

Welfare Schemes for the Differently Abled in Tamil Nadu (1947-1976)

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Abstract

The present study deals about the Welfare Schemes of the Government of Tamil Nadu for the differently abled persons. It was crucial to create and to develop volunteer organizations in the state. The Central Social Welfare Board provides fund to the Tamil Nadu Social Welfare Board for its different programs. It helps non-profit organizations to provide a wide range of services in the welfare fields of children, women, and handicapped welfare.

Keywords: Differently Abled, Educational Schemes, Education Programme for Visually Challenged, General Schemes

1. Introduction

In 1954, the State Social Welfare Board was established. In 1955, the Directorate of Women's Welfare was established. In 1961, these two entities merged to establish the Department of Women's Welfare. The Department of Women's Welfare was renamed as the Department of Social Welfare in 1972, increasing its scope to include initiatives such as the Nutritious Meal Program for pre-school children, the Nursing Mothers' Program and the Beggars' Home. The same department was also tasked with implementing numerous social programs for physically challenged people.

In 1974, a survey of physically challenged people was conducted in order to gather information and implement different welfare measures. A total of 2,351 lakhs of physically challenged people were calculated. Among them, there were 1.15 lakh orthopedically challenged people, 72,745 deaf people and 46,118 blind people. The government can use the results of this poll to create a rehabilitation program for physically challenged people.

2. Review of Literature

The primary sources are Madras Administration Reports, Madras Legislative Assembly Proceedings, Madras

Information Policy Notes and Performance, Budgets of the Government of Tamil Nadu, State Planning Commission's Five-Year Plans, Government of Tamil Nadu's Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of India Records and Reports of the Director of 1. Social Welfare, 2. Social Defence, and 3. Integrated Child Development.

Apart from the documents available in the Tamil Nadu Archives, a number of published works, such as K. G. Rama's Women's Welfare in Tamil Nadu, Dolly Singh's Child Development: Issues, Policies and Programmes, and D. L. Hobman's The Welfare can be regarded as key references. State, Indian Women and the West by H. Gray, The Story of Women in India by P. Gupta, The Changing Status of Women in India by Kiren Devendra, social Welfare in India by A. M. Majumdar, Maternity and Child Welfare by A. P. Pillay and M. Subramaniam and Women's Development: Problems and Prospects by Shamim Aleem.

3. Methodology

Historical and analytical methods were used in this study and the events were organized in chronological sequence. The descriptive research approach was used in this study. The process is based on research conducted in archives and libraries. It truly sets the tone for the rest of the study.

The research is based on a range of original sources with non-documentary sources supplementing it. It contains both main and secondary information.

4. Educational Schemes

A State Board was established to investigate the issues of the physically challenged from all angles to provide appropriate aid to all those currently involved in this activity and to provide direct assistance in all worthy situations. For the time being, the chairman is the Minister of Social Welfare. The Board's responsibilities were as follows:

- To determine the challenges of providing rehabilitation or assistance to physically challenged people in Tamil Nadu.
- To work with the State Government to improve the state of the physically challenged, as well as to organize and implement different programs to enhance the socially challenged situations via medical, vocational and social rehabilitation.
- To assist individuals and organisations in locating employment opportunities and finding acceptable work for physically challenged individuals and organisations in the state that are dedicated to the development and care of the physically challenged. Similarly, the Board's operations must be coordinated with those of the Rehabilitation Centres in order to carry out their programmes.

The chairman, the Minister for Social Welfare, was in charge of the fund set aside for the physically challenged. For the benefit of the physically impaired, 14 projects were devised. These systems may be divided into three groups.

They were:

- Schemes for children aged 6 to 16.
- Plans for people between the ages of 16 and 50.
- Plans for those beyond the age of 50.

5. General Schemes

Five special schools for the Deaf and Mute, each costing around Rs. 6 lakhs were established for children aged 6 to 16. A centre was also to be established to educate instructors to teach the physically challenged. A total of Rs.3 lakhs was spent for the aforementioned objective. The system outlined above allows physically challenged

students to continue their school while receiving therapy. A total of Rs.7.5 lakhs was set aside for the treatment of these physically challenged youngsters and the schools were linked to the District Headquarters Hospitals. The government established schools connected to orthopaedic centres and District Headquarters Hospitals in 1974 so that children receiving medical treatment may continue their education without interruption. Orthopaedic schools are affiliated with the following government hospitals.

- Madras, Government General Hospital
- Madras, Government Stanley Hospital
- Madras Government Children Hospital
- Madras Government Royapettah Hospital
- Thanjavur Medical College Hospital
- Tirunelveli Medical College Hospital
- Madurai Medical College Hospital
- Coimbatore Medical College Hospital

The Social Welfare Department of Tamil Nadu covered the costs of running these schools. The state government subsidised the cost of limb-fitting in order to make rehabilitation accessible to the poor, spending Rs. 45,000 a year.

Apprenticeship systems were planned for persons between the ages of 16 and 50. The trainees were supposed to be hired as apprentices in departments like the Transportation Department, the Government Transport Corporation, the Stationery and Printing Department, the Tamil Nadu Small Scale Industries Corporation and the Khadi and Village Industries Boards. For a period of six months, a monthly stipend of Rs. 50/- was paid. Following that, these apprentices were to be permanently incorporated into the different departments and undertakings. It was Rs. 3 lakh scheme. These apprentices were then to be hired on a permanent basis by the different departments and businesses.

In 1975, training and manufacturing workshop for 150 physically challenged people was suggested to be created at Muttukadu as part of this programme. 150 physically challenged people will be employed through the establishment of training and production workshops at a cost of Rs. 10 lakhs. Another measure was the Mahabalipuram motorways. 75 physically challenged individuals were trained in three batches for steel product manufacture in 1975. Furthermore, the government spent Rs. 25 lakhs in production of light engineering,

structural work and machine components commended at Muttukadu, compared to Rs. 10 lakhs. In addition, 17 wheel-chairs, 98 tricycles, 131 healing aids and 94 aluminium crutches were supplied. Approximately 5000 physically challenged people will be trained for work in labour-intensive sectors. They were supposed to be trained in the following labour-intensive jobs: 1. Matchbox making, 2. Beedi making, 3. Handlooms and 4. Hosiery. A monthly stipend of Rs. 30/- was to be paid. During the 1974-75 fiscal years, Rs.5 lakhs was set aside for the above scheme. The handicapped ladies were also taught how to weave cloth, mats and handlooms.

6. Secretariat Courses for Orthopaedically Challenged

For the benefit of those who are orthopaedically challenged, as well as Deaf and Mutes who have completed the S.S.L.C. exam, at a cost of Rs. 8.80 lakhs, 20 centres were suggested to provide training in typewriting and shorthand. Stipends of Rs. 30/- per month were to be paid to each trainee. In 1974-75, 400 people were supposed to profit from this programme. Furthermore, at Sree Seva Mandir, government-funded typewriting and shorthand training was provided to orthopaedically challenged women.

7. Tailoring Centres for the Orthopedically Challenged

The opening of 20 tailoring shops for the orthopaedically challenged and Deaf-Mutes was given a budget of Rs. 5,47,700. The trainees were to be paid a monthly stipend of Rs. 30.00. Deaf females were also taught how to make dolls, embroider and sew dresses. Blind girls were taught how to weave mats and use handlooms. The orthopedically challenged and Deaf-mutes were given 4 months of training in the verification and sorting out of computer Punch Cards at the Data Processing Centre in Madras, with a monthly stipend of Rs. 50/-. The entire amount provided for this purpose was Rs. 80,000. The government wants to give physically challenged people priority in specific jobs, such as lift operators. Both in Madras and elsewhere, it was proposed that a Special Employment Exchange Program be established. The special employment exchanges different operations include weeding out openings and bringing them to the

attention of businesses, as well as sponsoring the most qualified registrants for consideration by employers. By performing employment studies and job analyses, follow-up measures such as motivating employers and locating relevant work opportunities where disabled people can be productively employed and can be taken.

In addition, certain strategies have been designed, such as the following: In the Co-operative Society, information regarding co-operative societies is provided by physically challenged people seeking self-employment. On the 7th of December, 1972, a Book Binding Training Centre for the physically handicapped was established inside the Madras Museum under the direct supervision of the Special Employment Exchange. Candidates selected for employment in the Group 'C' and 'D' cadres in government offices are entitled to a free medical examination. By recommending such a course to the Director of Social Welfare, the Special Employment Exchange in Madras assisted the interested disabled youngsters to benefit from the passive Bunk Stall initiative and recommending the deserving and eligible physically challenged people to the Revenue Department for old age pensions .

Artificial limbs were being manufactured at the following locations for the benefit of the orthopedically challenged:

- The Government General Hospital, Madras.
- The Government Erskine Hospital, Madurai.
- Coimbatore Head quarter's Hospital, Coimbatore.
- Raja Mirasdar Hospital, Tanjore.

The performance of the Special Employment Exchange in Tamil Nadu can be seen in the following table.

Approximately 23% of the overall population of physically challenged people were beyond the age of 50. The old age pension programme was the sole welfare policy that could be adopted for that age group. In the years 1974-75, the previous pension award was enhanced to Rs. 100 and Rs. 50 lakh. This old age pension scheme for beggars who are impoverished or physically challenged was established in 1962. In 1974, the system was changed to include a benefit for the programme to assist the physically challenged. The pension is available to those who have a disability of 50% or more. The upper age limit has been lowered from 60 to 55 years old. The government has set aside certain funds.10,000 people who are physically challenged will benefit from this programme. Tamil Nadu was the first state to establish an

Table 1. Performance of special employment exchange

Period	Number of candidates Registered	No. of Persons placed in Employment	Number on the live Register
1967	X XX	X XX	X XX
1968 – 69	576	170	607
1968 – 70	548	179	764
1970 – 71	557	166	854
1971 – 72	562	136	1032
1972 – 73	531	102	1050
1973 – 74	765	188	1471
1974 – 75	1310	226	2319
1975 - 76	1148	320	2607

Source: State Administration Report of Tamil Nadu, 1967-1976.

Artificial Limb Centre for physically challenged people. The Government of India had already established a centre at Pune in 1944. In 1963, the Government General Hospital in Madras established an Artificial Limb Centre as part of the Orthopaedic Department. The Institute of Child Health has had an Orthopaedic Department since 1972, as well as 2 clinics dedicated solely to the treatment of congenial club foot and polio.

The department dealt with a wide range of orthopaedic issues in children. The Tamil Nadu government is responsible for the establishment of India's first head injury unit. In Tamil Nadu, a Diploma course in psychiatric medicine has been offered since 1971. Students of medicine, nursing and social work were also offered instruction in psychiatry in 1973. A medical officer and a pharmacist were dispatched to remote areas on a regular basis to provide psychiatric care. Clinics for Adolescents were founded in 1971 and currently serves 200 youngsters aged 13 to 18. The Neurosis Clinic has been in operation since 1969. There are separate blocks for male and female, children and criminal lunatics patients suffering from neurosis such as anxiety, spate, hysteria, obsessive compulsive neurosis and so on.

8. Education Programme for Visually Challenged

The government disregarded the education of the blind throughout the pre-independence period. In 1944, there were 32 schools in India, with a total of 1212 students. In their schools, there were 1059 seats that were unoccupied. Normally, parents disregard their blind children's schooling. The Tamil Nadu government discovered that

current blind schools were insufficient. As a result, a budget of Rs. 4.3 lakhs has been requested for this purpose. In 1975-76, these schools were established as part of the initiative in Chenglepet, Coonoor and Chidambaram. As previously stated, the government's concern for the education of the physically handicapped was extended to other sectors as well. It covers both medical care and employment.

In 1967, Glaucoma Clinics and Orthopaedic Clinics were established for the treatment of muscular imbalance and the correction of squint types. In 1968, the three-operation theatre was inaugurated. The Madras Eye Hospital also opened a new out-patient block featuring a theatre, auditorium, and bacteriological, pathological and biochemical laboratories. The government spent Rs. 4.18.75 lakhs on them. The government paid Rs. 72,200 in the form of scholarships to impaired students who continued their collegiate study in 1973-74, Rs. 74,000 in 1974-75 and Rs. 4.68,010 in 1975-76. In 1975, two more blind schools were established in Tiruvarur and Nagercoil.

During 1974, the government hired 4 blind people as lecturers in colleges. This was thought to be one of the methods for blind people to be rehabilitated. After analysing the instructors' performance, the government intended to encourage blind graduates. In essence, the government's attempts to ensure the disabled's welfare went beyond formal educational institutions, rehabilitation houses, and medical treatment. It also created job chances for physically challenged people when it came to State Government vacancies in Grade III, with preference given to them. State prizes were also given out for the best physically challenged employees and employers. These prizes were established in 1971 to

promote both physically disabled people and those who could employ them. Employers may be convinced of their ability if they are recognised. Outstanding staff of the blind, deaf, orthopedically challenged, mentally retarded, and leprosy cured received a prize as well.

As a result, the Tamil Nadu government took all necessary steps to ensure that the physically challenged were assisted in all areas so that they might live a life of independence rather than one of drudgery and begging. The D.M.K. government developed Loans for the Economically Underprivileged and other initiatives to assist the underprivileged. Taxi drivers are given loans to buy their own cabs, unemployed teenagers are given loans to start their own businesses and hand-rickshaws are phased out. The previous approach had been thoroughly investigated as the D.M.K. government is in power.

9. Conclusion

Social service, in the form it exists currently in this country, is a relatively new concept. With its joint family system and philanthropic endowment in practically every hamlet, ancient India had no need for it. The organisation of society at the time was simple, as were the issues. Since then, as civilization progressed, society has progressed from simple to complex and it is continuously progressing from complex to more complicated. The problems of social welfare have gotten similarly complex, highlighting the need for social workers to be trained.

Nearly 4,000 physically challenged people have been placed in work through the nine current special employment exchanges for the physically disabled. The child, who has previously been overlooked in the underprivileged area, is given extra attention. The state's attention is being focused on eradicating the state's misalignment with the rest of society. Ashram schools (residential schools), Sanskrit Kendras (community

welfare centres) and Ballades are active components of the programme for backward classes centres and provide a retreat for the children from the unusual environment to which they are compelled to be confined as a result of being backward. More programmes for physically challenged persons were launched in Tamil Nadu. In this article, the beneficiaries of persons in three different groups are described, as well as the plans that have been designed for those physically challenged people based on their categories. The advantages of physically challenged people were discussed, stating that they received extensive training and that some of them were assigned to various positions. Many educational initiatives have also been devised to help people improve their knowledge.

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