could be broadly classified into seven categories as in the table below.

TABLE 31—Distribution of the Respondents by the New Welfare Programmes that they want to be introduced.

Welfare Programmes	Districts				Total
	M	C	R	D	
No programmes suggested	88	—	126	98	312
Job opportunities	6	106	1	27	140
Craft classes	34	1	4	6	45
Educational facilities	—	36	3	10	49
Vocational assistance	—	3	26	—	29
House keeping	—	13	—	—	13
Cultural functions	10	—	—	—	10
Free food	—	5	3	—	8
Financial assistance	—	5	2	—	7
Medical help	2	—	—	—	2
Total	140	169	165	141	615

The table clearly indicates the demands for jobs for women. Excluding the not applicables and those with no suggestions, there are 300 respondents who have suggested new welfare programmes. 46.6 per cent (140 persons) of these 300 respondents have asked for job opportunities as part of the welfare programmes. The next demand is for educational facilities. This response includes free education for children, adult literacy and also library facilities. The third demand is for craft classes, as a means of learning a skill to earn an income. The fourth is for vocational assistance which specifically is expressed as the desire to learn typing. They also want examinations to be held in the various crafts and skills that they are learning and a certificate issued. Such a pattern of responses indicate an overwhelming priority of demands for employment and education.

Welfare Work

The fifteen welfare workers, who were interviewed also expressed a similar need. All of them felt that employment for women should be given priority, when one is thinking in terms of women's welfare.

These workers and the beneficiary respondents felt that the government's plans for women's welfare were sensible and sound. The flaw as they saw it was in the implementation of the plans and programmes.

One of the reasons given by the welfare workers for the failure in implementation is lack of proper motivation. An officer of the welfare department is not equal to one in another department such as finance or education. The prestige attached to the welfare department is rather low. For the village level workers there does not seem to be much incentive for hard and regular work. An organiser of a *Mahalir Mandram* who is paid ten rupees a month cannot be expected to be *highly* motivated in executing this complex programme. The *salary* structure calls for persons with a missionary or a philanthropic outlook. For a government service this is not a sufficient base for building a systems programme with the necessary execution. It is the necessary base for voluntary efforts.

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There seems to be a general feeling that the competition between the voluntary agencies and Government, in women's welfare programmes, is a negative factor. The voluntary agencies develop a hostile attitude towards the Government because of the bureaucratic delays and red tape of the Government in dealing with women's welfare which should be dealt with expeditiously.

Another limiting factor in the execution of this programme is the lack of trained social workers employed in the Department of Welfare. It cannot be assumed that in all cases trained workers are better and more effective in execution than the untrained ones. The point is that the training in Social Work is quite rigorous and prepares an individual to face the peculiar problems and heart breaks of working in the welfare fields. So, such persons can and should be made fuller use of by government in implementing their programmes.

CHAPTER 5

WELFARE PROGRAMME RECOMMENDED

To recapitulate an analysis of the sample of women surveyed in this study indicates a definite interest in making use of the welfare programmes of the Government. The survey brings out the expressed desire of the respondents for a three point programme: employment, training and education. A further finding is that it is the Government which should be involved in providing this three point programme.

Priorities

On the basis of these findings the Women's Welfare Programme should be restructured to lay major emphasis on employment, training and education to women in the poverty sector. The State Planning Commission computes that 12.6 millions in the rural areas and 4.28 millions in the urban areas live under the dietetic poverty line in the State. Included in this group are 8.30 million women in the rural and the urban areas. It is recommended that the Women's Welfare Programme be in the first instance addressed to meet the employment, training and educational needs of this group of women. The recommended activities are presented schematically at the end of the chapter. The other programmes of nutrition, child care and maternity welfare and family planning should continue as planned and are not dealt with in this chapter.

Employment

The employment opportunities for these women should comprise for the major part self-employment and for a smaller number wage employment. The proportion of women covered by these two forms of employment should be 75:25. In the rural areas self-employment should centre around the crafts of tailor-

ing, leather work and shoe making, basket weaving and net making, wood work and making of domestic utensils as well as in farm activities such as bee keeping, poultry and animal husbandry. For the first group of craft activities the welfare programmes must provide certain inputs through the other Governmental services and Departments of Industries and Agriculture and organise the marketing of articles. The inputs needed are the raw materials for the crafts and leather work, simple tools and equipments. These inputs should be provided to the women craft workers on a credit basis which is computed at Rs. 500 per woman worker calling for a total of Rs. 50 crores. The farm occupations also call for credit purchases to be made available to the farm women which at a rate of Rs. 1000 per farm woman worker for 5 lakh workers works out to Rs. 50 crores as credit. In urban areas the Slum Clearance Board and voluntary agencies should be the means of ensuring craft employment for the women workers who at the rate of Rs. 500 per worker need Rs. 50 crores in credit. For these three groups it is proposed that the Welfare Department mobilise the total Rs. 150 crores needed during the Fifth Plan from the Nationalised Banks, the Small Savings Scheme and other term lending institutions.

The other employment programme for women that the welfare programme should organise is wage employment. In the rural areas such wage employment should be organised by the Department of Social Welfare through the crash rural employment programme, planned and executed by the Departments of Public Works and Agriculture. In the urban areas wage employment for women in the poverty sector must be organised by the Department in the construction programme of PWD, the Harijan Welfare Board and the Slum Clearance Board. The Fifth Plan envisages providing employment and self-employment opportunities for fifteen lakhs of women workers. The wage employment of three lakhs rural and one lakh urban women in these programmes should be planned as part of the employment effort of the Women's Welfare Programme.

Marketing

The other programme is the organisation of marketing outlets for these products from crafts and subsidiary occupations.

There is no proper marketing of even the existing limited products of the welfare programmes. This is partly due to the ignorance of the potential consumers concerning the products and absence of information and publicity relating to them and partly to the quality of the produced articles. These lacunae should be corrected and call for resources, of the order of Rs. 1 lakh only for the Fifth Plan. The production programmes that are financed by women's welfare activities should be market-oriented and increasingly concentrated on the most easily saleable products.

Training

Training of the women workers should be the third major concern of the Women's Welfare Department. The training needs can be classified into vocational training and training in home management. Where vocational training is concerned the employment market in the district should be borne in mind. For instance, in Coimbatore District, which is highly industrialised and has a number of textile industries, women could be trained in packing, painting, etc. In the rural areas training should be imparted in handicrafts, para-medical work, community work, food preservation, tailoring and agricultural labour. Certain cottage industries and crafts like weaving, bee keeping, doll making should be taught both in rural and urban areas.

A network of training programmes somewhat on the lines of the industrial training institutes should be started in all the districts for providing training under this programme. The training should not be for a period longer than one year, except in certain crafts like tailoring which need a longer training period.

Already there are 34 production units existing in the State, according to the report of the Women's Welfare Department. In addition to this, in the existing *Mahalir Mandrams* and Women's Welfare Branches, some of the training activities could be conducted; craft classes are currently being organised. The ITI should also be used in the evenings and holidays for the vocational training of women workers. The additional cost of this programme will be Rs. 5 lakhs per district for the Fifth Plan calling for a total of Rs. 65 lakhs.

Training in house management should include child care, nutrition, health, hygiene and family planning and small savings.

This training also should be conducted in the existing *Mahalir Mandrams* and Women's Welfare Branches. The existing training programmes in this regard need to be expanded, regularised and demand-oriented.

Education

Education for women will primarily consist of adult literacy, and functional literacy programmes.

Adult Literacy should be made a compulsory activity of the *Mahalir Mandrams* and Women's Welfare Branches. The assistance of the Department of Education, involving use of the District Education Officer and his staff should be sought. The Perspective Plan has allotted Rs. 1.50 crores for adult literacy and this facility should be used in the women's education programme.

The Plan envisaged the functioning of 40,000 centres for Functional Literacy during the Fifth Plan. In collaboration with the Department of Education a certain number of these centres, say, 25 to 30 per cent should be assigned the task of imparting functional literacy to the neoliterates.

Periodical evaluation or at least a review of the progress of the activities of the Welfare Department should be undertaken, because the success of projects in this area involves not only the setting up and proper execution of projects, but even more the meeting as fully as possible, the needs of the individual for whom the programmes are devised.

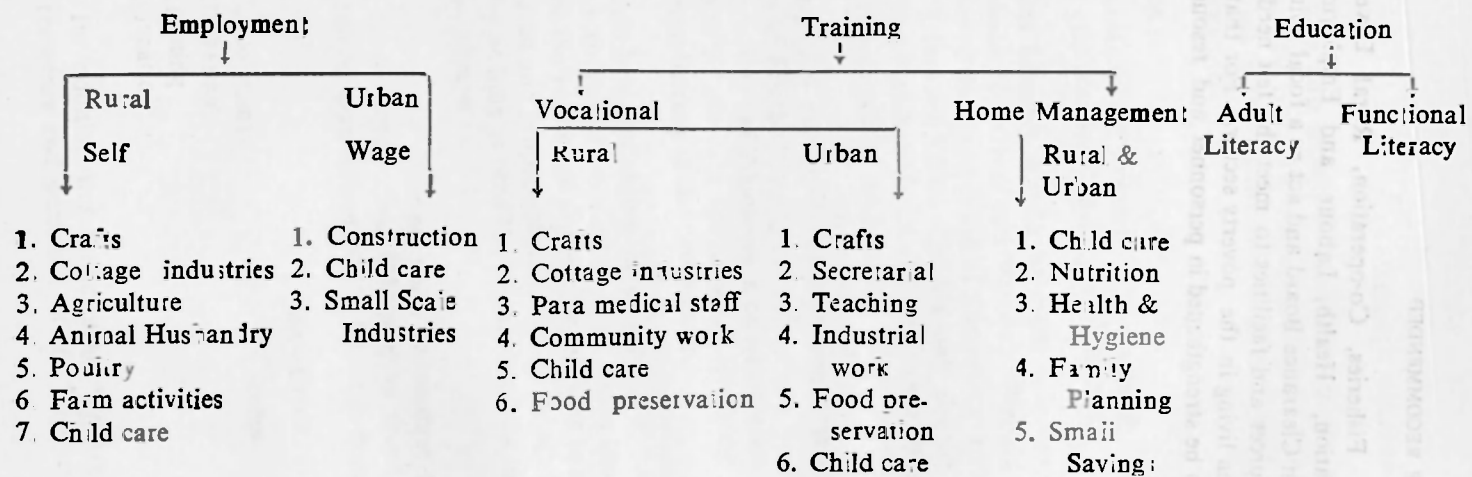
To sum up the four point programme of women's welfare calls for an outlay of Rs. 150 crores as credit and Rs. 1.01 crores as recurring expenditure during the Fifth Plan as follows :

	Loans—Credit	Recurring
1. Employment	Rs. 150 crores	
2. Marketing		Rs. 1 lakh
3. Training		Rs. 70 lakhs
4. Education		Rs. 30 lakhs

In addition the Department Welfare of must mobilise the resources and personnel of the Departments of Agriculture,

Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Co-operation, Rural Development, PWD, Education, Health, Labour and Employment, Small Industry, Slum Clearance Board and act as a focal point in canalising their resources and facilities to meet the felt needs of the 8.3 million women living in the poverty sector. For that the Department needs to be strengthened in personnel and resources.

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