Women and Education
CHAPTER - VI
WOMEN AND EDUCATION

Education is the only way of enlightenment, emancipation and independence. Swami Vivekananda says: Education is the manifestation of perfection in man. Education is the only panacea for all the ills of the society, a balance between men and women, the rich and the poor. It is an effective instrument for development and modernizations. It emancipates people from illiteracy, ignorance, superstition, prejudices and inhibitions. It helps women get rid of all evils of infanticide, child marriage, widowhood, prostitution, divorce, servitude and achieve total emancipation. It makes women rise above from traditionalism, orthodoxy, conservatism and develops self-confidence, self-reliance, Self-Respect and self-esteem, encourages economic independence and political decision-making and it strengthens understanding and peaceful-living. It is like giving a walking stick to a blind person to walkstraight and with confidence907.

Education is the only eye-opener. Ancient Tamils gave importance to Rithmatics and writing; both are said to be eyes. Valluvan says that only the educated has two eyes on their face others have two wounds908. All early Tamil works lay emphasis on education. Kalvi according to them is a Kalai (art). The educated wherever they go, are respected. Even if one is poverty stricken, it is good to learn909. If education could be attained by paying heavy amount, do not hesitate to get educated. The educated alone has a special place at home. Where there is ignorance that means there is not even a ray of hope of liberation. Education liberates; Education Enlightens; Education gives Employment; Education raises social status.

908 கல்வுக்குள் வரும் கருத்துக்குள் கூறுவதில்லாமல் கல்வுக்குள் வரும் கூறுவதில்லாமல். Kural. 392
909 கல்வுவழியான வசந்தம் கல்வுவழியான வசந்தம் பிரியாவில்லாமல் கல்வுவழியான வசந்தம். Avvaiyar
Until the starting of schools by Christian Missionaries in the eighteenth century, girls of high castes were imparted education in the indigenous school called Pyal Schools and Madarssas (Muslim girl’s school). It was conducted on verandahs. Some communities, particularly devadasis\textsuperscript{910}, and a few lower castes sent their daughters to Pyal schools.

In ancient Tamil Nadu education was tradition based. They learnt their unique arts and crafts by experience and experiments. If that be so, how could there be learned counsels, learned poets, learned poetesses, language and literature? While man progressed and marched forward in his long journey, he came not only under the spell of nature and its awe inspiring beauties but also came under the spell of his own imagination and influence from outside world. Thus, through his experiments wisdom dawned on him and thus he passed on that wisdom to his progeny. It was in this way the process of learning and education came to spread their spell on the people. In this process of progress, educational institutions were founded to impart knowledge gained from experience and experiments and it is therefore, not uncommon that the educational levelin ancient Tamil Nadu was universal. Early Tamils knew the three Rs of Reading, Writing and Rithmetic. This is proved by the presence of a learners’ court, where poets, poetesses, wisemen performed their respective roles.

The life of poetess Avvai, Mudathamakkanniay, Kakkaipadiniyar, etc. did stand as evidence to the high standard of learning by women, who enjoyed total freedom to move from one place to the other. After the arrival of the Jains in Tamil Nadu, pallis\textsuperscript{911} or salais were started to impart education to male students and a few female students. What was very impressive was the art of living at home and managing a house when the male members have gone to the war fronts to show their heroism. Their life was simple, unostentatious and unadulterated.

\textsuperscript{910} Devadasis had the right to educate their children in their own home. Ehrenfeld, B.O.R.,\textit{Op.cit.}, p.106.
\textsuperscript{911} Pallis are either Jain or Buddhist temple. It provided education to the Tamils and the Tamil literature was enriched by the writings of Jain authors.Nilakanda Sastri, K.A., \textit{Op.cit.}, p.655.
But the times changed. With the incoming of new waves of North Indians, the original Tamils tried to defend their cultural uniqueness. Education became a private purse or the property to learn the scriptures. It was caste-based and religion-biased. The secular character of the ancient Tamil learning could not defend itself due to its rulers falling prey to the new arrivals. Thus in the Medieval Age, Tamils’ education became temple-based, where *patasalais, (salais)* and universities flourished. The Vedic Colleges or Ghatikas\(^912\) at *Ennayiram\(^913\)* (S.Arcot) *Kanthalur salai* (TVM) *Srivallabha Perunchalai* (Kanyakumari) or the *Parthibhasekharapuram Salais* (K.K.Dist.) stand testimony to the royal support given to the Sanskrit language and learning. Women of the upper caste gained knowledge in reading the scriptures and reciting certain slogans, dancing and singing at times of Vedic sacrifices. Gradually, women of upper castes became teachers in the schools and colleges but that privilege was denied to the low caste women. This trend continued until the advent of the Europeans, who took steps to make education broad-based.

It is well known that the Christian Missionaries and the Catholics with their other denominations, and the Protestants with their many other denominations started imparting education to the natives, particularly to the converted Christians and took with them the educated ones to their own countries for offering further education in the Western Universities. Whatever may be the scope of Missionary education, the first beneficiaries were the converted Christians from the Caste-Hindu section or the Brahmins as a whole. The Brahmins were the first beneficiaries of English education in India. Their women were also allowed to enjoy the benefits of Western education\(^914\) and seek employment elsewhere, especially in Western Countries as they considered themselves the progenies of the Indo-Aryan race and language.

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Since the Brahmins did not allow education to perculate down to the downtroddens, here too English education was also kept as a **private purse** by the Brahmins. T.M.Nair remarked that “The present educational system in India has done grave social injustice to the large masses of the population of this country. It has denied them equal opportunities with others; it has smothered their capacity.” The Non-Brahmin Movement is a watershed in the history of social change in the Madras Presidency. The Non-Brahmin Manifesto highlighted the real position of the non-Brahmins, the majority in the Madras Presidency. If 3.2% of the Brahmins of this Presidency could enjoy 95% educational opportunities, why not the 96.8% of the population get educational opportunities, especially the women? The *Nyaya Dipika*, the Madras Native Newspaper, refers to the fact that only 3% of the population of this country are literate and the number of literates among the women of the country is still less and that among the Non-Brahmins it is 1% of the population.

The Non-Brahmin Manifesto gives the details of how the Brahmin Deputy Collectors got employment for their kith and kin during a particular period of time in the 19th century. They held various kinds of posts in the Courts, Police Department, Postal Department, Educational and Revenue Departments. Special interest has to be shown in the area of non-Brahmin women’s education and employment, except in the Missionary schools, colleges and hospitals as teachers and nurses.

So, the Non-Brahmin Manifesto and the founding of the South Indian Liberal Federations and subsequently, the Justice Party demanded a high share in education for the male and female wards. A significant development took place in 1925-1930 and it was the passing of the legislation of Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929, which increased considerably the age of marriage. This naturally increased the educational opportunities for

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918 N.N.P.R. *Nyaya Dipika*, Madras, 4 July 1922, p.769.
girls and their continuance in schools and colleges. The Justice Party started the Andhra and Annamalai Universities in 1925 and 1929 respectively and allowed women to enroll themselves and started the studies in Siddha Medicine. Thus a new chapter was opened in the Madras Presidency in the field of women education.

**Periyar’s Ideologies on Education of Women**

World thinkers found that knowledge is power. Knowledge can be acquired and inherited. For acquisition of knowledge education is a gateway. *Periyar* stated that one should acquire education to live independently with Self-Respect throughout one’s life. He emphasized that when education develops, the superstitious beliefs will automatically disappear from our country. If a family had 4 male children and one female child, preference should be given to the education of the female child so as to equip her to look after her family later. At the same time, education should be provided to women not just for the sake of it but also to make them intelligent and independent also.

He wanted education to be practical and natural to the world of humans. Education is indispensable to women, to the untouchables and to the other backward class people.

*Periyar* advised women to get educated in order to liberate themselves, to avoid selling of brides in the marriage market without her consent and to assist their respective grooms to overcome family pressures. Thus, she gets to voice out her say/consent during marriage by being a literate. Education helps women acquire employment and lead a happy independent life. Liberator of women should concentrate on educating her by way of training her for any kind of job. Periyar questioned: How it could be possible for women to

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922 *Kudi Arasu*, Erode, 29.07.1931, and see also *Unmai*, September 16-30, 2001, p.25
923 *Kudi Arasu*, Erode, 09.06.1940.
925 Ibid.
928 *V iduthalai*, Madras, 27.05.1969.
be liberated without the knowledge of even practical numeracy as in counting numbers 1, 2, 3, ... \textsuperscript{929}. He considered education as a tool to remove the superstitious beliefs, which is dumped into the society and it is essential to establish a new intellectual or rationalistic world \textsuperscript{930}. That was why he viewed that social emancipation precedes political freedom \textsuperscript{931} and the social reform should necessarily cover the subject of education \textsuperscript{932}. Periyar pointed out that women have been cheated by their counterparts by making them least interested in education and employment. But, he praised the Russian women who considered education and employment as their beauty and they led a happier and more independent life without worrying about their future. Other women in the world should engage in healthy competition with the Russian women \textsuperscript{933}.

Periyar criticized the people of India who celebrate the Navarathri festival and the Saraswathi (The Goddess of Learning) Pooja from time immemorial yet, failed to get a higher percentage of literacy in comparison with other countries for both sexes \textsuperscript{934}. For instance, the following tabulation denotes the literacy rate in various countries in 1945:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Britannia</td>
<td>932</td>
<td>912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td>955</td>
<td>930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>965</td>
<td>940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>990</td>
<td>980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>996</td>
<td>995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kudi Arasu, Erode, 15.09.1945

The table shows that women’s education in India is dismal, whereas it is the highest in Denmark. The poor performance is due to traditional beliefs and practices.

Periyar stated that the ancient system of teaching denied learning to women and the depressed classes. Eventually, 17½ crores of women and 7 crores of depressed class

\textsuperscript{930} Thanthai Periyar 102 Birthday Souvenir, Viduthalai, PSRPI, Madras, p. 46.
\textsuperscript{931} The Modern Rationalist, Madras, January 1974, Vol. III.
\textsuperscript{932} Thanthai Periyar 102 Birthday Souvenir, Viduthalai, PSRPI, Chennai, p.46
\textsuperscript{934} Kudi Arasu, Erode, 15.09.1945.
people were unable to get access to education according to the Census Report of 1931\textsuperscript{935}. \textit{Periyar} viewed that knowledge and religion should be compartmentalized. At first, knowledge should be imparted to students through which the student must acquire religion\textsuperscript{936}. The reason for the deplorable condition of women was religion based education. Hence, education should foster rationality and Self-Respect\textsuperscript{937}.

\textit{Periyar} agreed with his wife, Maniammaiayar, “Educating women in the fields of singing, playing fiddle, Veena, dancing etc. is a complete waste of money and tax of the nation as she would get no benefit out of such learning. But, it is used for advertising her for marriage to find the best beidegroom. No other reformer paid attention to the nuances of educating a woman except Periyar. Mostly, they included women only when topic of reproduction is raised”\textsuperscript{938}.

**Pre-School Education**

\textit{Periyar} suggested the Tamil Nadu Government through his organ \textit{Viduthalai} that every Primary School in Tamil Nadu should be attached with Nursery School to provide education to the children above three years. The facility which has been enjoyed by the rich people should be provided to the children of the poor, the depressed and the rural people who are in need of it. For this, the Government should employ the local elite women by giving them training and should establish thousands of Nursery Schools in Tamil Nadu.\textsuperscript{939} He also added that it is harmful to undermine the development of mental calibre of children by admitting them only in the age of 5 even in the era of information technology\textsuperscript{940}. So, the AIADMK Ministry established one Nursery Section in each of the \textit{Kuzhanthaigal Kappagams}

\textsuperscript{935} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{937} Kudi Arasu, Erode, 22.08.1937.
\textsuperscript{940} Ibid., pp.194-195.
in 1986\textsuperscript{941}. The Pre-School education is imparted to 2-5 years children. The objectives of the Pre-School education are to promote holistic development of child (physical, emotional, cognitive, language and social development)\textsuperscript{942}. The Government of India provides Pre-School kit materials to each Childrens’ Centre at a cost of Rs.500/- per year\textsuperscript{943}.

**Elementary Schools**

Education is panacea for women to emancipate them from all social evils and to remove gender bias in the society. Hence, *Periyar* advised people to educate women without bothering about the education of men in order to encourage women to live self-governing life\textsuperscript{944}. *Periyar* suggested that the Government should impart co-education to women and enable them to participate in co-operative work in order to change their attitude, fearness, ignorance and shyness so as to develop the characteristics of men within five years\textsuperscript{945}.

Earlier measures were taken by the Justice Party to implement the exalted idea of **Self-Respect** principles of *Periyar*, for the promotion of girls’ education. For instance, co-education at primary level and establishment of girl’s school with a population of more than 5,000 and raised the number of schools from 66 to 80\textsuperscript{946}.

*Periyar* demanded the government to introduce innovative schemes like **free compulsory education to both boys and girls and supply free midday meal to poor children**. The government should provide **food, clothes and shelter to poor students**\textsuperscript{947}. A noteworthy feature of the Congress Government under K.Kamaraj was the introduction of **Mid-day meals, free education scheme and supply of uniforms**\textsuperscript{948} towards the realization of *Periyar’s* principles towards the compulsory education of girls.

\textsuperscript{941} Progress of Education in Tamil Nadu - Note on Demand-17, Education 1985-86, Government of Tamil Nadu, 1986, p.11.

\textsuperscript{942} Citizens Charter, 2009, Social welfare and Nutritious Meal Programme Department, Madras, 2009, p.34.

\textsuperscript{943} Policy Note 2009-2010, Social welfare and Nutritious Meal programme Department, Governmentnt of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 2009, p.58.


\textsuperscript{945} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{947} The Revolutionary sayings of Periyar. A Periyar Centenary Publications, Madras, 1985, p.37.

Periyar stressed that compulsory free education should be given to the school-going children. The Congress Ministry under K.Kamaraj also gave importance to free education for the age group 6-11 and 11-14 in 1966. The Congress Government allotted 43% of the total plan meant only for the expansion of girls’ education; to remove the very large gap between the proportion of boys and girls in schools\textsuperscript{949}. Subsequently, the DMK Ministry paid much attention to the expansion of primary education by which the enrolment of pupil in age group 6-11 was raised to 92% \textsuperscript{950}. The Government appointed 3,750 additional teachers on account of the additional enrolment of 1.5 lakhs of pupils in the age group 6-11.

The DMK Government introduced two language formulae in the schools from 23 January 1968 according to the wishes of Periyar. Accordingly, part A-Tamil is taught from standard I and the part B-English is taught from standard III. Besides, the DMK Government redesignated the pattern of school education by dividing the schools into three patterns. Accordingly, schools with standard I to V were considered to be Primary Schools, schools with standard I to VIII or VI to VIII are known to be Middle School and the schools with standard VI to XI or IX to XI are known as High Schools, in order to accelerate the enrolment rate in every pattern wise\textsuperscript{951}.

Periyar pointed out that there was no use of talking about the glories of the past saying that we had the educated women like Avvai and Kailakalammai. He urged people to look at the present day. He pondered, “What is the literacy rate of women at this moment?” On an effort to awake the minds of people, he questioned them, “Do you know the literacy rate of non-Brahmin women?” He reinstated the answer that there was 100% literacy prevalent among Brahmin women whilst education among the non-brahmin was just a few out of hundred. This was just to put the non-brahmins into hardships\textsuperscript{952}. Periyar suggested

\textsuperscript{949} Ibid., p.5
\textsuperscript{950} Tamil Nadu State Administration Report 1968-69, Government of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1970, p.193,
\textsuperscript{951} Ibid., p.196.
\textsuperscript{952} Kudi Arasu, Erode, 26 June 1932, pp.3-17.
that 75% of teaching profession should be reserved for ladies alone. To expand the school education, the D.M.K Government envisaged perspective plan for Tamil Nadu from 1974-84 and appointed more number of women teachers in Primary and Secondary schools. It took steps to accelerate the construction of quarters for women teachers at the rate of 5 per Panchayat Union, though 1510 quarters have already been constructed in the state.

Since Periyar advocated elementary education for all children below the age of ten, the AIADMK Government abolished detention of students in standards 1-3 in all schools from 1978-79. The strength of girls students in elementary school was raised to 18,05,043 during the year 1978-79.

Periyar pleaded to the Government to provide free meal, dress and books to the poor students to improve their social and economic status. So, the AIADMK Government went one step forward to provide nutritious food to the students to develop their mental calibre.

While Thiru M.G.Ramachandran was the Chief Minister, he revived, reformed and reintroduced the Noon-meal Scheme in all schools in Tamil Nadu. The Chief Minister took personal care in implementing the scheme and entrusted the work to his trusted liutenants. Later he made some changes in the scheme and called it Nutritious Noon-meal Scheme, which helped even the dropouts attend the classes so as to enable the families to send their wards to school. When Kamaraj laid the foundation for increasing the literacy rate in Tamil Nadu, Thiru M.G.Ramachandran bettered the scheme and improved the enrolment and literacy rate. Due to this innovative step, the dropout rate was reduced to 33% in 1979-80, from 38% in 1978-79 and 51% in 1973-74. In 1983, there was an enormous increase in the enrolment of pupils with the addition of 2.63 lakhs students during the then current financial

957 15th Resolution of Chengleput Conference, 1929.
year due to the introduction of Chief Minister’s Nutritious Meal programme\(^{959}\). Being followed the principles of *Periyar’s Self-Respect Movement* for the promotion of girl’s education the Tamil Nadu Government exceeded the target set under the National Programme of 20 Point Programme\(^ {960}\).

**Population and percentage of enrolment of Girls from the year 1973-74 to 1985-86:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Enrolment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
<td>6-11</td>
<td>29.79</td>
<td>23.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-14</td>
<td>13.40</td>
<td>5.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14-17</td>
<td>11.07</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>6-11</td>
<td>32.54</td>
<td>27.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-14</td>
<td>14.64</td>
<td>6.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14-16</td>
<td>8.15</td>
<td>2.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>6-11</td>
<td>35.54</td>
<td>33.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-14</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>9.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14-16</td>
<td>8.94</td>
<td>3.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Though the enrolment of girl students in the elementary school was higher it gradually decreased in the Middle and High School level. The AIADMK Government implemented the reformed Tamil Script of *Periyar* in order to simplify learning\(^ {961}\).

**Periyar’s reformed Tamil Script**

*Periyar* thought that the prevalence of more letters in Tamil language is a handicap for writing, printing and type writing. So, he demanded the use of his reformed Tamil Script in all spheres to make things easy and to stop the wastage of time\(^ {962}\). Thus he thought that it would help students learn Tamil easily and positively.

To implement the reformed Tamil Script of *Periyar* and to develop Tamil language the AIADMK Government under Thiru.M.G.Ramachandran issued an order\(^ {963}\) on October19, 1978 in connection with *Periyar’s* centenary celebration which was held at Erode. According to this order, the reformed Tamil Script, introduced by *Periyar*, காண்டி, காண்டியுடன், காண்டியுடன், -

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\(^{959}\) Speech of V.R. Nedunchezhiyan on 5 March 1983. Budget Report 1983-84, Governmentmt of Tamil Nadu, p-31

\(^{960}\) Tamilarasu, Madras, January, 1987, p.4.

\(^{961}\) G.O.(Ms) No. 1875, Education Department, dt., 19.10.1978.


\(^{963}\) G.O.Ms. No.1875, Education Department, 19.10.1978.
"Periyar" is to be practised in all Government offices, schools and colleges, local boards, Township and Municipalities, Panchayat Unions and other Boards, Corporations and undertakings of the Government. Also, it recommended the usage of the revised Tamil Script by all dailies, periodicals, publishers of books and printers. Later, the Government retained the original script of "ந" and "நி" instead of "நி" and 'நி' in vowels. Thus, the students are permitted to use both the present and the revised scripts for some years and that they need not be penalized for not using the revised scripts. The revised scripts are more useful to the students who are studying in formal schools and also under functional literacy programme so that they can easily follow the Tamil language in the later period.

Periyar wanted that women should be imparted knowledge to get rid of their superstitious belief. The DMK Government has taken up a special drive to enroll and retain girl children in schools regarding the year 1990 which has been declared as the Year of the Girl Child. If they are out of the school, they would have been influenced by superstition. The literacy rate increased faster during 1981-91 than during 1971-81. While the male literacy rate increased from 52% to 74% between 1971 and 1991, the female literacy rate increased from 27% to 51%. Due to alternative effective steps taken by both the DMK and AIADMK Governments, the female literacy rate during 1971-91 was more than double of the male literacy rate. Following table shows enrolment of primary level students in the Southern States of India.

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964 Ibid.
965 G.O.M.S. No.4704/91/ 79-2 Education Department, dt., 23.5.1979.
966 No. V2/ 2094, University of Madras, date 20 September 1979, Letter from the Registrar of University of Madras to the Commissioner and Secretary to Government.
970 Ibid.
Likely achievement of Enrolment in classes I – V, 1984-85

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>States /UT’s</th>
<th>Enrolment (in’ 000s)</th>
<th>Enrolment Ratio (Percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>3686</td>
<td>2732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>2243</td>
<td>1776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>1610</td>
<td>1522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>3811</td>
<td>3232</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The table above shows that female education is higher in Tamil Nadu than the other Southern States. Following table shows enrolment of Middle School students in the Southern States of India:

Likely achievement of Enrolment in classes VI – VIII, 1984-85:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>States /UT’s</th>
<th>Enrolment (in’ 000s)</th>
<th>Enrolment Ratio (Percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>913</td>
<td>614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>887</td>
<td>832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>1395</td>
<td>923</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In Kerala, female education is higher than the other Southern States. Even then, there existed a wide gap between male and female education. Tamil Nadu State was able to achieve this much progress in women’s education only because of the driving force given by the principles of Periyar’s **Self-Respect Movement**.

**Secondary Education**

*Periyar* pleaded to the Government to provide compulsory education to girls upto 16 years in order to get relief from the evils of child marriage.\(^{971}\)

Owing to the raise of consummation age of marriage and the incessant propaganda of *Periyar’s Self-Respect Movement* from 1925, there was an increase in the number of girls

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\(^{971}\) Second Resolution passed in the Virudhunagar SRM Conference, 1930.
studying in secondary schools. It was raised from 2,765 in 1926-27 to 2891 in 1927-28\textsuperscript{972}. In addition to this, their number in other school was 794 excluding 53 studying in European high and middle schools\textsuperscript{973}.

A noteworthy feature of the Congress Ministry was the introduction of \textbf{free education} in the State from the academic year 1964-65 upto Std XI irrespective of community of the parents by the influence of \textbf{Self-Respect Movement’s} principle. It accelerated the growth of education among girls\textsuperscript{974}. The percentage of women literacy was raised to 18.2\%\textsuperscript{975}.

To accelerate the expansion of education, the DMK Government reorganised the administrative set up of the School Education Department\textsuperscript{976}. There were 45 Educational Districts in the State with District Educational Officers as its head. The Government sanctioned a scheme for the additional enrolment of 60,000 pupils of age-group 14-17 in secondary schools\textsuperscript{977}. The number of High Schools for girls was increased to 399 during the DMK Ministry in 1969-70\textsuperscript{978} against 381 High Schools in 1968-69\textsuperscript{979}.

During the year 1978-79, the AIADMK Government had established 31 Government boys’ schools and one Government girls’ school and 2 Aided Schools for girls\textsuperscript{980}. The AIADMK Government introduced a \textbf{new educational pattern} in Tamil Nadu from 1977-78. Accordingly, the pattern of education had been changed into 10+2+3 Pattern i.e. 10 year school education, 2 year Higher Secondary course in schools and 3 years Degree Course\textsuperscript{981}. The main aim of introducing \textbf{Plus-Two system in High school} was to extend the benefit of Higher Secondary Education to students in every nook and corner of the state.

\textsuperscript{975} Madras State Administration Report 1964-65, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{977} Ibid., p. 197.
\textsuperscript{981} Such a scheme was planned and executed while Dr.D.H. Lawrence was the School Education Director. He took personal interests and care in making such scheme under MGR Ministry Ibid. p.213.
Also, it has the objective of making Higher Secondary Education reach all sections of the society, particularly the rural population as well as the weaker section of the society. The Government aimed to establish at least one higher secondary school for each Panchayat Union Block and for each Municipality in urban areas to enable more girls to obtain Higher Secondary Education more in number. Consequently, there were 912 Higher Secondary Schools in Tamil Nadu during 1978-79\(^\text{982}\).

*Periyar* said that the purpose of education was to equip a person either to live independently throughout his life or to have a virtuous life in this world\(^\text{983}\). So, to provide job-oriented education at Higher Secondary School level, the AIADMK Government introduced vocational Higher Secondary Courses in 1978-79\(^\text{984}\). The purpose of this programme was to relate education to the needs of life and to increase efficiency of the students\(^\text{985}\). A total of 24,400 students out of 1,14,000 gained benefits by the introduction of this course\(^\text{986}\). During the year 1980, totally 18 lakhs students wrote +2 Public Examination. Of these, nearly 6,600 girls obtained Vocational Training which was a remarkable achievement of *Periyar*'s idea of providing job-oriented education during M.G.R’s Ministry\(^\text{987}\).

The AIADMK Ministry converted 1242 schools in the rural areas into Higher Secondary Schools during 1980-81 in order to expand higher level of education throughout the State\(^\text{988}\). Besides, it ordered for the establishment of 16 Higher Secondary schools, i.e., 5 Schools in Dharmapuri district, 2 schools in each district of Trichy, Pudukottai, *Periyar* and one school in every district of Chengleput, North Arcot, Salem, Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari.

\(^{982}\) Ibid.

\(^{983}\) *Kudi Arasu*, Erode, 27.9.1931.


\(^{986}\) Ibid.

\(^{987}\) *Tamilarasu*, Madras, 16.7.1980.

to meet the increasing demands of students. The same Ministry also opened as many as 100 High Schools and 79 Higher Secondary schools during 1986-87 to meet the additional enrolment of students. Hence, Tamil Nadu stood as the leading State in India in implementing the Higher Secondary Course of education because the female literacy rate in the state was 35% and it was higher than the national figure of 24.8% in 1980. But there were heavy back log of female illiterates, notwithstanding the rise in the female literacy level and there were a number of social, cultural, economic and psychological barriers.

Science Education

Periyar felt that the existing system of education is outdated. It did not help the scientists, philosophers, scholars, medical professionals and other well-educated to liberate themselves from the clutches of superstitions and old beliefs. So, he suggested that schools of rationalism should be established and it should inculcate scientific thought and enable them to think liberally and independently according to the needs of the society and to make them as healthy citizens both physically and mentally.

Bhaktavatsalam Ministry sanctioned a sum of Rs.40,000/- to each school, out of which a sum of Rs.25,000/- was set apart towards the construction of science block and a sum of Rs.15,000 for equipments. During the DMK Ministry, UNICEF supplied science kits to 400 primary schools in Chengleput, Kancheepuram, Cheyyar, Tiruvallore and Vellore educational districts during the year 1975-76 for developing scientific thinking among the pupils. For teaching science, the UNICEF bore 75% of the cost in service training in Science

989 Tamilarasu, Madras, 1.7.1980.
990 Tamilarasu, Madras, January.1987, p.4.
991 Budget Speech for 1980-81, Speech of Thiru V.R.Nedunchezhiyan, Minister for Finance, on 2 July 1980, Madras, p. 21
992 Ibid., p.204.
993 Anaimuthu V., Thoughts of Periyar EVR, Vol-III, Politics- Part I, P.1424 and see also Viduthalai, Madras 18.7.1972. The DMK Government introduced equity-based learning in the year 2006 to develop independent and creative thinking of a pupil.
Education for 600 Primary School teachers and 257 Deputy Inspectors of Schools at a cost of ₹1,00,000/-\(^{995}\).

**Entrance Examination**

The DMK Government introduced a proposal to conduct Entrance Exam to the students who enter High School and College from the year 1973\(^{996}\).

*Periyar* vehemently condemned the decision of the Government to conduct Entrance Examination. *Periyar* viewed that entrance examination was a cunning attempt of the Brahmans to perpetuate Brahminism. The words merit, mark and standard are the intentions of the Brahmans to filter some particular sections of students. He also advised to the Government to remove the words like ‘elgibility, merit and standard’ from its dictionary. *Periyar* believed that the word ‘Merit’ was only caste-based\(^{997}\).

Contrary to the views of *Periyar*, the AIADMK Ministry under M.G.R introduced the Entrance Examination for students seeking admission to professional colleges in 1984. But, it was a serious threat as well as detrimental to the well being of downtrodden section who have entered into the educational field only after a prolonged period of suppression. So, the member of Dravida Kazhagam protested against the Government policy on 23.6.1984 by burning the copies of G.O\(^{998}\).

**Sports**

*Periyar* stated that the purpose of education should be to equip a person to live independently throughout his/her life\(^{999}\). He pointed out that the teachers must be rationalistic and should act with reasoning power\(^{1000}\). *Periyar* suggested that girls should be taught active


\(^{998}\) The Modern Rationalist, Madras Vol.XI. July 1984, p.29. However, the entrance examination for professional courses was abolished by the DMK Ministry only in 2006. It was a great boon to the rural students as well as women students to enter the professional education.

\(^{999}\) *Kudi Arasu*, Erode, 27.09.1931.

\(^{1000}\) *Ibid.*
and energetic exercises like running, high jump, long jump and wrestling so as to acquire the
strength and courage like that of men. Their time and energy should not be wasted by playing
Kummi and Kolattam\textsuperscript{1001}. Healthy bodied women alone can compete with men in all kinds
of job. Traditionally, the sports and tournaments were confined to men only, but in course of
time due to the encouragement given by Self Respect Movement they were extended to
women also. The commendable work done by AIADMK Government in 1984 was its
formation of the Tamil Nadu State Sports Development Corporation, which replaced State
Sports Council and established two sports hostels for girls\textsuperscript{1002} to promote the spirit for sports
among the girls. The Government of India also allocated Rs.20 lakhs separately for the year
1987-88 and 1988-89 for the promotion of sports among women\textsuperscript{1003}.

**Collegiate Education**

The Justice Party which championed for the cause of women’s emancipation
extended its constant support to women’s higher education too. Hence, the progress of
women’s higher education has been taking place gradually in the Presidency. According to
the statement of Periyar, education plays a tremendous part directly and indirectly for the
progress of women’s employment. During the time of independence, there were only 7
Womens’ Colleges in the Madras Province and the strength of students increased to 2,779\textsuperscript{1004}.

*Periyar* remarked that the uneducated Thiru.K.Kamaraj had opened eye of the
Tamilians by providing education and the DMK Ministry should make the people walk
ahead\textsuperscript{1005}. During the Congress period, many of Elementary Schools were established in the
nook and corner of the Madras State to expand literacy among the Tamilians. Having it in

\textsuperscript{1002} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1003} Women in the Five Year Planning, p.106. It is noteworthy that AIADMK Government under the leadership
of J.Jayalalitha introduced sports quota by reserving 3% of seats in the under graduate level and 2% of seats
in under graduate level and 2% of seats in the post-graduate level. in professional courses. She thus tried to
remove discrimination against girls by providing all kinds of facilities to women, who have been proving
their efficiency by participating equally with men in all kinds of tournaments and sports in the State, National
and International level.
\textsuperscript{1004} Premalatha.P.M., *Indian women, (TI)* Mother Theresa Women’s University, Kodaikanal, 1947, p.131.
\textsuperscript{1005} *Viduthalai*, Chennai, March 5,1969.
mind, the DMK Government proposed to establish High Schools and Colleges for the development of Higher Education. The total intake in colleges during 1968-69 was 1,29,967 (98,601 men and 31,366 women). The DMK Government started 6 new Arts Colleges-2 for women and 4 for men- during the year 1969-70 under the management. Nine aided colleges were also started by private agencies during the same year. In 1969 the total number of Arts Colleges in the State has increased to 141. Out of these, the number of Government Colleges was 39 and Aided Colleges were 102\textsuperscript{1006}.

The following table shows the number of colleges, the strength of women students and Teachers during the year 1978-79\textsuperscript{1007}.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Types of Colleges</th>
<th>No. of Colleges</th>
<th>No. of Female Students</th>
<th>No. of Female Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Govt. Arts &amp; Science Colleges</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14,751</td>
<td>1,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Aided Arts &amp; Science Colleges</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>43,212</td>
<td>2,586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Govt. Training Colleges</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Aided Training Colleges</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>738</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Govt. Oriental Colleges</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>*658</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Govt. Private Colleges</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Govt. Physical Education</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Private Physical Education Colleges</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Government Music College</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Private Ayurvedic college</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>*2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Private Colleges for Rural Higher Education</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>*85</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*There were no Separate Colleges for Women but they studied in Men’s Colleges.

Besides these colleges, the AIADMK Government gave constant encouragement to Higher Education for women. So, there were 14 Government Colleges and 39 Aided Colleges for women in 1981-82. The strength of the women students studying in various Government colleges during 1981-82 was 17,881 and in several Aided colleges was 44, 616\textsuperscript{1008}.

University Education

Education is a continuous process. It does not stop with acquiring a degree/or an employment. It should go to higher levels. The main emphasis in higher education is on consolidation and improvement in standards and reforms in the system to make higher education more relevant to national needs and to link higher education with employment and economic development\footnote{Seventh Five Year Plan 1985-1990. Vol. II, Government of India, Planning Comission, New Delhi, 1985, p.585.}. One University in the Madras Presidency under the British raj,\footnote{Fourth Five Year Plan, Madras State, Review of Progress during 1967-68, and Programme for 1968-69, p.142.} was founded in 1857. That was the Madras University. There after the Justice Party Government started the Andhra University in 1925 and the Annamalai Unitary University in 1929. The Congress Government established the Madurai University at Madurai in 1966\footnote{Tamil Nadu State Administration Report 1978-79, Government of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1980, p.214.}. The \textbf{Gandhigram Rural Institute} (GRI) was founded in 1956 with the purpose of developing women in rural areas and implementing Mahatma Gandhijis principles. It was converted into Deemed University in 1976-77\footnote{Status of Women in Tamil Nadu,The Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women Ltd. Madras, 1986, p.182.}.

The period 1980s had witnessed the era of Universities in Tamil Nadu. During the AIADMK period, M.G.Ramachandran Ministry established the Bharathiar University, Coimbatore on April 1982, the Bharathidasan University, Trichy on April 30, 1982, the Alagappa University, 1985, the Tamil University, Tanjore in 1984 and Karaikudi on May 9 to promote research knowledge among the scholars and women as well. The strength of female students in the following universities during the year 1984-85 was 494 in Anna University, 981 in Madras University, 823 in Annamalai University, 40 in Bharathiar University, 55 in Bharathidasan University, 342 in Madurai Kamaraj University, 170 in Gandhigram Rural University and 2 in Thanjavur Tamil University\footnote{Status of Women in Tamil Nadu,The Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women Ltd. Madras, 1986, p.182.}. 
Mother Theresa Women’s University

M.G. Ramachandran was convinced of the backwardness of women in education. He wanted to promote higher education of women by establishing a University in 1984 exclusively for women, completely manned by women\textsuperscript{1013}. It was known as the \textit{Mother Teresa Women’s University}. It has been established to develop research facilities in the studies relating to women in general, and in particular, studies relating to rural or destitute women and to institute degrees, titles, diploma and other academic distinctions for women. It was established with the aim to provide a chance for the visit of guest lectures from Universities of India and abroad in the area of women’s studies\textsuperscript{1014}. The total strength of scholars in this university was 274 in 1988-89\textsuperscript{1015}. By 1989, there were eleven Universities\textsuperscript{1016} and one Deemed University in Tamil Nadu which cater to the needs of the public and provide positive impetus to women’s higher education. The introduction of correspondence course in these Universities is a great boon to the expansion of women’s higher education.

Legal Education

\textit{Periyar} wished that women should obtain legal education in order to know their Rights. So, the Department of Legal Studies was created in 1953 with the purpose of providing Legal Education\textsuperscript{1017}. Two Law colleges were functioning in Madras and Madurai which were started in 1974 during the Ministry of DMK and the strength was raised to 3,492 in 1978-79\textsuperscript{1018}. Three year Law Course and B.G.L Course were conducted from the year


\textsuperscript{1014} Tamil Nadu State Administration Report 1988-89, Governmentmt of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1992, p.83.


\textsuperscript{1016} A new university named “Manonmaniam Sundaranar University” in memory of the great scholar Prof. P. Sundaranar Pillai, who gave us the Tamil Thai Vazthhu was established in Tirunelveli on September 7, 1990. The DMK Government laid the foundation for establishing a new university. \textit{Tamilarasu}, Madras, May 1990, p.29.

\textsuperscript{1017} Tamil Nadu State Administration Report 1972-73, Governmentnt of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1974, p.268.

\textsuperscript{1018} Tamil Nadu State Administration Report 1978-79, Governmentnt of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1980, p.220.
1968-69\textsuperscript{1019}. The total strength of Law Colleges at Madras and Madurai during the year 1974-75 is given as follows\textsuperscript{1020}.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of College</th>
<th>Regular Course</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U.G</td>
<td>P.G</td>
<td>U.G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madras Law college</td>
<td>1,510</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madurai Law college</td>
<td>788</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Two more Law Colleges were started in Trichi and Coimbatore during the year 1979-80 to meet the demands of the students\textsuperscript{1021}. The AIADMK Ministry introduced Five Year Law Course from the year 1983 in order to provide legal education to the students who have passed the +2 examinations. Simultaneously, it introduced post-graduate Course in M.L degree in the Evening Law College in Madras and Madurai from the year 1983\textsuperscript{1022}. It gave an opportunity to the employed graduate as well as women. Moreover, Periyar’s ideas inspired women to compete with men in every field and showed their talents. Eventually, they entered into legal education too\textsuperscript{1023}.

\textbf{Medical Education}

While the Christian Missionaries were doing the proselytization work, they were engaged in imparting education and medical service to the people of Madras Province. In 1835, a Medical School was established and it was elevated to a College in 1851. Later, it became the Madras Medical College\textsuperscript{1024}. The first women student, A.M.Van Injen, who obtained degree from the Madras University, was a student of Madras Medical College\textsuperscript{1025}. Later, Muthulakshmi Reddi and Mary Poonam Lukose received their M.B.B.S degree in

\textsuperscript{1020} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1022} Tamil Nadu State Administration Report 1983-84, Government of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1985, p.56.
\textsuperscript{1023} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1024} History of Higher Education (1857-1957), University of Madras, Madras, 1957, p.15.
1912\textsuperscript{1026} Periyar wanted women to be encouraged to develop rational thought and general knowledge on world affairs but they should not be allowed to read literature, history and stories which will infuse once again superstition and fear among them\textsuperscript{1027}. The encouragement given by the Justice Party increased the strength of women students in the Medical school from 20 in 1923-24 to 42 in 1924-25\textsuperscript{1028}. The Performance of Medical Education in Madras State was remarkable. The lofty ideals of Self-Respect Movement of Periyar not only encouraged women to enter into school in a large number but also make them undergo professional courses, especially Medical education, to lead a dignified and a self-sufficient life.

The DMK Government had done remarkable service to Medical education by upgrading the following medical colleges such as the Kilpauk Medical College Hospital, Chengleput Medical College Hospital, Tirunelveli Medical College Hospital and Coimbatore Medical College Hospital\textsuperscript{1029}. It also increased the facilities for medical students by converting the District Head quarters Hospitals at Tiruchirappalli and Salem into teaching hospitals. As a result, these hospitals were equipped to train 100 M.B.B.S students in clinical subjects\textsuperscript{1030}.

The laudable step undertaken by the AIADMK Government in the field of Medical Education was the establishment of Dr.M.G.Ramachandram Medical University which began its functioning from July 1988\textsuperscript{1031}. This university was named after Dr.M.G.Ramachandran the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu for his identification with the under privileged, downtrodden and the sufferers\textsuperscript{1032}.

In 1990, the DMK Ministry introduced free education scheme to the first generation of MBC and Denotified community to study either medicine or other professional education

\textsuperscript{1026} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1027} Anaimuthu V., Thoughts of Periyar E.V.R. p.2463.
\textsuperscript{1028} G.O.No.256 Public Health (Local self Governmenmnt) dt., 6.2.1926.
\textsuperscript{1029} The Perspective Plan for Tamil Nadu, 1974-84, State Planning Commission, Madras, 1974, p.41.
\textsuperscript{1030} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1031} Tamilarasu, Madras, November 1992, p.15.
\textsuperscript{1032} Ibid.
but their parents income should be below Rs.25,000/-\textsuperscript{1033} So, there was an enormous entry of these communities into medical education\textsuperscript{1034}.

**Technical Education**

**a) Polytechnics**

Technical education is one of the major employment generators. Many students with pass marks could join the courses. Periyar wanted to impart to women all the subjects which are taught to men without any bias. He specified technical education for women to equip them technical know-how to lead an independent life\textsuperscript{1035}.

There were three polytechnics exclusively for women situated at Madras, Madurai and Coimbatore. Out of 32 polytechnics, three are Government polytechnics exclusively for women. Nearly 10,955 students including 408 women had gained benefits during the year 1964-65 in Technical Education\textsuperscript{1036}. Though 4,740 seats were available in polytechnics, only 375 seats were intended for girls\textsuperscript{1037}. A diploma course in Electronics Engineering was started in the Government Polytechnic for Women in Coimbatore\textsuperscript{1038}. The Government sanctioned a sum of Rs.1.5 lakhs for the construction of the quarters in the Budget Estimate for 1972-1973\textsuperscript{1039} to increase the hostel facilities.

Since the demand for Technical education increased among women, The All India Council for Technical Education has recommended that girls’ section may be opened in the existing polytechnics. So, 17 girls were admitted in the pre-technical course in May 1974 in the Government polytechnic, Tiruchirappalli. The following table shows the demand for technical education among women\textsuperscript{1040}.

\textsuperscript{1033} Tamil Nadu Administration Report 1989-90, Government of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1992,
\textsuperscript{1034} 150 Additional seats for Medical education are increased in the academic year in 2011 besides 1653 seats in 17 Government Medical Colleges and 617 seats in 10 Self finance Medical Colleges. Dinamani, Tirunelveli, 16\textsuperscript{th} June 2011.
\textsuperscript{1035} Pathalivisu, Erode, September 2, 1934.
\textsuperscript{1038} Tamil Nadu State Administration Report 1969-70, Government of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1971, p.211.
\textsuperscript{1039} G.O.No.325, Education Department, dt., 08.03.1972.
\textsuperscript{1040} G.O. No.1047 Education Department, dt., 08.06.1978.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sanctioned intake</th>
<th>No. of Application received</th>
<th>No. of Students admitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1974-75</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>1395</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-76</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>1914</td>
<td>424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-77</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>2211</td>
<td>414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>2524</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: G.O. No.1047 Education Department, Madras, dt. 08.06.1978.

Owing to the growing demand for technical education, the DMK Government has opened *women’s wing* in the men’s polytechnics[^1041].

*Periyar* emphasized that girls should be admitted into mixed school so that women must change their nature. So, *women’s wing* were opened at the Valivalam Desikar Polytechnic at Nagapattinam by the A.D.J. Dharmambal Trust, Vallipalayam, Nagapattinam and the Government Polytechnic, Tuticorin by the Arumugaswamy Memorial Educational Trust during the year 1979-80 by admitting 30 students[^1042]. During the year 1981-82, the AIADMK Government opened women wings in 3 more polytechnics to promote technical education among girls. Besides, they are permitted admission in men’s polytechnics wherever necessary[^1043]. To empower women and implement the ideology of providing Job-oriented technical education, *Periyar* himself wanted to establish an institute exclusively for women. But it was established in 1980 only. The AIADMK Government granted permission to establish women’s polytechnics known as *Periyar—*Centenary Women’s Polytechnic at Vallam in Tanjore and a private polytechnic in Coimbatore[^1044]. Later, the former was developed into *Periyar-Maniammai* University in 1997.

**b) Engineering**

Besides Polytechnics, there were 7 Engineering Colleges under the control of the Directorate of Technical Education in Tamil Nadu during 1968-69[^1045]. The total number of seats in these colleges was restricted to 1000 during 1968-69. The DMK Government

[^1041]: G.O.Ms.No.1204, Education, dt., 12.7.74,
introduced the subject unit system, Semester system, for the first time in the Engineering Colleges to improve the quality of the students\textsuperscript{1046}.

The AIADMK Government established the Anna University, a unitary type of university in September 1978\textsuperscript{1047}. It was established with the objective to provide excellent higher education and to promote research knowledge among the students in Engineering and Technology. Anna University brings together and integrates the four well-known technical institutions in the city of Madras. They are the college of Engineering in Guindy, the Technology Departments of the University of Madras situated in the Alagappa college of Technology campus, the school of Architecture and Town planning of the University of Madras and the Madras Institute of Technology, Chrompet. During the year 1983-84, the strength of women students were 426 in this university\textsuperscript{1048}.

**Dravidian Government Schemes to promote Womens’ Education**

**Free Education Scheme**

*Periyar* passed a resolution in the First Provincial *Self-Respect* Conference held at Chengleput in 1929 demanding the Government to introduce *free compulsory education* for students. He also pleaded the Government to impart compulsory elementary education to the school going girls from the public fund\textsuperscript{1049}. The Justice Party with a view to introduce free education issued an order on 13 May 1929 to exempt the poor girl students under Madras Educational rule 92, studying in Form III from paying fees\textsuperscript{1050}. Similarly, half-fee concessions were allowed to poor girls studying in Form IV and above in 1934\textsuperscript{1051}.

The Congress Government under the leadership of Kamaraj introduced free education in 1958. His Ministry allocated Rs.100 crore for education in the 1958 budget. For introducing free education, Kamaraj Ministry fixed the income limit of parents upto Rs.1200

\textsuperscript{1046} Ibid., p.209.
\textsuperscript{1047} Tamil Nadu State Administration Report 1983-84, Governmenmt of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1985, p.48.
\textsuperscript{1048} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1049} *Namadu Kurikkol,Periyar Self-Respect* propaganda Institution, Chennai, 2001, p.3.
\textsuperscript{1050} G.O.Ms.No.1047, Education Department, Madras, dt., 13.5.1929.
\textsuperscript{1051} G.O.Ms.No.47, Education Department, Madras, dt., 6.01.1934.
in 1960. But, if this income ceiling was implemented, only 17% of students would get benefit. Therefore, Kamaraj cancelled the income limit of the parents and introduced free education up to S.S.L.C\(^{1052}\). Free elementary education from I to V standard students was introduced in the Madras State by the Congress Government\(^{1053}\) to realize the ideology of *Periyar*. Following the Congress Ministry, the DMK extended the same Scheme up to introductory class in 1969\(^{1054}\). The Special feature of the State’s endeavour in spreading education was that the study up to PUC was made *free to all* the students during the year 1971\(^{1055}\).

**Educational Concessions to Harijan Students**

The Director of Public Instruction, N.D.Sundaravadvelu, a self-respecter, submitted a proposal for the exemption of *Harijans* from the payment of special fees in connection with the part II schemes for 1957-58\(^{1056}\). Hence, the Congress Government introduced a scheme of providing *free education to all the students* irrespective of castes up to S.S.L.C and it was implemented from June 1961. Thus, Madras State has been a model and a guide to India in all fields particularly in the field of education. It also brought forth a great revolution by introducing this scheme\(^{1057}\).

*Periyar* demanded the Government to provide *books, meals and dress* to the children of untouchables for attaining equality, by these they could acquire education along with other caste people\(^{1058}\).

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\(^{1052}\) Chief Minister M.Karunanidhi’s Speech on Kalvi Eluchi day on 15.7.1999, Tamilarasu, January 1999, pp.13-14.

\(^{1053}\) G.O.No.2714, Education Department, dt., 27.12.1960.

\(^{1054}\) Chief Minister M.Karunanidhi’s Speech, on Kalvi Eluchi day on 15.7.1999, Tamilarasu, January 1999 pp. 13-14.

\(^{1055}\) Tamilarasu, Madras, February 1971, p.23.

\(^{1056}\) R.C.No.593-E3/57 Education Department, Madras, dt., 8.4.1957.

\(^{1057}\) *Viduthalai*, Madras, 1.3.1961.

\(^{1058}\) Namadu Kurlikkol, PSRPI, Chennai, 2001,p.3, 15th resolution of Chinglepattu-I Provincial *Self-Respect* Conference held in 1929.
Mid-day Meal Scheme:

Madras State became a forerunner and created a revolution in the society by introducing free midday meal scheme even from the time of the arrival of the Christian Missionaries, the Tranquebar Missionary did notable service and later by the Congress Government under Thiru.K.Kamaraj who took a revolutionary step by introducing midday meal scheme for all the students who entered the school premises.

In 1970, the DMK Government revived the Midday Meal Programme which was supplemented by CARE (Catholic Relief Services). Packed Food containing Bulgar Wheat, Salad oil and milk powder was supplied as 3 days programme in a week. The total beneficiaries of this scheme were about 20 lakhs including 11/2 lakh pupils fed in HW and BC department schools. It also introduced the Special Nutrition Programme for the first time in October 1970 for the benefit of the pre-school Children in the slums of Madras in the age group of 3 years. Under the Scheme, the protein-rich “Modern Bread” is supplied at a cost of 23.50 paise per child, per day and 250 days in a year involving a total cost of Rs.11, 75,000 for the districts of Chengleput, Madurai, Trichy and Coimbatore1059.

Moreover, the AIADMK Government under M.G. Ramachandran (See Plate No.12) remodelled the Midday Meal Scheme into Nutritious Noon-meals scheme for feeding the children studying in the standards 1-5 from July 1, 1982 and later in the standards 6-10 from 15.9.1984. While introducing this scheme M.G.Ramachandran, the then Chief Minister stated that

‘I have decided to carry out this programme with a view to redress the sad plight of the poor and downtrodden living below the poverty line and bemoaning their lot in not being able to provide even single whole some meal to their children in spite of their efforts in all possible ways. I felt that it is my bounden duty to take immediate efforts to provide atleast one nutritious food at noon. This scheme will cover

children below poverty line all over Tamil Nadu for the provision of a nutritious noon meal free of cost from 1st of July, 1982.\(^{1060}\)

As a result, 64 lakhs of pupils in standards 1-10 were fed through 38,399 school feeding centre during the year 1986\(^{1061}\) and increased the enrolment of children naturally in school.

In 1989, the DMK Government introduced Nutitious Meal Programme into a meaningful nutritious programme by announcing the distribution of an egg to the children twice a month to increase the protein value of noon meal taker as per the recommended Dietary Allowance for Indians. But demand was made to provide egg in everyday meal during the Assembly debates.

**Supply of Free Text-books, Slates & Slate Pencils**

The Congress Government was the predecessor in introducing a scheme in 1966, to fulfill Periyar’s idea to supply books to the poor pupil by which poor pupils studying in standard I to III in all recognized schools in the state were supplied *text-books freely*. In addition poor pupils of standard I were supplied slates\(^{1062}\). The Government also introduced a scheme to *supply books and slates* to poor children studying in Municipal and Corporation elementary schools\(^{1063}\). The Government sanctioned the payment of a sum of Rs.30,478.92/- in 1966-67 as a subsidy to each of the Municipal councils towards the actual expenditure incurred on the free supply of Text books and slates to poor children during 1965-66\(^{1064}\).

During 1967-68 the DMK Government under C.N.Annadurai extended the existing scheme to the benefit of students studying upto 5th standard by distributing free text books, slates and slate pencils to all pupils. (See also Plate No.10). In the Corporation of Madras

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\(^{1060}\) *Tamil Arasu*, Madras, December, 1984, pp.5-6.


\(^{1062}\) G.O.M.S. No.334, Education Department, dt., 7 June 1966.

\(^{1063}\) G.O.Ms.No.1361, Education Department, dt., 18.7.1966.

\(^{1064}\) G.O.Ms.No.523, Education Department, dt., 11.4.1967.
alone 1,45,000 children got benefits during the year 1967-68\textsuperscript{1065}. During 1967-68 the scheme was further extended to cover the pupils of Std VI to VIII also. The beneficiaries in the Corporation of Madras were 1,62,363 pupils.

Due to financial constraints the Government advised the Corporation to defer the implementation of the scheme for the time being. So, the Corporation of Madras implemented the scheme only to the pupils (35,000 in number) who came under the mid-day meal scheme\textsuperscript{1066}. About 12 lakhs of pupils were benefitted by this scheme every year and from 1972-73 the text books were supplied by the Tamil Nadu Text Book Society at its own cost\textsuperscript{1067}.

In 1985-86 the AIADMK Government extended the scheme of free supply of text books to all deserving poor children in standards 1-8\textsuperscript{1068}. All students studying in I to II standards are supplied with slates. Once again, the AIADMK Government extended the supply of free note books and text books to the students studying in standards III to X from 1986-87. A sum of Rs.71,31,600/- has been spent for the supply of text books, note books and slates to the students during 1986-87\textsuperscript{1069}.

The beneficiaries of this Scheme during 1988-89 were 62.10 lakhs and the expense was Rs.7.64 cores\textsuperscript{1070}. In addition to this, the Government supplied free scales to 5 lakhs students who were studying in I standard at the expense of 12 lakhs in the year 1988-89\textsuperscript{1071}. During the year 1988-89, the Government extended the scheme of supplying free note books to the S.C/S.T and S.C. converted students studying in standard IV to X in general schools\textsuperscript{1072}.

\textsuperscript{1065} G.O.No.818, Education Department, dt., 27.5.1974.
\textsuperscript{1066} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1067} Report on the Director of Public Instruction in Tamil Nadu for the year 1966-67 to 1972-73, p.11.
\textsuperscript{1068} Progress of Education in Tamil Nadu, 1985-86 Demand No. 17, p. 9 and see also TNLAD, Vol.II, Madras, 1st July 1985, p.248.
\textsuperscript{1069} Tamil Nadu State Administration Report 1986-87, Governmentt of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1989, p.395.
\textsuperscript{1070} TNLAD, Vol.III, Madras, 7 April, 1989, , p. 296.
\textsuperscript{1071} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1072} Tamil Nadu State Administration Report 1989-90, Governmentt of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1993, p.13.
Supply of Free Uniform to Children

Periyar said that education should make us simple and our sense of dressing should show no discrimination between the rich and the poor\(^{1073}\). He also added that boys and girls at school should not think it a privilege to wear fashionable attire or costly jewellery, but should wear only simple clothes. At seats of learning where all classes of people mingle together, there without any distinction\(^{1074}\).

The Congress Government under K. Kamaraj introduced a scheme of providing free uniforms to poor children studying in elementary schools during the year 1960 to enable the students to attend the schools and to implement the idea of Periyar to establish a casteless society\(^{1075}\). The provision of uniforms to the needy has stimulated other well-to-do pupils to wear the same type of uniforms. So, it has tried to remove the discrimination between the rich and the poor and created oneness of feeling among the students\(^{1076}\). As a voluntary effort, by raising contributions from the public more than 16 lakhs of uniforms have been distributed during the quinquennial period from 1966-67 to 1972-73\(^{1077}\). This is another pet scheme of K. Kamaraj which had tremendous and immediate impact on the parents and their wards.

To attract the girls to school premises, the DMK Government provided the girls clothes in addition to mid-day meal. Every year 2 sets of dresses, one at the beginning of the academic year and another at the time of Pongal were supplied free of cost to all girl students irrespective of community who were studying either in Adi Dravidar Welfare Schools or residing as boarder in Government hostels run by the Department. Till 1969-70, 12.93 lakhs uniforms at a cost of Rs.76-49 lakhs have been distributed to poor children free of cost\(^{1078}\). Nearly 39 lakhs of pupils were supplied with uniform upto 1972-1973\(^{1079}\).

\(^{1073}\) Arasu Manimegalai, Periyar EVR Chinthanaikalil Pengal (Tl), Parinilayam, Chennai, 1981, p.3.
\(^{1076}\) Ibid.
\(^{1077}\) Quinquennial Report on the Director of Public Instruction in Tamil Nadu for the Year 1966-67 to 1972-73, Government of Tamil Nadu, Madras, p.29.
The cost of the dresses for the different age groups 1972-1973 was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Ceiling fixed for the supply of dresses for two sets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 5-8 and 9-11</td>
<td>Rs.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 12-14</td>
<td>Rs.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 15 and above</td>
<td>Rs.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The AIADMK Government had extended the scheme of free supply of uniforms to the deserving poor pupils in standard I to VIII from 15th September, 1985\textsuperscript{1080} and for this, the Government had incurred the expenditure of Rs.13\(\frac{1}{2}\) crores\textsuperscript{1081}. During 1989-90, the DMK Government supplied free uniform to 62.10 lakhs students with the outlay of Rs.18 crores\textsuperscript{1082}.

Periyar suggests that it was the prime responsibility of the parents to educate their daughter up to the age of 22 years. After education, the girls should be provided with jobs. Then only they will find suitable life partners during the time of marriage\textsuperscript{1083}.

Scholarship

1. To promote the education of girls and to discourage child marriage, the DMK Government introduced Residential scholarship for unmarried Hindu and Muslim girls. Accordingly, six scholarships to the monthly value of Rs.18 each were awarded for 10 months in the year to unmarried Hindu girls and 2 scholarships of the same value to unmarried Muslim girls studying in the residential school\textsuperscript{1084}.

2. The DMK Government had much concern for the rehabilitation of widows. So, it provided 21 scholarships to the value of Rs.8/- to each for 10 months to Hindu and Muslim widows who studied upto XI of secondary schools\textsuperscript{1085}.

\textsuperscript{1080} Progress of Education in Tamil Nadu, Demand No.17, 1985-86, p.9, and see also TNLAD, Vol.II, Madras, 1st July 1985, p.125.
\textsuperscript{1081} TNLAD, Vol.IV, Madras, 28th March 1985, p.248.
\textsuperscript{1082} Tamil Nadu State Administration Report 1989-90, Government of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1993, p.120.
\textsuperscript{1085} Ibid., p.201.
3. To bring the girls belonging to Hill Tribes in the Nilgiris district in standards IV and V to school the DMK Government introduced a scheme to provide Rs.1 per month for 9 months in the year. During the year 1968-69, 90 scholarships were awarded to these girls.\textsuperscript{1086}

**Foot Wear for Children and Working Mothers**

The Government proposed to introduce a scheme in 1987-88 of free supply of footwear to the school going children and poor working mothers in rural areas.\textsuperscript{1087}

**Book Bank Scheme**

The AIADMK Government introduced Book Bank Scheme on 1\textsuperscript{st} October, 1984. Accordingly, the Book Banks had been established in 36,553 schools in order to issue books to poor students freely and they should return it after the exam is over. The students who got benefit under this scheme till 1985 were 13 lakhs.\textsuperscript{1088}

Since Periyar considered education as the ultimate cure for women to liberate themselves from all clutches of her life, the DMK Government introduced special schemes for the promotion of girls' education. Having considered the year 1990 as the Year of the Girl Child, the DMK Government has taken special measures for reducing the drop-out rates among girl students.\textsuperscript{1089}

1. **Foster – Parent Scheme**

In 1989, the DMK Government introduced an innovative splendid scheme known as Foster-Parent Scheme to improve education among girls.\textsuperscript{1090} According to this scheme, the philanthropists could adopt the girl students who were studying from the I to VIII standard and donate Rs.250/- annually to their parents to meet out the educational expenses of

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\textsuperscript{1086} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{1087} Tamilarasu, Chennai, January, 1987, p.5.

\textsuperscript{1088} Progress of Education in Tamil Nadu, Demand No.17, 1985-86, p.9.

\textsuperscript{1089} Tamil Nadu State Administration Report 1989-90, Government of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1993, p.12.

\textsuperscript{1090} Ibid., p. 120.
their daughter. It was introduced with the purpose of arresting the dropouts among girls from school\textsuperscript{1091}. Nearly 50,000 donors came forward to extend their help\textsuperscript{1092}. This scheme was the manifestation of Periyar ideologies to promote girls’ education in Tamil Nadu.

**2. Ramamirtham Ammaiyyar Marriage Assistance Scheme:**

To encourage women’s education and to remove illiteracy, Periyar went to the extent of advising the youth that they must be firm in marrying only the educated women. Then only parents of girls will give education to them. If the youth do not get any literate girls, they should remain unmarried. The illiterate girls may be married to old man as 2\textsuperscript{nd} or 3\textsuperscript{rd} wife. This would be a punishment to the illiterate girls\textsuperscript{1093}. Another notable feature of the DMK Government towards the progress of women’s education was the introduction of **Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyyar Marriage Assistance scheme** in 1989\textsuperscript{1094}.

To encourage women’s education and to remove drop outs in the age group of 6-14 the Government gave under this scheme, Rs.5,000/- as financial assistance for the marriage of poor women from poor households, who have studied upto 8\textsuperscript{th} standard and above. The minimum educational qualification for scheduled tribe is reduced to 5\textsuperscript{th} standard. But, the parents’ income is limited to Rs.5000/- per annum. This scheme is being implemented from 3\textsuperscript{rd} June 1989. A sum of Rs.7.60/- crores was disbursed by the Government during 1989-90 to benefit 14,800 girls\textsuperscript{1095}. The main content of the scheme was to promote education among the girls\textsuperscript{1096}.

**Merit Scholarship**

Though Periyar was dead against merit and talent, the Dravidian Governments introduced merit scholarship to motivate and encourage the students to improve their standard

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\textsuperscript{1091} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1092} TNLAD, Vol.VIII, Madras, April 7, 1989, p.297.
\textsuperscript{1093} Kudi Arasu, Erode, July 5, 1931.
\textsuperscript{1094} TNLAD, Vol. VIII, 7\textsuperscript{th} April, 1989, Madras, p.297.
\textsuperscript{1095} Tamil Nadu State Adminstration Report 1989-90, Governmentt of Tamil Nadu, 1993, p.364.
\textsuperscript{1096} During the AIADMK Government in 2011 the amount was raised to the extend of Rs.25000/- for the beneficiary who has the educational qualification of 10\textsuperscript{th} std and Rs.50,000/- to the beneficiary who are the degree holders. Besides, they are provided with 4 gram gold for Thali.
and their interest in studies. Merit scholarships were also given to talented pupils in the rural areas under which an annual scholarship of Rs.1000/- for boarders and Rs.500/- for day scholars was being given for pupils studying in Standards IX to XI\textsuperscript{1097}.

**Free Education and Concessions to Women in the Collegiate Education**

*Periyar* wanted women to be given education upto 30 years. Since education empowered women’s social and economic status N.D.Sundaravadivelu, the Director of DPI, demanded the Government to introduce fee concessions to women students who were studying in the Annamalai and Madras Universities from the year 1958-59. He further added that they should not be denied the free concessions which were enjoyed by the students studying in other colleges\textsuperscript{1098}. As a result, the Congress Government introduced **full fee concessions** to women students belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Backward Classes and half-fee concessions to other community by considering their economic condition\textsuperscript{1099}. This scheme would be followed for two years from 1958-59 and 1959-60\textsuperscript{1100}. But, the DMK Government under Annadurai made the concession grant permanently from 1967-68 onwards\textsuperscript{1101}.

*Periyar* wished that the measure for women’s Higher Education had been taken up by the Government. It enabled the parents to send their daughters for Higher Education. The Government should pass an act by which women students should marry only after 20 years. Otherwise parents might arrange their daughters’ marriage only after the age of 20 or 25 or 30 for enjoying their daughters’ income\textsuperscript{1102}.

In 1967, the DMK Government exempted the students belonging to the S.C and S.T, MBC and Denotified Tribes from the payment of tuition fees in the Madras, Madurai and

\textsuperscript{1097} Quinquennial Report on the Director of Public Instruction in Tamil Nadu for the Year 1966-67 to 1972-73, Governmental of Tamil Nadu, Madras, p.29.
\textsuperscript{1098} G.O.No. 1058, Education Department, Madras, dt., 22.5.1959.
\textsuperscript{1099} The annual income of the parents or guardians of the pupil should not exceed Rs.1,200/- in the case of Secondary Schools and Rs.1500 in the case of Colleges.
\textsuperscript{1100} G.O.No. 1058, Education Department, Madras, dt., 22.5.1959.
\textsuperscript{1101} G.O.No. 1552, Education Department, Madras, dt., 6.9.1967.
\textsuperscript{1102} Viduthalai, Chennai, October 14, 1967.
Annamalai Universities\textsuperscript{1103}. A question was raised: Whether it was applicable to the research scholars working in the various Departments of Universities. Madras University made the difference between tuition fee and research fee. It collected Rs.100/- from the research students who studied in humanities and Rs.300/- was collected from the science students\textsuperscript{1104}.

The Congress Government introduced half-fee concession scheme to the women students who were studying in Annamalai University for the poor students whose family income was below Rs.1500/- per annum. This scheme was made a permanent one from the year 1966-67\textsuperscript{1105}. The same was continued during the DMK period.

The following table shows the amount of fee concessions paid to women students of Annamalai University\textsuperscript{1106}.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1967-68</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>Rs.2,745.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968-69</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Rs.3,412.50/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-71</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Rs.4,425/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Rs.5,677/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textbf{Source:} G.O.Ms.No.542, Education Department, Madras, date 12.04.1971.

The DMK Government took one more step forward towards women’s education by introducing free education of Pre-University Course for all children irrespective of annual income or community of their parents or guardians\textsuperscript{1107}. Accordingly, the Government sanctioned a sum of Rs.81,300/- to Annamalai University as an advance fee compensation grant for 581 students towards the introduction of free education in PUC for the I & II terms of 1970-71\textsuperscript{1108}.

The DMK Government had committed itself to make education free and extended the system of free education in different stages from primary to secondary and recently upto the first year of college education\textsuperscript{1109}. Eventually, it created an impetus among the poorer and

\textsuperscript{1103} Lr.Reg.No.111136 Es/67-14, Education Department, Madras, dt., 27.05.1967.
\textsuperscript{1104} G.O.No.1299, Education Department, Madras, dt., 28.07.1967.
\textsuperscript{1105} G.O.No.157, Education Department, Madras, dt., 10.09.1966.
\textsuperscript{1106} G.O.Ms.No.542, Education Department, Madras, dt., 12.04.1971.
\textsuperscript{1107} G.O.Ms.No.693, Education Department dt., 26.05.1969.
\textsuperscript{1108} G.O.(Ms). No.179.Education Department, dt., 04.02.1971.
\textsuperscript{1109} G.O.(Ms). No.818, Education Department, dt., 27.05.1974.
socially backward sections, of the public to acquire minimum educational qualifications. The then Chief Minister M.Karunanithi announced in the Assembly on 25th March 1989 that “In accordance with the electoral promise, graduate education at the B.A., B.Sc., and B.Com. stages will be made free for students belonging to S.C and S.T., MBC and D.C. A provision of Rs.2.25 crores has been made for this purpose”\textsuperscript{1110}. The commendable feature of DMKs’ III Ministry regarding the empowerment of women was issuing an order for the extension of free education upto First year undergraduate level for girl students hailing from poor and middle class families studying in Government and aided Arts and Science Colleges in Tamil Nadu from the academic year 1989-90. But, their family income should not exceed Rs.12,000/- per annum\textsuperscript{1111}. This welfare scheme was named as \textbf{E.V.R Nagammaiar Memorial Free under graduate scheme}\textsuperscript{1112}. The amount spent under this scheme during 1989-90 was Rs.14.07 lakhs and the number of beneficiaries of this scheme during the same period was 5,444\textsuperscript{1113}. This Scheme fulfilled 
\textbf{Periyar’s} idea of providing free education to women upto 22 years. The same resolution demanding education for women till 22 years was passed in the Second Provincial Conference of \textbf{Self-Respect Movement} held at Virudhunagar in 1930\textsuperscript{1114}.

This scheme provides hope for implementing free education upto 30 years to women by the Tamil Nadu Government within a short period.

\textbf{Medium of Instruction}

\textbf{Periyar} categorically said that the medium of instructions must be through \textbf{Mother Tongue}. So, the DMK Government under C.N.Annadurai, made Tamil as the medium of instruction as it was the most effective way of helping the students to develop their knowledge, ability and keenness of perception. Tamil was introduced as an alternative medium of instruction in the P.U.C. (Humanities) Course from 1966-67, in B.A from 1967-68

\textsuperscript{1110} Budget for 1989-90, Speech of Thiru M. Karunanidhi, March 26, 1989, p.34.
\textsuperscript{1111} G.O.Ms.No.412, Education (G2) Department, dt., 13.4.1989.
\textsuperscript{1112} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1113} Tamil Nadu Administration Report, 1989-90, Governmentment of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1993, p.96.
and in P.U.C (Science subjects) from 1968-69\textsuperscript{1115}. However, some colleges were permitted to retain one humanities section in English medium for the benefit of the students belonging to linguistic minorities\textsuperscript{1116}.

To lead a dignified and Self-Respectful life, the DMK Government encouraged the students to learn through the medium of Tamil in Higher Education without depending upon any other third language particularly Hindi, the Government awarded the stipend to the women students studying in PUC and I year degree classes in the shape of books in 1975-76\textsuperscript{1117}. Later, it introduced the payment of incentive stipend of Rs.180/- per student per year studying in B.A and B.Sc., course as well as Rs.50 per year per student studying in the PUC through Tamil medium towards the purchase of text books in Tamil\textsuperscript{1118}. A total of 23,087 students were benefited from this scheme in 1986-87 and a total amount of Rs.41.56 lakhs was spent for providing incentive to the above scheme\textsuperscript{1119}.

**Curriculum**

The traditional view emphasized the curricula for girls such as domestic science, needle-work, fine arts and vernacular literature, etc. to make them sober wives, a soft and a patient mother and an obliging in-law to the elders in the joint family.

Contrary to this, *Periyar* stressed that women should be imparted common education on par with men in rational knowledge and world affairs. They should have no access to literature or history or legends which would revive this submissive character and make them indulge in superstition and fear\textsuperscript{1120}. Fortunately, both the DMK and the AIADMK Governments in Tamil Nadu imparted common course of general education upto X class for both boys and girls. Moreover, Vocational Courses were introduced for both the sex in Higher Secondary Courses by the AIADMK Government in 1979-1980. At present, they

\textsuperscript{1115} Tamil Nadu State Administration Report 1969-70, Government of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1971, p.205

\textsuperscript{1116} The Colleges which retained English medium are Queen Mary’s College, Madras, Government Arts College for women North Madras, Lokanatha Narayanaswami Government College, Ponneri, Government Arts College, Coimbatore and Government Arts College in Ootacamund. Madras State Administration Report 1966-67, Government of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1968, pp.204-205

\textsuperscript{1117} Tamil Nadu State Administration Report, 1975-76, Government of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1977, p.255.


\textsuperscript{1119} Tamil Nadu Administration Report 1986-87, Government of Tamil Nadu, Madras, 1989, p.69.

\textsuperscript{1120} *Kudi Arasai*, Erode, August 22, 1937.
compete equally with men in taking different research courses like aeronautics, aerospace, information technology and management courses like Entrepreneurship, Human Resource Development, etc. besides Medicine and humanities.

Earlier, women were not allowed access to education. The society believed that there was no need for women, who involved in household chores, to get education ("உணவு வைத்திருப்பே வேண்டில்லை"). Not only this, the scriptures emphasised chastity as the commendable quality of women. Therefore, they were kept under surveillance. They also laid emphasis on child-bearing (procreation) as the only duty of women, for which education is not needed. The second emphasis was charity which did not need education. But, Periyar stated that education is the key for women to open up new vistas to her ambition and aspiration. He emphasized social reform before attaining political reform. Since his friends and the disciples ruled over Tamil Nadu, they introduced all possible schemes to improve the literacy rate of women, who are able to acquire different higher positions in Higher Education all over India. Finally multi-faceted abilities of women are brought out by both the DMK and the AIADMK Governments to acquire different types of occupations from the rank and file. Thus, education emboldens women to gain economic and political emancipation and subsequently, empowerment.