CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION

The present study concerns the history and development of higher education in Kerala. The study assumes special significance in the light of the fact that the State of Kerala is one of the most advanced states in India in the matter of education. The Universities in Kerala play a decisive role in the development of higher education.

Higher education is concerned with the preservation and transmission of knowledge as well as the development of new knowledge. But it is also concerned with the use of knowledge for the service of society. Prof. Kothari has emphasised this aspect in a convocation address in the University of Kerala.

Knowledge is growing and expanding at a terrific pace. In the rapidly changing world of today, one thing is certain: yesterday's educational system will not meet today's; and even less so, the needs of tomorrow ... Knowledge is virtually important but ... to transform society from a state of relative stagnation to one of dynamism and progress, there must be a general willingness and determination to make use of it in the service of the community. In a developing country it is most important to strengthen the universities. We need strong and progressive Universities. But, if the universities are to fulfil their role, they must be close to the people and
close to their needs and their life. It is important to recognise that in a knowledge-based world, universities, in 'advanced' as also in 'developing' countries, have acquired a new role and a new significance. Through the invigorating and symbolic combination of teaching and research, of knowledge and discovery, and of youth and age, universities make a contribution to fundamental science as no other organisation or agency can do. ... There cannot be a strong and progressive country without strong and progressive universities. And we cannot have strong universities except in an atmosphere where there is complete freedom to enquire and explore boldly and express freely, where there is readiness to doubt courageously, and where knowledge and understanding and true humanity go together and grow more and more and where the highest standards of scholarship, integrity and conduct are expected, respected and cultivated.1

The university in the contemporary society must be acutely sensitive to the fact that society is being refashioned and restructured by an aggregate of deep, penetrative, continuous forces - quite as much in the complexity of living as in scientific and technological advances. In consequence there are important human issues that require social sense for their solution. Hence there is an urgent and insistent need for universities today to play a major role in providing men and women who

have, not only the professional knowledge and skills to meet changing situations, but also the attitudes and abilities to analyse and assess problems, human as well as material.\(^1\)

Today, as never before, there is the need to extend and deepen our understanding of human nature, for many of our most urgent problems are those which involve human values and human needs. Universities can by their training play a vital part in producing men and women with the social attitudes and knowledge for the solution of some of these problems.\(^2\)

Education, particularly higher education, is thus the sine qua non of national development, since ideally it produces the high level manpower needed.

Universities cannot be mere certificate issuing offices but institutions which send out human beings with developed critical transitive consciousness, so that they can play the role of responsible citizens of a nation committed for its growth and progress. "A university must be a ferment of ideas that affect the future of the


\(^2\) ibid., p.20.
nation; its products are to become a catalytic force generating change.\textsuperscript{1} Now that admission is open to all and not reserved to the privileged few, the university is capable of exerting a profound influence on the fundamental structure of society.

Objectives of University Education

In the present age of science and technology, universities have acquired a new role and a new significance. It is the universities that provide the focal points for importing and exporting knowledge from where it is in abundance and transmitting it to the local community. Much more than any other agency they function as the ports of commerce in the great ocean of international science. They act as powerful 'pumps' drawing science and technology from advanced countries to irrigate the native soil. But if the universities in a developing country are truly serving their country they must be close to the native soil, close to the people and their aspirations and needs of the Government. "Universities must at times give society, not what society wants, but what it needs ... it is in universities that the soul of a people mirrors itself.\textsuperscript{2}


An analysis of universities will show their objectives. Their charters show that they are designed to be multipurpose institutions undertaking several tasks, each essential to the whole. All of them set themselves to advance learning and knowledge by teaching and research for the benefit both of their students and of the community, and in general to give students the benefits of a university education.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in his convocation address to the University of Allahabad in 1947, summed up the basic objectives of the University and its role in national life: "A university stands for humanism, for tolerance, for reason, for the adventure of ideas and for the search of truth. It stands for the onward march of the human race towards even higher objectives. If universities discharge their duties adequately, then it is well with the nation and the people."¹ These great words highlight the basic truth that universities have a crucial part to play in the life, welfare and strength of a nation.

A university is a federal body consisting of different departments directly under its jurisdiction and several affiliated colleges, where professors of eminence

and students dedicate themselves to the pursuit of different branches of knowledge including Science and Technology. The members of the university are at the same time members of society as well, and as such they cannot but be influenced by the values, aspirations and ideas of that society. Hence it is impossible for a university to function as an isolated unit, oblivious of its obligation to society.

In broad terms, the functions of the universities in the modern world may be said to be:

to seek and cultivate knowledge, to engage vigorously and fearlessly in the pursuit of truth, and to interpret old knowledge and beliefs in the light of new needs and discoveries;

to provide the right kind of leadership in all walks of life, to identify gifted youth and help them develop their potential to the full by cultivating physical fitness, developing the powers of the mind and cultivating right interests, attitudes and moral and intellectual values;

to provide society with competent men and women trained in agriculture, arts, medicine, science and technology and various other professions, who will also be cultivated individuals, imbued with a sense of social purpose;

to strive to promote equality and social justice and to reduce social and cultural difference through diffusion of education; and

to foster in the teachers and students, and through them in society generally, the attitudes and values needed for developing the 'good life' in individual and society.1

1. ibid., pp. 274-275.
In addition to these broad functions which they share in common with all universities, the Report of the Education Commission 1964-'66 clarified that the Indian Universities will have to shoulder some special responsibilities in the present state of our social and educational development. For instance,

they must learn to serve as the conscience of the nation and from this point of view they should encourage individuality, variety within a climate of tolerance;

they should develop programmes of higher education in a big way and to that end evolve a widespread network of part-time and correspondence course;

they should assist the schools in their attempt to qualitative self-improvement;

they should shake off the load of their tradition which gives a permanent place in examination and strive to improve standards by all-round development of research training; and

they should create at least a few centres which would be comparable to those of their type in any other parts of the world and this helps to bring back Indian academic life.1

The universities must ... create among the people the imaginative visions and intellectual breadth necessary for the attainment of the goal of 'democracy, justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity' enunciated in the Indian Constitution. Hence it is very clear that 'education in general, and higher education in particular', must play a vital role in modern world.2

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1. ibid., pp.275-277.
Need and Significance of the Study

Education has a history no less renowned than that of any other discipline. Yet the history of education in our country is rarely, if ever, presented as a meaningful development of many aspects of a nation's life.¹ The value of a study of the history of different aspects of education, in so far as the planning of future education goes, is great. Any aspect or kind of education lends itself to historical research.

India, a country of vast resources and rich culture, varied in nature, has largely remained an underdeveloped country even after nearly four and a half decades of independence and systematic educational planning. Why this has occurred has not been fully explained by social researchers and cultural historians of the country. The duties and functions of the centres of higher education have been rather vague and obscure. The assumption that universities must develop new technology for the country's economic development is well accepted. But why centres of higher education in India have not done so remains as obscure as ever.

A knowledge of the history and development of higher education of a country will provide us with adequate

¹ ibid.
inputs as to why the system has not been functioning at
the expected levels of efficiency. At the same time, it
will provide us inputs for further planning so that the
drawbacks of the existing patterns can be corrected.

The study of educational development in Kerala has
attracted world-wide attention since the State of Kerala
has several achievements in the field of education to its
credit. Starting with some of the early innovations like
the framing of Education Rules, Free Compulsory Education,
Education Act, University Education Act etc. to the latest
achievement viz., achieving the highly sought status of
cent per cent literacy, the State has been one of the most
progressive states in India in the matter of education.
It is noteworthy that 41 per cent of the total revenue
receipts of the State goes for education, out of which
21 per cent is allotted for higher education.

In the matter of higher education, Kerala enjoys a
predominant position among other Indian states. The
aspiration for higher education among the people of Kerala
is higher as compared with those of other states in
India. There is a tremendous rush of students to the
institution of higher learning in the state. This has
created problems. The explosion in the strength of
students and the comparative increase in the number of
colleges and universities is by no means a unique phenomenon confined to the state. This is a universal phenomenon; but its impact is comparatively greater in the state.

It may be noted that Kerala is the only state in India which does not have any higher educational institutions run by Central Government. All the other States have at least one Central Institution of higher education.

The study of the history of higher education in Kerala has not been adequately attempted by researchers. All that we have is fragments of records on education found scattered in the State Manuals of Travancore and Cochin, the Malabar Gazette and the Handbooks of institutions, University Calendars etc. This is a serious gap with respect to higher education in a state like Kerala which leads other states in India in many aspects of education. An attempt to interpret the scattered pieces of information and interpret the trends will be of great value to students of history as also to students of educational planning.

In addition to the general case for study of the development of higher education in Kerala there are some specific issues which have provoked this investigator to launch on this enterprise. Formalised education,
particularly higher education, has been considered as a means of social mobility. In a caste society the status of a person is ascribed by his birth. India is the classical land of caste and conservatism. But even here the aspiration towards upward mobility has not been absent and the attempt towards mobility has not entirely been futile. M.N. Sreenivas points out 'Sanskritisation' (the attempt to imitate the practices of the upper caste) as a means by which the lower caste strived to get upward mobility. But with the advent of English and modernity into the Indian scene and the introduction of English education especially since the 19th century, English and 'westernisation' seem to be the key to a new kind of power and position. Srinivas points out that at the early stages of English contact, while the upper castes were attempting upward mobility through English education, the lower castes (with the exception of those who had missionary contacts) were still continuing the 'Sanskritisation' device. It will be interesting to examine to what extent English education or modern education catalysed by English and particularly higher education played a role in vertical mobility aspirations and actualities in Kerala.
It is well known that there is difference of emphasis in the aims and objectives of education from the ancient times to the modern times and even between two education commission reports separated by just two decades - the University Commission Report (1948) and the Education Commission Report (1964-‘66). The motives which impelled higher education in Kerala in the 19th and 20th centuries would be worth examining.

Even when the motive force to higher education has taken hold, some agency is needed to give precise shape to the aspiration. It will be interesting to examine who were the agencies - government, missionaries, private individuals, social groups etc. - who were instrumental in developing higher education in Kerala.

Society has been progressively moving from hierarchi-cal and autocratic forms of control to egalitarian and democratic forms. Kerala has probably moved very rapidly from one extreme to the other. In modern social transac-tions multiple voices and the assertion of rights by different groups is heard conspicuously in Kerala. The implications of the democratisation experiments in the state and in the university bodies would be worth examining.
As compared to the coastal cities subjected to direct English influence - Bombay, Madras and Calcutta, the interior and the princely states were at an initial disadvantage with respect to English education and particularly higher education. Yet the more progressive among the princely rulers and their advisors are likely to have found ways of overcoming and compensating for the initial disadvantage. A princely state like Travancore and later a relatively small state like Kerala with its pressures of population and other problems is likely to innovate ways by which educational and social problems can be solved. One crucial aspect of the study would be to check whether Kerala has initiated major educational reforms or set afloat major educational ideas ahead of the rest of India and what has happened to these ideas in the course of its educational development. The dialectic between the organized and orderly execution of innovations and the multiple voices of democracy, between problem-solving and problem-creating models could also take interesting shapes in a state like Kerala.

The small units sometimes make innovations when they were small. These units could face different types of problems when they become larger. If they finally become smaller again, the final state may be very different from
the original state. Such a dialectic is possible with the original Travancore University which grew into a state-wide Kerala University. It again became a more restricted Kerala University after begetting other universities. It would be interesting to examine the status of the Trivandrum-centred University in the course of its development, - of its birth, growth, further expansion and contraction.

Statement of the Problem

The problem selected for the study is "HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN KERALA."

Definition of Terms

History

In the Chamber's 20th century Dictionary the meaning of the word History is given as 'an account of an event, a systematic account of the origin and progress of the world, a nation, an institution, a science etc. the knowledge of past events: a course of events: a life-story, an eventful life, a past of more than common interest: a drama representing historical events.1

In this study history is conceived as 'a systematically arranged written account of events affecting a nation, social group, institution, science and art, usually including an attempted explanation of the relationship of events and their significance i.e., a purposive interpretation of the past data. \(^1\) Here, it is meant to trace the educational history of higher education in the state.

**Development**

Development means growth or change in structure, function or organisation, constituting an advance in size, differentiation, complexity, integration, capacity, efficiency, or degree of maturity, a broad term inclusive of but not synonymous with maturation; may include lasting changes due to lengthy or extended learning, whether deliberate or incidental. It is loosely used as synonymous with growth, but more often and correctly restricted to sequences involving qualitative changes or changes in quantitative relations among constituent elements or factors. \(^2\)


\(^2\) *ibid.*, p.128.
Development with reference to higher education implies not merely expansion in terms of enrolment, number of courses etc. It also implies diversification, reintegration, relevance and many other qualitative dimensions.

Higher Education

The term is used in a broad sense in the present study. The term includes all kinds of post-secondary education, such as university education, technical education, medical education, legal education and general or liberal education in Arts, Science and Commerce, and higher special studies in Music, Fine Arts etc.

In the modern parlance at All India level, higher education means the education which comes after 10+2 level. But in Kerala there are still colleges catering to the +2 level and where some senior teachers draw U.G.C. Scale teaching at this level. In the course of the developmental stages of higher education, the term higher education meant 10+ or 11+ in the whole country during much of the period.

The early missionaries who started seminaries and high schools in the private sector were innovators in English education and modern education. Though they were operating apparently at a high school kind of structure they were also offering a substantial amount of higher education content
which was offered at that time. The more advanced students in these schools or seminaries were in fact studying collegiate matter. Thus qualitatively and in terms of standards a kind of higher education content was implied even in the early seminaries and English high schools. This interpretation is relevant before the formal structure of high school, matriculation and college get crystalised. In the early phases of education in Travancore mention is made in these discussions to English education and even to vernacular education of the modern type, since they paved the way for the development of higher education in Kerala.

**Kerala**

Kerala is a fascinating and interesting state in India. The age-old tradition about Kerala's origin is that long ago, Parashurama, a turbulent God, like Thor of Nordic mythology, flung his battle-axe far into the heaving sea. The waters receded. Thus emerged the land of Kerala into the sun and air. Kerala means the land of kera (coconut palm). There is another explanation. Kerala was originally Cheralal, meaning the land of the Cheras.

Kerala is a narrow strip of land in the southern part of India bounded by the Western Ghats on the east and the Arabian Sea on the west. The State of Kerala lies between
8° 18' and 12° 48' north latitude and between 74° 52' and 77° 24' east longitude. It has a total area of 15002 sq. miles (38855 sq. km.).\(^1\) Kerala comprises all the three regions that existed as separate princely states under the Raja of Cochin, Maharaja of Travancore and the Zamorin of Calicut. In less than two years after India's independence Travancore and Cochin were united and the State of Travancore-Cochin was formed on July 1, 1949.\(^2\)

The present Kerala was formed by the merger of Malayalam-speaking areas of the Travancore-Cochin state with the Malayalam-speaking Malabar district of the Madras State on November 1, 1956, according to the States Re-organization Act of 1956.\(^3\)

**Objectives of the Study**

The study has been designed with the following general objectives:

1. to identify important landmarks in the early developments relating to higher education in the constituent areas of Travancore, Cochin and Malabar;


ii. to trace the important historical developments with regard to the higher education from the time of starting the first college;

iii. to analyse the progress with reference to faculty improvement, growth of departments and other institutions;

iv. to delineate the growth and development of higher education - in its various dimensions - in the State in the post-independent period.

**Specific Research Questions**

Within the frame of the broad research objectives stated above the following specific research questions will be taken up in this study.

Some important research questions to be examined are:

1. What were the social motivations behind the starting of higher education in Kerala during the 19th and early 20th century?

2. What kinds of agencies were responsible for starting of higher educational institutions in Kerala?

3. What was the role of the state in establishing and popularising higher education in the State?
(4) To what extent were the democratisation experiments in the state responsible for the spread of higher education in the state?

(5) What special forces were in operation in establishing the first university in the state?

(6) How did the model adopted for the first university influence the the starting of other universities in the state?

The major hypothesis

The major hypothesis in focus is: "The spread and acceptance of the Western model of higher education in Kerala was the result of an attempt to achieve vertical mobility and occupy positions of power in Government and society by members of the upper strata of society in their attempt to share power with their imperial masters".

Other hypotheses

1. The educational thinkers of Trivandrum and later broader unit of Kerala have floated educational ideas relating to educational structure, social relevance etc. and even attempted reform measures in higher education much ahead of the generation of such ideas in the national scene.

2. Kerala has launched certain potentially democratic and egalitarian reforms ahead of the other states.
3. The dialectic between genuine equality of opportunity and meritocracy has not been adequately resolved in Kerala.

4. The democratic tendency in Kerala shows itself in the bold presentation of multiple points of view. But there is a tendency for this to degenerate into a clash between multiple vested interests. This clash has often stood in the way of Kerala losing the benefits of the ideas which Kerala itself has initiated into the national stream.

5. The dialectic between the small and the big often resolves itself in very interesting ways with reference to the development of higher education.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is governed by the general and specific objectives indicated above. The relevant primary and secondary sources were used and interpretations and assessments done according to the accepted principles in this kind of study. A descriptive approach is used rather than elaborate statistical approaches in the presentation of much of the data.

The history and development of higher education is proposed to be traced in this study, in order to place the
suggestions in their proper perspective. It also traces the efforts of expanding higher education as well as the standard of education in the state. More than a century of history of higher education and its development have been dealt with. This period is divided into different stages, and analysed. Even then, it is a systematic study, touching all the important educational factors which contributed to the development of higher education in Kerala.

Detailed historical analysis indicating the antecedents and other factors is limited to the period 1866 (when the first English College was opened at Trivandrum) to 1957 when the University of Travancore was expanded into the University of Kerala following the formation of the State of Kerala on November 1, 1956. However the descriptive analysis of the growth of higher education with reference to the plurality of universities in Kerala is continued up to 1990 (up-to-date information deemed important is occasionally given in footnotes).

**Methodology of the Study**

The study is aimed at tracing the educational history and development of higher education in Kerala. It is basically a historical research.
Historical research is concerned with the past and it attempts to trace the past as a means of seeing the present in its true perspective. Historical studies in education are based on two types of data - primary and secondary. "The primary sources, the only solid basis of historical work, are the original documents or remains and the first witness to a fact."\(^1\) In the secondary sources, a middle man has come between the original witness and the present consumer. "Primary sources are the main sources providing historical evidences which include documents such as the old literature, things from Archaeological Departments, contemporary books etc. The secondary sources are useful, but should not be taken as final."\(^2\) The main limitation of the historical research is that it is not always possible to obtain primary evidence, and at times, the investigator has to rely on secondary sources.

The required data is collected primarily from the various official publications including Departmental and Committee Reports, Annual Reports, Minutes, Statutes, Acts, Books, Government Files, Government Gazettes,

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Journals, Pamphlets, Publications of the period and various records of the Government and the University.

The study naturally used the data from primary as well as secondary sources. The primary sources of data include mainly various files, documents, Administration Reports, Annual Reports, Minutes, Statutes and Committee Reports of the State Government Gazettes and Universities. The investigator had no difficulty in getting records from the Universities, Government offices and libraries. He also visited the Government Archives at Trivandrum and Calicut several times and collected the necessary information.

Secondary sources consist mainly of published books, research papers, articles, pamphlets and reports of conferences and seminars which touch upon higher education. An extensive survey of available literature relating to the present study was made in order to know the various observations made by others regarding the problems of higher education in our country.

The data obtained from primary and secondary sources were finally analysed, interpreted and reported, keeping in view the objectives of the study.
In interpreting historical data investigators use two kinds of criticisms, viz., external and internal. As this is not a study in pure history or archaeology this investigator did not have much recourse to external criticism. The documents used have been well authenticated and accepted as genuine. The concern of the investigator was primarily internal criticism, interpreting the worth of the content of the documents from the point of view of educational history.

Much of the reporting in the study uses simple descriptive procedures without using complex historiographic approach. However, from the point of view of testing the hypotheses some historiographic approaches were found relevant. This investigator was not committed to any particular school of writing history. The eclectic approach is predominantly used. There are occasions when the contribution of a great personality tends to get into focus. The initiator of a reform or originator of an idea could be a Maharaja, a reigning Princess or a force behind the rulers (a powerful and intellectual Dewan or a British Resident representative). Innovations could have emanated from intelligent and dynamic bureaucrats or from any intellective person. The Missionaries who have helped to change the course of educational history have been
moved by certain ideals. The later social groups which
organised themselves for the cause of education or for
the end of using education to protect their interests
were also moved by certain ideologies. The economic and
environmental factors are constantly present at the stage
of historical operation. The interpretation of history
in terms of democratic and other social forces also became
relevant in some parts of the study.

The study also takes the survey dimensions in
certain aspects. Direct survey of primary data was not
attempted. The compilations already available at the
Government and University records were analysed and
occasionally reinterpreted. Detailed statistical treatment
is not attempted. Descriptive techniques are used by
and large.

Limitations

The early history of education in the state was
traced from all available sources.

The present study touched mainly the academic
aspects of the University of Kerala. Apart from this,
there are many aspects (e.g., Planning and Development,
General Administration, University Finances, University
Examinations, Residual matters etc.). It is not at all
possible to study all these aspects within the limited
time. Still, those areas are worth investigation but may have to be explored separately. Even the educational history and development in this study, it is hoped, will serve as a spring from which further studies could be attempted. Much stress has been given to the study of the University of Kerala. The history and development of other Universities in Kerala has to be investigated separately. Finally the investigator had to depend on secondary sources to some extent. But on the whole the data thus collected has helped to frame a history of the educational history, growth and development of higher education centred round the University of Kerala. However, the analysis of the theme presented in this thesis is claimed to be original.

At the commencement of the study the investigator started with an open approach regarding the history and development of higher education following the lines set by many studies in this history of education under review. When the primary and secondary data were analysed in a preliminary way in consultation with the supervising teacher it occurred that the data could be reorganised and reinterpreted with very specific objectives and even some guiding hypotheses in view. Hence the results of the study might be found taking two different forms (i) of a
purely descriptive kind following from certain general objectives and (ii) certain pinpointed conclusion which could result from clearly specified objectives and hypotheses. Given more time, it would be possible to polish up the general descriptive approach according to its time-consuming inductive approach or to pursue the specific objectives and hypotheses in depth and place the conclusions on a formal footing. The best that is possible in a limited time impelled by the two divergent and even contradictory approaches is presented in this study.