

**Contributions Of Higher Education Institutions In Tirunelveli – A Study****P. SRIDHAR #<sup>1</sup> & Dr.P.Senraya Perumal \*<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1</sup>Ph.D., Research Scholar (Full Time), Reg. No: 17214011051149, Department Of History  
Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli – 627 012.<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, Dept. of History, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University,  
Tirunelveli – 627 012.***Abstract***

Education, the major factor for the development of a nation or a person, constituted an important aspect in the sphere of depressed class peoples upliftment too. The British administration in Madras and other parts of India began to introduce English education to the natives for getting cheap labour from them. It becomes a blessing in disguise to the native people. The upper-class people availed the opportunity of English education and occupied key posts in the government. The Educational survey undertaken by Munro in 1822 did not refer to the education of Low Castes who were expected only to render menial service to the four varnas. The Directors of the East India Company in their memorable dispatch of 1854 had declared that “No boy be refused admission to the Government School or College on the ground of Caste”. The right of the depressed class pupil of entering Government Schools was asserted in the despatch of 1858 But the scheme was not effective, because of the opposition of the high castes to the admission of students from the depressed class in public schools.

***Keywords: Education, Schools, Colleges, Established, Tirunelveli, Vernacular, Padasala, Pre – Degree Course.***

**Introduction**

In Early British days, Hindus and Muslims were educated through Padasala and Madrassa respectively. Some of the Britishers in the personal endeavour and for political gain showed some interest in spreading education. Lord Warren Hastings, Governor-General of Bengal showed keen interest in spreading oriental education in which effort Jonathan Duncan, Nathani Halhead, Sir William Jones, joined hands. Sir William Jones, the Justice of Calcutta High Court, established Asiatic Society at Calcutta in 1784 A.D. During the period Lord Wellesley Fort William College was established in 1800 A.D. Here the British Civilians were taught Indian languages, laws, customs, religion, geography etc. By endeavour of Wilkins Jones,

Colebrook, William Carey this oriental education got a foothold to Indian Educational System. The Christian Missionaries were the pioneer to provide Western Education in India. Accordingly, The Baptist Missionary William Carey came to India in the year 1793 A.D. Along with his friends he established Baptist Mission in Serampore by the year 1800 A.D. By their enthusiasm many primary schools were constructed. They established a printing press and printed booklets in Bengali. Languages they translated Ramayana in English by 1800. And also the Bible was translated in different Indian languages.<sup>1</sup>

### **Endeavour of the British Government**

The Charter Act of 1813, Sanctioned one lakhs Rupees per year was sanctioned for the advancement of Western education in India. In India, Raja Rammohan Roy was in favour of spending the money in western education. But that was not done. The General Committee of Public Instruction (1823 A.D.) decided to spend the money on oriental studies. In 1823 A.D. the decision was taken to establish a Sanskrit College at Calcutta. During the rule of Lord William Bentinck, there was a change in the government's education policy. He appointed Thomas Babington Macaulay, a renowned educationist, the chairman of the Committee of Public Instruction. Macaulay presented a proposal of advancement of English education in 1835 A.D. This was known as Macaulay minutes. Charles Wood's recommendation in the question of spreading of higher education was very important. He was the Chairman of the Board of Control. His proposal about education was known as Wood's despatch. He gave instruction to regularize the education system from the primary stage to University level. He also instructed to educate pupils in both English and Vernacular Languages. By his recommendation, the Education Department was established. In 1857 A.D. Calcutta, Bombay and Madras Universities were established.<sup>2</sup>

Education is mostly needed for the development of society. The people of India didn't know the importance of western Education. After the arrival of the British, the people knew the importance of western Education and making many optimum steps towards Education. It was a humble beginning of all the Educational Institutions in and around Tirunelveli. Tirunelveli was constituted as a Municipality on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1886. Palayamkottai town serves both as an

administrative headquarters and an educational centre. Palayamkottai was one of the oldest municipality since it was constituted on 1<sup>st</sup> 1886. Tirunelveli and Palayamkottai called Twin city. Palayamkottai is situated on the eastern bank of the perennial Thamirabarani river. The region is very fertile and supports a thriving agrarian community amid many urbanized areas. Regular monsoon rains coupled with the Thamirabarani water, support the purely agricultural villages around the city. Palayamkottai is located on the National Highway near many bigger cities (international seaport: Tuticorin - 45 km; international airports: Trivandrum - 140 km, Madurai - 150 km. Palayamkottai is rightly called the Oxford of South India. Almost all the best schools, colleges and institutions of higher education in and around Tirunelveli district are located in Palayamkottai, some of which date back to more than a century. The architecture of many of these old institutions is said to resemble the majesty, elegance and academic fortitude of the real Oxford and Cambridge Universities. The Christian missionaries were the torch bearers of Education in Tirunelveli District. Palayamkottai is one of the important place of Tirunelveli District. Palayamkottai is popularly known as the 'Oxford of South India'. A quick review of the trend of growth of Education between 1871 and 1947 seems to be relevant to understand the Historical background.<sup>3</sup>

By the year 1878 in Tirunelveli district there were two aided Colleges they are The Madurai Dayumanavar Thiraviam Hindu College and St. Johns College These are oldest Higher Education Institution in Palayamkottai area. The first College for Women and Third College of the Tirunelveli district namely St. Sarah Tucker College, came up in 1895. The fourth College Started in the district was the St. Xavier's College was started in the year 1923.

### **St. John's College**

St. John's College as discussed elsewhere was founded by the Church Missionary Society in 1878. To Started with a Pre – Degree Course, leading to the award of a Diploma by the Faculty of Arts by the University of Madras to which the College was affiliated, was offered When the Second Principal Prof. Young (1920-1935) he carried out the shifting of the College Campus from Tirunelveli to Palayamkottai. Between 1937 and 1946 The College Offered Course in Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and logic were Offered under part – III of the Intermediate course. In 1945 St, John's College was Upgraded and the degree course in Mathematics and

Economics were introduced. In 1955, University courses were recognized with the introduction on the one year Pre – University course and three-year degree courses.<sup>5</sup> From 1966 to 1990, the College remained affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University. Since 1990, St, John’s College has been an affiliated College of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University. The institution which has grown into a first grade Post – Graduate College is being run by the Tirunelveli Diocesan Trust Association (TDTA) the educational agency of Tirunelveli Diocese of the Church of South India.<sup>6</sup>

S.No	Name of the Programme	Year	S.No	Name of the Programme	Year
1	B.A. Economics	1945	12	B.Com.	1980
2	B.Sc. Mathematics	1945	13	M.Sc. Botany	1981
3	B.Sc. Physics	1957	14	M.Sc. Zoology	1986
4	B.Sc. Chemistry	1957	15	M.Phil. Zoology	1988
5	B.Sc. Botany	1959	16	B.Sc. Computer Science	1992
6	B.Sc. Zoology	1963	17	B.Sc. Electronics S/F	2006
7	B.A. history	1967	18	M.SC. Physics	2006
8	M.Sc. Mathematics	1967	19	M.Com.	2006
9	B.A. English Literature	1969	20	M.Phil. English	2007
10	M.A. in English Literature	1971	21	M.Phil. Mathematics	2007. <sup>7</sup>
11	M.A. Economics	1979			

These programmes were helped a lot to learn Higher Education in the people of Tirunelveli and other parts of Tamil Nadu.

### **Madurai Draviyam Thayumanavar Hindu College**

The Madurai Draviaym Thayumanavar (M.D.T.H) Hindu College, Tirunelveli as it is known popularly owes its existence to an uncomfortable state of feeling brought about by the successful proselytizing efforts of the old Palyamkottai High School Managed by the Church Missionary Society. The oldest institution in Tirunelveli district was initially started as a second-grade college in 1878. Manonmaniam Sundarampillai served the college as principal only for a short period. After Prof. P. Sundarampillai a line of distinguished principals served the college

which was raised to the first grade in 1924.<sup>8</sup> The name of the college was changed to Madurai Diraviyam Thayumanavar Hindu college on the 23 January 1936 on receipt of a magnificent donation of a lakh of rupees from Thiru. M. Diraviyam Pillai and Thiru M. Thayumanasamy Pillai, two Philanthropists of Madurai. The college was shifted to the new campus at Pettai for the beginning of the academic year 1958-59. The year 1971 saw the institution raised to a postgraduate College. In the same year, an Evening College offered the Pre – University course. The college which had been affiliated to the University of Madras till 1967 and it was one of the affiliated College in the Madurai Kamaraj University till 1990. From 1990 on Wards. M.D.T. Hindu College of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University. These programmes which were Stared in the College as follows.

S.No	Name of the Programme	Year	S.No	Name of the Programme	Year
1	B.A. Economics (English medium)	1938	17	B.Com Corporate S/F	1997
2	B.Sc. Mathematics	1957	18	B.Com. S/F	1997
3	B.Sc. Chemistry	1958	19	B.Com C.A. S/F	2006
4	B.Sc. Advanced Zoology	1958	20	M.Com., C.A S/F	2006
5	B.Sc. Physics	1961	21	Mathematics Research Centre	2006
6	B.A. Economics (Tamil medium)	1967	22	MBA S/F	2008
7	B.Com	1970	23	MCA S/F	2008
8	M.Com	1979	24	B.C.A S/F	2009
9	M.Sc. Mathematics	1980	25	B.A. English	2010
10	M.Sc. Physics	1983	26	Economics Research Centre	2010
11	Gandhian Thought	1985	27	Commerce Research Centre	2011
12	M.A. Economics	1978	28	B.Sc. Computer Science S/F	2013
13	M.A. Tamil	1971	29	M.Phil. Physics	2013
14	M.Phil Tamil	1983	30	B.Com one more was introduce	2013
15	B.Sc. Computer Science	1988	31	Physics Research Centre	2015. <sup>9</sup>
16	B.Sc. Physical Education	1990			

**Sarah Tucker College**

The Sarah Tucker College for women managed by the Church Missionary Society is one of the most important institutions of its kind in the Madras Presidency. The Sarah Tucker College was affiliated to the Madras University as a second-grade college it was first intended only for Christian girls, with a training school and a High School forming part of this institution. A large number of village Schools have been opened throughout the district by the authorities of this college, which supplies trained teachers to staff them. The institution which derives its name from a sister of the Rev. John Tucker, for many years. In 1895, this institution was raised to a second-grade college and later by the year 1939 upgrade as a first-grade college after nine years the college was shifted from Palayamkottai to Perumalpuram. The college was further upgraded as a postgraduate institution in 1971. Now the Sarah Tucker College offering 39 Degree Programmes.<sup>10</sup> The details are given below.

S.No	Name of the Programme	Year	S.No	Name of the Programme	Year
1	B.A. History & Economics Group IV course started	1939	21	M.Sc. Zoology S/F	1993
2	B.A. Maths	1941	22	B.Com. S/F	1994
3	B.A. Tamil	1942	23	B.Sc. Mathematics	1995
4	B.Sc. Mathematics	1957	24	B.Sc. Physics	1995
5	B.Sc. Zoology	1957	25	MCA S/F	2001
6	B.A. Economics	1957	26	B.Sc. Food Science and Nutrition S/F	2003
7	B.A. English Literature	1961	27	M.Phil Tamil	2007
8	B.Sc. Botany	1962	28	M.Phil English	2007
9	B.Sc. Physics	1968	29	English Research Centre	2007
10	B.A. history	1970	30	Economics Research Centre	2007
11	B.Sc. Chemistry	1971	31	Zoology Research Centre	2008
12	M.A. English Literature	1971	32	Computer Science Research Centre	2008
13	M.A. Tamil	1971	33	B.Sc. Nano Science (ShiftII)	2008
14	M.Sc. Physics	1979	34	B.A. Tamil S/F	2010
15	B.Com.	1980	35	B.A. English S/F	2010
16	M.A. Economics	1985	36	Chemistry Research Centre	2013
17	M.Sc. Chemistry	1986	37	B.C.A S/F	2015

18	M.Sc. Mathematics	1987	38	M.Sc. Food Science and Community Nutrition	2016
19	M.Com S/F	1988	39	M.Phil. Chemistry S/F	2017. <sup>11</sup>
20	B.Sc. Computer Science S/F	1992	-	-	-

These details are explaining clearly that the Role of Sarah Tucker College for promoting Higher Education in Palayamkottai Region is accountable.

### **St. Xavier’s College**

St. Xavier’s College was started in 1923. By the intrepid Jesuit Missionaries. Rev. Fathers Consannal, Dhanasamy, and Gnana Pragasam contributed decisively to the early development of the college. The college is run by the Society of St. Francis Xavier, a Body registered under the Societies Registration Act in the year 1920 – 21. The Motto of this college is life and light through Truth. The University of Madras was so impressed by the rapid progress of the college that in 1925, it raised St. Xavier’s college to the status of a first-grade college and granted affiliation in B.Sc. Mathematics and History. Now the following courses offered by St. Xavier’s college. They are as follows.

<b>S.No</b>	<b>Name of the Programme</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>S.No</b>	<b>Name of the Programme</b>	<b>Year</b>
1	B.A Mathematics	1923	11	M.Sc. Botany	1982
2	B.A Economics	1932	12	M.Phil. Tamil	1983
3	B.Sc. Physics	1956	13	M.Phil. Mathematics	1986
4	B.Sc. Zoology	1952	14	B.Sc. Computer Science	1987
5	B.Com	1968	15	M.A. Folklore	1988
6	B.Sc. Botany	1968	16	M.Com	1988
7	M.Sc. Mathematics	1970	17	P.G.D.C.A	1993
8	M.A. Tamil	1971	18	M.B.A	1993
9	M.Sc. Zoology	1976	19	P.G.Dipl.in. finance management	1995. <sup>12</sup>
10	B.A. English literature	1982			

Now, St. Xavier College is one of the leading Higher Education Institution in the Palayam Kottai area.

**Sadakathullah Appa College**

To perpetuate the memory of Sadakathullah Appa, the erudite Arabic Scholar and Philosopher saint of Kayalpattinam it was decided to establish an institution of higher learning. This resulted in the founding of Sadakathullah Appa College in 1971 by a managing Committee Comprising of munificent Muslim elite of the district. The college is currently run by the Sadakathullah Appa Educational society which has benevolent members both at home and abroad.<sup>13</sup> This institution offered at the degree level in Commerce, History, Mathematics, Physics, Zoology, Chemistry, Computer Science, and English literature. The Postgraduate courses offered are M.Com, M.A. History, and M.C.A. certificate and diploma courses in Arabic are the other courses being offered by the Sadakathullah Appa college.

S.No	Name of the Programme	Year	S.No	Name of the Programme	Year
1	B.A. History	1971	7	B.Sc. Chemistry	1979
2	B.Sc. Mathematics	1972	8	M.A. History	1980
3	B.Com.	1972	9	B.Sc. Physics	1983
4	B.Sc. Zoology	1973	10	B.Sc. computer science	1987
5	M.Com.	1978	11	P.G.D.C.A.	1991
6	B.A. English literature	1979	12	M.C.A	1993. <sup>14</sup>

The Sadakathullah Appa College contributed a lot for promoting Higher Education to all class people of Tirunelveli region.

**Conclusion**

Education was monopolised by the Caste Hindus. But the solid economic changes during the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century attracted Government attention. The Colleges for Higher Education Studies were set up in 1857 in Madras. The Indian Educational Commission of 1882 introduced Modern Education system, not only in India but also in Madras Presidency. This leads to the emergence of Higher Educational Institutions in Tirunelveli region. Institutions like St. Johns College, MDT Hindu College, Sarah Tucker College and St. Xaviers college, contributed a lot for providing higher education in Tirunelveli particularly Palayamkottai. So it



was called The Oxford of South India. The emergence and growth of the Higher Educational Institution in Palayamkottai laid a foundation for Socio-economic changes among the people.

## REFERENCES

1. K.S.K. Velmani, Gazetteers of India, Tamil Nadu State, Tirunelveli District, Vol. II, Government of Tamil Nadu, Chennai, 2002,pp,1171-1173.
2. Ibid., pp,1172-1174.
3. Administrative Report of Palayamkottai Municipality 1983-84, and Municipal Directory, 1986, p,122.
4. Report From the Commissioner of Collegiate Education, Chennai, 23.12.1995.
5. K.S.K. Velmani, Gazetteers of India, Tamil Nadu State, Tirunelveli District, Vol. II, Government of Tamil Nadu, Chennai, 2002,pp,1200-1201.
6. Handbook of St. John's College, Palayamkottai, 2017-18, pp,2-3.
7. <http://www.csistjohns.com>
8. K.S.K. Velmani, Gazetteers of India, Tamil Nadu State, Tirunelveli District, Vol. II, Government of Tamil Nadu, Chennai, 2002,p,1248.
9. Academic Calendar, M.D.T.Hindu College, Pettai, 2015-16, pp, 4-5.
10. K.S.K. Velmani, Gazetteers of India, Tamil Nadu State, Tirunelveli District, Vol. II, Government of Tamil Nadu, Chennai, 2002, pp,1244-1245.
11. <http://www.sarahtuckercollege.in>
12. <http://www.stxavierstn.edu.in>
13. OMEIAT, Directory of Muslim Educational Institution in Tamil Nadu, 2000, p,148.
14. Hand Book of Sadakathullah Appa College, Tirunelveli, 2016-2017, p,1-2.