

## **EFFECTIVENESS OF WOMEN'S RESERVATION IN POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AND EMPLOYMENT OF TAMIL NADU**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study investigates the effectiveness of women's reservation policies in Tamil Nadu, focusing on both employment and political spheres. Through a comprehensive analysis encompassing quantitative data and qualitative insights, the study explores the impact of reservation policies on enhancing women's representation and empowerment. In the realm of employment, it evaluates the extent to which reservation quotas have facilitated women's access to job opportunities and their socio-economic advancement. Similarly, in the political domain, the research examines the outcomes of reservation mandates on women's participation in decision-making processes and their influence on governance. By shedding light on the successes, challenges, and potential areas for improvement, this study offers valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders striving to promote gender equality and inclusive development in Tamil Nadu (Chengalpattu District).*

**KEYWORDS :** *Women Empowerment, Policymakers, Gender Equality*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In India, casteism, gender discrimination, and economic inequality are commonly regarded as components of social injustice. Social injustice is when one group or individual treats another group or individual unfairly, and that group or individual has to deal with a lot of negative effects. Social injustice can lead to losses in health care, housing, work, education, and other opportunities. Social injustice can lead to a number of problems, including underemployment or unemployment, poor health, unfair trial sentences, and civil unrest.

One of the components of social injustice is economic inequality, which is the uneven distribution of wealth and resources. Higher earners have the means to meet and even exceed demands by funding housing, food, healthcare, and education. The British Raj's Madras Presidency introduced reservation as a

means of ensuring justice for the poor. In 1916, the South Indian Liberal Federation (Judge Party) was created to facilitate non-Brahmins' employment in government positions.

In 1921, Chief Minister Akaram Subbaroyalu Reddy issued a government order instituting reservations, which was contested by Periyar E. V. Ramasamy, a social reformer and Congress member. The 'Communal Government Order', implemented in 1927, mandated non-Brahmin Hindus to hold 44% of all posts, Brahmins, Muslims, Christians, and Anglo-Indians to hold 16%, and Scheduled Castes to hold 8%. After India's independence in 1950, the Madras High Court annulled the edict, but the Supreme Court affirmed it. Congress supported the reservations, and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru helped amend Articles 15 and 16 of the Constitution.

In 1970, A.N. Sattanathan led the first backward class commission in Tamilnadu. In 1980, M.G.Ramachandran increased the percentage of the backward classes to 68%. The Supreme Court mandated a commission to investigate the situation. The Second Backward Classes Commission found that 34.8 percent of the backward classes account for 50.7 percent of public service jobs, 62.7 percent of professional course seats, and 54.4% of scholarships. The government maintained the 68% quota for SCs, STs, and backward classes.

**Present Tamil Nadu Vertical Reservation:**

Main category	Sub category		Sub category reservation		Overall reservation
Backward caste	General	Muslim	26.5%	3.5%	30%
Most backward caste And de notified community	MBC	DNC	13%	7%	20%
Scheduled caste	SC	Arunthathiyar	15%	3%	18%
Scheduled tribe			1%		1%
Total					69%

The DMK government in Karunanidhi's DMK divided reservations for SC and ST in 1990, raising the total reservation percentage to 69%. The Supreme Court in 1992 reduced it to 50%, but the state has maintained a 69% reservation rate since 1993. The reservation policy supports economic empowerment for marginalized groups, including women, ex-servicemen, widows, persons with disabilities, and PSTM candidates.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Reservation</b>
Women	30%
Widow	10%
Person with disability	4%
Ex-servicemen	5%
PSTM	20%

**Present Tamil Nadu horizontal reservation:**

In the above reservation, equal opportunity is provided to the disadvantaged groups, such as women, ex-servicemen, widow, and person with disabilities. It uplifts the economically and socially backward groups in society

**The term “Empowerment”**

Empowerment involves providing them with the knowledge, skills, resources, and support needed to assert their rights, achieve their goals, and participate fully in society. Empowerment often entails challenging and dismantling structures of discrimination, oppression, and inequality, while promoting autonomy, self confidence, and self-determination. It can occur at the individual, community, or societal level and may involve various strategies such as education, economic opportunities, advocacy, and collective action. Ultimately, empowerment aims to enhance individuals' agency and enable them to overcome barriers and achieve greater well-being and social justice.

**Women Empowerment:**

Women empowerment refers to the process of giving women to more authority over their lives and greater equality in a range of contexts, including the social, economic, political, and personal spheres. It involves creating an environment where women can make decisions about their own lives, have access to resources and opportunities, and participate fully in society. This can be implemented in number of ways, including supporting women’s rights, fighting for gender norms and stereotypes, ensuring access to healthcare and education, fostering gender equality and ensuring economic opportunities and financial independence, advocating for women's rights, and challenging traditional gender roles and stereotypes. Empowering women not only benefits them individually but also leads to positive outcomes for families, communities, and societies as a whole. The empowerment of women is mainly classified into five parts: social, political, economical, educational, and

psychological.

### **Women's Political Reservation :**

Tamil Nadu has a long history of women's participation in politics. In the pre-independence period, women political leaders like Rukmini Lakshmipathi, Muthulakshmi, Anjalaiyammal, and Ambujathammal played pivotal roles. In India, first in 1921, the Madras presidency authorized women's participation in politics. This move aimed to enhance women's representation and empower them politically. Over the years, this reservation policy has facilitated the entry of more women into the political arena, leading to increased participation and influence in decision-making processes at the grassroots level.

In India, a number of political positions are reserved for specific groups of the population, including SC and ST. In the Indian government, reserved concepts are used in the election of parliamentary and state assemblies, as well as local bodies. Also, women got a one-third reservation in local rural government such as gram Panchayat, block Panchayat, district councils, and municipal bodies. Now the Tamil Nadu government is providing a fifty percent reservation in the local rural government election.

### **Why women's need reservation:**

In India, women's reservation is crucial for promoting gender equality and giving women more influence in a various types of public domains. In India women still face major obstacles to political representation and engagement, even with recent improvements. Reservation policies ensure that women have a fair opportunity to participate in decision-making processes at all levels of government. This not only helps in addressing the historical marginalization of women but also brings diverse perspectives to policy formulation and governance.

### **REVIEW LITERATURE:**

1. Vijaya Chandrika (2022) in her article " The Empowerment of Women in Tamil Nadu: A Multidimensional Approach " stated that Women's political, social, economic, and health status is crucial for sustainable growth and achieving overall well-being. However, women face challenges due to excessive workloads, lack of authority, and undervaluing their skills. Women's access to financial resources, social awareness, and reliable employment must all be improved through policy and programming initiatives in order to solve these problems.

2. Ritu Singh (2017) in her article "Impact of Women's Reservation on Political Empowerment" stated that ,how women's reservation laws have affected Indian women's political empowerment. It talks about the advantages of having more women in decision-making roles as

well as the difficulties experienced by female politicians in settings where men predominate.

3. Staffan Lindberg, Venkatesh B Athreya, R Vidyasagar, Göran Djurfeldt And A Rajagopal (2011) in their article "A Silent Revolution"? Women's Empowerment in Rural Tamil Nadu stated that Over the past 25 years, women in Tamil Nadu have made significant social changes, including entering local political bodies and organizing in self-help groups to a significant extent. This has allowed about one-fourth of households to access loans for small entrepreneurship or emergency/consumption loans. Additionally, women have increased participation in the non-agricultural labor market, leading to a rudimentary "barefoot" welfare state in the village.

4. Sunita Verma(2019) in her article "Discussion on Women's Reservation: Views and Difficulties" stated that, the controversy over women's reservation in India, Verma's study highlights a number of view points and issues. In addition to discussing issues about tokenism, backlash, and the necessity of more significant societal reforms to achieve gender equality, it also addresses arguments for and against reservation rules.

5. Dr. Hameed Basha B (2020) in his article " Women Empowerment through New-Fangled Schemes in Tamil Nadu "stated that, Tamil Nadu, a southern Indian state, prioritizes women's empowerment and economic development through various welfare schemes. The state Government provides financial assistance to women in various stages, including education, marriage, and widow remarriage. Empowering women is not just about financial support, but also treating them as equals to men. The government recognizes the importance of empowering women over centuries, especially in poor backgrounds where girl child birth is often unwelcome. The state Government of Tamil Nadu provides financial assistance to women in child birth, marriage, remarriage, inter-caste marriage, and widowhood, ensuring a smooth and happy life for poor families. These new-fangled schemes have been a significant solution for women's problems in contemporary times.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Objectives:**

- To know the effectiveness of women's employment reservation in Tamil Nadu.
- To know the effectiveness of women's political reservation in Tamil Nadu.
- To examine the challenges in women's reservation.

**Significance of the study:**

This research is crucial as it aims to evaluate the impact of women's reservation policies on gender equality and empowerment in Tamil Nadu. Understanding the effectiveness of these policies can help to identify the areas for improvement in reservation policies.

**Statement of the problem:**

The primary objective of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of women's reservation in Tamil Nadu in promoting gender equality and empowering women in leadership roles. Specifically, the research aims to assess the career growth, development opportunities, challenges, and overall experiences of women in reserved positions compared to their counterparts without reservation.

**Research Method:**

This study utilizes a mixed approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods to comprehensively examine the effectiveness of women's reservation in Tamil Nadu.

**Primary data:** Primary data was collected from female political leaders and government officials in Chengalpattu district.

**Secondary data:** Secondary source of data is collected from articles and journals.

**Sampling method:** Convenience sampling

**Sample size:** 30

**Tools of data collection:**

Questionnaire, it is a list of questions or items used to, gather data from the respondents about their challenges, experience and opinion.

**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

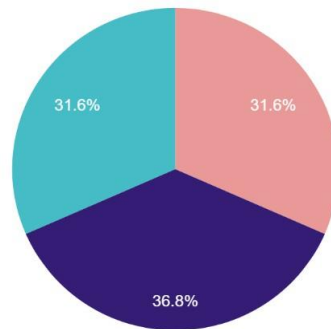
**Table-1**

<b>Women in reserved positions with their Career Growth and Development Opportunities</b>			
<b>S.no</b>	<b>Particulars</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1	Strongly agree	6	32
2	Agree	6	32
3	Neutral	7	37
4	Disagree	0	0
5	Strongly disagree	0	0
Total		19	100

**INFERENCE:**

women in reserved positions with their career growth and development opportunities

- Strongly Agree
- Neutral
- Agree



From the above table 1, it is inferred that that the distribution of 32 per cent of respondents strongly agree that the reservations help their career growth and development. Also, the distribution of 32per cent of respondents agree with the same. Another 37per cent of respondents said some changes were needed in the reservation policies to empower women. The table above shows that changes are needed in reservation policies to improve the lives of marginalized women.

**Table-2**

<b>Gender Disparities In Leadership Roles</b>			
<b>S.no</b>	<b>Particulars</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1	Strongly agree	3	16
2	Agree	8	42
3	Neutral	7	37
4	Disagree	1	5
5	Strongly disagree	0	0
TOTAL		19	100

**INFERENCE:**

From the above table, it is inferred that that the distribution oof the respondents agree with the statement that they are addressing gender disparities in leadership roles. and other respondents donot agree with the statement. It shows that society's perspective is changing, and they accept and encourage women's empowerment.



reservation policies are effective in addressing gender disparities in leadership roles

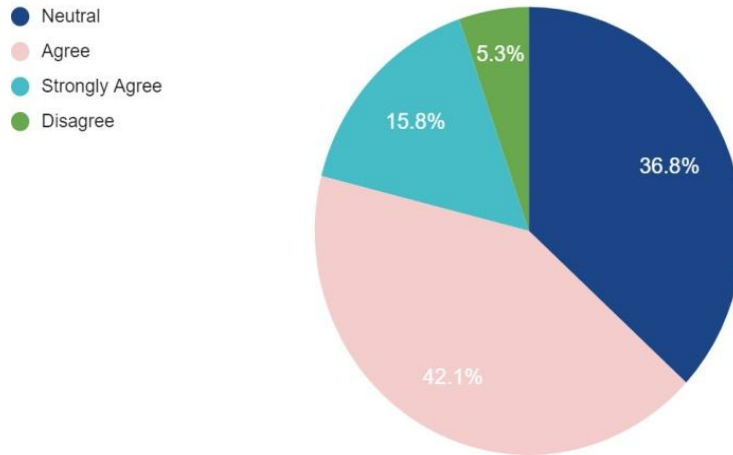


TABLE -3

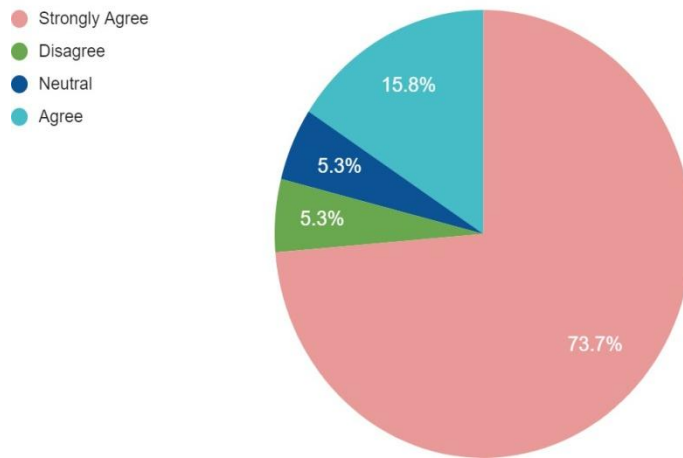
Continuation of Women's Reservation			
S.no	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	15	74
2	Agree	3	16
3	Neutral	1	5
4	Disagree	1	5
5	Strongly disagree	0	0
TOTAL		19	100

**INFERENCE:**

From the above table, it is inferred that the distribution of above 80 percent of the respondents supports the continuation of women's reservations. 5 percent of the respondents are not satisfied with the current reservation policies. 5 percent of the respondents said equal opportunities are needed for both genders. It demonstrates that women's reservation policies need to empower the marginalized community's. Reservation policies are needed to empower women and create gender quality at all stages. because women are confidently involved in working many places compared to past years, so the continuation reservation is needed for women's.



continuation of women's reservation



## THEMATIC ANALYSIS:

### 1. Opinion about women's reservation in employment:

**Empowerment and Dignity:** The role of women's reservation in empowering women both economically and socially. Respondents see it as a means to dignify women's lives and enhance their status in society. Reservation in employment are perceived as a tool for promoting self-sufficiency and independence among women.

**Socio-Economic Growth:** Many respondents view women's reservation in employment as crucial for the socioeconomic growth of the society. Empowerment and Upliftment: It shows that women's reservation in employment is essential for the empowerment and upliftment of women. Respondents see it as a means to break barriers and address systemic discrimination against women in the workplace.

**Essential Requirement:** Many respondents emphasized the essential nature of women's reservation in employment. They view it as a necessary step towards achieving gender equality and providing equal opportunities for women in the workplace.

**Opportunity:** Women's reservation in employment provides valuable opportunities for women to secure government jobs and contribute to the workplace. These themes reveal a spectrum of opinions regarding women's reservations about employment. While some view it as a necessary step towards gender equality and empowerment, Overall, the themes highlight the complex interplay of social, economic, and cultural factors shaping perceptions and attitudes towards women's participation in the workplace.

## 2. Difficulties faced in politics:

### **Influence of Male Dominance:**

Male dominance in politics has been prevalent, leading to gender disparities in decision-making roles and leadership positions. This dominance can perpetuate traditional power dynamics, hindering diverse perspectives and equitable representation in political processes.

**Complex Decision-Making:** Political decisions often involve navigating intricate socio economic, cultural, and ethical considerations, making the decision-making process challenging. The thematic analysis shows the challenges faced by women in politics are multifaceted, encompassing issues related to decision-making, representation, and accountability.

Addressing these challenges requires proactive measures to promote inclusivity, transparency, and responsiveness in political processes.

## 3. Opinion about women's reservation in political field :

### **Opportunity and Empowerment:**

The majority of respondents emphasize the importance of reservations in providing opportunities for women in politics. They view it as a means to empower women and increase their representation in decision-making processes.

### **Gender Equality:**

The responses reflect a broader societal concern for gender equality. The implementation of reservations is seen as a step towards addressing gender disparities in political participation and leadership roles.

The thematic analysis highlights a widespread endorsement for the implementation of women's reservations in Tamil Nadu's political landscape. Respondents emphasize the need for such policies to foster gender equality, provide opportunities for women, and promote inclusive decision-making processes.

## **FINDINGS:**

- Half of the respondents belong to the age group of 21–30 years.
- The absolute majority of the respondents started their political career after marriage with their family support.
- More than one-third of the respondents agreed that the women's reservation policies provide more opportunities for youngsters in the government sector and political field.

- Less than half of the respondents agreed that the reservation policies provide opportunities for women from marginalized communities, uplifting them economically and socially.
- Less than half of the respondents agreed that they are addressing gender disparities in leadership roles.
- Less than half of the respondents feel that the reservation policies encourage women to work in the various sectors. It improves their confidence levels and decision-making processes.
- Less than half of the respondents feel women's from urban areas are easily getting chances in employment compared to women's in rural communities.

### **SUGGESTIONS:**

- The government needs to take initiative in empowering the rural community especially the tribal population.
- The reservation should continue for the coming years to empower marginalized communities. The government need to educate the ST community women and create awareness about various opportunities that empower them.
- Provide training programs and workshops for women candidates to enhance their leadership skills, political knowledge, and communication abilities.
- This horizontal reservation policy for women need to implemented nation-wide.

### **CONCLUSION**

The implementation of women's reservation in Tamil Nadu has proven to be a significant step towards achieving gender equality and empowerment. Through reserved seats in local governance bodies and in government employment sectors, women have been provided with a platform to participate actively in decision-making processes, thereby amplifying their voices and addressing issues pertinent to them. It is inspiring women across the state to actively participate in political processes and aspire for leadership roles. This initiative has not only increased female representation but has also fostered a more inclusive and diverse political landscape. By breaking barriers and challenging stereotypes, the reservation policy has paved the way for a more equitable society where women are recognized as equal partners in the development process.

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