INTRODUCTION

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Education has been a widely discussed topic. There are many different views regarding it. According to an important concept education is the manifestation of the inborn totality of the human being. The role of education is the emancipation of an individual.¹

In the traditional society the role of education was different from what it is today. Ideologically it was accepted that education brings forth the all round development of human beings. But the stratification of the society on the basis of caste, religion and class made it restricted to the elite groups and hence it did not play any remarkable role in the society as a whole.

Naturally, resistance movements became inevitable in modern times and the neglected groups tried to get what they had been denied for many centuries. Political circumstances also changed and it affected the education policies as well. But still what education did was to recreate the stereotypes of the old systems. When modern education system was imparted, many believed that the system would include the downtrodden groups also. But the opposite was the experience. This is because of the simple fact that Education has never been impartial. So it is incorrect to believe that a system in which the downtrodden has the role of critical appraisal of social justice has emerged.²

The education system developed by the dominant groups will always be biased. They want to become the masters without any threat from any

quarter. Now that education was limited to a creamy section of the society, the majority of the common people were denied the same.

Like changes in the field of education, the dominant classes never tolerated changes in the political formation as well. So any attempt to change the pattern was strongly dealt with. It is believed that education was one of the important ingredients to bring about any change in the social and political structure. Political power was the major influential aspect in the society. So there was serious and deliberate effort to deny the same to those who were not at all supposed to be welcomed to wider political arena. But this process did not continue for long since there were liberating forces that came up to take up the responsibility to equip the downtrodden with the idea of political and economic rights.

Many studies have been conducted about the political and educational history of Kerala. But it is significant that no serious study has been done to untangle the relation between education and political consciousness in Kerala. Kerala being one of the leading states in terms of literacy as well as one of the most politically active states in India, the study about the relationship between growth and development of political consciousness and the role of education in this process seems to be relevant. Kerala is a state where many political and educational experiments have taken place. So an examination is to be done to see how the people of Kerala reacted to these experiments.

There is an argument by some thinkers like T.J.Nossiter and Dr.E.J.Thomas that education played a vital role in changing Kerala society. They are of the opinion that education along with some other factors changed the society and paved the way for political and social consciousness. Robin Jeffrey
considers the role of education as a catalyst in politicizing and radicalizing the masses. Scholars like Dilip.M.Menon think that all the reforms we have today have been the legacy of the Missionary education.

The relationship between education and political consciousness is clearly manifested in the region of Malabar, which formed a district of the Madras Presidency under British rule. On the one hand, Malabar was one of the most developed districts in Madras Presidency in terms of education, and it was also the centre of political activity during the period of the freedom struggle. It is easy to speculate upon a connection between education and the growth of political consciousness, as it has always been the educated middle class who had been in the forefront of the freedom struggle. In this context, the following questions are looked at in this enquiry taking Malabar as the field of study.

The first problem is how the education system worked here under the colonial influence and whether education was a liberating agent in its real sense in Malabar. A serious consideration is also given to the argument whether education had played the role of a change agent in bringing about major social and political changes; what role did the educated groups play in Malabar in politicizing the masses; whether they spearheaded the political struggles or kept their silence, enjoying what the colonial masters offered to them. The role of education in the colonial rule is examined in the context of the ongoing political struggle. Further the existence of any other factors that fomented the augmentation of political consciousness in Malabar has to be examined.
Methodology

Normally what is attempted is a standard historical narrative of the development of political consciousness in Malabar or a detailed history of education in Malabar. Here the endeavour is not to develop such a narrative but to examine the linkage between the process of education and the growth of political consciousness. Much of the information that is used here on the growth of political consciousness and education is already well known. But in our opinion the linkage between the two has not been sufficiently explored. So as an interdisciplinary methodology using social as well as pedagogical analysis linked to historical information is used to untangle the process of social and political transformation in Malabar.

Sources.

The following sources were used in this study.

1. Archival sources

We have depended mainly on the sources available at the Regional Archives, Calicut.

2. Interviews

We have conducted interviews with a number of persons both reputed and unknown to get a clear picture of the responses of the people to the ongoing changes in the period of study.

We have gone through almost all the biographies and autobiographies available and were helpful in framing ideas about the life and thought of the people during the period of study.

4. Literary sources

There are a number of books, magazines, weeklies and newspapers that provided ample materials for the completion of the study.

5. Earlier studies

Many scholars have given much relevant information to supplement the study. They approached the social, educational and political developments in our society in a serious manner. The study by P.R.Gopinathan Nair – ‘Education and Economic Change in Kerala’ is worthwhile. Another study that comes under this group is that of V.K.Ramachandran-‘Kerala’s Developmental Achievements: A Review’. P.K.Michael Tharakan has brilliantly described the educational development in the 19th century Travancore through ‘Socio- Economic factors in Educational Development: The Case of 19th century Travancore’.

An important study has been made by Aparna Basu in the book titled-‘The Growth of Education and Political development in India (1898-1920).Thayat Sankaran has written Bharateeya Vidyabhyasam: Charitravravum Varthamana Prasnangalum, which deals with the history of modern education in India and the problems of today.

B.V.Shah and K.B.Shah have described the social context of education through ‘Sociology of Education’. ‘Development of Education System in
India' is a significant work by Arther Mayhew and H.R.James that describes the growth and development of modern education system in India. 'The Sociology of Education-An Introduction' is an important book written by Ivor Morrish that points out the social relevance of education. The educational concept of Gandhiji is very clearly explained in his work 'Towards New Education'. Paulo Freire has been vivid about his educational concepts in *Vidyabhyasathinte Rashtreeyam* (The Politics of Education). Ananda.E.Wood has given a brilliant examination of education in Kerala through 'Knowledge before Printing and After'. Tapas Basu too has given a detailed history of the student movement in India through 'Probing into the History of Indian Student Movement'.

C. Bhaskaran has a description about the founding of Student Unions in Kerala and the struggles conducted by them in politicizing the Kerala society through *Keralathile Vidyarthi Prasthanam*.

The M.Phil thesis by M.N.Padmanabhan- 'Nationalism and Teachers Movement in Malabar' describes the role of the teaching Community in the freedom struggle. Dr.K.J.John through 'Christian heritage of Kerala' has picturised the spread of Christianity and its contribution in many fields in the history of Kerala. P.K.Muhammed kunhi has given a detailed story of the Muslims of Kerala and their culture through *Maslimingalum Kerala Samskaravum*. P.K.Gopalakrishnan has made a serious effort to find the culture of Kerala through *Keralathinte Samskarika Charithram*. Through 'Nationalism and Social Change :The Role of Malayalam Literature', Dr.K.K.N.Kurup has examined the role of literature in fomenting the National Movement in Kerala. A.R.Desai has attempted to go through the social movements in India and the influence of such movements in bringing
about changes in the history of the country through 'The Social Background
of Indian Nationalism'. An important study by Robin Jeffrey is remarkable
in many respects. 'Politics, Women and Well-being' unravels the social,
political and educational background of Kerala society. 'Religion and
Ideology in Kerala' is an important work by Genevieve Lamercinier that
examines the social and ideological situation in Kerala. Through the
celebrated work 'Caste, Nationalism and Communism in South India'
Dilip.M.Menon has examined the growth of social, political and educational
aspects of the Kerala Society.

Dr.E.J.Thomas has given a description about the social and political
structure of Kerala through his work- Keralathinte Samooha Ghatanayum
Roopantharavum. M.S.A.Rao has gone through the social movements led
especially by the lower castes in Kerala and the indelible impact they made
in the Kerala society through 'Social Movements and Social Transformation-
A Study of two backward class Movements in India'.

Cherukad (Jeevithappatha), A.K.Gopalan (Ente Jeevithakatha), P.Narayanan
Nair (Ara Noottantilute), Mannath Padmanabhan (Ente Jeevitha Smaranakal),
Thikkodiyan (Arangu Kanatha Nadan), C.K.Gopalan (Quit India Samaravum
Njanum), M.N.Govindan Nair (Emmente Atmakatha), E.K.Nayanar (Pinnitta
Vazhikal and Samaratheehoolayil) E.M.S.Nambudiripad (Atmakatha),
K.P.Kesavamenon (Kazhinha Kalam) were some of the helpful auto
biographies to get a clear picture about the situation in Kerala.

The ideological differences between the Indian National Congress and the
Communists have been well explained by K.Kelappan in his work
Congressum Communisavum.
The peasant struggles in Malabar have been described by V.V.Kunhambu through Kayyurum Karivellurum and Kayyur Samara Cahrithram. M.N.Kurup has given another major contribution in this topic through the biography of A.V.Kunhambu. The working class movement in Kerala has been well depicted by R.Prakasam in his work Keralathile Trade Union Prasthanathinte Charithram. The political struggle in Kerala and the role of the working class have been described by P.Krishnapillai through Sakhakkale Munnottu.

‘The History of Freedom Movement in Kerala’ by P.K.K.Menon has the distinction being the most important work about the National Movement in Kerala. The Sampoorna Krithikal by E.M.S.Nambudiripad has great importance in the context of the National Movement since many of the articles were written during the period of freedom struggle.

‘Malabar’ by William Logan is helpful in getting the history of the Malabar region. P.RadhaKrishnan through his work ‘Peasant Struggles, Land reforms and Social change’ has highlighted the past of Kerala especially the land and revenue system and the many struggles by the peasant community against exploitation. Another remarkable work on the same subject is by T.C.Varghese – ‘Agrarian Change and Social Consequences’, which provides the economic situation in Kerala, the land and revenue system.

**Limitations of the Sources**

Since this study is not the standard history of education or of political development, the normal secondary or even primary sources on the political or educational history of Malabar are not very helpful. Many of the valuable documents that might have helped the study have been irrecoverably lost. More over the old generation that had the experience ended their lives
without recording their memories properly and hence the possibility of first hand information has been very limited. Much of the information has to be gathered from non-conventional sources, including memories of the participants in political struggles, those who have undergone school education in colonial times and so on. So autobiographies and biographies are heavily depended for the completion of the study.

**Framework of the Thesis**

The first chapter in the study-The Features of Kerala society and Education before Twentieth century- An Overview-gives a brief account of the social, political, economic and educational situation that prevailed in Kerala on the eve of the 20th century.

The second chapter-Caste, Community and the Struggle for Modern Education-describes how the social and political life of the people of Kerala in the 20th century had been. It also considers how the common people undertook the struggle against casteism and other social evils. It also goes through the various struggles conducted by different community organizations for attaining education.

The third chapter-Progress of Education in Malabar-discusses the growth and development of education in Malabar; the problems faced by the people on the way to achieve mass education. Major steps taken by the Government in the field of education are also evaluated. The activities by the Missionaries in spreading education are given attention.

The fourth chapter-The Growth and Development of Political Consciousness in Malabar-elaborates how political consciousness was developed in Malabar and achieved greater momentum later. The activities
of the major political parties are discussed. The persons, who spearheaded the struggle for freedom and their educational background, are given importance. The founding of Peasant Unions and Trade Unions and their role in spreading mass education are also examined.

The fifth chapter-The Teaching Community and Political Consciousness in Malabar- deals with the founding of the Teachers Unions in Malabar and their role in politicizing and radicalizing the teachers and students in the context of the freedom movement. The role of the teachers in the educational institutions and society in Malabar are also looked at. Various struggles by the teaching community are elaborated in this chapter. The role of the teachers in the fight against the colonial Government is given importance.

The sixth chapter-Radicalization of the Student Community in Malabar- includes the study of the student life in Malabar and the role of the students in bringing about educational and political changes. The various struggles and the founding of the Student Unions, and their role in spreading political ideologies are given greater consideration. The participation of the students in the National Movement is also a topic of study.

The seventh chapter-The Role of Letters in the Development of Political Consciousness in Malabar-discusses how the common people got politicized since the academic community was not at all taking the responsibility to politicize the students and the society. The remarkable role played by the newspapers, public speeches by eminent persons, the libraries and reading rooms etc. in imparting political awareness is analysed.

The concluding chapter briefly summarises the findings of this study.