INTRODUCTION
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THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study traces the role of Women Legislators in the Madras Legislative Assembly from 1946 to 1967. The subject has not so far received the exhaustive treatment that it deserves. There are a few books on the role of women in Indian Politics such as the Indian Women's Battle For Freedom by Chattopadhayay, Kamaladevi, Women's Quest for Power by Jain Devaki, Women in Politics by S. Panday (1990), The Political Behaviour of Women in Tamil Nadu by V. Rajalakshmi (1985), Women's Welfare in Tamil Nadu (1974), published by the Institute of Development Studies, Madras etc. But, these books deal only with the women's role in the Freedom Movement of India and their service for the society after independence. They do not deal with the role of women in the Legislative Assembly in shaping India after independence. The present work emphasises the role of women members of the Madras Legislative Assembly in shaping the Madras State after independence from 1946 to 1967.

The position of women in any civilization shows the stage of evolution, at which it had arrived the social laws, the agencies through which the life of a Nation was developed. The position of women in the framework furnishes the truest test of civilization and culture. "The Degree" says Sir Henry Maine, "in which personal immunity and proprietary capacity of women recognised in a particular State or Community was, a best of the degree of advance of its civilization".
In the Egyptian Civilization (5000 – 332 B.C.) women enjoyed independence in her own right and her property and inheritance rights were fully recognised. The wife of a ruler was the keeper of the royal heritage and transmitted the right of kingship to her children. In the Babylonian Civilization (2200-1200 B.C.) women occupied comparatively a high position in the society. She could own property, have equal rights in divorce and bring lawsuits. She could engage in business and become professional scribes. Women enjoyed equal rights during the Greek Civilization (3000-1500 B.C.). The wife of a ruler occupied a high position of dignity and influence in the society. She was less secluded and enjoyed a wider sphere of action, than was allotted to her in historical Greece. In the Roman Civilization (753-510 B.C.) women were elected as member in the social groups, determined by the amount of wealth that one possessed. In these civilizations women were permitted to rule the country.

In the medieval period, Isabella of Spain ascended the throne of Castile in 1474. The reign of Isabella formed a turning point in the history of Spain. She extended the empire by the conquest of Granada and Navarre. The conquests in North

Africa and the discovery of the New World lent charm and dignity to the kingdom.

Many women actively ruled the country in modern period. Queen Anne ruled England from 1702 A.D. to 1714 A.D. The reign of Queen Anne was outstanding for the glories achieved abroad and at home. Another noble woman Maria Theresa was an enlightened despot of the 18th century. After the death of her father Charles VI in 1740, she became the Queen of Bohemia and Hungary and Arch Duchess of Austria. Russia was ruled by female and male sovereigns alternately till the end of the 18th century. Among the female rulers, Catherine II (1762-1796) or Catherine the Great, was notable. She was an enlightened despot of the 18th century. Her expansionist policy paid rich dividends. She dismembered Poland by taking the lion's share in the spoils and humbled Turkey by extending the Russian territory along the Black Sea.

The position of women in Hindu Civilization could be taken back to pre-historic times. Though the data was incomplete and unsatisfactory, one could say without any hesitation that the general position and status of Indian women in the Vedic Age was much higher than in any other ancient society. The Vedic word, 'Dampati' used to denote jointly, the husband and the wife. It etymologically means the joint owners of the house. The wife and husband being the equal halves of one substance, were regarded equal in every respect and both took equal parts in all works, religious and social. Even according to Hindu Scriptures, man was only onehalf of an entity and wife, who had equal rights, responsibilities and obligations together to go to make a complete and purposeful existence. One sure criterion of the status of women in a society was the relative feelings evolved by the birth of a son and a daughter. The Rigveda contains a prayer for 10 sons in the marriage hymn without reference to any daughter, seems to indicate that the later was less welcome than the former. The Atharvaveda leaves no doubt that sons were preferred to daughters.

The Ancient Vedic period shows that women enjoyed a relatively high position in the Indian Society. They enjoyed freedom of spiritual progress and intellectual development. The Aryans were also engaged in warfare activities for political

expansion and so, they looked to their women for their co-operation. Sometimes women were found to play an insignificant role in the political life of these Rigvedic Aryans but they were given vigorous physical training as they had to participate in wars. It may also be said that some military trainings were provided to them which made them capable of becoming soldiers and fighters. Especially girls of the ruling families received military and administrative training.

Many Queens like Nayanika of the Satavahana Dynasty (2nd century B.C.), Prabhavati Gupta of the Vakataka family (4th century A.D.), Vijaya Bhattrika of the Chalukya house (7th century A.D.) and Sugandha and Bidda of Kashmir (10th century A.D.), successfully administered extensive kingdoms during the period of the minority of their sons. Queen Nayanika was the head of the administration of the extensive Satavahana Empire of Deccan when her son was a minor in the second century B.C. In the 4th century A.D. Prabhavati Gupta administered the Vakataka kingdom in Madhya Pradesh for over 10 years after her husband's death, for the sake of her minor son. In Medieval Kashmir Queen Sugandha was actively governing the country. In Rajput history, many widowed queens also carried on the administration after the death of their husbands. In 1193 A.D. Karmadevi the Rajput Queen took the administration of Mevad in her own hands when her


husband Samarasi died in the battle field alongwith Prithviraj and she also fought at the head of her troops resisting the invasion of Qutabuddin. Karmavati one of the widows of Ranasanga, took a prominent part in the defence of Chittoor when it was attacked by Sultan Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. Shila Mahadevi, one of the most renowned queens who had joint authority with the king to rule over a big territory was an able princess of the Rashtrakuta dynasty which flourished in the eighth century A.D.

In the list of the famous heroines and administrators of Karnataka, the name Akkadevi (1010-1064 A.D.) stands very high. She was a Chalukyan Princess who ruled over various divisions of the Chalukya dominion, such as Banavasi Kisukadu and Masavadi for nearly half a century. The story of the Telugu heroine Nayakuralu has been celebrated by songs and legends. Nayakuralu had a talent for intrigue and organisation and her life of adventure was cast in a heroic mould. Rudramba was the eldest daughter of the Kakatiya king Ganapatideva. Ganapatideva had no male issue, but had two daughters Rudramba and Ganapamba, both endowed with great intelligence and exceptional abilities. Rudramba ascended the throne on the death of her father in 1262 A.D. She was a wise ruler, who strove hard to promote the welfare of her subjects. Though not as famous as her elder

9. Ibid .,PP.317-318.
11. Ibid ., PP.315-316.
sister, Ganapamba deserves to be remembered as one of the few Andhra women who actually wielded the sceptre and governed a kingdom in her own right.

With the advent of the Muslims, many changes took place in the Indian society. The Hindu Society began to withdraw in its own shell and in such circumstances the women became the worst sufferers. Their freedom was circumscribed and with its their knowledge of their own rights in relation to the State. Though, the women were not given a position of pride in the social structure of the nation, yet certain talented women made a mark in different spheres. These women mainly belonged to the well-to-do high classes.

After the death of Iltutmish his only daughter Razia Sultana ascended the throne in Delhi in 1239. She ruled between 1239 to 1240 A.D. She was an able administrator and a wise ruler. During the Mughal rule, Nur Jahan, the concubine of Jahangir, became the defacto ruler (1611-1627 A.D.), of the Mughal Empire. She often appeared in the "Jharokha" along with the Emperor Jahangir and listened to the complaints of her subjects. She exercised full control over the State administration. She also decided the question on war and on peace. She also wielded

13. B.D. Tesesa, D.P. Varma, Text Book of Indian History, Delhi, 1974, PP.36-38.
judicial powers and could pardon or punish anyone. It was entirely the privilege of Nurjahan to make grants of land to women.

Chand Bibi (1547-99 A.D.), the daughter of Husain Nizam Shah of Ahmednagar, holds the foremost place among the Muslim Women of India. In addition to her military genius and administrative skill, she was a good scholar of Arabic and Persian and could speak several Deccani languages fluently. In the Maratha history, Tarabai of Kolhapur, Anubai of Ichalkaranji (near Kolhapur) Ahalyabai of Indore and Lakshimbai of Jhansi were well known for their skill, diplomacy, efficiency and bravery with which they carried on the Government.

The Ancient Tamil Nadu was well known for its political activities. During the Sangam age, the kings were always associated with poets. The poets were admitted to advice the king in his administrative works. Among the noted poets there were some poetess who played a prominent role in the politics of that time. Avvaiyar was one of the famous poetess among them. She was the court poetess of Adikaman Neduman Anchi, the Chief of Tagadur. Once, she went to the court of Thondaiman of Kanchi as an ambassador and stopped the war to be held between Thondaiman


15. C. Bala Subramanian "The Status of Women in Tamil Nadu During the Sangam Age", University of Madras, 1976, P.41.
and Adikaman by her wise talk. The famous trial scene in Silapathikaram mentioned that Kopperundevi was seated by the side of the king Nedunchezhiyan, when Kannaki presented her case. The Pallava Queens Parameswari and Parama Bhattarikar were made grants of land at their own will and issued orders to the executive officers of the Government. During the later Chola period, the members of the royal family like Sembiyam Mahadevi and Kundavai were great patrons of religion and temple building. During the later Pandya period, a lady sat in the Council of Nyayatar.

During the Nayak rule in Madurai, Rani Mangammal ascended the throne after the death of her husband. The regency of Mangammal was remarkable for her careful stewardship of the affairs of the Kingdom. As Vijayranga Chokkanatha Nayak died without a male issue his wife Meenakshi assumed the reign of the Government. Her short reigns of about 5 years was a record of internal strife followed by foreign occupation and extinction of the Nayak Kingdom.

After the arrival of Europeans, the political activities were limited to men, mostly due to the political instability

16. 'Puram 95'.


19. Ibid., PP.31 - 34.
prevailed in India as well as in Tamil Nadu. But, after a few years, Indians realised their slavery and began to fight for their freedom. The Freedom Movement gave a chance to the Indian Women to involve in the politics again. The English education and the growth of Vernacular Press and Communication were some of the reasons for the creation of political awareness among the Indian women. The educated men and women spread national feelings in the minds of the Indians. Thousands of women along with men took active role in the Freedom Movement of India. In Tamil Nadu, along with the educated men, some poets like Bharathi, through their patriotic poems, impressed the feelings of nationalism in the minds of the people. Bharathi who treated women equal with men, wrote many songs on the role of women in a Nation and the inspired the women of Tamil Nadu towards National Movement. The bold activities under took by the extremists of Tamil Nadu like V.O. Chidambaram Pillai, Subramaniya Siva and Vanchinathan encouraged the women of Tamil Nadu to enter into politics.

The advent of Gandhiji gave a new light to the life of women which was weakened by the foreign invasions and other political and social situations. Gandhi encouraged women to take part in the national and political movement of the country. He said that the freedom struggle was a struggle for the country's freedom as well as the freedom of women. From the beginning of his political activities, Gandhi associated himself with women and
took their help as and when necessary. When Gandhi started his non-violent satyagraha movement in South Africa, he encouraged his wife and other women to take active part in it. In India also Gandhi sought the co-operation of women in his non-violent struggle for freedom of the country. When Gandhi started his Sabarmathi Ashram near Ahmedabad along with men some women had joined.

When Gandhi started the Non-Violent, Non-Co-Operation Movement in 1920, he was convinced that without the aid of women he could not successfully continue the non-violent battle for Swaraj. He called upon and welcomed the so-called weaker sex to join the Indian National Congress and to take part in the freedom struggle. He wrote, "I expect great things from the women. I expect them to do their full share in the struggle. Let Government capture every one of our soldiers. I do not mind. Our work was so very easy that even our women can carry it on and without difficulty. Thus at the call of Gandhiji, women began to join the Indian National Congress and they contributed to a great deal to strengthening it. Women did not enter politics as silent spectators but as active participants in the non-violent


struggle for freedom. They played their part fully and freely along with their male partners. In brief, the women of India helped Gandhiji in the implementation of his constructive programmes. Mrs. Basanti Devi, Mrs. Urmila Devi, Mrs. C.R. Sunity Devi were the first women to offer civil resistance to the British Government. They begged the public to buy and use home made cloths and observed hartal on the day of the visit of Prince of Wales to Calcutta. The Government arrested them on the charge of "obstructing the gentlemen of Calcutta". Gandhiji was very much surprised and declared, "The Women of India should have much share in winning Swaraj as men. He asked the whole country to welcome this innovation and women to take up the challenge and organise themselves.

It was a matter of pride to state that Tamil Nadu was a pioneer State where the Women's Indian Association was established under the Presidentship of Dr. Annie Besant at Adyar on 8th May, 1917. The main object of this Association was to work for the uplift of women and to achieve social equality. It had 43 branches and 2,300 members in various part of our country in 1922.

25. Young India (Weekly), Ahmedabad, 15th December, 1921.
27. Ibid., P. 1.
Gandhi added prohibition and untouchability in his programme of the Non-Co-Operation Movement. The prohibition campaign attracted the women of Tamil Nadu very much. They voluntarily took part in the picketing of liquor shops. In Erode, a town in Coimbatore district, along with E.V. Ramasamy, his wife Nagammal and his sister Kannammal followed by hundreds of women took part in the picketing of liquor shops. They were arrested and later released by the police. Some other women like Mrs. Anjalai Ammal of South Arcot district and Mrs. Leela Jamadagni of Madras were sentenced for one year imprisonment for their active role in the Non-Co-Operation Movement. Mrs. Govindammal and Mrs. Sona Bai from Coimbatore participated in picketing. Both were arrested and sentenced to 6 months. They were kept in the Coimbatore jail for women. Mrs. Sornathammal from Tinnevelly and Mrs. Rajalakshmi from Ramanad took part in this picketing. They were detained in the Vellore and the Madurai central jails respectively.

In Tamil Nadu, the Youth League helped the Congress in propaganda activities. The head of the league was Mrs. Lakshmipathi. The Youth League members started an association known as Women's Swadeshi League. The main aim of this League was to sell


Khadi cloth, spinning khadi and to conduct Hindi classes. Mrs. Jahamma and Mrs. Krishna Bai were its Secretaries. Mrs. Ambujammal became the Treasurer of the Women’s Swadeshi League in 1929. She resigned her job as a teacher at Sarada Vidyalaya. This Swadeshi League was a non-political organisation but was a wing of the Congress which was implementing Gandhiji’s social and economic programmes. Mrs. Kameshwari, Mrs. Kamala Bai, Mrs. Rama Bai, Mrs. Vasudeva Rao, Mrs. Kothainayagi Ammal, Mrs. Rukmani Ammal and Mrs. Ranganayagiammal joined as members of the League.

The next major step in India’s march towards independence was the Civil Disobedience Movement. The civil disobedience movement came as a golden opportunity for the women of India. On 12th March 1930, Gandhi inaugurated the Dandi March for breaking the Salt Law of the British Government. At first Gandhi did not allow women to take part in the Dandi March. It was opposed by the Women’s Indian Association who expressed their protest as follows. "This division of sexes in non-violent campaign seems to us unnatural and against all the awakeners consciousness of India’s destiny. There should be no watertight compartment for the service of a nation". Then Gandhi allowed women to take part in the Civil Disobedience Movement.

31. Reddi Dr. (Mrs). S. Muthulakshmi, "Mrs. Margaret Cousins and Her Work in India," Women’s Indian Association, Madras, 1956, P.72.
In February 1931, the Congress women volunteers, demonstrated before the textile shops, such as those of Chellarams and Kannaiah Chetty in Madras for their refusal to implement the decision of not importing foreign textiles especially textiles from Great Britain. The women volunteers were Mrs. Ambujammal and Mrs. Janammal who demonstrated before Chellarams. The demonstrators were arrested by the Police Commissioner and remanded to judicial custody. Mrs. Ambujammal was released on health grounds. Mrs. Ambujammal and her associates were in need of money for the National Movement. By conducting dramas and swadeshi exhibition they collected money. She along with Mrs. Kamala and Mrs. Janammal, led the boycott programme at Rattan Bazaar in Madras. They were arrested. Mrs. Ambujammal was sentenced to 6 months under section 4 of the Ordinance Act of 1932 and kept in the jail for the women at Vellore. She was released on July 19th 1932.

During the Swadeshi Movement, Mrs. Saraswathy Pandurangam was sentenced to 2 years imprisonment. This was because, she along with women volunteers organised boycott of foreign cloths near Flower Bazaar Police Station. For about 6 months, she wore only Gunny bag as a dress in the prison. In 1931, she was detained along with her child in the Cannanore jail. Mrs. Lakshmi Bharathi also participated in the propaganda of Khadi

32. Swadeshimitran, 26th February, 1931, P.8.
and aroused the consciousness of the people against the use of foreign goods. Mrs. Anjalai Ammal who participated in the boycott of foreign cloth was imprisoned for 6 months.

In Madras, a 20 year old girl Durga Bai joined the volunteer corpse. She marched to the Madras beach and defined the Salt Laws. She was arrested and imprisoned at the Madurai jail for one year. Again in 1932, she was arrested and given a long term imprisonment. Some times she was kept in solitary confinement. While, she was in Vellore jail, she conducted Hindi classes and many women freedom fighters learnt that language. In 1933, she was released.

When the Congress launched the Individual Satyagraha, its volunteers formed committees, issued anti-war pamphlets and raised anti-war slogans. The administration faced the situation through lathi charge and arrests. In 1940, many women freedom fighters from Tamil Nadu participated in the movement, courted arrest and were imprisoned.

Mrs. Radha Bai Subbarayan from Salem district actively took part in the movement organised against England's treatment of India during the Second World War. She was arrested along with her husband, and one of her sons and were put in jail. Their life story was part of the brave non-violent struggle of the Indians.

Mrs. Rukmani Lakshmipathi, while presiding over the Wallajapat taluk political conference, which was held in September 1940, declared that the time had come for women to work with full vigour and determination in order to fulfill the independence pledge. She appealed the people to carry out the constructive programmes of the congress in all earnestness to enrol themselves as congress members in thousands and to be prepared for sacrifice and service. She even observed that the Women of India had equally great part to play in this struggle, because their fortunes were bound up with those of the men in the land. She took part in the Individual Satyagraha Movement and was sentenced to one year imprisonment.

In August 1942, Gandhiji started the Quit India Movement. In the Madras Presidency the agitation was not only intense but widespread. The common people including women, the workers and students plunged into the movement. In Madras they led processions and raised Quit India Slogans, observed hartals, picketed toddy shops and burnt police offices. Among those women who participated in the Quit India Movement, Mrs. Manjubashini was one of the foremost members. She was imprisoned for about 1 1/2 years along with Mr. K. Kamaraj. Throughout her life, she was influenced by Mr. K. Kamaraj and

36. The Hindu, 1st September, 1940, P.3.
worked with him in almost all the fields. Mrs. Ammu Swaminathan, President of the Madras branch of the All India Women's Conference and Mrs. Manjubashini, President of the Madras Women Students Organisation were actively engaged in organising hartals, student strikes and other demonstration in the city. They not only arranged for the Clandestine Printing and distribution of anonymous appeals but also personally moved about in the city canvassing for hartals and strikes. They called for a mass meeting at Spur Tank Road in Madras on the evening of 19th February 1943 in defiance of the prohibitory orders. As a result, mainly, of their activities in Madras, a large number of shops in George Town, Choolai, Triplicane and Mambalam areas remained closed. Also the attendance at the Colleges and some of the High Schools were poor. Miss. Meenakshi a student from Annamalai University organised demonstrations against the British. She was arrested in 1941 and was sent to Vellore jail. She was not allowed to continue her studies at the University.

The "Quit India Movement" practically marked the end of the heroic fight for freedom in India. But it did not end the struggle for India's freedom which took the shape of grim fight waged beyond the Eastern frontier of India by the Indian National Army (I.N.A.) led by Subash Chandra Bose. It was one of the most important episodes in the long history of the freedom struggle.


40. G.O.No.2113, Education Department (Confidential), dated 27th September, 1941.
movement in India. Miss. Lakshmi, daughter of the freedom fighter Mrs. Ammu Swaminathan resigned her job and proceeded to Singapore and joined the I.N.A. Subash Chandra Bose made her the Captain of the Women’s I.N.A. brigade. With the retreat of the Japanese and the occupation of Burma by the Britishers, the I.N.A. men were disarmed and made prisoners including Captain Lakshmi. They were put on trial for treason in the Red Fort at Delhi. There was a wave of nationalist protest and their release was demanded. Though they were convicted, the Government had to yield to the public opinion. The sentences were suspended and the I.N.A. Officers were set free.

While thousands of Women took part in the Indian Freedom Movement, some women entered into law making bodies such as Legislative Council and Assembly and raised their voice on behalf of Indians. In Tamil Nadu, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi was nominated to the Madras Legislative Council in 1927. She was unanimously elected as the Deputy President of the Madras Legislative Council. When Gandhi was arrested in 1930, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi resigned her membership of Madras Legislative Council. Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi organised many public meetings to show their protest against the ill-treatment of the women political

prisoners and students and thus alleviated their sufferings. She underwent many a hardship of a more intense type than that of the prisoners in the jails.

Mrs. Lakshmi Ammal was elected to the Madras Legislative Assembly in 1937. She was the first to sing 'Vandemataram' in the Provincial Legislature. She took part in Satyagraha Movement in December, 1940. A huge crowd headed by Mrs. Lakshmi Ammal started the procession from her residence to the East Car Street where a public meeting was held. She was garlanded on behalf of a number of Associations and Committees. She delivered a speech exhorting the people not to help the war efforts and requested the audience to be strictly non-violent when following Gandhiji's instructions. At the end of the speech, she was arrested.

Mrs. Lakshmi Bharathi was also elected to Madras Legislative Assembly in 1937. She was the daughter of Soma Sundara Bharathi who also did satyagraha on 19th December 1940 at Tiruparankunram. She read out a hand written anti-war pamphlet and distributed some copies of the same to the people assembled there. She was arrested and sent to Vellore Women's Jail. In fact at that time, she was suffering from heart ailment and Gandhiji wrote a special letter advising her not to participate in the movement, but to work for the congress from outside. But, she courted

44* The Hindu. 20th December, 1940, P.20.
45. The Hindu, 20th December, 1940, P.8.
imprisonment inspite of Gandhiji's letter. Thus, the Indian women proved that they were capable of working shoulder to shoulder with men in politics if sufficient opportunity was given.

Women's participation in the freedom struggle in the Madras Province may be analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative approach showed that only 2% of women actively participated in the National War. It was necessary to mention that only 10,000 men alone were vigourously worked and sacrificed their life for this purpose in the Province. Population of the Province from 1901 to 1941 of men and women were more or less equal. The total population in 1941 was 49,342,000 and men and women were 24,557,000 and 24,785,000 respectively. As per statistics only 0.040% of men alone participated in the Freedom Struggle in the Province. Out of the total participants as freedom fighters, 2% were women. But, in the total women population, the percentage of women freedom fighters were only 0.0008.

But, a qualitative study proved that women's role in the Province was in no way inferior to men in the National Movement. According to the census report, a person who could write a letter and read the answer to it was classed as literate. Judged by


this standard only 152 men and 21 women in every thousand were considered literates. As mentioned already, the social backwardness of women and very poor percentage of literacy did not encourage women more to enter into politics. But, it was really proud to note that even in such situation, the women who entered into the public life suffered like men. 60% of Women Freedom Fighters went to Jail as per Indian Penal Codes: (a) Section 141-'deals offences against public tranquility and unlawful assembly' (b) Section 143 and Section 144 - 'assembly with deadly weapons' (c) Section 188 - 'disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant' (d) Section 124 - 'assaulting Governor or President'. The sacrifice made by women gave encouragement and to take bold steps to fight for franchise. Here also it was worthy to note that Madras Province leads in that direction.

The next election to Madras Legislative Assembly was held in March 1946 before independence. The Indian National Congress won the election and formed the Ministry under the head of Mr.T.Prakasam. From 1946 to 1967, four elections were held for the Madras Legislative Assembly and the Congress Party which won in all the elections formed the Ministry. There were forty women members in the four Legislative Assemblies. Women belonged

49. Ibid ., P.24.
to various political parties like the Congress Party, Muslim League, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam entered into the Assembly and took active role in the proceedings of the Assembly. Some women members of the Congress Party were given Ministership in the Assembly who worked along with other Ministers in creating the Modern Tamil Nadu. The women members fought for political, social, economic changes in Tamil Nadu and they showed their interest specially for the development of women folk of Tamil Nadu in all sphere of life.

In the modern democratic India many women occupied highest posts in the Central as well as in the State. Mrs. Indira Gandhi became the Prime Minister of India and worked not only for the development of the Indians but also for the people of the world. Many women like Miss. Mayavathi of Uttar Pradesh, Miss. Jayalalitha of Tamil Nadu were functioning as Chief Ministers. The Women Legislators of Tamil Nadu from 1946 to 1967 became the pioneers to them.

SOURCES:

Materials for the present study have been gathered from various sources. The Primary Sources for this study are the Proceedings of the Madras Legislative Assembly from 1946 to 1967, Government Orders and Government Reports pertaining to the Department of Revenue, Law (Legislative) Home, Education, Public Health, Public Works and Food and Agriculture. Among the Primary Sources the Proceedings of the Madras Legislative Assembly from
1946 to 1967 are very important because they deal with the activities of all the members in the Legislative Assembly. These proceedings give elaborate account of the women members, speeches in the Assembly and help us to assess the impact of their speech from the answers of the Ministers. These proceedings give detailed information about the wholehearted fight of the women members in the Assembly for the Socio, Economic, Political benefits of the people and their special interest on the welfare of the women folk of Tamil Nadu. The Election Commission Report of 1946-1967 gives us a detailed account of the Assembly elections held in Madras State. They give details about the constituency, contested candidates and victorious candidates and their party. They also give us about the number of votes got by the candidates of the various political parties in the elections from 1946 to 1967.

General Elections of Tamil Nadu, published by The Research Cell and Public Election Department, 1982, give some more account about the elections and its results in Tamil Nadu from 1946 to 1982.

Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly 'Review' published by Legislative Assembly Department 1980 gives some account on the role of Women Legislators in the Assembly from 1946. The Directory of the Madras Legislative Assembly published in 1950 by the Government of Madras gives detailed account of the Legislators of the Madras Assembly. Madras State Administration Report (1946-67) also gives some information regarding the role of

The Secondary Sources which are consulted for the present study are included in the bibliography. The most important are 'The Political Behaviour of Women in Tamil Nadu' by V.Rajalakshmi, 'Who's Who of Tamil Nadu' published by Government of Tamil Nadu, 'Directory of Indian Women Today' published by International Publication 1977, and "Kamaraj - A study" by V.K.Narasimhan published in 1966. These books give a clear account of the life and role of Women Legislators of the Madras State. "Bio-Data of Dr.Sathyavani Muthu" gives a detailed account of her life and her role in the Madras Legislative Assembly. "Madras Information" 1946 to 1967 gives about the administration of Madras State from 1946 to 1967. "The Role of Madras Legislature in the Freedom Struggle 1861-1947" by S.Krishnaswamy gives a detailed account of the history of Madras Legislature and the role of Legislators in the Assembly upto 1946. "Nan Kanda Bharatham" (Tamil) published in 1973 by Mrs.Ambujammal gives an account of her role in the Assembly as a legislator.

Some news papers like The Hindu, Viduthalai, Swadeshimitran, Kudiarasu, Navasakthi have also been consulted for the present study.