Chapter V

LITERACY PROGRAMME IN PALAKKAD DISTRICT: AN ANALYSIS

Having understood the implementation process of literacy programme in Ernakulam and the impact it has created in the district, Kerala government took the initiative of spreading literacy in rest of the districts of the state. The spread of literacy in Palakkad district has thus become a part of the state government programme, which is slightly different from the Ernakulam model of implementation of literacy. Lying in the northern part of Kerala, Palakkad district encompasses high lands consisting of forest and plantations and midlands where paddy is cultivated; and it has been backward in terms of social and economic development. Though upper caste, especially Brahmins, constitute the predominant communities of the district, there are a large number of landless labourers belonging to the SC/STs. Moreover, it is least literate and symbolises a new trend in the Social development with its roots in the social history of the district.

Purpose of Selecting the District

Palakkad has been selected for study because its social and economic development is different from Ernakulam and the trend towards the attainment of literacy here is very weak. Ernakulam being traditionally advanced district it was decided to take another district which present a different level or social and economic attainment. It was in this context that selection of Palakkad as a
part of the present study assumes importance. Moreover, the two different models may give a different insight into the inner dynamic of the social history of the state of Kerala.

The attempt here is not to address the implementation of literacy programme in Palakkad as Palakkad model of development but as an extension of the initiative of the state government. The enlightened leadership of the numerous social movements in Kerala has always given importance to spread of education as the first step in any social activity. Therefore it is not surprising that the state government has taken up the programme after its success in Ernakulam. The state of Kerala has had a social history based on the approach of attaining social development by following alternative method of development without creating any confrontation among the communities. The entire social development in the state before and after independence has been based on education and its related activities.¹

The initiative to spread literacy was taken by the Left Democratic Front (LDF) government headed by Sri Nayanar who constituted a society known as Kerala Saksharatha Samithi (KSS),² with Chief Minister as Chairman. This society was registered for the purpose of enforcing the programme of spreading literacy


throughout the state of Kerala. Seven Cabinet Ministers, senior officials, District Collectors, representative of political parties, mass organisations and major voluntary agencies and persons of eminence constituted members of this Samithi. In order to highlight the administrative structure of KSS, depicting its organisational structure is given below.

**Organisational Structure**

**Kerala Saksharatha Samithi (KSS)**

Chairman: Chief Minister
Six Cabinet Ministers, Secretaries, Reps. of political Parties, Voluntary, Mass, Youth organisation, Persons of Eminence.

- Executive Committee (KSS Ex)
  - Chairman (R.D Minister) Secretary (K.S.S)
  - State Centre
  - District Saksharatha Samithi.
  - Collector
  - District Co-ordination Centre.
  - Project Office.
  - Block Co-ordination Committee.
  - Sub Project.
  - Panchayath Saksharatha Samithi.
  - Ward Saksharatha Samithi
  - Literacy Centre.
  - Peoples Committee.
At the top of KSS there was the Chief Minister in his capacity as the chairman of the organisation and next below came members who comprised six Cabinet ministers, Secretaries and representatives of political parties etc. Just below it came executive committee with its chairman, Rural development minister and secretary KSS. State centre constituted the bottom of the organisation at the state level.

Kerala government envisaged total literacy in the state of Kerala so that it becomes the first fully literate state in the whole of India. The idea was that through this programme, people who did not have access to the educational facilities would get an opportunity to become literate. Secondly, Kerala would emerge as a model state which brought about social development through the attainment of literacy. With this perspective, the KSS constituted by the state government marched forward to execute the objectives enshrined in this programme.

In order to implement this project, the state was divided into 40 project areas and each project area covered between 70000 to 75000 learners. Each project covered about 4000 to 5000 learners. At the district level, the district collector appointed a government

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official not below the rank of deputy/joint director in order to supervise each project area.4

The state government envisaged a total expenditure of about RS 1122 million for the project and out of this about RS 800 million was the monetary value of the voluntary work at the rate of Rupees 5 per hour. A balance of about Rs 322 million was to be raised from various sources and of this Kerala government (Human Resources Development Ministry) contributed Rs 30 million. Approximately Rs 122 million was to be collected from local sources through cash and other donations and the balance of Rs 100 million was to come from funding agencies.5

For the successful implementation of the programme, a three level implementation mechanism was set up as a part of the internal arrangement of the project. The first level constituted the state co-ordination centre, the district co-ordination centre, the project offices and the sub project offices supervised by the project staff. The second level constituted various peoples committees starting from the state literacy council to the ward literacy committees and the third level included the district collector who would assign senior officials of the district to supervise the literacy activities at various levels.

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Having its roots in traditional Kerala model of social movement with its emphasis on education, Nayanan government began to encourage the literacy message spread by Ernakulam. Democracy needs awareness of social and political matters and by doing this, the state government was laying the foundation for strengthening the existing democratic set up. Though the state governments' initiative could not involve the mass participation of the people, it was a great success as the social activists of the movement had penetrated even into inaccessible areas and socially and economically underprivileged section of the society with one message: Total Literacy. The princely Kingdoms of Travancore and Cochin before India's independence had a negative approach towards the spread of literacy among the backward classes. It was in this context that the community leadership took initiative to spread education among the poor classes through the establishment of schools and colleges for educating the respective communities. In this case, one can trace two important features which are different from the aspect intentioned above: (1) The initiative of the state apparatus (2) Spread of literacy without establishing educational institutions.

Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba believe that education plays an important part in political participation and education is the shortest route to the creation of a modern political culture. One of the advantages of education is that skills that may take years to
develop for the first time in the life of an individual can be attained through this process. That is the reason why Almond and Verba have called education is the most obvious substitute for time. Moreover, education, especially in the case of Kerala, has opened the way for backward communities for social upliftment.

Before going into the details of the implementation process and its implication of the literacy programme in the Palakkad district, the structure of the state centre is given below for having a close insight.

**Structure of the State Centre**

Kerala Saksharata Samiti

KSS Executive Committee

Secretatry

KSS State Centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Directors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orgn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Env. Creation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material Production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance &amp; Accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asst. Co-ordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The structure as shown by the table indicates KSS executive committee at the top and Assistant directors with their office staff at the bottom. It also shows the administrative capacity of the state centre to allocate its works accordingly.

**Implementation Process in Palakkad District.**

The administrative body to implement the literacy programme at the district level is known as District Literacy Council which rated as an advisory body at the district level. The chairman of the council was the district collector who nominated any senior official of the district administration as the convener of the council. Members of legislative Assembly, members of Parliament from Palakkad, officers in charge of major department, representative of people, Mahila organisations and students organisations belonging to the district were also the members of the council. Apart from the representatives of voluntary agencies, trade unions, teachers organisations, President of Panchayat association and eminent personalities of the district also contributed the members of the council. As a matter of fact, special attention was paid in order to give representation to all sections of the people.

An executive committee of the council was constituted with the district collector as chairman and any senior official of the district nominated by the collector as convenor. There were representatives from officials and non-officials also. One of the
important functions of the district council was to ensure support of the people in order to implement the programme. The council also helped and advised the district collector and the district co-ordination centre in the organisation of public campaigns, setting up training camps and identifying master trainees and instructors besides bringing about proper co-ordination among all the concerned agencies in Palakkad district.

The following were the important function of the district coordination centre.

1. Co-ordination of project areas within the district.
2. Planning and execution of district level environment building campaign.
3. Training district level resource persons.
4. Distribution of teaching and learning material.
5. District level resource mobilisation.
6. Monitoring academic work.
7. Co-ordination of total literacy survey.
8. Liaison with district level administration and people's organisations.  

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A chart depicting district co-ordination centre in Palakkad is given below.\textsuperscript{7}

\textbf{District Co-ordination Centre}

Kerala Saksharatha Samithi

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\node at (0,0) {Kerala Saksharatha Samithi};
\node at (0,-1) {District Co-ordination Centre};
\node at (0,-2) {Maps, Las, Collector, Senior Officials, Non-Officials etc.};
\node at (0,-3) {Executive Committee};
\node at (0,-4) {District Collector};
\node at (0,-5) {District Co-ordination Centre};
\node at (0,-6) {Co-ordinator};
\node at (0,-7) {Orgn. | Eniv. | Finance | Training | Monito- | Office};
\node at (0,-8) {Creation | | | ring |};
\node at (0,-9) {Asst. Co-ordinators};
\node at (0,-10) {Office Staff};
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}


\textsuperscript{7} The same structure was followed in all the districts of the State.
Just like in Ernakulam, the literacy programme was implemented by the Panchayat/Block level committees under the supervision of the district collector of Palakkad. What is important to note here is the attempts made by KSS and district administration of Palakkad to make it a social movement on the pattern of Ernakulam with the active involvement and participation of the masses. It is already mentioned earlier that compared to Ernakulam, the district is very backward in terms of social and economic developments. Moreover, people in Palakkad, especially those belonging to scheduled Castes, scheduled tribes and other backward sections are lagging behind in the attainment of literacy. Taking into consideration of the high percentage of illiterates, illiterate Tamil population and inaccessible areas of tribal and scheduled caste settlements, the activists of the literacy programme in Palakkad had a Herculean task as far as implementation of the scheme was concerned.

It was the combined effort of KSS and district administration and there were a few KSSP members in this movement. It was also difficult for the activists to go for campaigning for the programme as there were lot of differences in linguistic and social composition. As the propaganda was very essential to spread the message of the programme, the peoples committees and sub project officers which proved to be backbone of the programme went for ensuring public support, identifying master trainees and instructors, propaganda at
the local level, motivating learners, linking Panchayat committees and peoples organisation with the programme and arranging facilities including finance for the literacy centres.

Before initiating the enforcement programme, it was felt the necessity of bringing about awareness among the masses on the importance of the scheme. Mass media, including All India Radio, Doordarshan, and popular art forms were utilized for propagating the messages of the scheme. Meanwhile, survey squads, selection of activists, enrollment to the literacy centres, prevention of drop outs and the question of improvement of the standard of instruction were all identified and worked out for future plan of action. Every activity of the district level Samithi was conducted in Palakkad as peoples festivals in which mass participation was expected for its success in the days to come. It is quite fascinating to have a look at the method of campaigns as organised by the Samithi, in the district of Palakkad. In order to have an insight into the method of campaigning, a chart depicting various techniques of campaigning adopted by the Samithi as given below.8

PHASE -I PRE-SURVEY CAMPAIGNS

Proclamation Jathas
Posters
Conventions
Survey Inaugurations.

PHASE-II  POST SURVEY CAMPAIGNS

Akshara Kala Jathas - “Akshara Deepamala”  
Class inauguration - Posters - Badges  
Literacy Days - (Youth, women, School, College, Scouts etc.).

PHASE-III  BOOSTER CAMPAIGNS

House to House squad visits- Family Concessions.  
Women’s Motivational camps - “Padayatharas”.  
Fraternal Visits to Literacy Centres.

PHASE-IV  FINAL ROUND CAMPAIGNS

Aksharotsav (Literacy Festivals)  
Enrollment declaration festivals.  
Cultural Festivals of Learners.

SPECIAL CAMPAIGNS

Vanitha Kalajathas  
Tribal Kalajathas  
Tamil Kalajathas etc.

As the first step, one day literacy survey was carried out on 8th April 1990 in order to identify the communities and individuals who were illiterate. The survey revealed that Palakkad district had the highest number of illiterates up to the extent of 4.12 lakhs. The survey comprised of people in the age group of 6-60 and above. A large number of women, scheduled caste and scheduled tribes were

TABLE 1

Summary of Illiteracy Survey: Palakkad District, 1990

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>5-15 Male</th>
<th>5-15 Female</th>
<th>5-15 Total</th>
<th>16-45 Male</th>
<th>16-45 Female</th>
<th>16-45 Total</th>
<th>46-60 Male</th>
<th>46-60 Female</th>
<th>46-60 Total</th>
<th>Above 60 Male</th>
<th>Above 60 Female</th>
<th>Above 60 Total</th>
<th>Total Male</th>
<th>Total Female</th>
<th>Total District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Palakkad</td>
<td>7871</td>
<td>9770</td>
<td>17641</td>
<td>81562</td>
<td>127321</td>
<td>208883</td>
<td>45183</td>
<td>65839</td>
<td>111022</td>
<td>29028</td>
<td>45292</td>
<td>74320</td>
<td>163644</td>
<td>248222</td>
<td>411866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (Kerala)</td>
<td>54224</td>
<td>43341</td>
<td>103439</td>
<td>513050</td>
<td>868634</td>
<td>1381884</td>
<td>279281</td>
<td>518476</td>
<td>797757</td>
<td>196652</td>
<td>373546</td>
<td>570198</td>
<td>1043207</td>
<td>1809871</td>
<td>2853078</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>5-60 Male</th>
<th>5-60 Female</th>
<th>5-60 Total</th>
<th>Muslim Male</th>
<th>Muslim Female</th>
<th>Muslim Total</th>
<th>SC Male</th>
<th>SC Female</th>
<th>SC Total</th>
<th>ST Male</th>
<th>ST Female</th>
<th>ST Total</th>
<th>Below 1</th>
<th>Pregnant</th>
<th>Polio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Palakkad</td>
<td>134616</td>
<td>202930</td>
<td>337546</td>
<td>32264</td>
<td>49325</td>
<td>81589</td>
<td>46270</td>
<td>62650</td>
<td>108920</td>
<td>9489</td>
<td>9201</td>
<td>18690</td>
<td>34491</td>
<td>14434</td>
<td>1489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (Kerala)</td>
<td>846555</td>
<td>143625</td>
<td>2282880</td>
<td>267064</td>
<td>510249</td>
<td>777313</td>
<td>225510</td>
<td>304429</td>
<td>529939</td>
<td>79827</td>
<td>95432</td>
<td>175259</td>
<td>399537</td>
<td>170255</td>
<td>14368</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

found to be illiterate. This was followed by the literacy processions covering all parts of the district, with more emphasis on backward and inaccessible areas. These literacy processions worked out to be a great propaganda machinery reaching out to the people, the message of the programme with more conviction and enthusiasm.

Processions used art forms to attract the people and street plays formed an important aspect of these processions. These processions which were carried out quite often in the course of the implementation of the programme focused attention on the rural hinterland where illiterates were staying. Apart from this, newspaper news and song groups were also utilised as a part of propaganda machinery.

Members from various political parties, voluntary organisations, all worked together as a joint effort to enforce this along with the peoples involvement, though the mass participation was less in Palakkad district in comparison to that of Ernakulam. Many factors may be attributed to this aspect: Lack of proper coordination between the officials of the district administration and non-officials involved in the movement. Moreover as Palakkad district did not have enough voluntary organisations, the literacy implementation programme in the district could not emerge as a peoples movement involving maximum number of people of the district. Rather it worked out to be as a programme being carried
out by the governmental machinery as a part of government task. The literacy campaign programme in Palakkad lacked competitive spirit among Scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward communities who had been illiterate. In the case of Ernakulam, there emerged community leadership to guide, supervise, encourage and monitor programme within a particular community and Palakkad did not witness any such trend, leading to lack of enthusiasm among the people.

The next attempt was to implement the scheme at the project area level, and before discussing the next stage of the implementation it is better to have a look at the project office structure.

**Project Office Structure**\(^{10}\)

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Project Office
    ├── Project Officer | Joint Project Officer
    │                  └── 5 Asst. Project Officer
    │                         └── 20 Sub Projects Each Under an APO
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\(^{10}\) This structure is the same for all districts of Kerala.
Functions of the Project Office

1. Overall supervision of field level activities.

2. Conducting Training Programme for Master Trainers & Instructors.

3. Planning and execution of the literacy survey.

4. Mobilisation of resources.

5. Identification of Master Trainers and Instructors.

6. Organisation of Project/ Panchayat/ Ward level Committees, Holding Conventions.

7. Organise padayathra, Kalajathas and other building campaigns.

8. Co-ordination of sub projects, give instruction to field level APOs.\textsuperscript{11}

At the Block level, there was block co-ordination committee which was supposed to ensure support and guidance of all Panchayats under the Block. Block co-ordination committee had a chairman and a convener besides members who constituted panchayat presidents of all Panchayat in the Block, Assistant project officers in the block, executive officers of panchayat and joint convener of panchayat aksharatha Samithi of Palakkad district. This block co-ordination committee had such important

\textsuperscript{11} Excerpt from, Akshara Kerala Total Literacy Programme, Kerala Saksharatha Samithi, Thiruvananthapuram, 1991, p.8
functions as co-ordination of sub projects, co-ordination of panchayat Saksharatha Samithis, conduct of training camp for master trainers and organisation of block level environment creation activities.

Each sub project was to take care of about 5000-6000 learners and an Assistant project officer was in charge of the sub project. As a matter of fact, member of literacy centres in the sub project varied with the rate of illiteracy in that area. An Assistant Project officer in charge of the sub project was not to have any office staff; but he was allotted a room in the Panchayat office/Block office or any other suitable place in order to co-ordinate his work. For having an incite into sub project structure is given below.

**Sub-project Structure**

```
Sub Project
    Asst. Project Officer
        |
Ward Level Saksharatha Samithi
        |
Literacy Centre
    People's Committee
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Meanwhile literacy conventions were held at the district, panchayat and ward level in order to form literacy committees, which are supposed to identify the infrastructures. This was organised throughout the district of Palakkad with the involvement of people and various voluntary organisations and these conventions were organised by the district administration in collaboration with the local bodies.

Before discussing the training programme launched for giving training to the instructors, it is essential to have a look at the organisation, structure and functions of Saksharatha Samithi at Panchayat, Municipal and corporation level. For mustering enough support and guidance of all sections of the people in the Panchayat, a panchayat level Saksharatha Samithi was to be constituted. It may be remembered that Saksharatha Samithis were also constituted in towns and city of Palakkad. Panchayat Saksharatha Samithi had a chairman who in the case of panchayat was Panchayat president and Municipal chairman in the case of municipality. The convener of the Saksharatha Samithi was the civil commissioner and it had a joint convener apart from a number of members such as councilors of municipality, ward members of panchayat village offices, headmasters, representatives of teachers organisations and members of voluntary agencies.

Panchayat Saksharatha Samithi (Municipal Saksharatha Samithi) had such functions as ensuring public support, helping
the sub-project, in identifying master trainers and instructors, organising panchayat level Padayathras and Kaljatha, motivating learners, ensuring the co-operation of panchayat committee and people's organisations, co-operating local level resource mobilisations, ensuring successful conduct of training camps, providing minimum infra structure facilities to sub project and literacy centre and ensuring proper conduct of literacy survey etc.\textsuperscript{12}

Instructors being the foundation of the implementation of literacy programme, maximum care was taken by the activists of the Saksharatha Samithi to identify committed, and voluntary instructors belonging to various social and professional composition of Palakkad district. Any person who had completed secondary school leaving certificate and was fully conversant in the Malayalam language could be instructor. In order to teach the minority Tamil illiterate population inhabiting the Palakkad district, efforts were made to identify Tamil instructors who could be proficient in Tamil language. Instructor Enrollment Register was kept at panchayat and municipal office and also at the different sub project or project offices. Having identified instructors they were registered at ward level and it is something quite interesting to note that different voluntary youth and women organisations came forward with a list of persons who were willing to function as instructors on voluntary basis. As a matter of fact effort had all been made to identify

\textsuperscript{12} This is based on the information collected from the offices of Saksharatha Samithi at panchayat and municipal level.
instructors even in the course of launching literacy survey. Apart from this, special request was made through advertisement boards, newspapers and cinema slides with an appeal to the masses to come forward and register their names as instructors with utmost dedication and loyalty. For making the enrollment more feasible and smooth, special booths were established at award level as systematically as possible.

The organisers of the movement assigned the master trainers with the task of training the instructors as carefully as possible. A look at the professional composition of the instructors will bring to light the method by which organizers of the movement made efforts to choose people having different faculties and specialisations in various walks of life. It was also felt that they had to be conversant with the language and had some teaching experience. Teachers, activists of voluntary organisations having experience in non formal classes were identified as master trainers. Resource persons were identified among qualified teachers and experienced social workers etc. and as such a panel of resource person were prepared at the district level with great care.13

The problem now was how to train the instructors and regress training, in fact, became an essential programme of the literacy movement. After initial round of training, two more rounds of

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13 Saksharatha Keralam Sundara Keralam (Literate Kerala: Beautiful Kerala), Original in Malayalam, KSS, pp.9-10.
training were given to the instructors. Training programmes were carried out with local support and high motivation. Camps for master trainers and instructors were organised in schools or colleges and trainers as well as master trainers were classified into groups of 30 for the purpose of taking classes. For having a clear understanding of the way in which this was carried out a chart representing the training programme is given below.

**Training Process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Activity</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshop of State Level Resource Persons</td>
<td>State Level</td>
<td>6 Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training of District Level Key Persons</td>
<td>District Level</td>
<td>6 Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training of District Level Resource Persons</td>
<td>District Level</td>
<td>8 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training of Master Trainees</td>
<td>Project Area/2-3 Projects Combined</td>
<td>8 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training of Instructors</td>
<td>Sub Project/ Panchayat Level</td>
<td>9 Days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: District Saksharatha Samithi, Palakkad.
Training and Implementation at District Level

Having carried out total literacy survey, a ward level illiteracy map was prepared on the basis of survey data. This map showed the dispersion and concentration of learners in each ward and the map helped the instructors and the learners the location of places where illiterates were concentrated. Each ward had literacy centre and peoples committees which were responsible for carrying out the task of conducting the classes. Normally, a literacy centre had 10 learners and an instructor. The number of learners in a centre varied from 1 - 15 and under any circumstances it never went beyond 15. Peoples committees generally looked after minimum infrastructural facilities and also mobilised maximum social support for the enforcement of the programmes.

The classes were conducted according to the convenience of the learners, preferably in their residences or surrounding areas. The learners did not have much enthusiasm and anxiety to learn just like Ernakulam had witnessed because Palakkad has a large population of tribals and scheduled castes, mostly belonging to the category of landless agricultural labourers. As this, literacy programme in Palakkad did not emerge as a peoples movement, it was very difficult to convince the importance of the programme to these sections of the people. Moreover the indifferent attitude shown by the bureaucracy led to not only the lack of interest among the people but also lack of qualitative output at the performance level. When the social activists approached the people, they told the organisers that what was more important was to tackle the social
and economic needs of the deprived sections of the district before carrying out the literacy programme. The resistance of the socially and economically backward sections to acquire literacy could be seen from the perspective and understanding of these deprived sections that all previous rural development programmes sanctioned by the government were made use of by the rich people. Therefore, people in the Palakkad district also treated the literacy programme as a bourgeoisie approach of the government to appease these sections. Bureaucracy of Palakkad district, therefore, could not visualize the trend of the people in advance and even when they came to know about it, they did not take any necessary measures to bring about a coordination between the district bureaucracy and the masses at large.¹⁴

The organisers of the movement should have tried to have an incite with the social and economic position of the underprivileged sections of the people and no movement would succeed if the organisers proceeded without understanding of the social history of the community in question. This was what happened in the case of Palakkad district where the organisers of the literacy programme as a part of the general directive of the state government rushed with the whole programme of enforcing it. This is where one finds the difference between the implementation programme of literacy in Ernakulam and Palakkad.

¹⁴ This information is based on the researchers interview with the underprivileged sections of the people in Palakkad district.
The researcher's observation and interview with the local people in Palakkad district show that the organisers of the literacy enforcement programme showed lack of commitment and coordination between officials and non-officials leading to the communication gap. Time schedule of conducting classes and working conditions were not systematically organised. In the case of Ernakulam the programme became a people's movement as a result of the initiative, the interest and commitment shown by the officials and non-officials. Moreover, in Ernakulam district the movement originated as a past of voluntary effort unconnected with the governmental agencies, which joined the movement at a later period. In the case of Palakkad district no such movement first developed on voluntary effort and it was imposed on the people as part of the effort of the Kerala government to spread literacy in the rest of the districts. And it is already been mentioned earlier that there are not enough voluntary organisations compared to Ernakulam in the Palakkad district.

The total literacy was declared by the Kerala government in the whole of Kerala on 18th April 1991, which included Palakkad district also. Various techniques such as observation, interview and interaction with people belonging to deprived sections were made by the researcher to examine the impact the movement created in the district. As a result, various interesting facts have come to light: one of the important results being the creation of an awareness about the purpose of newspaper reading. In fact, the organizers of the literacy programme spread the message of the use of family
planning techniques among the people with the slogan, 'small family - happy family'. Moreover, people began to understand about various environmental problem leading to the emergence of an environmental movement in a place called Attapady of Palakkad with the sole purpose of protesting against environment degradation and an interesting aspect of the movement was the large number of scheduled tribe involvement in it. An important point to note here is that the scheduled tribes never had such an awareness before to come forward in the form of a movement.

Every tribe is an ethnic identity which they want to preserve at any cost. In the absence of literacy, though they may have an inner urge to preserve that cultural identity, it would be rather difficult for them to demand either in the form of protest movement or any other method for the preservation of their culture, identity of which culture constitute an important aspect. Here in the Palakkad district, the tribals felt the necessity of preserving their cultural identity, which is in fact one of the important consequences of the literacy enforcement programme in the district.

The interview with some of the tribals shows that the literacy movement made them aware of the bad impact of such habits as smoking, addiction to liquor and living in bad environment etc. The tribal settlements such as Agali and Sholayar in Palakkad district became liquor free villages.15

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15 Based on information collected from District Saksharatha Samithi, Palakkad.
There also came up a consumer awareness along with the quality of food especially adulterated food. This awareness is not exactly the result of spreading messages of literacy among the people, but along with literacy movement, its activists began to discuss with the people on various social and economic problems. As a result of this, one important aspect that came to the notice of the researcher in the field was that some people started reading Malayalam version of Indian Constitution, thereby giving a thrust to political issues. Palakkad being a socially, educationally and economically backward district, this achievement is not something small to be attained within a short span of time. Though voluntary agencies were there in large numbers, their active involvement as a part of the movement made the people, especially those who belong to inaccessible areas and socially and economically backward sections to look upon the voluntary agencies as effective social agencies which may emancipate them from oppression and other deprivations in society. This aspect has come to light only when the researcher had an active interaction with the people of the Palakkad district.

Another interesting aspect that has come to the notice of the researcher is the gradual decline of superstition and an awareness to think in terms of reason. They also came to realize the evil of communalism and they wanted that this should go out of Indian society. Apart from these developments, people developed a tendency of such social needs as the necessity of applying for ration card and electricity connections for their houses.

One of the important achievements, the researcher feels, is the social mobilisation of the people in collectivity for such social
necessities as the construction and repair of roads, construction of schools and other related things which had till then being carried out by governmental agencies as part of their official programme. Interview of the researcher with the landless labourers of Palakkad district shows their awareness and urge for education which was, in fact, the direct consequence of the literacy programme in the district.

On the basis of the impact of the enforcement of the literacy programme in the district of Palakkad, one can go for social theorising of education and its role in society. All industrialised and industrialising nations give utmost importance to education as an area of investment which may lead, in due course of time, to social upliftment, social mobility and economic and political developments. There are educationists who look upon education as a matter of cost benefit analysis. Plato, the first political theorist in his masterpiece "Republic" gave so much importance to education that Rousseau, the main architect of 1789 French Revolution was compelled to say that the Republic is the finest treatise on education ever written. With experience of educational literacy movement in the districts of Ernakulam and Palakkad, it may be concluded that the development and spread of literacy can be encouraged and motivated for the whole of India, because the development of education will have its return in abundance in all walks of life.