CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The present study focuses upon the implementation of the Literacy programme in two districts of Kerala. However, in the process it also raises a number of significant issues related to the societal structure of Kerala, a state where the programme has achieved a high degree of success. A historical analysis of the data shows that throughout history, the territories comprising modern Kerala have witnessed two important trends: (a) A trend towards the realisation of the social objectives through social movements on non-violent means. (b) A trend towards radical movements. A central question which runs through the study is whether it is the social context within which the programme was carried out which was responsible for its success. In order to address this question, extensive fieldwork was undertaken in the selected districts. This enabled the researcher to probe deeply into the social fabric of Kerala particularly the two districts. It is in this context that the present study is to be looked at and the objectives formulated for the study have been examined in the light of these aspects mentioned above. Since the particular problem cannot be studied with the help of survey (Structured Questionnaire), other methods such as participant observation, discussion with the people and interviews have been followed. In fact implementation studies cannot be carried out with the help of survey method because this
kind of study would seek to analyse the effectiveness of various enforcing agencies, and their social character. Moreover, it also needs to examine the social and political context in which the execution of the programme is undertaken and the failure or success of implementation is also related to social and political context. Apart from this, this kind of study looks for qualitative and not quantitative data, and that is the reason why survey method is not chosen for studying this problem.

Efforts have been made to collect primary data along with secondary sources in order to make the study more authoritative and scientific. The available literature on the subject is reviewed in order to have an understanding of the way scholars have looked at the study on implementation process. And out of a discussion of the review of literature, there emerges the present study with its unique characteristic features which make it more relevant in social context of modern democratic India, especially the Kerala society.

The reasons why Kerala society has a culture of learning are examined by giving an account of development of literacy from the ancient period till 1991. This part is classified into two phases chronologically and emphasis is given to examine the interplay of various forces that were at work at a certain period of history in Kerala. Pre-independent princely Kingdoms of Travancore and Cochin had witnessed a different level of literacy development with the marginal role of the state in this sphere. Sangam period infact
sheds light on a different system of education which embraced all communities irrespective of wealth and division of labour.

19th century Travancore and Cochin presented a dismal picture of social life which clearly demarcated the discrimination between caste and communities with the support of state authority guided by religious ethos. The arrival of Christian missionaries, especially from the west, in the state brought about a turning point in the history of social equality. Education introduced by them in the state gave importance to include the books and other relevant literature concerning ideas of liberal school of thought which emerged in Europe as a part of renaissance. The educational activities of the Church created a new era in the history of social development because literacy spread during this time among the people living in the rural areas.

Beginning of 20th century created a new social movement based on education and a number of community leaders such as Ayyankali, Kumaranasam, Sree Narayana Guru and Mannath Padmanabhan began to concentrate on establishing educational institutions with the assumption that once the people belonging to respective communities were educated, there would come into being social upliftment, social mobility, increase of per capita income, political consciousness and a new social interaction between communities. People's involvement in their upliftment through literacy development brought, in fact, a new civic culture which is
still dominant in the society even today and it is this civic culture which has brought about a social order which Kerala society presents itself in modern India.

The re-organisation of the state in 1956, and the inclusion of Malabar in order to constitute Kerala state brought a new trend in the educational development in the state in the sense that this aggravated and increased the competition between various communities for position and authority. The increase of educational institutions is another remarkable event. Moreover, the spread of an urge among the people to have social upliftment by acquiring education is another development of this trend. It was this social context that has made the educational field more competitive and also enabled the people to come forward to initiate a social movement for development of which literacy movement becomes very prominent. This is what we witnessed in the social movement initiated by KSSP in Ernakulm district along with the cooperation of district officials and other voluntary agencies, followed by the literacy movement in Palakkad district as a part of the overall literacy movement initiated by the Kerala government at that time.

No study can be carried out without being familiar with the social composition of the area of study and the problems and issues faced by them. A profile of these two districts giving details of social structure, economy, history, social development and political activities was essential to have a clear insight into the interaction
between various forces that made the literacy movement successful at least for a short period of time. Every social activity has a historical root and without having an understanding of this, the examination of the trend of the literacy movement would have been absolutely difficult. Hence a historical account of the area under study along with the various factors that confront and challenge at times the communities that are inhabiting in the area is very essential. The present research while taking into consideration of the factors mentioned above has made sincere efforts to highlight the two districts under study. It is assumed that every region (districts in this case), has its own historical and social identity which again balance and help the social formulations and social movements that are likely to emerge any time.

Ernakulam district, for that matter, has its own social composition of almost all the communities living together, with the dominance of Christians. It also has its historical identity because of the interaction of various communities from abroad that came here and lived for centuries together. The interaction between the local communities and foreign communities created a cultural fusion in the district though some of them retained their cultural identity and some others tried to assimilate partly with the local culture. Being closer to the sea port, the district has always attracted the foreign traders and merchants.
Palakkad, on the other hand, being closer to Tamilnadu gives altogether a different picture. The district is dominated mainly by Tamil speaking Bhramins, though a number of almost illiterate working class population are inhabiting here. The beautiful natural scenery symbolises a synthesis of Kerala and Tamil geographical setting. As there is a cultural fusion of Tamil and Malayali people, efforts have been made to examine in detail the impact it has made in the literacy movement in the Palakkad district. In terms of literacy, a vast difference can be found between Ernakulam and Palakkad districts. Geographical features and the climatic conditions in both the districts are more or less similar to the rest of Kerala.

While the Vembanad and Crangannore backwaters in Ernakulam provide the means of livelihood to a large percentage of population by way of coir spinning and inland fishing, people in Palakkad mainly depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Being one of the major paddy growing regions in Kerala, it provides a lot of employment opportunities to the agricultural laboures living in the district. However, agriculture continues to be the most important occupation and the largest source of employment for the people of Ernakulam and Palakkad. Moreover, Ernakulam is marked by very high density of population and Palakkad is marked by less density of population. One of the other important aspect that can be found in Ernakulam is large number of people going to educational
institutions along with trade union and other political activities. Palakkad, on the other hand, is backward in literacy development, though trade union and other left oriented political activities are greater here. A closer look at the history of Ernakulam brings to light some very important aspects. Ernakulam district is constituted of territories which once formed part of princely states of Cochin and Travancore and the district of Malabar which now form the state of Kerala. At the same time, Palakkad has its own history dating back to hundreds of years. As a whole, both the districts present a number of differences though there are certain uniform features in both of them. Carrying out a research assignment in such districts where one finds similarities and differences, it is slightly difficult to penetrate into the mystery of social history and then examine the dynamics of the literacy movement. However, several visits paid by the researcher even into the interior parts of these two regions where literacy movement had been active, sheds light on a number of aspects which have not come to light till today.

The two princely kingdoms witnessed enormous social disabilities in the 19th and the beginning of 20th century. Discrimination and suppression meted out to the low caste people by the upper caste with the support of the ruling class created wide social cleavages within the existing Hindu social order. The emergence of a few educated people among the low caste brought
drastic changes among them because it was they who gave leadership to the respective communities' to march towards progress by spreading literacy. The conviction of this leadership that education would alone lead to social upliftment and other related changes encouraged them to initiate a movement of starting schools and colleges where the members of the respective communities would be admitted and later provided jobs, once they became qualified for that. The importance of explaining this statewide movement in the pre-independent Kerala lies in the fact that it was this movement which, infact, had laid the foundation for literacy movement in Ernakulam and later in Palakkad which are examined here in detail.

It was this social movement for upliftment through literacy that has brought about social and economic development among certain sections of the people. The present movement for total literacy in Ernakulam is looked at as a continuation of the social movement which had taken place in pre-independent Kerala. As there are certain features in this movement that are different from the earlier one, the present literacy movement in Ernakulam can be better addressed as a new social movement. The present movement witnessed the active involvement and direction of the district administration as a part of the National Literacy Programme. The most important aspect in this movement is the way in which active involvement of the people was generated by the social activists.
Enthusiasm, anxiety and feeling of satisfaction are some of the characteristic features of this movement.

The present study focuses its attention on the Total Literacy Programme carried out in Ernakulam in 1989-90 and the literacy movement initiated in Palakkad in 1991 as a part of all Kerala literacy programme. The generalisations made from the present study of Ernakulam and Palakkad represent almost similar trends. Therefore, attempt is made to focus attention on the implementation of the literacy movement in Kerala as a part of the political and administrative environment in which the programme was carried out. It has already been mentioned in the beginning of the thesis that the activists who participated in Ernakulam didn't have any intention for carrying out a movement for the spread of literacy. In fact the intellectuals and scientists comprising KSSP had earlier concentrated on the negative impact of the environmental pollution and they understood the fact that in the absence of literacy it was very difficult for them to convince the people about the negative impact of science and related aspects. It was in this context that KSSP came into contact with the National Literacy Mission which felt it better to entrust this responsibility to KSSP for which it received active co-operation of the district administration.

With the advent of Left Democratic Front government (L.D.F.) in 1987, the whole programme of KSSP, especially literacy
programme received major attention partly because of the fact that ideologically both LDF and KSSP was on the same path of social development. The mass literacy programme of KSSP had active collaboration of district administration at a later stage. The programme was inaugurated in January 26, 1989 and some of the important features of the programme were the prevalence of multiple agency and the necessity of sustaining an environment. The organisational structure of the literacy programme had a wider representation to become a genuine people's movement. And the actual teaching period lasted only for six months and the duration of the project operation period was about one year. This short period for the programme helped to keep the tempo of the movement. A mass upsurge was created in the whole district through publicity and fieldwork so that the illiterates will be mobilised and individual instructors, master trainers and resource persons were selected on voluntary basis. The main role in the implementation process was initiated by voluntary agencies especially Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP), Kerala Association for Non-Formal Education and Development (KANFED) and Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI). The district administration supervised, arranged the materials and equipments for conducting the classes, co-ordinated, interacted with voluntary organisations in the field, managed and monitored the entire programme. The literacy classes and other means of propaganda machinery were enforced by these voluntary organisations.
The study shows that conducting various campaigns among the socially and economically disadvantaged sections of the people brought about a new thrust in the movement. It was for the first time that the bureaucrats came out and started interacting with the masses. As a part of the programme such activities as construction of roads, issue of ration cards and electricity connections were also carried out by this activists simultaneously. Till then the poor masses could only witness the interaction of the politician who made only promises but not executed them properly in practice. It was for the first time that they have seen the officials along with other social activists reaching out to them with a positive approach of implementing the objectives of the programme and taking up the social causes. The study further reveals that this led to the emergence of a new force: bureaucracy with the people. As a matter of fact, the attitude of the educated people was also positive in this respect. Moreover, a cultural interaction between various communities and social classes took place leading to the blending of social harmony and cohesion which have never been witnessed earlier by the Kerala society.

Now the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes who could never get a chance to see the Collector earlier, were now in a position to meet him along with his officials. This, in fact, brought about a new trend in the social set up and approach of bureaucracy bringing about close interaction between the people and officials.
In the earlier days, there was hardly any co-ordination between the bureaucracy and the people and this movement witnessed a new trend: co-ordination as well as cooperative functioning between bureaucracy and the people. There witnessed a radical change on the one side among the people with mobilisations at the local level and on the other a approach being pursued by the bureaucracy. One of the important aspects to be noted here in the implementation process is the managerial competence and commitment of top level administrators especially the district collector. An important point that emerges in the process of implementation is the co-ordination that has been achieved between various levels of administration at the local level. The following factors have helped the implementation process: (a) the managerial competence and commitment of administrators. (b) efficiency of planning system at the local level. (c) communication and co-ordination (d) mobilisation of voluntary agencies and unorganised masses along with the political leadership and finally (e) the competence and capacity of the leadership. This literacy movement has brought about its own impact in Ernakulam district as well as in the rest of Kerala. For any movement to be successful, the commitment of the government is very essential and in the case of present study the movement for literacy development witnessed at least a partial development because of the strong political commitment and the subsequent co-ordination between the bureaucracy and the people. The Ernakulam model and its
temporary success attracted the attention of Kerala government which has subsequently, launched a similar programme in all the 13 districts of the state with a view to attain complete literacy by the year 1991.

Literacy movement in Palakkad was initiated as overall development of the initiative taken by the Kerala government. One day literacy survey revealed that Palakkad district had the highest number of illiterates, which included a large number of women SC and ST. The literacy processions covered the entire 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.

The study shows that Palakkad district also witnessed the involvement of members from various political parties, voluntary organisations and the people, though in a low measure. The literacy movement in Palakkad has enabled the people even in the rural areas to have access to the process of reading and writing which has not been experienced by them till then. Joining the learning process by those belonging to the working classes, especially agricultural labourers consisting of Tamils and Malayalis have added a new dimension to the literacy movement in the district. In the real sense of the term, it could not even achieve a temporary succes because of the lack of proper co-ordination between the officials
involved in the movement. Moreover, as Palakkad district didn't have enough voluntary organisations, the literacy implementation programme in the district could not emerge as people's movement involving maximum number of people in the district. Rather it worked out to be a programme being carried out by the governmental machinery as a part of government task. Besides this, the literacy campaign programme in Palakkad lacked competitive spirit especially among SC/ST who had been illiterate.

In the case of Ernakulam, there was KSSP comprising intellectuals and scientists to guide, supervise and coordinate the literacy movement in collaboration with the district officials. On the other hand, Palakkad did not witness any such trend, ultimately leading to the lack of enthusiasm among the people. The observation and interview with the local people in Palakkad district show that organisation of the literacy enforcement programme showed lack of commitment and co-ordination between officials and non-officials leading to the emergence of a gap in communication. Time schedule of conducting classes and working conditions were not systematically organised. One of the results of the movement was that it was able to reach the message of learning process among SC/ST and other agricultural labourers who did not know the importance of literacy.

This literacy movement in both the districts continued only for sometime. The enthusiasm which people and organisers had
during the total literacy programme almost vanished the time when attempts were made to launch post-literacy programme. There were many factors which led to this development. The change of ministry at state level and its lack of interest in the post-literacy programme subverted the whole process initiated in the course of total literacy programme. As this movement had the support of the government, it still looked for the governmental initiative and support in the post-literacy period. The allegations of corruption raised against KSSP discouraged this organisation to continue with the movement. Withdrawal of officers sent on deputation from various governmental departments for conducting the movement was another real set back for the post-literacy movement.

The materials made for the post-literacy programme were not fully utilised by the people. It is learned that a number of people who had learned how to read and write within a short period of time almost forgot the whole process later. What one witnesses in the movement for literacy development initiated by the community leadership in the pre-independent Kerala was its institutionalisation method which is explicitly visible in the establishment of schools and colleges for the communities. Since it was institutionalised, its impact is so profound that continuity of educating the respective communities is still in the process. In the case of literacy movement in Ernakulam and Palakkad, no efforts were made to institutionalise the literacy movement and development
so that the learning process would have continued. It is one of the drawbacks of this movement. Though the official version claims that the movement brought hundred total literacy, there are still people in the remote areas remaining illiterate.

Any movement to be successful needs permanent organizational structure to continue the programme. In the case of present movement various partners in the movement were withdrawn from the scene and though KSS remains as an official machinery, it does not show any effectiveness in practice. However, one of the important factors that emerges from the present movement is not exactly its success but the character of civic life of the people of the state. This is marked by an active public spirited citizenry existing in a secular social fabric which represents historical and traditional legacy. The study further reveals that a supportive mood among the political as well as social elite with regard to implementation has been more or less successful. The mobilization of societal support for the literacy programme as a kind of movement reinforces the values and ideals of a Kerala model of development. It is not correct to say that the movement was a complete success and manifests itself a number of drawbacks. Apart from spreading literacy, what emerged was the interaction between illiterate and normal masses and the top government officials including the district collector. The social relationship created a new harmony between bureaucracy and the rural masses who were till then kept
isolated from the government offices. The movement also witnessed involvement of all caste, community and religious groups cutting across existing social barriers. This was in fact a good development in the social relations.

The present study is concerned with the politics and implementation of development programmes and as such, literacy has assumed importance as it forms an integral part of the developmental programme. The focus has been laid on to the way in which the message and programme of the movement was implemented in both the districts. The study brings to light that policy making is much easier than implementation because execution of programme needs the active participation of various governmental agencies. Moreover, the implementation becomes difficult mainly because of the attitude of officials responsible for the implementation of any programme. In the case of present study the process of implementation was made much easier only because of the fact that people were made to realize the importance of the programme before the implementation was started and for this, various techniques were used by the organisers of the movement to convince the people about its significance. The study reveals that factors such as the co-ordination of the people and the district administration on the one side and that of various voluntary agencies and the organisers of the movement had been very helpful for the implementation of the programme. It brought about wider
social recognition of the programme and also helped to further the social upliftment and responsibility of the government for mobilisation of any problem regarding the state. One important factor that emerges is, implementation of any programme would be easier only if people are made aware of its significance and then they are made to participate in the implementation process.

Any society, irrespective of its social characteristics, has certain characteristic features which symbolise in the system of networks of interpersonal communication and exchange -- both formal and informal. In the case of Kerala, networks of civic engagement like the community groups, educational trusts, religious groups, co-operatives, mass based parties and voluntary associations help intense horizontal interaction. In such cases it is much easier for any organisers and activists to mobilise people's support for implementing any programme. This is exactly what we find in the case of Ernakulam and in the case of Palakkad districts. The more horizontally structured an organisation, the more it fosters institutional success in the broader community. Horizontally ordered groups like cooperatives, cultural associations and voluntary associations help in the better implementation of policies rather than vertically structured hierarchic institutions like the bureaucracy and its constituents. This aspect is very much visible in the present movement which has already been examined.