



SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN PRINCELY STATE OF MYSORE: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

The Kingdom of Mysore was one of the third largest princely states in India which was operated by British. When India got independence in 1947, the King of Mysore signed the instrument of accession incorporating his realm with the union of India. Old Mysore was ruled by Wadiyars for many centuries. Researchers, historians and academicians have documented the most prominent development aspects of Mysore. Mysore was the first Indian state to have a representative Assembly, a democratic forum in 1881. Mysore state had worked toward alleviating poverty and improving rural reconstruction, public health, industry and economic regeneration, education, culture and the fine arts. The majority of the people lived in villages and agriculture was their main occupation. The economy of the kingdom was based on agriculture and industry. Grains, pulses, vegetables and flowers were cultivated. Commercial crops included sugarcane and cotton. Under the royal patronage, there was encouragement for the development of art, music, agriculture, industry and education. Even today many Historians and researchers tend to concentrate on these major issues of Mysore State. The process of development of Mysore state has been examined by various experts in different ways. But no researchers have been focused on the socio-economic development of Mysore state. The people of all community such as upper caste, dalits, backward classes and minorities have enjoyed and treated equally. The present paper deals with the socio and economic development of princely state of Mysore.

Key Words: *Kingdom of Mysore, Representative Assembly, Democratic Forum, Economic Regeneration, Socio-Economic Development.*

Preamble

Mysore state was the biggest princely states in India. The erstwhile Princely State of Mysore consisting of nine districts namely Mysore, Bangalore, Shimoga, Mandya, Chitradurga, Tumkur, Chickmagalur, Hassan and Kolar. It was the welfare state. The rulers of mysore state was giving more importance to the development of state in general and welfare of the people in particular. We all know that, development is a multidimensional process which is continuous in nature. There are several measures and methods of evaluating the level of development but most of the methods have its own limitations. Many scholars and researchers such as Dr. K.L.N. Chandrashekhara (1985), James Manor (1977) and Bjorn Hettne (1978), Dr. Thriveni Urs (2013), N. Chowdappa, L. Usha Devi and C.P.Ramasesh (2014) Murthy (2015) have focused on various dimensions of socioeconomic and political changes that took place in the Mysore state under the British administration.

The studies have revealed the fact that the princely state was one of the most progressive and secular states in India. Basically, the Mysore state was a southern principality of the great southern Hindu empire of Vijayanagar, which had its capital in today's Hampi in North Karnataka. Although Mysore was able to establish an independent kingdom under the Wodeyar reign, it was forced to surrender the throne to a powerful soldier, Haider Ali, paving the way for Muslim rule in Mysore region. Later, the death of Haider Ali son's Tippu Sultan in 1799 allowed the colonial masters to enter into southern states. Although the British restored the Hindu Dynasty of Wodeyars, the actual powers re-establish to the Maharaja were extremely limited. In fact, it was governed and regulated under the provisions of "Subsidiary Treaty of 1799". And the wodeyars had continued to rule the state until Indian Independence in the year 1947. As a princely state, Mysore came to be counted among the more modern and urbanized regions in India. During 1799–1947 Mysore emerge as one of the important centres of art and culture in India. And much socio-economic, political, educational development had taken place. The Mysore kings were not only accomplished exponents of the fine arts and men of letters, they were enthusiastic patrons as well, and their legacies continue to influence even today. During the reign of Nalvadi Krishna Raja Wadiyar Mysore Kingdom did comprise Bangalore, Chitradurga, Hassan, Kadur, Kolar, Mysore, Mandya, Shimoga, and Tumkur saw an all-round development. The rulers of Mysore princely state have built education institutions, hospitals, industries, soap factories, lakes; dams and so on for the sake of people and it facilitated to their socio and economic status. Under the royal patronage, there was encouragement for the development of art, music, agriculture, industry and education. Even today many Historians and researchers tend to concentrate on these major issues of Mysore State.

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Review of Literature

Janaki Nair (2012) has studied that the historical records of colonial India has been refined by studying the varying mechanisms of colonial power and rule, with increasing attention to formation of identities and communities, language and gender and, not least, to the politics of freedom, the princes remain the margins of history. The researcher has focused on major princely states like Hyderabad, Kashmir, Baroda and Mysore, with Mysore debatably being one of the most widely researched princely states in India.

Lakshmi Iyer (2008) has focused and compares the economic outcomes across areas in India which were under direct British colonial rule with areas which were under indirect colonial rule. The researcher has found that many areas which experienced direct rule have significantly lower levels of access to education and health institutions and roads in the post-colonial period and more importantly the evidence that the quality of governance in the colonial period has a significant persistent effect on post-colonial outcomes.

C. S. Nagaraju (1998) studied the incredible developments in the field of education from 1858 onwards in India under the direct and indirect rule of the British and in Karnataka during the post-Independence period. The research concluded with the changes in the control over education and in Ms internal processes were negotiated in such a way that while education served the new political and economic interests, it managed to maintain the status quo in social stratification.

Dr. Sreedhara. H (2015) has studied the importance of the Mysore Representative Assembly during 1881-1950. In 1853 Dewan C Rangacharlu became Dewan of princely Mysore. He was an able administrator during his administration he made the great achievements. Among the important progressive reforms during those days, the establishment of "People Representative Assembly" was a great thing. This reform helped the people to participation in the administration. It was started on the advice of J.D.Gardon. The king Chamaraja Wodeyar and Dewan Rangacharlu besides Resident Gardon have introduced the democracy for the first time in India.

Dr. Thriveni Urs (2013) has elaborated the vision and mission of the princely state Mysore. The researcher has highlighted the efforts of the rulers of Mysore to develop urban cities and villages of the state and to improve the health and quality life of the people during the outbreak of epidemic disease in the state during pre-independence India. The research has focused on how plague commission strongly advocated that sanitary improvements as the best and only effective measure to check the epidemic diseases. This kind of development was an important measure on the process of urban sanitation in the Princely state of Mysore when plague breakout in the state during 1898. Social, economic & political factors led to the migration of people in large number towards cities and towns led to the overcrowding, congestion, growth of slums and unhygienic living conditions which led to the high rate of mortality and epidemics.

Dr. K.L.N. Murthy (2015) has studied that how other religion have been treated and respected during the rule of Mysore Wadeyars. He has documented the history of Christianity in the research. In 1889, new missionaries came from France to the Mysore state and all of them worked as hard as their predecessors. 1891 Sri Krishnarajendra Wodeyar IV was installed as Maharaja. His Highness bestowed gifts to the orphanages and other charitable institutions. During that time Bishop Coadou was chosen as the last Vicar apostolic and the first Bishop of the Diocese of Mysore. He managed and administered successfully the Christians of Shimoga, Settihalli, and Virajpet, gaining everywhere the well reputation of being a zealous, saintly missionary. St. Joseph's College in Bangalore was started during 1891. In the year 1884 Bishop Coadou decided to start the hospital of St., Martha's in Bangalore.

Socio- Economic Development: Historical Perspective

The Mysore state has introduced many development programmes for the welfare of the state. The Mysore Wadeyars had set up the developmental targets, challenges and the strategies and a long-term developmental plan to achieve the targets for reducing poverty, accelerating growth, and enhancing human development in the State. The vast majority of the people lived in villages and agriculture was their main occupation in that time. The economy of the kingdom was based on agriculture. Grains, pulses, vegetables and flowers were cultivated. Commercial crops included sugarcane and cotton.

Mysore state has witnessed several socio-economic reforms, secular and liberal policies administrated by dewans under the rules of Mysore state. One of the greatest progressive reforms of during wadeyars was the establishment of "Representative Assembly" with elective principle which shows that they have much interested in democratic rule. And It was the first princely state in country to create such a inimitable institution that sowed the seeds of democracy in those times. It provided space for the people to participate in the debates and discussions of the administration. It was the main contribution of King Chamaraja Wodeyar (1881-1894) and his Dewan Rangacharlu (1881-1882) who emphasized on the pioneering role of the state in 1881. For the first time Mysore Civil Service was introduced in 1892 when Sri. K. Sheshaadri Iyer was Dewan, in



order to attract young talent in the art of administration. Another important social development in the princely state of Mysore was the establishment of "Legislative Council" in 1907. Although the princely state of Mysore flourished under the prominent personalities of Dewanship like Punaiya, C. Rangacharlu, Sheshaadri Iyer and others. The reign of Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV in Mysore with the assistance of high profile Dewans such as M. Visveshwaraiah and Sir Mirza Ismail could be seen as an important milestone in the history of Mysore state. The visionary policies of these kings resulted in Mysore getting the epithet "Model State" for other princely state.

The various developmental activities that took place in the Mysore during indirect rule have been regarded as a model even today. The development model not only built economic infrastructure but also concentrated on the social infrastructure such as education institutions, health facilities, good administrative system, trained manpower and development of entrepreneurship in the state. Under the guide ship of Shri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar Dewan Visveshwaraiah who coined the phrase 'Industrialize or perish' with definite plans on economic development and social change has played an important role in developing Mysore as a model state in India. Shri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar was a noble ruler and his strategy of development emphasized on three important fields of change such as education, industrialization and rural modernization and transformation. He built many concrete projects, which aimed at transformation of the institutional and economic structures of Mysore. Shri Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV organised and inaugurated The Mysore Economic Conference (MEC) in June 1911. This conference had an objective of associating men of enlightenment, public-spirited citizens, merchants, prominent agriculturists, Government officials and so on. Besides, foundations like The Mysore Bank [1913], The Iron and Steel Works, Cement and Paper Factory at Badravati, Mysore Chamber of Commerce, Government Soap Factory, Central Industrial Workshop, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited [HAL], and others were established in Bangalore. Apart from these, Sugar Factories, Fertilizer plants, Sandal Oil Factories and host of other industries were mushroomed during his reign.

In the field of Education, Shri Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV has stated that education as a key in development process and a sovereign remedy for the economic and social evils therefore, the Maharaja and his Dewans accorded high priority to education. It was also felt necessary to generate manpower required to run all those industries established for socio-economic change. The Mysore University was established in 1916. It is noteworthy; Mysore University is the first university to be established in princely Indian states with specific aims and objectives.

On another hand, they have introduced compulsory education, the government of Mysore extended and providing scholarship for students belonging to the oppressed and depressed sections of the society to pursue higher education. Engineering, medical colleges and technical institutes were established and inaugurated and women education was encouraged during the rule of Mysore Wodeyars.

Power generation was most significant success of the princely State and Mysore became the first Indian state to generate its own electricity. The Shivasanamudra Hydroelectric Project pioneered the scheme of power generation and also provided electricity to Kolar Gold Fields, in 1902. Electricity supply was extended to Bangalore, the first Indian city to be electrified in 1905. It was a multipurpose project which is still being used for both power generation and agricultural purposes.

Shri. Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar has maintained social cohesion and amity in the state amongst various sections of the society. For the first time in the history of India Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar had issued an order asking all headmasters to admit Dalit children in all the public schools in 1915, thus accepting the principle of equality that no pupil should be denied admission to government schools, schools maintained out of public funds on the ground of caste. By providing reservation he directives applied in the same way in cases of hospitals, courts of law, railways and other public institutions.

More importantly, politically, the Mysore was much advanced in every aspect of the society and there was scope for political freedom and action. Under his guidance the representatives of the backward communities established "The Praja Mitra Mandali", the first political party in 1917. It led the Non Brahmin Movement (NBM) in Mysore, which had received impetus from the "Justice Party" of Madras. The Non-Brahmin Movement became successful in winning the heart of the king, who introduced the system of 'Protective Discrimination' in legislative bodies, government services and educational institutions. This measure strengthened the socio-economically dalit and backward communities not only to avail educational facilities but also to participate in the governance of the state. On other hand, the large number of small-scale industries and socio-economic measures took place in Mysore.

Conclusion

Many researchers, historians and scholars have revealed the fact that the princely state Mysore was one of the most progressive and secular states in India. It was the only state in India which upholds the equality, fraternity and humanity and brought many laws for the socio-economic development of people. Mysore state was and still, it is the home to several education, research institutes, health centres, and tourism of national importance. Public funds earmarked for constructions of



dams, education and health institutions, city planning, sustainability development and other sectors during the period of Mysore kings and dewans. Even today, the people of old Mysore memorize the socio-economic contribution of Mysore Kindom.

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