This thesis entitled “Introducing New Public Management Principles: A Case Study of the Modernising Government Programme in Kerala” seeks to analyze and evaluate the public management reform programs coming under the category ‘New Public Management’ (NPM) implemented by some developed countries and explore the applicability of the model to developing countries. This study takes up the case of Kerala and seeks to understand the nature of NPM interventions made in the state in the name of Modernising Government Programme (MGP) with particular reference to the District of Ernakulam and the impact these interventions had in improving service delivery. Adopting a descriptive and analytical methodology, the study uses the questionnaire method, interview schedule and institutional physical facilities survey to collect the necessary data.

The study found that considerable amount of physical facilities was created with the help of MGP. Fear of downsizing, fear of greater work load, the burdensome character of participatory processes etc. forces the staff to continue old methods of doing things rather than change the work culture. The MGP was not a whole system effort. Only a few institutions could be brought under its purview. There was not much coordination among the execution ministries either at the ministerial level or at the level of the bureaucracy. Resistance was put up by organised unions belonging to the left and right parties fearing downsizing and reversal of the gains from organised unionism. In sum, the MGP was scuttled due to the adverse bureaucratic environment in the state and the lack of strong political will to see it through. No constituency at the level of the society could be created in the state to support reforms. Finally, civil society in Kerala also did not see MGP in a favourable light. The study concludes with a number of policy recommendations.