

# CHAPTER VII

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## SOCIAL SECURITY

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### Introduction

Social security is the measure of welfare of the citizens in a state or country. Every Government has an agenda to improve the status of livelihood of its people and create equitable development. Social security measures form an important tool to realize the set goals, as there is bound to be heterogeneity in any population with reference to economy, social status and health. The prime duty is identification of marginalized groups who are in need of assistance to satisfy their basic needs and supply cash or kind to help them. The Government would be an appropriate institution to implement the schemes in a sustainable basis without any lacunae. There may be many NGOs that carry out similar activities but they could only act as supplementary institutions to the Government as their sphere of action is small and constrained to a particular sector.

The performance of the Government of Tamil Nadu in this context is a model to other states as the schemes carried out are holistic and inclusive. All the schemes that both Central and State Government sponsored are meticulously implemented in the State and this could be understood by the number of beneficiaries under different categories. 13,40,154 old age pensions, 50,911 disability pension, 4,58,599 widow pensions of Rs.1,000 per month for the year 2011-12 have been provided through Central government schemes in Tamil Nadu. In addition, through State Government sponsored schemes 1,81,063 destitute disabled, 4,54,361 destitute widows, 4,28,529 destitute agricultural laborers, 1,38,943 deserted wives and 19,424 unmarried women of more than 50 years get Rs.1,000 per month as assistance. Totally, 30,71,984 people of Tamil Nadu (2011-12) get financial assistance from the state on a monthly basis and this is about 4.25 per cent of the total population of Tamil Nadu for the year 2011. (Source: Director of Social welfare, Chennai). Other than this, maternity and marriage assistance given to expectant mothers and young girls below BPL is unique to the State of Tamil Nadu. Maternity assistance of Rs.1000 per month for six months given to mothers to

improve their nutritional status so as to beget healthy babies is a laudable scheme covering all villages and towns of Tamil Nadu. Marriage assistance given to one female child of the BPL family of Rs.50,000 for graduate and Rs.25,000 for non-graduate along with 4 sovereigns of gold is yet another scheme, first of its kind, in Tamil Nadu wherein 1,60,228 in 2011 and 1,63,228 in 2012 were beneficiaries. Both schemes give an impetus to improve the status of women and encourage them to continue their education to college level.

Another important scheme to be reckoned is PDS (Public Distribution System), whose practice and function in Tamil Nadu has been the best that it almost covers the entire population below poverty line. No gainsaying the fact that there are modifications in quality and quantity of PDS according to the Government in power, the staple food for the people – rice – is always distributed at a subsidized rate or free of cost ensuring absence of starvation.

## Demographic Profile of the Aged

**Table 7.1 Demographic Profile** (in no.)

Sl. No	District/ State	Total Population	Population Aged Above 60*		
			Male	Female	Total
1	District	16,18,345	81,441	82,929	1,64,370
2	State	7,21,47,030	36,61,226	38,48,532	75,09,758
Source: Census 2011					

Pudukkottai district in central Tamil Nadu, comprising 13 blocks has a total population of 16,18,354 according to Census 2011. From Table 7.1 the population above 60 years was 1,64,370 in 2011 which was 10.16 per cent of total population. Among the 60+ group the female outnumbered the male to a smaller degree – 82,929 females (50.45 per cent) as against 81,441 males (49.55 per cent). The data clearly brings out the need for social security measures for the target population. The current trend predicts an increase in 60+ populations in the coming years necessitating more financial outlay to implement the assistance programs by the district administrative authorities.

## Financial Security

Assistance given to various categories of population is presented in Table 7.2 and from this the maximum beneficiaries come under OAP scheme, which is 23.82 per cent of the target population, i.e., persons aged above 60 years. Totally 39,144 persons get

OAP out of which, 33,359 persons aged above 60 years, 4,558 destitute widows and 1,227 disabled persons get OAP. Pension exclusively for other women like deserted women and unmarried women would benefit women to manage their lives independently and respectfully. Agriculture being the mainstay of rural economy is subjected to upheavals that lead to abject poverty among agricultural labourers during monsoon failure and hence, such persons could also get some relief from this scheme. Marginalized workers need some support to tide over the crisis period, here also such scheme would be valuable and it may even prevent the suicide by farmers.

**Table 7.2 Financial Assistance to Old Age People**

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	Total No. of Beneficiaries
1	OAP	33,359
2	OAP for Destitute Widows	4,558
3	OAP for Disabled Persons	1,227
	Total	39,144

Source: District Revenue Department, District Statistical Handbook 2011-12 & 2013-14

## Differently Abled

**Table 7.3 Assistance to Differently Abled** (in no.)

Sl. No	Categories	Male	Female	Total
1	Locomotor	6,605	5,467	12,072
2	Hearing Impaired	2,606	1,667	4,273
3	Mental Retardation	1,984	1,759	3,743
4	Cerebral palsy	545	394	939
5	Visual Impaired	622	433	1,055
6	Multiple Disappear	495	302	797
7	Leprosy	263	215	478
8	Mental Illness	609	113	722
9	AU	2	0	2
	Total	13,731	10,350	24,081

Source: Differently Abled Welfare Department, Pudukkottai.

One of the major social security measures is pension to differently abled and this is brought out in Table 7.3. Inclusive development of the differently abled, is a compelling need of any society could be achieved through such assistance given to all

categories of special people, blind, deaf, lame, mental retardation etc. Pudukkottai district data on assistance to differently abled shows various categories of differently abled persons getting financial assistance such as persons with locomotor disability (12,072), hearing impaired (4,273), mentally retarded (3,743), cerebral palsy (939), visually impaired (1055), multiple disorder (797), leprosy (478), mental illness (722) and AU (2). More male persons are able to get such benefit compared to female persons, if the number of such male persons is greater than female persons, then there would be no problems. If some female persons are not able to access such benefits, then the issue should be addressed suitably.

### Box 7.1 Marriage and Maternity Assistance Programme

The Government of Tamil Nadu provides several marriage and maternity assistance programmes for the benefit and upliftment of the persons, especially women in dire needs of such assistance like, Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Marriage Assistance Scheme provides Rs.25,000 and four gram gold coin to support the marriage related expenses of poor families; E.V.R. Maniammaiyar Ninaivu Poor Widow's Daughter's Marriage Assistance Scheme provides a similar financial assistance to help the poor mothers who are widows for the marriage of their daughters ; Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy Ninaivu Intercaste Scheme provides similar assistance to a person belonging to a Forward Community and marrying a person belonging to BC/MBC/SC/ST; Annai Teresa Ninaivu Orphan Girls Marriage Assistance Scheme provides similar to financially help Orphan Girls for their marriage; Dr. Dharmambal Ammaiyar Ninaivu Widow Remarriage Scheme provides similar assistance to encourage widow remarriage and to rehabilitate widows; Marriage Assistance to Normal Person Marrying Orthopaedically Handicapped Person provides similar assistance; Marriage Assistance to Normal Person Marrying Speech and Hearing Impaired Person provides similar assistance; and Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy Memorial Maternity Assistance Scheme provides maternity assistance grant of Rs.6,000 at the rate of Rs.1,000 per month, to pregnant women to compensate for the loss of income and to ensure adequate nutrition for them. The financial assistance for marriage is given with certain conditions related to the beneficiary's socio-economic and educational background such as studying 10 Standard. It may be noted that in order to promote higher education among the girls, enhanced assistance of Rs.50,000 is provided to girls with Degree or Diploma. Maternity benefits consider only the economic background and this bears a positive impact on the nutritional status of the mothers.

Table 7.1 in the Appendix presents, data on marriage and maternity assistance doled out to women as a part of social security measures in Pudukkottai district. The total number, who received marriage assistance, was 3,791 in 2012-13, which dropped to 2,999 in 2013-14. Among the blocks, Aranthangi acquired maximum aid given to 350 persons and Gandharvakkottai the least with 61. Maternity benefits have been distributed in three phases in line with the three trimesters of pregnancy

## Case Study: Widows, Destitute Women and Disabled

Three case studies conducted among widows, destitute women and disabled persons in Keeranur Town Panchayat in Pudukkottai district illustrate the way these marginalised section of the society have been sidelined in mainstream development policies and the implementation of existing social security programmes. It is observed that the concerns of widows cannot be dissociated from those of other single women, or indeed from those of women in general. Widows do experience special difficulties and deprivations, connected with the restrictions that are imposed on their lifestyle and the persistence of negative social attitudes towards them. In the development context, it is important to give attention to widowhood as a particular cause of deprivation. And, in the context of affirmative action, it is right to organise and support widows in their specific demands (e.g., relating to pensions, property rights and other entitlements). But this does not mean that action has to take the form of working for or with widows in isolation from other women. The case studies and personal testimonies summarised here demonstrate that there are intimate links between the predicament of widows and a wide range of patriarchal institutions and the gender division of labour. The cause of widows must be seen as an integral part of the broader battle against gender inequalities. The case studies also clearly demonstrate that widows, destitute women and disabled persons are in distress conditions in which they have to face difficulties in realising existing social security measures such as pension for widows, and skills and vocational training for disabled persons. For instance, a woman deserted by her husband cannot avail a ration card as her name would not have been deleted from the ration card, which is held by her deserted husband. A woman taking care of her grand children as her destitute daughter has expired would not be able to include their name in her ration card. The level of disability prevents disabled persons to get assistance from the Governments schemes. Such destitute persons should be included in the mainstream development process empathetically through some suitable policy measures.

## Crime against Women

Data set out in Table 7.4 lists the crime against women for a period of five years from 2009 to 2014. This record is a major indicator of social security as women's safety and security are of prime importance. The data may be only a tip of the iceberg as only registered cases will be tabulated, while unregistered crime against women would show a higher value if documented. Rape cases in the district have a declining phase from 5 in 2009 to 3 in 2014.

**Table 7.4 Crime Against Women**

Sl. No	Category	Number of Cases					
		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
1	Rape	5	7	7	6	2	3
2	Dowry Death	4	5	-	-	-	2
3	Molestation	21	42	24	26	12	29
4	Sexual Harassment	1	2	2	1	-	0
5	Cruelty by Husband and Relative	18	14	18	35	15	44
6	Kidnapping Women and Girls	22	54	41	28	15	47
	Total	71	124	92	96	44	125

Source: S.P.Office, Pudukkottai

Dowry deaths drastically decreased to nil in 2013 from 4 in 2009, but 2 two cases were reported in 2014. Molestation All other crimes like, sexual harassment, cruelty by husband and kidnapping of women and girls show decline in their rate through this five year period. More kidnapping of women and girls were recorded in the year 2010 (54 cases), but had come down to 15 cases in 2013. On viewing the total cases registered in this crime against women 71 in 2009, 124 in 2010, 92 in 2011, 96 in 2012 and 44 in 2013, leads to a conclusion that there is a positive input in social security as there is considerable reduction in the number of cases.

## Conclusion

The above chapter discusses the social security measures for the aged, women and the differently abled. Among the 60 plus group, the female outnumbered the male to a smaller degree – 82,929 females (50.45 per cent) as against 81,441 males (49.55 per cent), but only 23.82 per cent of the target population gets benefit from OAP. Also 24,081 differently abled in the district get benefit from various Government schemes, which is a heartening fact. But, Crimes against women are rising in the district and parental education to create awareness in each and every family can help reducing such problems. Constant vigil should be maintained on the social security benefits for old age people, differently-abled and abandoned mothers and safety net arrangement to protect such vulnerable masses need to the established in their district.