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WHITE BLACK LEGAL is an open access, peer-reviewed and refereed journal provided dedicated to express views on topical legal issues, thereby generating a cross current of ideas on emerging matters. This platform shall also ignite the initiative and desire of young law students to contribute in the field of law. The erudite response of legal luminaries shall be solicited to enable readers to explore challenges that lie before law makers, lawyers and the society at large, in the event of the ever changing social, economic and technological scenario.

With this thought, we hereby present to you

# **A STUDY ON THE DRAVIDIAN POLICIES** **CONTRIBUTION TO EDUCATIONAL ACCESS AND** **LITERACY RATES IN TAMILNADU**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Dravidian movement, which began in the early twentieth century, has influenced Tamil Nadu's socio political and educational landscape. This study examines how Dravidian policies have shaped educational access and literacy rates in the state, showing key programs and their outcomes.

The Dravidian agenda has focused on social justice and addressing historical injustices, particularly through education. Initiatives such as free and compulsory education, the Midday Meal Scheme, and supportive action laws have played a crucial role in expanding educational opportunities. These policies have significantly boosted school enrollment and reduced dropout rates, especially among marginalised communities. The literacy rate in Tamil Nadu has risen from 36% in 1971 to over 80% in recent years, reflecting the success of these efforts. The study also shows the development of educational programs under various Dravidian governments, emphasising infrastructure improvements, technology integration, and skill development initiatives. By comparing Tamil Nadu's achievements with other Indian states like Kerala and Bihar, the study provides context for its successes and ongoing challenges. It also shows the factors influencing educational access, such as socioeconomic disparities, caste-based inequities, and government implementation strategies.

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## **INTRODUCTION:**

The Dravidian movement, which emerged in Tamil Nadu in the early 20th century, has been the most important in shaping the tamilnadu's socio-political structure. A key points of this movement was its focus on social justice, particularly through education. The Dravidian parties like the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), implemented a range of policies that have significantly influenced educational access and literacy rates in Tamil Nadu.

Major initiatives included introducing free and compulsory education, establishing numerous schools and colleges, and implementing affirmative action policies to ensure representation for backward classes and minorities in educational institutions.

Recognizing education as a crucial thing for social and economic progress, Dravidian leaders prioritized open access to education, reducing social inequalities, and uplifting marginalized communities.

Over the years, these efforts have led to remarkable improvements in Tamil Nadu's literacy rate and overall educational attainment. From a literacy rate of 36% in 1971, the state has seen a dramatic rise to over 80% in recent years, making it one of India's leading states in terms of educational achievements. This study aims to explore the specific Dravidian policies that have given these outcomes, analyzing their implementation and impact across different demographics within the state.

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Finland: A highly funded, comprehensive education system with a focus on early childhood development, teacher quality, and individualized learning, leading to one of the highest literacy rates globally. Canada: Emphasis on early literacy development through programs like "Early



Learning and Child Care" and initiatives to support diverse learners. South Korea: A strong focus on standardized testing and rigorous curriculum, coupled with extensive after-school tutoring programs, contributing to high literacy rates.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- To Assess the impact of specific Dravidian policies, such as free and compulsory education, the Midday Meal Scheme, and reservations, on educational access and literacy rates.
- To Rate the overall effectiveness of Dravidian policies in improving educational access for marginalised communities.
- To examine that Dravidian policies have successfully addressed gender disparities in education

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURES:**

Religion, Caste, and State: Social Dynamics in Indian Politics. This work explores the intersection of caste and state policies in Tamil Nadu, highlighting the significant role of Dravidian parties in advancing social justice through educational reforms TN performance compares with that of OECD countries. The focus of successive Dravidian governments on education has made Tamil Nadu one of India's leading states in human resource development. For instance, according to RBI data, TN has the highest Graduate Enrolment Ratio (GER) in India at 52% against the national average of 27% (Radhakrishnan P, 1989).

Ethnicity and Populist Mobilization: Political Parties, Citizens, and Democracy in South India". Subramanian examines the political strategies of Dravidian parties, emphasizing their focus on education as a means to mobilise support and promote equality Another unique accomplishment of the Dravidian movement in education is its inclusion of marginalised communities and women in attainment of educational outcomes (Subramanian N, 1999).

Towards a Non-Brahmin Millennium: From Iyothee Thass to Periyar."This book discusses the historical roots of the Dravidian movement and its educational policies aimed at empowering non-Brahmin communities through increased access to education. The focus of successive Dravidian governments on education has made Tamil Nadu one of India's leading states in human resource development. For instance, according to RBI data, TN has the highest Graduate

Enrolment Ratio (GER) in India at 52% against the national average of 27% (Geetha V & Rajadurai S. V, 1998).

Women's Question in the Dravidian Movement c. 1925-1948." Anandhi's work highlights how the Dravidian movement addressed gender inequalities in education, promoting access for women and challenging traditional norms. Another unique accomplishment of the Dravidian movement in education is its inclusion of marginalised communities and women in attainment of educational outcomes (Anandhi S, 1991).

Brahmin and Non-Brahmin: Genealogies of the Tamil Political Present." This study explores the political dynamics of Tamil Nadu, focusing on how Dravidian policies have influenced educational access and literacy rates among different castes. While enrollment of girls in high school stands at 85% (compared to 50% in Gujarat), enrollment of women in graduate programmes stands at 46%, the highest in India. TN also has the highest percentage of Muslim graduates at 36% compared to the national average of 16% (Pandian M. S. S, 2007).

Political Agenda of Education: A Study of Colonialist and Nationalist Ideas." Kumar examines how colonial and post-colonial policies, including those of the Dravidian movement, shaped the educational landscape in Tamil Nadu. The NITI Aayog's school education quality index ranks TN, alongside Kerala, as the best in India when it comes to school education. As per the National Sample Survey, the average household expenditure of a higher secondary student in a government school in TN is Rs 2,800, less than half the national average of Rs 6,916 (Kumar K, 2005).

Smart Governance? Politics in the Policy Process in Andhra Pradesh, India." While focusing on Andhra Pradesh, Mooij's comparison with Tamil Nadu highlights the effectiveness of Dravidian educational policies in achieving higher literacy rates. Maharashtra, the figure is as high as Rs 8,788, while it is a whopping Rs 9,179 in Gujarat. This is possible due to targeted welfare schemes. One of the most significant impacts of Dravidian social justice initiatives has been the implementation of reservation policies in educational institutions. These policies reserved a certain percentage of seats in schools and colleges for SC, ST, and OBC students. By ensuring representation and access to quality education, reservation policies have helped uplift these communities and enabled them to participate more actively in educational pursuits (Mooij J, 2003).

Education and Social Justice in India: A Study of Tamil Nadu." Ramakrishnan discusses the role of Dravidian policies in promoting social justice through educational reforms, focusing on access and equity. Rightly understanding that education is the key to social mobility, the Justice Party, more than 100 years ago, democratised education through a series of interventions that sought to upend the status quo in which members of a single community disproportionately occupied positions in government and academic institutions (Ramakrishnan V, 2008).

Inclusive Education in Tamil Nadu: Policies and Practices."This study analyzes the implementation of inclusive education policies in Tamil Nadu, highlighting the impact of Dravidian policies on marginalized communities. These interventions include issuing the Communal Government Order, which sought to increase representation of people belonging to diverse castes and religions, provision of mid-day meals and provision of free and compulsory education for children aged five to 12 and penalties for parents who withdrew their children from schools (Venkatesh M, 2015).

Nationalism Without a Nation in India." Aloysius critiques the nationalistic movements in India, contrasting them with the Dravidian movement's focus on education as a tool for social transformation. Subsequently, the Dravidar Kazhagam and DMK further democratised education. Protests by Periyar, CN Annadurai, and MK Karunanidhi resulted in the first amendment to the Constitution of India. The amendment to Article 15 (4) allowed for the Union government to create affirmative action policies for socially and educationally backward classes and SCs and STs (Aloysius G, 1998).

Human Development Report: Tamil Nadu."This report provides comprehensive data on Tamil Nadu's educational achievements, attributing progress to targeted Dravidian policies. After coming to power in 1967, the DMK government set up a Backward Classes commission. Based on its recommendations, the reservation for OBCs, SCs and STs was increased. Over the years, successive Dravidian governments introduced different interventions aimed at removing structural inequalities in education (Nair K. S, 2004).

Educational Development and Dravidian Politics in Tamil Nadu."Chandrabose explores the political motivations behind Dravidian educational reforms and their impact on the state's literacy rates. These include expanding caste-based reservation up to 69%, abolishing entrance exams and providing special reservation for government school students (Chandrabose A. S,

2008).

Mobilizing India: Women, Music, and Migration between India and Trinidad."Niranjana discusses the cultural aspects of the Dravidian movement, including its impact on education and social mobility.Chief Minister MK Stalin, on the principles of the Dravidian Model, has given a renewed push for education. Schemes such as Illam Thedi Kalvi, Pudhumai Penn Thittam and free breakfast for primary school students are revolutionary and aimed at ensuring that TN attains educational outcomes similar to those of developed European countries (Niranjana T, 1999).

Tamil Nadu's Educational System: Strengths and Challenges.” This book provides an overview of Tamil Nadu's educational system, highlighting the successes and ongoing challenges of Dravidian policies.The free breakfast scheme is a policy initiative with far-reaching consequences for both education and public health. Research has shown that consumption of a nutritious breakfast improves a child’s learning outcomes (Balakrishnan G, 2012).

Educational Reforms in South India." Rao compares educational reforms across South Indian states, emphasizing Tamil Nadu's success under Dravidian leadership. Under the Pudhumai Penn Thittam, the government offers Rs 1,000 a month for every girl student from government/aided schools during her college education. Although TN, with a labour force participation of women at 30%, trumps the national average, it still lags behind the global average (Rao S. N, 2011).

Policy Making in India: An Analysis of Dravidian Educational Policies." This analysis delves into the policy-making processes behind Dravidian educational reforms and their impact on literacy rates,The political strategies of Dravidian parties in Tamil Nadu have long prioritized educational reforms as a cornerstone of their agenda, aiming to enhance social equity and uplift marginalised communities. One of the primary strategies has been the promotion of education through state intervention. This includes the establishment of government schools, especially in rural and underserved areas, to ensure widespread access to education (Ramanathan H, 2007).

Literacy and Social Change: Tamil Nadu in the 20th Century."Chakraborty examines the social changes brought about by increased literacy in Tamil Nadu, attributing much of this progress



to Dravidian policies. This scheme, apart from improving enrolment of women in schools and colleges, will also improve women's participation in the labour force. When the percentage of women who participate in the job market increases, so will the freedom of women (Chakraborty A, 2010).

The Impact of Political Movements on Education in India: A Comparative Study.”pSingh's comparative analysis highlights how the Dravidian movement's educational policies in Tamil Nadu differ from those in other Indian states, focusing on their unique contributions to literacy and access. Education is a public good. CM MK Stalin has said, education is the real wealth that cannot be stolen. Any expenditure on education comes with lots of positive externalities (Singh S, 2013).

Educational Policies and Socio-Economic Development: A Case Study of Tamil Nadu.”This study investigates the link between educational policies and socio-economic development in Tamil Nadu, illustrating how Dravidian policies have fostered both educational access and economic growth. “Transforming Tamil Nadu: Dravidian Politics and Educational Reforms (Karthikeyan R, 2017).

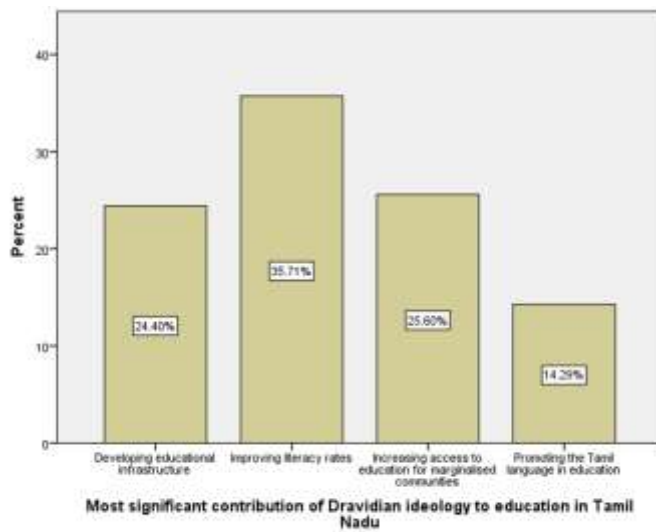
Krishnamurthy explores the transformative impact of Dravidian politics on Tamil Nadu's education system, detailing how specific policies have improved literacy and educational outcomes over the decade. Better-employed people pay higher taxes, and, in cases of brain drain, we have remittances coming in from those who are abroad. A well-educated society is key to a state's prosperity (Krishnamurthy K, 2020).

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

The research method followed is empirical research. The data is collected through a questionnaire and the sample size is 200. *Convenience sampling* method is adopted in the study to collect the data. The samples were collected from the general public with special reference to Chennai. The independent variables are gender, age, educational qualification, occupation, residence. The dependent variables are overall effectiveness of Dravidian policies in improving educational access for marginalised communities and examinations of Dravidian policies have successfully addressed gender disparities in education.

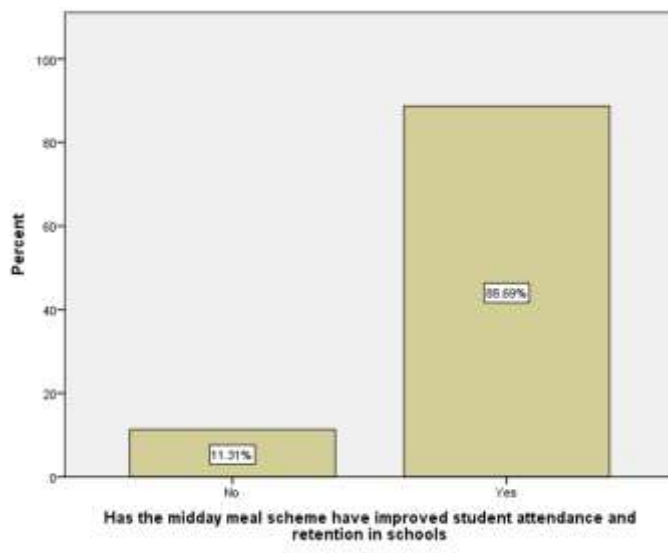
## ANALYSIS

**FIGURE 1**



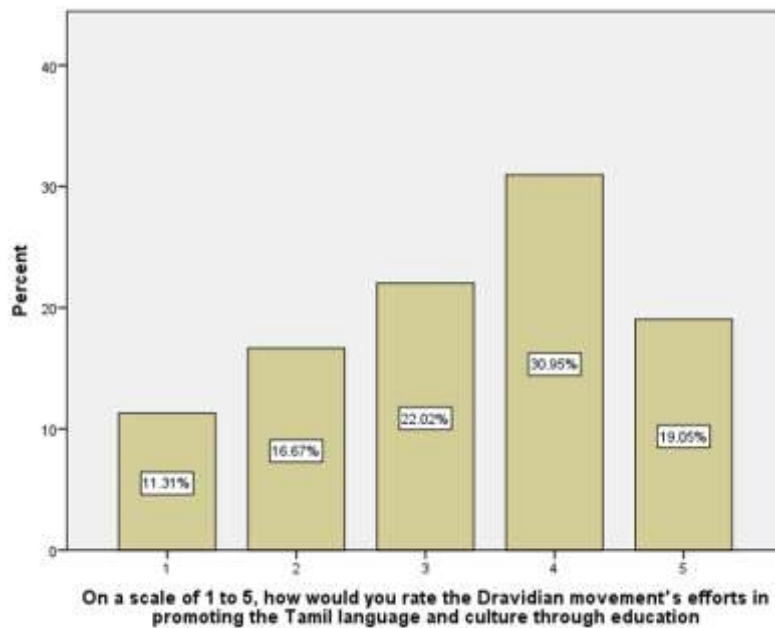
**LEGEND:** The figure 1 shows the most significant contribution of division ideology to education in Tamil Nadu.

**FIGURE 2**



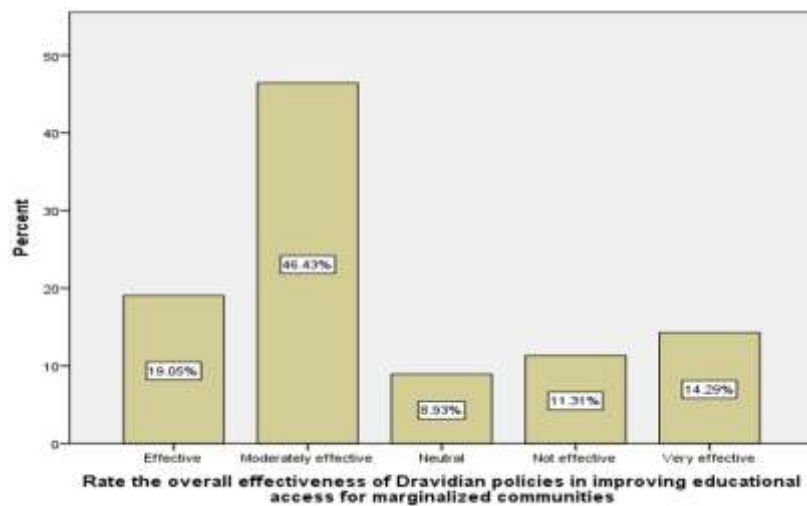
**LEGEND:** The above figure shows that the midday Meal scheme have improved the student attendance and retention in school.

**FIGURE 3**



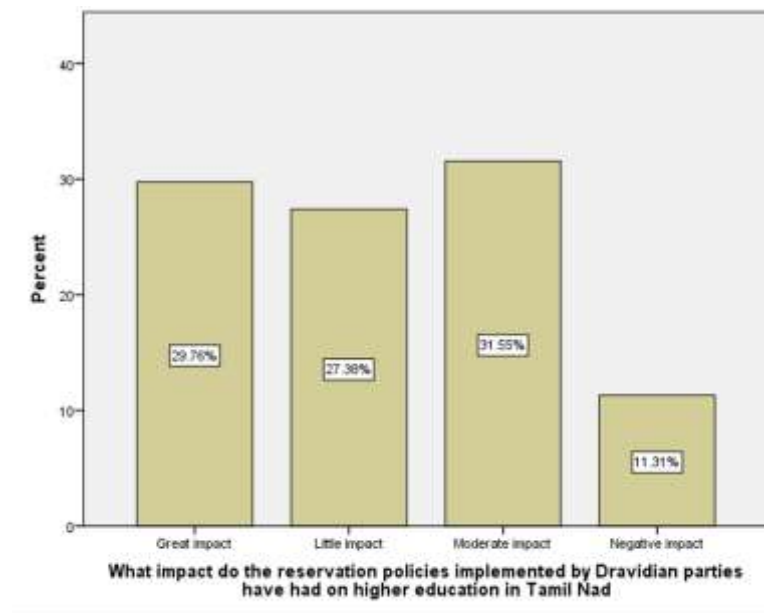
**LEGEND:** The above graph shows the scaling of Radian moments, effort in promoting the Tamil language and culture through education.

**FIGURE 4**



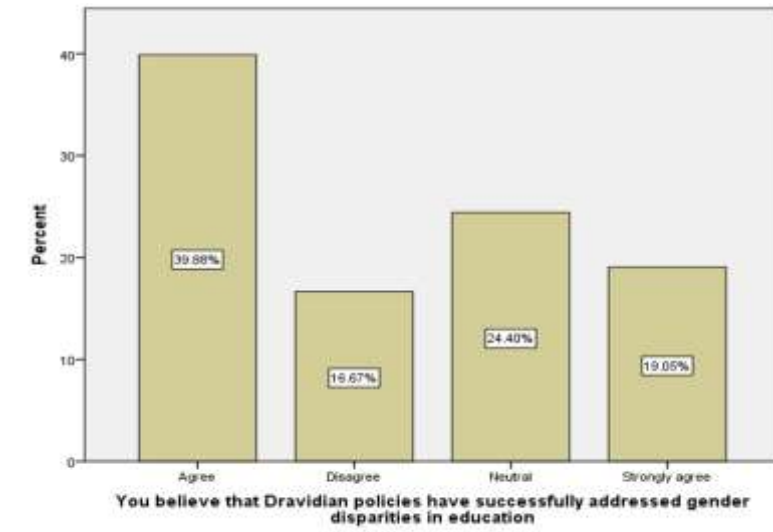
**LEGEND:** The above figure 4 shows the Rating of overall effectiveness of deviant policies in improving educational access for marginalised people.

**FIGURE 5**



**LEGEND :** The above graph shows that reservation policy implemented by Davidian policies impact on the higher education in Tamil Nadu.

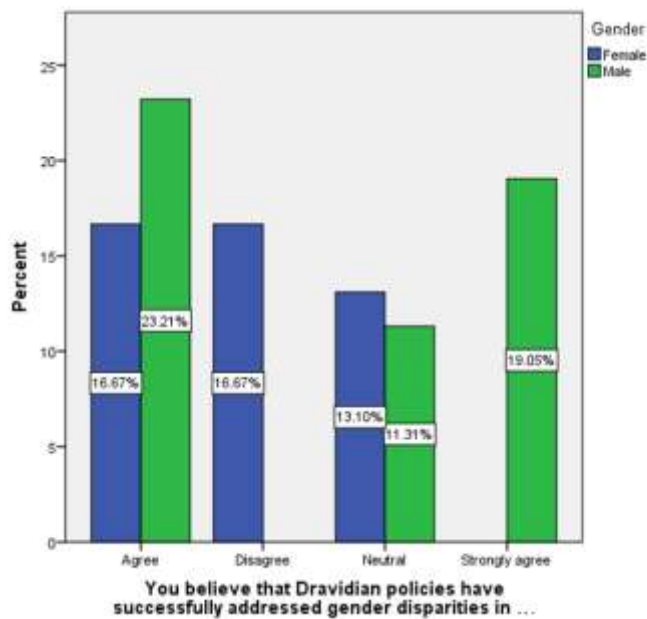
**FIGURE 6**



**LEGEND:** The above graph shows the revision policies, successful, addressed gender disparity in education.

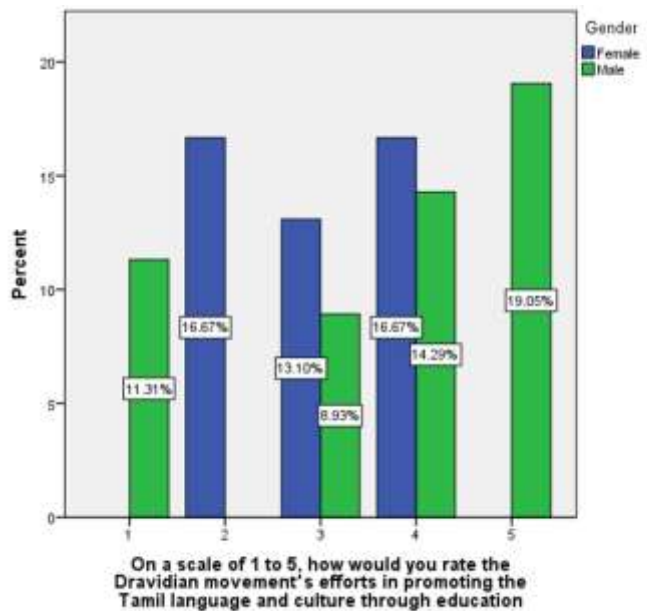


**FIGURE 7**



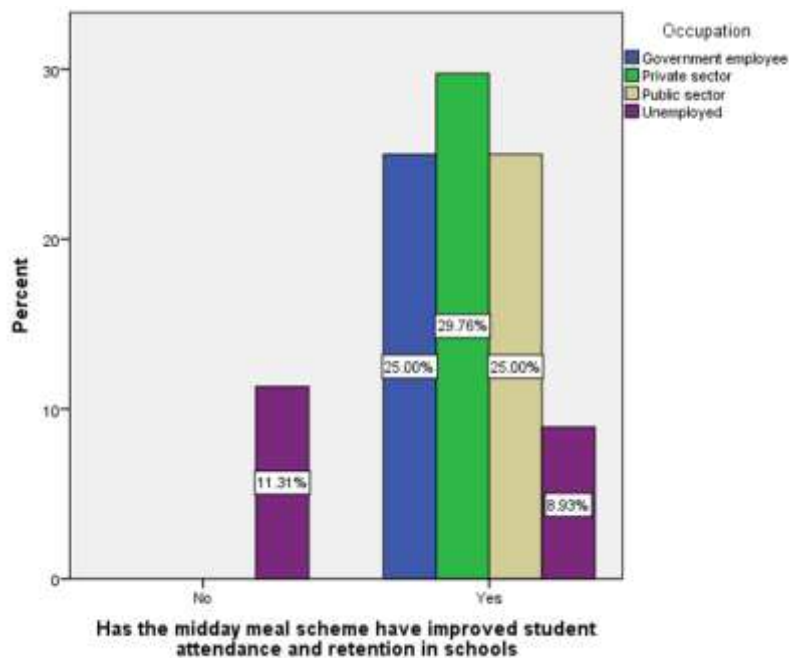
**LEGEND:** The above graph shows the revision policy successful, addressed gender disparities on the gender distribution of the respondents.

**FIGURE 8**



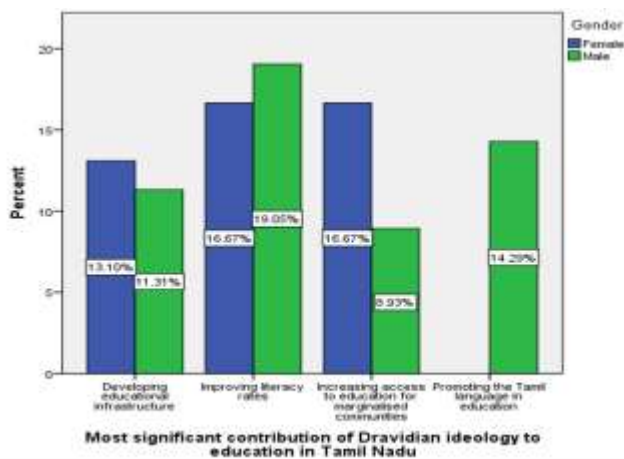
**LEGEND:** The above graph shows the Scale rating of Dravidian movements efforts in promoting the Tamil language and culture through education.

**FIGURE 9**



**LEGEND:** The above graph shows the effectiveness of midday meal scheme, improvement in attendance retention in school of students.

**FIGURE 10**



**LEGEND:** The biography shows the most significant contribution in radium ideology to education in Tamil Nadu, with respect to gender distribution of the respondent

## DISCUSSION

The figure 1 shows that The highest percentage (35.71%) indicates that the most significant contribution of Dravidian ideology is perceived to be in improving literacy rates. This aligns

with the Dravidian movement's emphasis on social reforms and educational policies aimed at increasing literacy among the broader population. The focus on literacy has likely played a crucial role in raising the overall educational standards and opportunities in the region.

The figure 2 impact on student attendance and retention, with 88.69% of respondents affirming its effectiveness. This high percentage indicates the success of the scheme in achieving its objectives, which include improving nutritional status of children and enhancing school attendance and retention rates. The 11.31% of respondents who believe the scheme has not improved these aspects may indicate areas where the implementation could be refined or specific contexts where the scheme's impact is less pronounced.

The figure 3 displays a varied but generally positive assessment of the Dravidian movement's efforts to promote Tamil language and culture through education. The highest percentage of respondents (30.95%) rated the efforts as '4' on a scale of 1 to 5, suggesting that many perceive these efforts as significant. Additionally, 19.05% rated it as '5', the highest rating, further indicating strong approval. The combined percentage of ratings '4' and '5' (50%) suggests that half of the respondents view the movement's contributions as above average.

The figure 4 The graph indicates a generally positive perception of Dravidian policies in improving educational access for marginalized communities. While a significant portion of respondents (46.43%) believe the policies have been moderately effective, a combined 33.34% strongly support their effectiveness (19.05% + 14.29%). This suggests that a considerable portion of the population sees these policies as beneficial.

The figure 5 The data indicates a generally positive perception of the impact of reservation policies on higher education in Tamil Nadu. While a significant portion of respondents believe the impact to be moderate, a substantial number also consider it to be great. However, a notable minority perceives the impact as little or negative.

The figure 6 The graph indicates a generally positive perception of Dravidian policies in addressing gender disparities in education. While a significant portion of respondents (39.88%) believe the policies have been successful, a combined 53.45% either agree or strongly agree with their effectiveness (39.88% + 19.05%). This suggests that a majority of the population sees these policies as beneficial in addressing gender disparities.

The figure 7 The graph reveals a generally positive perception of Dravidian policies in addressing gender disparities in education, with a majority of respondents expressing agreement or strong agreement. However, the presence of a gender gap in these perceptions is noteworthy.

The figure 8 The graph indicates a generally positive perception of the Dravidian movement's efforts in promoting Tamil language and culture through education among both male and female respondents. The majority of respondents rated these efforts positively, with a significant proportion rating them as "4" or "5".

The figure 9 The graph demonstrates a generally positive perception of the midday meal scheme's impact on student attendance and retention across different occupational groups. The highest positive response comes from those employed in the government and private sectors, indicating a potential correlation between socioeconomic status and perceived effectiveness.

The figure 10 The data suggests that both men and women recognize the importance of improving literacy rates as a key achievement of Dravidian ideology in Tamil Nadu's education sector. This indicates a shared understanding of the significance of basic literacy for overall development.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Dravidian movement's emphasis on social justice and equality has had a great impact on educational access and literacy rates in Tamil Nadu. Through a series of progressive policies, successful Dravidian governments have significantly reshaped the state's educational landscape. Initiatives such as free and compulsory education, the Midday Meal Scheme, and strong affirmative action policies have collectively boosted enrollment rates, lowered dropout rates, and uplifted marginalized communities.

Tamil Nadu's literacy rate, which has risen from 36% in 1971 to over 80% today, highlights the success of these policies. The state's efforts to build educational infrastructure, integrate technology, and focus on skill development have further solidified these achievements, positioning Tamil Nadu as a leader in educational progress in India.



When compared to other states like Kerala, which boasts the highest literacy rate, and Bihar, which faces significant educational challenges, Tamil Nadu's progress underscores the importance of consistent and targeted policy interventions. While Kerala's success is linked to its long-standing commitment to education, Bihar's struggles highlight the need for better infrastructure and socio-economic support.

Dravidian policies have not only transformed Tamil Nadu's educational landscape but also serve as a model for other states. This study shows that policies introduced by Dravidian governments have improved the literacy rates of the state.

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