

THE ROLE OF AIADMK RULE IN THE IMPLEMENTING OF WELFARE SCHEMES FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN TAMIL NADU - A HISTORICAL NOTE

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Abstract

Historically, women were considered as weaker section in the society during the medieval period. The social movements and leaders started reforms for social change in the Nineteenth century. The political parties emerged from social movements for system of political power. When political parties came to power, they were working for implementing of their ideologies and the development of society. In Tamil Nadu, the Dravidar Khazhagam (DK), the social movement established for mainly social reforms and women liberation. The women empowerment is one of the ideology of Dravidam movements. To examine these issues, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) party a relevant source of study. This paper explores the role of AIADMK in the implementing welfare schemes for empowerment of women in Tamil Nadu.

Key Words: The AIADMK Government, Education schemes, Chief Minister's Nutrition programme, Women welfare schemes.

Introduction

Women are facing number of problems not only India in the world wide from medieval period. They were affected by the dominated of men in the society. Their rights and equal denied in the society. They were affected socially, economically and politically. The socio - political movements and leaders took various reforms for the empowerment of women. They anonymously believe that if empowered women, they face changes boldly and overcome barriers in their life. They also believe that empowerment is a multi - dimensional process, which ought to empower women or gathering of women to understand their full personality and power in all circles of life¹. Nations like India witnessed

reformation of such practices. During the British colonial rule, they implemented various acts like of the act as abolition of sati 1829, the abolition the practice of Devadasi system and Hindu widow Remarriage Act 1857. English Leaders, Social Reformers and freedom fighters argued for more rights to women which ultimately expanded a space for actualizing their potential. The Constitution of India guaranteed gender equality is included in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles². The Directives principles of state policy allows the state governments to bring the welfare measures. Tamil Nadu has a long history of social justice in broader perspective. The ideological evolution of Dravidian movements includes women rights and equality as well. The Dravidian movement always supported for providing new ideas for women empowerment. All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) initiated and implemented welfare schemes for women empowerment during its tenure.

AIADMK and women Empowerment:

All India Anna Dravida Munetra Khazhagam (AIADMK) was founded by M. G. Ramachandran (MGR) a popular Film star of Tamil Nadu in the Year 1972. During the 1940s, MGR, was attracted by the ideology of Dravidian movement his film colleague. E.V.Ramasamy, called known as Periyar revolutionary, socio - political thoughts forced him to come close to the Dravidian movement. In 1946, by CN Annadurai's social reforms drama and cinemas, he came into contact with CN Annadurai. His association with CN Annadurai and the ideals of DMK made him to join the party in 1953. The DMK purty leaders like CN Annadurai, M. Karunanidhi used drama and cinemas also depict position of women. They stood for women liberation and their empowerment. MGR to act in Movies which depicted removal of social inequalities. He made 'Annaism' which is the blend of socio - political ideas of E.V.Ramasamy (EVR) and C.N.Annadurai (CNA) as the ideology of AIADMK. The MGR's AIADMK Government way very much concerned with the welfare of the women. When the AIADMK came to power in 1977 it was for the leadership to consider the ways and means to practice it's ideological promises through legislation and governance.

Education Schemes during 1977 - 1987 :

MGR named the ideology of the party as Annaism which covers various spheres of society, party and government. It includes, the welfare of the economically and socially backward communities, special concern for the SC and ST and the poor and the weaker sections of the people, uplifting the weaker sections of the society. The education is one of the powerful tool for women empowerment. The AIADMK government introduced various schemes in the educational section. From 1978-79, higher secondary education, the 10+2 system was introduced and the old pattern of 11 std was put an end. Enrolment of girl students were on the increasing scale. Book Banks have been established in all Technical

Institutions with the assistance from the government and Voluntary Organizations to help the poor students³.

Every year two sets of uniforms one at the beginning of the academic year and another at the time of Pongal festival were supplied free of cost to all girl pupils irrespective of community who were either studying in Schools or residing as boarders in Government Hostels⁴.

The AIADMK government decided to implement the programme in a modified form from 1981-82. Modified Applied Nutrition Programme consists of the following components: Consequent on the introduction of Chief Minister's Noon Meal Programme from 1st July 1982 all the Child Welfare Centres started under Applied Nutrition Programme were integrated with Chief Minister Noon Meal Programme and the activities under the previous Applied Nutrition Programme came to an end⁵. The Chief Minister's Nutritious Meal Programme was extended to the voluntary Institution during 1982-83. Balwadies function under Tribal Sub-Plan were also merged with the scheme. The scheme was also introduced in the rural areas of Tamil Nadu from 1st July 1982 to tackle the problems of malnutrition and to provide facilities for pre-school education and health care for the children in the age group of 2 plus to 4 plus. Under the scheme, employment opportunities were created for 68,738 women.

During the tenure of MGR, schemes of the five year plans were implemented effectively. Fifth, sixth and seventh five year plans were functioning during his tenure. Women education was given importance in the plans. In the period of fifth five year plan (1974-79) number of steps were taken for the education of girls. These included creation of separate cells in the State Directorates of Education to look after the programmes of girls' education, establishment of polytechnics for girls, construction of staff quarters for women teachers in rural areas and girls hostels, introduction of condensed educational courses, assistance to voluntary educational organizations working in the field of women's education and holding of seminars in different states to discuss problems and programmes of girls education⁶.

The seventh five year plan (1985-90) initiated several schemes for expanding women education. It initiated 100 per cent coverage for education of girls up to the age of 14 years. Priority was given to retain girls in schools. Incentives like uniforms, text-books and attendance scholarships were continued for the needy girls in all schools. Non-formal education were expanded to benefit girls in 6-14 age groups.

Economical Welfare Schemes :

Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women was incorporated as a public limited company on the 9th December 1983. The primary objective of the corporation is to contribute to the upliftment of the

poor and downtrodden women in all spheres from education and health to enterprise and management.

During 1984-85, full fledged entrepreneurial development programme for women was organised in consultation with industrial and technical consultancy organization of Tamil Nadu and in association with several leading banks and financing institutions and public sector undertakings of Tamil Nadu. An industrial estate was proposed to be set up exclusively for women. The prospective women entrepreneurs will be allotted sheds in the industrial estate to set up their units. Schemes aimed at generation of income and employment to women. Supply of milch animals, supply of shop units, promoting employment opportunities for women in non-traditional vocations, carpentry units, manufacturing loud speaker kits, screen printing, plastic mould units were promoted. Projects were assisted by the world bank and the central government as well⁷. The Corporation sets its aims and programmes with the broad framework of economic empowerment of women.

In order to provide opportunities for needy and deserving women between the age group of 16 to 30 years, the Social Welfare Board started vocational training programme through Voluntary Welfare Institutions by giving them financial assistance and technical guidance. Training programmes which have employment potential are selected and girls according to their educational background, aptitude, etc., are chosen for the relevant course. In Tamil Nadu, more than 100 courses such as training of girls in Needle Work and Dress Making Government Examination, Embroidery, Shorthand, Typewriting, Accountancy Courses, Business Management Course, Training in Printing such as Proofreading, Composing, Book-Binding, Nurses Aid Course, House-keepers Course, Radio Mechanism and Television Maintenance Course, Creche and school Training Course and Photography Course are run under the scheme. Most of the schemes are Government recognized courses having employment potential. This programme has taken its root from 1978-79 onwards. This had benefitted about 2,500 girls so far. During 1982-83, 76 institutions were aided for different courses with a total grant of Rs. 14.49 lakhs. 1,580 women are benefitted under this programme⁸.

Scheme for the Welfare of Destitute Children

The Government of India started a scheme for the care and maintenance of destitute children by registered voluntary institutions. The scheme was based on cottage system each unit consisting of 25 children. Up to 31st March 1979, 90 percent of the cost was given as grant by Central Government. From 1st April 1979, 45 percent was given by state Government, 45 percent was given by the Central Government and the rest 10 per cent was borne by the institution. Building grant of Rs. 1,50,000 was also given for each cottage to accommodate the children.

During 1987-88 a sum of Rs. 1,23 lakhs were allotted to 156 institutions⁹.

Marriage Assistance Scheme :

E.V.R. Maniammaiya Ninaivu Marriage Assistance Scheme for Daughters of Poor Widows was started in the year 1981 with an intention to help the poor mothers who are widows by providing financial assistance of Rs.1000 for marriage of their daughters. The Government launched a marriage assistance scheme during the year 1984-1985 to help the orphan girls to get married¹⁰. The scheme of widow re-marriage envisages rehabilitation of widows by presenting incentives in the form of National Savings Certificate to both husband and wife to the value of Rs. 5,000 to be held in deposit for 7 years. Destitute widows in the age group of 18-30 are eligible for the scheme¹¹.

Conclusion

The AIADMK government initiated several welfare schemes and empowerment measures pertaining to women. It continued the measures of previous government as well depending on their emphasis on welfare and empowerment. The government believed that these measures have improved the life of the women. These measures also cost the exchequer heavily. However, the welfare assumes priority over the cost of implementation. M.G.Ramachandran are better known for their welfare schemes in general and women empowerment programmes in particular.

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