

# EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN CHENNAI DISTRICT - A STUDY

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**Abstract:** The status of women in Tamil Nadu has been subject to great changes. Patriarchal society was there in Sangam Age. The Sangam literature said that women had the status not equal to men. They had to follow a lot of rules, which were not meant to men. Aganaanuru said that in Sangam age women somewhat had the right to choose their husbands. During the modern period, Kothinayaki Ammal, Ambujammal, Sornathammal, Padmavathy Asher, Padmavathy Ammal and Muthulakshmi Reddi actively participated in the freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu. All these women contributed for the women's empowerment. Women's Indian Association was established in 1917, at Adyar, in Madras, under the leadership of Annie Besant. This Association was the mother of all other women's organizations in Tamil Nadu. The main objective of this organization was to work for the uplift of women which was the first women's association in Tamil Nadu and brought all Indian women together for mutual assistance. The branches of this association were spread from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. Whenever the people want a change in the society, the participation of women is badly needed as they are about the half of the population. Generally feminist organizations help to obtain self reliance and consciousness of women. Without the active initiative and participation of the large section of feminists themselves, the women problems cannot be solved by any personality including the government. Poverty is one of the major problems of women in India as well as in Tamil Nadu which is found more in rural areas. Therefore, feminist organizations are ready to fight for the women's problems and attain democratic rights and self reliance. Feminist organizations have framed various programmes to eradicate the poverty of women. One of the objectives of women's organization is to achieve the socio-economic empowerment of women. This is proved by many feminist organizations in Tamil Nadu.

**Keywords:** status of women, Sangam Age, women's empowerment and Women's Association was established in 1917, at Adyar, in Chennai.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The status of women in Tamil Nadu has been subject to great changes. Patriarchal society was there in Sangam Age. The Sangam literature said that women had the status not equal to men. They had to follow a lot of rules, which were not meant to men. Aganaanuru said that in Sangam age women somewhat had the right to choose their husbands. They enjoyed the freedom. Women were good in education. For an example, Sangam literature said that there were 26 poetesses in that period. Avvaiyar was one of the famous poetesses of this age. There were 59 verses written by Avvaiyar in the Sangam literature. She also wrote many ethical works, some of them are Atti Niti-venba and Aranericharam. Sangam Age mothers were brave enough to send their sons happily to the battle field. Purananuru mentions the brave woman as Mudin Magalir or Maraikudi Magaliar. Sangam mothers wanted their sons to be brave enough to die as soldiers with a great name. In Purananuru, Okkur Masathiyar a Poetess of Sangam Age mentioned that a woman was ready to cut off her breasts, if her son ran away from the battlefield. Tholkappiyar said that a brave mother was happy and proud when she saw her dead son in the battlefield with a wound on his chest.

During the modern period, Kothinayaki Ammal, Ambujammal, Sornathammal, Padmavathy Asher, Padmavathy Ammal and Muthulakshmi Reddi actively participated in the freedom struggle in Tamil Nadu. All these women contributed for the women's empowerment. Periyar E.V. Ramasamy played a crucial role in the uplift of women. Periyar was emphatic that the common practice of giving a lower status to women in the Indian society should be eradicated.

During the post-independence period women played an active role in education, politics, media, art and culture, service sectors, science and technology. In 1970s the feminist activism in India gathered momentum. Female activists united over issues such as female infanticide, gender bias, women health, and female literacy. Feminism in India refers to set of movements intending to define, establish and defend equal political, economic and social rights and opportunities for Indian women. As the feminist counterparts in parts of the world, feminists in India also seek gender equality. This can be right to work for equal wages, to have access to health and education as well as political rights. It is worth mentioning that feminists in India have also fought against cultural issues. Women's Indian Association

Women's Indian Association was established in 1917, at Adyar, in Madras, under the leadership of Annie Besant. This Association was the mother of all other women's organizations in Tamil Nadu. The main objective of this organization was to work for the uplift of women which was the first women's association in Tamil Nadu and brought all Indian women together for mutual assistance. The branches of this association were spread from Kashmir to Kanyakumari.

### **VIDHVA VIVAH SAHITYA SABHA**

This was established at Madras in 1921. The main aim of this association was to encourage widow remarriage. This association was started by the members of Women's Indian Association. It was much opposed by orthodoxy especially Brahmins who regarded the remarriage of a widow as the most sinful.<sup>40</sup> In 1921 - 1937 the gradual spread of education and culture let loose the bonds of castes and widened and liberalized the outlook of young people. Gradually Hindu women also came forward to receive western education and these educated women became conscious of their inferior positions and began to assert their rights.

### **MADRAS SEVA SADAN**

The Women's Indian Association was started the Madras Seva Sadan at Udayanvanam, Madras in 1923. Andal Venkatasubba Rao was the founder of this institution. The main objective of this organization was promoting adult education among women and making them self-reliant, self-supporting and thus enabling them to earn an honourable living. This home gave scholarships to the students. Fund of this association was collected from the public and from the members of Women's Indian Association. This home created an organization 'Baby Welcome' attached to it and gave medical help to babies. In the Women's home girls were trained as nurses, vocational teachers and music teachers. Inspired by the activities of Seva Sadan, a similar home was started at Triplicane, Madras. Muthulakshmi Reddi pleaded with the government to sanction a special grant for the rescue home, but it was not accepted by the Tamil Nadu Government. Seva Sadan was able to get a grant from the Industrial Department of Government of Madras from 1929. Muthulakshmi Reddi was successful in her efforts to provide a safe shelter to women who were thrown out by their own family members and helped them to earn.

- their own living with confidence.
- Avvai Home

Muthulakshmi Reddi was instrumental in abolishing the immorality of women and under her able guidance the Women's Indian Association started the Avvai Home in 1930.<sup>43</sup> The main aim of this home was to protect all women especially young girls and children not only from the evil of poverty and destitution but also from the association to educate the train them to a useful profession. This home treated all the girls on equal footing without any caste distinctions. Muthulakshmi Reddi spent her whole life for the development of the home.

### **MADRAS VIGILANCE ASSOCIATION (MVA)**

Another association which provided a helping hand to the victims of immoral life was the vigilance association started by Women Indian Association, Chennai. This association associated itself with the 'Moral Welfare Work', served not only the Chennai city but also the whole of the Province, Ms. V.T. Lakshmi, a noted welfare worker of Chennai was closely associated with the working of the association. This association had undertaken three aspects of moral work (i) rescue and reclamation, (ii) moral reformation and (iii) rehabilitation. The association brought about a change in the attitude of public towards the rescue and reclamation work which was looked down upon with disdain and fear in early days. As far as the reformation work the rescue and the training home in Chennai had provided all facilities to unfortunate girls. They were given all-round training. Girls from other districts were also given chances to reform themselves. 'Stri Sadana' a higher elementary, Arts and crafts school was started to this house.

**MUSLIM WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION (MWA)**

Muslim Women's Association was started in 1961 under the presidentship of late Bagum Nasir Hussain at Madras. Now there are 16 Muslim women leaders including the ex-officio member. All the office bearers are Muslim women. The MWA runs a Matriculation and Higher Secondary School at Chennai. They teach all modern subjects to boys from LKG to standard V and girls upto Standard XII.

**SELF-HELP GROUP (SHG)**

The concept of SHG serves the principle by women, of the women and for the women'. The origin of SHG is from the brain child of GRAMEEN Bank of Bangladesh, which was found by the Economist Prof. Mohamed Yunus of Cittaogong University in the year 1975. This was exclusively established for the poor. Throughout the changes of history, women have collectively struggled against direct and indirect barriers to their self-development and their full social, economic and political participation. The women's organization started the struggle for women's rights in the early part of the 20th century. At present women's movement focuses its attention on equality and influences policy and planning of the government for development and empowerment. In Tamil Nadu the SHGs were started in 1989 at Dharmapuri district.

**TAMIL NADU CORPORATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN (TNCDW)**

Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women (TNCDW) was incorporated as a limited company under the companies Act 1956 in December 1983 with the prime objective of bringing about socio-economic development and empowerment of women. The corporation implemented Mahalir Thittam, IFACassisted post Tsunami Sustainable livelihoods programme and also Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), s a major anti-poverty programme meant for selfemployment of rural poor. Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women Ltd. Began to function from July 2006. Further the Board of TNCDW was broad based and reconstituted under G.O. Ms. No. 148, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department dated 12.10.2006, included representatives from industry, NGO Sector and Banks.

**MAHALIR THITTAM**

Mahalir Thittam is an offshoot of Tamil Nadu Women Development project. It covers all rural areas of the entire state. This scheme is intended to promote economic development and social empowerment of the poorest women through a network of selfhelp groups formed with active support of NGOs. This project is to reach out and empower 10 lakh poor and disabled women below the poverty line, through 60, 000 self-reliant and sustainable self-help groups. The main objective of this scheme is socio-economic empowerment of the porest women in Tamil Nadu.

**2. ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN**

These organizations try to establish the new micro-credit mechanisms through finance institutions and banks which enable all women under poverty have easy access to credit. There are some organizations trying to make women as entrepreneurs by implementing macro economic policies. The micro and macro credit attitude among women are implemented through SHG approach. Women Entrepreneurs Association of Tamil Nadu (WEAT) is an organization helps the women in formal sector to become successful women entrepreneurs for identification of a project, skill training, finance from bank and marketing. Further, WEAT tends to empower women to become self-employed, economically independent and decision makers in business. At present WEAT have 526 women entrepreneurs in all over Tamil Nadu.<sup>10</sup> One of the major objectives of the WEAT is to promote grass root women to become entrepreneurs either in micro scale or self-employed women who have to intend to help the other entrepreneurs to expand their scale of operations. The members of WEAT are given awareness to start garment units, food processing, computer oriented programmes, Eco green products such as banana fiber products, areca nut leaf plates, fly ash bricks etc by availing finance assistance from banks.<sup>11</sup>

Most of the NGOs are advocating for the women's economic empowerment. One of the NGOs is Women's Collective (WC) which is functioning at Kolathur Chennai. WC has at present more than one lakh women members spread over 1383 villages in 18 districts in Tamil Nadu. WC was started in the year 1994. WC is working for the empowerment of rural and marginalized women.

Tamil Nadu Dalit Women's Movement (TNDWM) is one of the state level feminist organizations. TNDWM mainly voices for the land and political rights of the Dalit women. This is because of 80% of food grains are produced by women workers, whereas, only 13% of women are the real land owners in India.<sup>14</sup> Hence, TNDWM believes that the land is the

main source of economic priority for the landless agricultural Dalit women. TNDWM focuses the impacts of globalization to the lively hood rights of Dalit women and continues to compain for protecting and promoting the food security of Dalit Women.

### 3. SCHEMES FOR ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN INDIA

Central and State governments have proposed many schemes with a view to facilitating economic empowerment of women. A high power committee has been formed in 1999 to review all legislating and government schemes. This committee mainly and carefully found out the ways and means for the access of women to nationalresources and ensuring that women should take their rightful place in the mainstream of economic development. The committee has also proposed the specific programmes for observing the year 2001 as Women's Employment Year. The central theme of this scheme is to make the women economically independent. The central government has introduced several proposals for facilitating this scheme through the ministry of rural development. All the programmes have focused on the empowerment of women. Government of India has been launched many schemes for women empowerment. Some of the programmes implemented by the Central Government are given below.

#### INDIRA MAHILA YOJANA (IMY)

Indira Mahila Yojana was started in 1995 in 200 blocks of the country for women empowerment. It is being implemented in 238 blocks. More than 40, 000 women's group has been formed under this scheme among which 3000 groups were formed in 1999-2000. The main objective of IMY is to give a forward thrust to the education, awareness about income-generation capacities and the empowerment of women. The platform of the forward thrust is to be the self-help group at the grass-root level.

#### NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

The National Commission for women was set up in the year 1992 as a statutory body at the national level to protect and safeguard the rights of women. The commission also calls for special studies or investigations into specific problems arising out of discrimination and atrocities against women and also undertakes promotional and educational research. One of the important function of the commission is to participate and advice on the planning process for socio-economic development of women. The state women's commissions are constituted by the states under their respective state legislations.

#### SCHEMES FOR ECONOMIC EMPOEWRMENT OF WOMEN IN TAMIL NADU

Tamil Nadu State Government has introduced a number of innovative schemes for the economic empowerment of women. Most of the schemes are implemented by Social Welfare Department and Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department through SHGs and NGOs. State Government is very much appreciated for the establishment of a separate corporation for the welfare of women named Tamil Nadu Corporation for the Development of Women (TNCDW) which was under the control of Social Welfare Department.<sup>28</sup> The setting up of TNCDW has led to certain qualitative change in the type of schemes. The major programmes taken up the State Government under TNCDW are (1) Mahalir Thittam (2) Vocational Training Programme (VTP) (3) Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP) and (4) Women Recreation Centres (WRC).

#### MAHALIR THITTAM

This is one of the most important and significant schemes launched by the TNCDW for socio-economic empowerment of women. The basis of Mahalir Thittam is Self-Help Groups approach and is implemented with the help of NGOs and social organizations. Mahalir Thittam with this approach was first started in a small scale in Dharmapuri district in the assistance provided by International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) during the year 1989. After knowing the fruitful results, the scheme was extended to Salem and South Arcot districts in 1991-1992 and then to Madurai and Ramanathapuram in 1992-1993 under the head of Tamil Nadu Women Development Projects (TNWDP). This project was prepared with a view to carrying out the following : (1) Income-generation activities such as farm and crop development, animal husbandry, cottage and village industries etc. (2) Institutional credit – in this case the Indian Bank was responsible for providing credit to village women; (3) Informal credit and savings mobilization – here encouraged the group based savings to meet the financial needs of the SHG members; (4) Group development-promotion of active, cohesive groups of women as organizational catalyst for the economic and social betterment of the target group; (5) Institutional support – establishment of a network of social workers to provide the social development and support to women.

Animators were appointed in each village and one supervisor for every 12 villages; (6) Training – Necessary training was given to women members on various subjects such as group organization and management book keeping, entrepreneurial programmes, legal and social related issues. Further, training was also provided to improve the capacity of project staff, bank officers and NGOs; (7) Role of NGOs – Selected members of NGO were asked to assist identification of beneficiary, group formation, provision of bank loans and recoveries etc.,

### **SELF-HELP GROUPS**

Self help group is a voluntary association of the economically backward women from a similar socio- economic background of both rural as well as urban centers. They come together for the purpose of solving their common economic and social problems through self-help and mutual help. For the empowerment of poor women and to introduce equality among the genders and also to inculcate self confidence the Women Self-help Groups are introduced.

The self help group promotes the concept of small savings among its members. Their savings are deposited in the bank in the name of the Self Help Group as a common fund. The fund thus collected will be utilized for paying loans to the members of the group who are in the dire need of it. Generally its members should not exceed 20. This group will be having a common aim and specific ways and means for promoting their empowerment. Evidently, thus that the women self help group is an association which functions exclusively for the plight of women economically and socially. Self Help Groups are small homogenous groups consisting of 12-20 women from BPL families voluntarily organised to promote savings. They are self-managed groups of poor women which primarily came into existence to mobilize financial resources through their own savings and lend the same amongst themselves to meet the credit needs of their members.

### **MAHALIR THITTAM**

There are two types of SHG is working in Tamilnadu. Which one is rural based and another is Urban based. Functions of both types of SHGs are same but, there is a difference in subsidy limit in revolving fund only. Revolving fund subsidy maximum is Rs.10, 000 to rural SHGs, whereas, 30, 000 for urban SHG.

### **RURAL SHGS UNDER MAHALIR THITTAM**

Systematic training was given to SHG members with a view to acquiring the leadership quality, team building spirit and capacity to maintain books of accounts. Further, skill training also was given to those who wanted to start economic activities or develop skills to get self employment. The SHGs that complete six months become eligible for credit rating which is a bench marking exercise to grade the group and ascertain its credit worthiness. Regularity of savings, frequency of meetings, proper maintenance of registers, internal loaning and repayment are some of the key parameters for rating of groups. The successful credit rated SHGs become eligible for credit linkage through the schemes like SGSY or directly provided by the banks. If the SHGs were satisfied from the second credit rating after further six months, they are provided financial assistance to start economic activity through SGSY schemes along with bank funding. In this way Rs.5165.95 crores were distributed to SHGs during the period from 1989 to March 2009.

### **URBAN SHGS UNDER MAHALIR THITTAM**

Revolving Fund (RF) subsidy was not available to urban SHGs until 2006. As a result their savings were restricted from the banks. Therefore, the Government had announced a scheme to provide RF subsidy to urban SHGs from 2006-2007. Due to this announcement, Government had sanctioned Rs.30 crores to give RF subsidy to 30, 000 urban SHGs. Further, the government had decided to provide RF subsidy to 1.50 lakh urban SHG during the year 2008-2009 for which Rs.150 crores had been granted. A total sum of Rs.131.41 crores as RF subsidy and with the bank credit of Rs.644.97 crores had been given as assistance to 1, 14, 413 urban SHGs set up to 31st March 2009. Both rural SHGs and urban SHGs are playing a significant role in preventing exploitation of the poorer sections by creating self reliance, making leadership qualities among group members, providing training for credit documentation and prompt repayment etc.

### **PANCHAYAT LEVEL FEDERATION (PLF) UNDER MAHALIR THITTAMS**

The federations of SHGs in Mahalir Thittam were formed at Village Panchayat levels which are called Panchayat Level Federation (PLF). Government had issued orders to restructure the PLF to make them inclusive and more democratic and participatory in functioning. Further, PLFs have been registered under Tamil Nadu Societies Act 1975 for acquiring legal status and institutional status. PLFs identified the talents and economies of SHGs and provides the ways and means of production and marketing for the benefits of SHGs.

### **PERIYAR EVR NAGAMMAI SCHEME**

Periyar EVR Nagammai Free Education Scheme has been implemented in the State from 1989-90 to women students irrespective of caste, creed and community to encourage their education and to reduce dropout rate. As per the scheme those students' whose parental annual income is less than Rs.24, 000/- are exempted from payment of tuition fees in under - graduate courses. During 2005-06, 8936 women students were benefited under this scheme. In 2006-07, a sum of Rs.65.00 lakhs has been allocated for this scheme.

### **4. DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN RURAL AREAS (DWCRA)**

It was launched as a sub scheme of IRDP (Integrated Rural Development Programme). It was started as pilot project in 50 selected districts in all states during 1982-83.46 During the 9th plan almost all state governments started implementing DWCRA activities in remote areas. The objectives of the programs were to organize women into socio-economic groups with the dual purpose of providing selfemployment opportunities and social strength to them. The performance of DWCRA membership indicates that some state governments like Andhra Pradesh performed much better than other states in terms of formation of women groups. The DWCRA scheme is implemented by the District Rural Development Agencies (DRDA) through Mandal Praja Parishad. For implementation of the scheme a women Project Officer was appointed.

The objectives of this programme are:

- To strengthen the economic base for rural women by providing them credit and subsidies.
- To train them in productive skills and group dynamics.
- To provide support and help to the Rural Women for enhancing their productive skills and capabilities.
- To enable rural women to improve their economic capacity
- To orient the development functionaries to respond positively the needs and constraints of poor women.

### **TAMILNADU NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS AND VOLUNTARY RESOURCES CENTRE (TNVRS)**

This is a resource centre functioning from 2001 A. D. onwards for offering training to the staff of nongovernmental organizations for improving their capacity as well as the quality. These training programmes also enhance the efficiency of the programme such as Mahalir Thittam. They also assist the Non-Government Organisations to monitor the self help groups effectively in Tamilnadu. Due to the efforts of such centres 6.4% of the rural women were included in the self help groups Movement.

### **THE VILLAGE LEVEL POWER REDUCTION COMMITTEE**

This is yet another measure which takes efforts to form self help groups in the rural community. It improves the capacity and efficiency of the already prevalent self help groups. It offers proposals for the economic activities of the vulnerable member of the self help groups. Thus the Self Help Group Movement in Tamil Nadu is widened by the various other schemes introduced by the Government of Tamil Nadu for the sake of the enhanced women empowerment. Such schemes are also of immense help in elevating the status of women from their backwardness. The self help groups are viable alternatives to achieve objectives of rural development and to get community participation in all the rural development programs. A self help group is a viable organization set up to disburse micro credit to the rural women for the purpose of making them enterprising women and encouraging them to enter into entrepreneurial activities. Self Help Movement through savings has been taken up as mass movement by the rural women to shape their future destiny.

### **TAMILNADU NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEES SCHEME**

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was enacted in September 2005.<sup>53</sup> The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme was launched on 02.02.2006 and is being implemented in ten districts, viz., Cuddalore, Dindigul, Nagapattinam, Sivagangai, Tiruvannamalai and Villupuram from 02.02.2006 onwards and in four more districts viz. Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Tirunelveli and Karur from 01.04.2007 onwards. From 01.04.2008 onwards, the scheme is being

extended to the remaining twenty districts of the State which are; 1. Ariyalur, 2. Dharmapuri, 3. Perambalur, 4. Pudukottai, 5. Ramanathapuram, 6. Namakkal, 7. Vellore, 8. Thoothukudi, 9. Virudhunagar, 10. Salem, 11. Erode, 12. Tiruchirappalli, 13. Kancheepuram, 14. Theni, 15. Tiruvallur, 16. Madurai, 17. Nilgiris, 18. Kanniyakumari, 19. Coimbatore and 20. Krishnagiri.

## 5. FEMALE WORK PARTICIPATION RATE

Flexible market and the myth of feminization of work have been created by the global economy. This has led to unemployment and under employment of women in India. Women constitute about 49% of the total population in Tamil Nadu. The status of women's welfare in a community can be known from the Sex ratio index. This index has been steadily declining in India from 1961 to 1991 except a small rise in 1981, whereas increases in 2001 and 2011. The same was observed in Tamil Nadu also. Declining in the sex ratio index would make the economic development more favourable for women in international scene, whereas, unfavourable for women in India.

FWPR indicates to a great extent the economic empowerment of women in the society. The status of women is intimately connected with their economic position. It also depends on opportunities for participation in economic activities. Education along with participation of women in workforce has been universally recognized as an important element in the adoption of small family norms. This is very much essential for family planning. **Table 4.1** shows the work participation rate as well as the number of workers in Tamil Nadu. FWPR rose 26.52% in 1981 to 31.32% in 2001. This rate growth has been found faster than for males. Even then, the number of female workers accounted for 34.72% in the total workforce of 278 lakhs in 2001. The corresponding figure for 1991 census was 34.06%. In the total population, nearly half were females but they accounted for only 34% of the total workers. This proportion has to be improved for ensuring better and all round economic empowerment. The working population in Tamil Nadu increased from 278.80 lakhs in 2001 to 328.80 lakhs in 2011 accounting an annual compound growth rate of 1.18%.

According to NSS survey in 1993-94, the work force of women in Tamil Nadu (rural 47.8%, urban 22.8%) was higher than the national average (rural 32.8%, urban 15.4%). The Female Work Participation Rate in Tamil Nadu has been increased in the subsequent years. As on 31st March 1997, a total number of 7.2 lakh women were employed in the organized sector in which 4.0 lakh in the public sector and 3.2 lakh in private sector. The followings are some of the sectors where women are mostly employed:

1. Agriculture and Allied
2. Live stock
3. Textile and Textile products – cotton mills, cotton spinning mills
4. Tobacco – Bidi manufacturing works
5. Food products (cashew nut processing, preservation of fishes etc)
6. Construction
7. Petty Traders – Match Factory etc
8. Personal services – Household works
9. Education and Hospitals

## 6. CONCLUSION

Women's Indian Association was established in 1917, at Adyar, in Madras, under the leadership of Annie Besant. This Association was the mother of all other women's organizations in Tamil Nadu. The main objective of this organization was to work for the uplift of women which was the first women's association in Tamil Nadu and brought all Indian women together for mutual assistance. The branches of this association were spread from Kashmir to Kanyakumari.

Whenever the people want a change in the society, the participation of women is badly needed as they are about the half of the population. Generally feminist organizations help to obtain self reliance and consciousness of women. Without the active initiative and participation of the large section of feminists themselves, the women problems cannot be solved by

any personality including the government. Poverty is one of the major problems of women in India as well as in Tamil Nadu which is found more in rural areas. Therefore, feminist organizations are ready to fight for the women's problems and attain democratic rights and self reliance. Feminist organizations have framed various programmes to eradicate the poverty of women. One of the objectives of women's organization is to achieve the socio- economic empowerment of women. This is proved by many feminist organizations in Tamil Nadu.

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