

## ALMSGIVING OR SERVICES BY THE INDIAN NGO'S OF PORT DICKSON BASED ON SARIYAI IN PERIYA PURANAM

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### ABSTRACT:

Sekzhilar's 12th great myth of Periya Puranam presented and still presenting the nobility of 63 Nayanmars to the world. Services refers to an act of aid or help that one voluntarily makes to others. Besides, 'Thiruthondu' simply means a meritorious services performed to a deity and his followers. Thus, the great myth explains Nayanmars' nobility services to the deity and also being the basis of or for service ethics called sariyai. So, this paper was aimed to point out that the Indian NGO's in Port Dickson follows the footpath of the Nayanmars in Periya Puranam in order to perform the religious and society oriented services in today's scenario based on sariyai.

### Keywords

Periya Puranam, Nayanmaar, sariyai, nobility service, voluntarily

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of being born in this world should be live in harmony with others. It is an obligation for every person to make good deeds for other lives while worshiping god (Ponniah, Sivanadhan, Kumar & Nadarajan, 2019; Ponniah, Thamburaj & Samuvel, 2017). When everyone starts to feel this way, selfishness disappears and public health is on the rise. The great myth reveals about the followers who worshiped the god with pure love (Abinaya, 2019; Prema, 2020; Adell Carrasco et al., 2019; Chetthamrongchai et al., 2019). So, the service ethics of Port Dickson NGO's were explored based on this. This services of this NGO's body were divided into religious and society oriented services (Kolendai, 2019; Vasudevan, 2019; Ponniah, Kumar, Moneyam, S., & Sivanadhan, 2019).

### 2.0 PORT DICKSON NGO'S SERVICE ETHICS

In general, the ASEAN Technical Organization's Workshop Survey (1988) reports that over the last twenty years, NGOs have transformed into professional movements. At the meantime, the report also stated that these bodies moving further

by holding the basic principles of service ethics (Al Muhsin & Ahmad, 2019). On the basis of this, the Malaysian Hindu Association based in Port Dickson working as Regional Council, Port Dickson social welfare Corporation and port Dickson new family welfare association to promote the basic principle of service ethics (Vengkades Rao, 2019; Saravanakumar & Devi Padmini, 2019).

Unlike animals, life with a purpose is special. Therefore, each and every one who born as human beings must know that it is their obligation to worship God and also make contributions to other lives. Likewise, Nayanmars are the followers who worshiped the God with pure love (Thamburaj & Ponniah, 2016; Bhuvanewari, 2020). Realizing that, worshipping the gods are exactly same as services for people, the descended from heights and served for the people. It is revealed that 63 Nayanmars were not only active in religious yet, they are social activists. On the basis of it, the Port Dickson NGOs movements were analyzed into two components as religious services and community

services (Bangkok. Asian Institute of Technology, 1988).

**2.1 RELIGIOUS SERVICES**

Religious plays a major role in people’s physical and psychological development (Balakrishnan & Andi, 2019; Bhaskaran & Portia, 2019; Chemen, 2018). On the basis of this, the temples, shrines and religious formations are the major

contributors to the development of people through religious work (Annalakshmi & Abeer, 2001), since the development and security of religion based on the 3 stations mentioned above, the religious services of 3 NGO bodies in Port Dickson are highly dependent on temples. Even though, these bodies were developed by volunteers yet, their interest in religion made them to do so. Table 1 illustrates the religious services of three NGOs.

**Table 1.** *The comparison between Port Dickson Indian NGOs*

Num	Religious services	NGO bodies		
		Port Dickson Regional Council	Port Dickson Social Welfare Corporation	Port Dickson New Family Welfare Association
1	Religious classes	✓		
2	‘Thevaram’ competition / quizzes	✓	✓	
3	Joint prayers	✓		✓
4	Religious discourse	✓		
5	Shaivisme classes / workshops	✓		
6	Home worship	✓		
7	Spiritual tour	✓		
8	Cleaning temples	✓		
9	‘Annatanam’ (feed) in temple	✓		
10	Festival poojas	✓		
11	Donations for temples	✓	✓	✓

It clearly shows that the Port Dickson Regional Council plays a significant role among the 3 NGOs. This is due to, the religious function of the Malaysian Hindu Association. All the activities like religious tourism, home worships, religious classes, shaivisme classes were based on the

religious. Other than that, this NGO also plays a significant role in temples by cleaning temple, festival poojas, feeding devotees (‘annatanam’). It is also worth noting that the actions of this movement have been a major contributor to the development of the religion.

The other 2 NGO bodies seemingly low in contributions. Since, these 2 NGOs plays a major role in society oriented services, their contribution in religious services seems to be lesser. However, since the development of the religion will lead to social transformation, these religious activities are undertaking certain religious tasks. Likewise, it is notable that, Port Dickson Social Welfare Corporation has organized ‘thevaram’ competition emerging with Port Dickson Regional Council. Port Dickson Family Welfare Organization on the other hand also organizing joint prayers in temples.

Temples are built for the well-being of people says Annalakshmi & Abeer (2001). Therefore, as the temples resembles the culture of a society, the service ethics of these NGOs’ are based on religious services. Hence, these NGOs gives opportunities for the people to involve themselves in the religious works or services. Therefore, these movements are actually supporting the home worshipping. They also pursuing ethical and religious guidelines to get the love of God. Thus,

by doing this the lack of or improper guidance, adherence and role models can be resisted which leads to action on religious issues.

**2.2 SOCIAL SERVICES**

The uniqueness of NGO bodies are providing services for all the layers in the society which includes from youths to the elderlies (Mansor & Ariffin, 2014). The 3 NGOs mentioned earlier are providing several of aids and services to the people in this region. It is notable that, the activities of these NGOs are merely done for the development of the society.

Therefore, all 3 NGO bodies in Port Dickson are concerned with the community and their well-beings by making many moves and activities. Their services benefits all the people in the society which includes the children, adults, youngsters, mothers and so on. Hence, the social services of these movements are explained here. Table 2 compares the community contribution of these NGOs.

**Table 2** *The comparison between NGO bodies in Port Dickson based on society oriented services.*

Num	Society oriented services	NGO bodies / movements		
		Port Dickson Regional Council	Port Dickson Social Welfare Corporation	Port Dickson New Family Welfare Association
1	Moral / self-confidence classes for youths	✓	✓	✓
2	Financial / material aids for poor families	✓	✓	✓
3	Financial / material aids for the students		✓	✓
4	Self-motivational classes for women		✓	✓
5	Collaboration works		✓	
6	Material aids for the less blessed			✓
7	Hospital services	✓		
8	Educational tour / camp		✓	

We can say that, youngsters are the backbone of a society. Therefore, these bodies organizes moral and self-confidence classes for them. This also includes self-confidence discourses. This type of discourses not only inspire the confidence of youths, yet also their actions towards victory. Particularly, since the religious thoughts makes the youths and children well-mannered, these bodies sponsors religious self-confidence trainings for them.

Apart from this, the principle of these NGOs are to help the needy in the society. The life of an impoverished person is like a torn garment. There will be no happiness in their home, no big celebrations will be celebrated. As the poem below,

Putāivai kiḷintatu pōyirru vāḷkkai  
 aṭaiyappaṭ tārkaḷum aṅpila rāṅār  
 koṭaiyillai kōḷillai koṇṭāṭṭa millai  
 naṭaiyillai nāṭṭil iyaṅkukinṅār kaṭkē  
 (Thirumantiram ,252)

explains Thirumoolar.

Therein, to combat the extreme poverty in the society, the Port Dickson Social Welfare Corporation showing a special interest on it. They identifies the needy in the society and helps them both financially and materially. They also organizing camps for the women in this households. Moreover, they also sponsor the children's educational fees. Focusing on children's education this NGO also conducts educational tours for them.

As we can see that, the Port Dickson New Family Welfare Association, aids the poor families. It is noteworthy that, the purpose of this movement is to ensure the educational development of the children in this families. The services of these NGOs are being supportive for the academic development of the students (Al Muhsin & Mustafa, 2020).

Besides, the Port Dickson New Family Welfare Association are aiding the less blessed with material aids. This helps the less blessed to perform their daily activities easily. As a part of this society they deserved to be served as well. At the meantime, the Port Dickson Regional Council, serves the patients which is quite similar as the Family Welfare Association do.

The Malaysian Hindu Association Regional Council and the Port Dickson New Family Welfare Association serves theless blessed and patients (sick people) with pure love, patience and kindness. It is noteworthy, that such services are difficult to sustain unless there is love and compassion in it.

Collaborative works consider as society oriented services. A clean environment sustain a healthy living. So, the Port Dickson Social Welfare Corporation has conducted the collaborative work. even though, the Malaysia Hindu Association doesn't directly involved in such service, yet they encourage the students to purify the temple one in a month via religious classes (Al Muhsin, et al., 2020). This type of activity not only sustain a healthy environment yet it also brings or holds the sense of togetherness among everyone.

Even though, the Malaysia Hindu Association concentrated in religious movements, yet it also contributed a lot to the societal developments. Hence, the other 2 bodies focusing merely on society oriented services. Thus, we can note that these 3 NGOs working on and also pays attention to societal needs. Their contributions to the society are warmly welcoming by the people of this area.

The Shaivisme recommends one need to love other lives rather than merely worshipping the God. It has been also said that, these type of services with pure love, peace and humble will be always watched by God. Therefore, it is

inconceivable that the ethical services of the 3 NGOs mentioned above are solely based on love towards the God.

**3.0 THE SERVICE SERVICE ETHICS IN PERIYA PURANAM AND THE SERVICE ETHICS OF INDIAN NGO’S IN PORT DICKSON - COMPARISON**

For the purpose of this study, the service ethics were divided into 5 elements and explained in this section. The 47 Nayanmars seem to have performed religious services to the society. This was their life goal. Most of the Nayanmars seem to have reached the God through temple charities (Kaliyanasundaranar, 2000). It can be seen that some of them even served the god’s followers. That is why all the 47 Nayanmars have attained mukti.

Even though, the service ethics of Nayanmars were merely based on religious, yet it was performed for the society’s wellbeing. Services which held in temples aid unwillingness (or difficulties) of people. Kandiah (2018) says, that this type of services led to devotional services among people. Hence, her view is that any services which rendered with genuine purity and true love is dedicated to God.

Nowadays, the services are being held to meet the basic needs of mankind. People are worshipping or giving more importance to money, materials and time says (Krishnan, 2018). The three NGOs; Port Dickson Regional Council, Port Dickson Social Welfare Corporation and Port Dickson New Family Welfare Association in Port Dickson are actually serving or giving importance to those functions that were mentioned above.

In today’s globalized world only money and materials are seems to be appealing to many. However, beyond this, the services performed by these 3 NGOs with humanity in mind resembles the service ethics of Nayanmars.

**THE RELIGIOUS SERVICE ETHICS IN PERIYA PURANAM AND THE SERVICE ETHICS OF INDIAN NGO’S IN PORT DICKSON: COMPARISON**

63 Nayanmars who were mentioned in Periya Puranam were performed various religious services (Kaliyanasundaranar, 2000;2014). 47 of them contributed a lot to the religious development and evolution based on Sariyai. At the meantime, the NGO bodies in Port Dickson are also performing religious services as a major task. Table 3 summarizes the religious services of Nayanmars and the service ethics of 3 NGO bodies in Port Dickson.

**Table 3** *The religious services in Periya Puranam based on Sariyai and the religious services of NGOs in Port Dickson based on Sariyai - Comparison*

Nu m	Services	Nayanmar s	Port Dickson Regiona l Council	Port Dickson Social Welfare Corporatio n	Port Dickson New Family welfare Associatio n
1	Poojas in temple (plucking	✓	✓		

		flowers, grinding sandalwood, etc)				
Religious Services	2	Reciting in temple (Thirumurai)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3	Conducting festive poojas	✓	✓		
	4	Providing food at the temple	✓	✓		
	5	Purifying temple / donations for temple works	✓	✓	✓	✓
	6	Cleaning / glorifying the temple	✓	✓		
	7	Cutting ponds in temple	✓			
	8	Providing musical instruments to the temple	✓			

The religious services mentioned above can be said as one of the spiritual exercises. It is well known that, it is intertwined with human life. Moreover, it also make us realize that, we feel satisfied in life when we do things we like. This is called as ‘Suyadarmam’ in Gita (Rajamickam, Paramasivam, & Subramaniam, 2012).

This is what the Nayanmars have shown us in the Periya Puranam. They have introduced us to the ideal journey of seeking God, settling our minds on temple services (Arumugam, 1989). The law of karma says “even if you go to Kaasi (holy place), you can’t purify your sins”. Yet, the history of Nayanmars shows that one can get rid of the karmic reactions by taking part in temple services. Moreover, Saivism says that one can worship the God in the simplest way which is possible for them rather than worshipping in the same way. The ideology also makes it clear that worshipping is an ethical endeavor to have a noble relationship

with God says (Krishnamoorthy, 2018). That is why it is essential to follow the Nayanmars style of worshipping the god.

As we can see that, Nayanmars’ principle of life were solely based on religious services. For example, purifying the temple, giving foods, plucking flowers and so on were led Nayanmars to receive mukti. Thirumoolar sings,  
*Anṇuṭaṇēniṅ ṛamutamum ēṛriyē  
 poṅcey viḷakkum pukaitīpan ticaitoṅun  
 tuṅpam akarrit toḷuvār niṅaiyuṅkāl  
 iṅpuṭaṇēvan teytiṭum mukṭiyē*  
 (Thirumantiram, 981)

Therefore, it is evident that the above mentioned poem means the salvation for mukti.

Thirunyanasambantar,  
*Paṛitta malarkoṭu vantumai yēttum paṅiyatiyōm  
 ciṛappilit tīvinai tīṅtappe ṛātiru nīlakaṅṭam*  
 (Thirumurai 1:116:1254)

Says that, by worshipping the god by flowers one can evict the evilness or and get or reach the god’s love.

Tīram payil nānacampantaṅ centamiḷ pattum vallār

nirainta ulakiṇiṅ vāṇavarkōṇoṭuṅ kūṭuvarē

(Thirumurai 1:116:1258)

Says that, by reciting Thirumurai, one can receive god’s pure love and grace (Mohanadass, 2018). It must be remembered that, every lives created by the God, need to take refuge in the shadow of him. This is based on the 4 ways where the Thirumoolar says Sariyai, kriyai, Yogam and Gnanam (enlightenment) (Thirumoolar, 2018). This service ethics includes the temple services in it, where we can know this from the history of Nayanmars. Nayanmars can be said a good guide for us. Therefore, the religious services of the NGO bodies in Port Dickson are based on this. although, the religious services varied over time, yet it can be seem to be consistent with the Nayanmars.

The NGOs are merely focusing on younger generation in order to teach them the true religious. They are working with the people to select and explain proper, necessary and intellectual religious process for the society. By this, the

younger generation will become well educated and religious as well.

Moreover, by conducting the festive poojas, NGOs are sharing the noble act to other religions. This will help restore and uphold our cultural excellence. By this way, withholding Saivisme, these NGO bodies can bring ‘bakthi neri’ to the next generation.

**3.2 NAYANMARS SOCIETY ORIENTED SERVICES BASED ON SARIYAI AND SOCIETY ORIENTED SERVICES OF INDIAN NGO’S IN PORT DICKSON BASED ON SARIYAI - COMPARISON**

In periya puranam, Nayanmars holds and lives with the principle of ‘ makkal thonde mahesan thondu’ (Navalar, 2008). They performed services via religious for the wellbeing of the society. It is notable that, like the Nayanmars, the 3 NGO movements in Port Dickson are following the footpath of them.

Though, it has been a long time, yet selfless service of Nayanmars are still eveolving through these NGOs. Table 4 shows the society oriented services of nayanmars and the society oriented services of NGOs in Port Dickson.

**Table 4***The society oriented services of Nayanmars and the society oriented services of NGOs in Port Dickson – Comparison*

Num	Services	Nayanmars	Port Dickson Regiona l Council	Port Dickson Social Welfare Corporatio n	Port Dickson New Family Welfare Association
1	Providing foods for the poor	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Providing material/finan cial assistance to the poor family	✓	✓	✓	✓

d service s	3	Providing material/finan cial aid to the students		✓	✓	✓
	4	Providing materials for the poor		✓		✓
	5	Carrying out Collaborative works	✓	✓	✓	✓
	6	Conduct ethical/ self-confidenc e training for youths	✓	✓	✓	✓
	7	Educationalto urs/camps	✓	✓	✓	
	8	Camps for woman				✓
	9	Trainings for students			✓	

In the world of selfishness, the services are being made for one's own pride. In that case, we should be proud of these NGOs who follows the footpath of the Nayanmars who served the people with pure love. It is worth noting that, the youngsters in these NGO bodies are working for the wellbeing of the society rather than involving themselves in unhealthy activities. their services are commendable in support of the liturgy and theology.

Therefore, the selfless act and services of these NGOs will help to obtain the God's grace fully. The God knows those who love others without any benefit or expectations. So, the Thirumoolar says,

Ikaḷntatum perratum īcaṇ ariyūm  
ukantu aruḷ ceytiṭum uttama nātaṇ  
koḷuntu'anpu ceytu aruḷ kūravallārkkku  
makiḷntu anpu ceyyūm aruḷ atuvāmē  
(Thirumantiram, 267)

Thirumollar's claims

Toḷutu tū malar tūvit tutittu niṇru

aḷutu kāmurru ararūkinrāriyūm,  
poḷutu pōkkip purakkaṇippāriyūm,  
eḷutum, kīlkaṇakku- iṇṇampar īcaṇē  
(Thirumurai 5:21:1282)

These songs shows that, whoever loves the lives of the God, will receive the love and the grace of the God. The Nayanmars can be the exemplary for this. the God made the world known by the love of the young devotee who served from the hut, whom named Ilangkudi Maranar, who had being doing voluntary works in the hut. Hence, 'வேண்டத் தக்கது அறிவோய் நீ! வேண்ட, முழுதும் தருவோய் நீ' (Thiruvagam, 33) as quoted by Manikavasagar god, he who understands his devotees.

The NGOs and the nayanmars service ethics are similar. Without limitations these NGOs serving all the layers of the society including children, elders, poor, woman and so on.

Moreover, God will grant mercy to those who shows love; as the poem by Thirunavukarasar vindicates,

Calam ilaṅ caṅkaraṅ cārntavarkku alāl  
nalam ilaṅ nāltoṟum nalkuvāṅ nalaṅ  
kulam ilar ākilum kulattiṟku ēṟpatu ōr  
nalam mikak koṭuppatu namacivāyavē  
(Thirumurai 4:11:109)

Therefore, the service ethics in the name of love for all the livings especially for the poor can be seen as a noble act.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

In the world of selfishness, the services are being made for one's own pride. In that case, we should be proud of these NGOs who follows the footpath of the Nayanmars who served the people with pure love (Paranthaman, Santhi, Radha & Poornima Thilagam, 2019; Ponniah & Thamburaj, 2017). The goodwill and service of these NGOs are a good example of what today's generation is doing with the guidance and principles of the Nayanmars. The love that emerges from one's self has led the NGOs to participate in this types of acts or services. To sum up, the service ethics of these NGO bodies beyond their circle and comfort zones will be a good exemplary for the upcoming generations to take part in such noble service (Demaisuria & Muniisvaran, 2019; Eswaran, 2019; Ganaprakasam, 2018).

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