CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“Magnificent buildings and equipments are no substitute for the eat teachers. A university is not a mere information shop; it is a place where man’s intellect, will and emotions are disciplined. The university is a sanctuary of the intellectual life of the country, and pursuit of knowledge is the soul of the university. Universities are the homes of culture and citadels of liberty”.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

Education is universally recognised to be an investment in human resources. It is the process by which society transmits its cultural heritage – its accumulated knowledge, values, and skills – from one generation to another through its schools, colleges, universities, and other educational institutions. Its pristine aims, as suggested in the Kothari Commission Report entitled “Education and National Development”¹ are:

1. “Internal transformation so as to relate it to the life, need, and aspirations of the nation;

2. Qualitative improvement so that the standards achieved are adequate, keep continually rising and, at least, in a few sectors become internationally comparable; and

3. Expansion of educational facilities broadly on the basis of manpower needs and with an accent on equalisation of educational opportunities”.

The higher educational system in India is one of the oldest and the largest in the world with a network of 20 central universities, 215 state universities, 100 deemed universities, 10 open universities, 13 institutions of
national importance, and more than 17,000 colleges (of which 1,798 are women’s colleges). Our Higher Educational system occupies a prime position in the world. Around 39 institutions provide education in agriculture (including forestry, dairy, fisheries, and veterinary science), 16 in health sciences, 38 in engineering and technology, four in information technology, one in journalism, and four in law”.

However, such a phenomenal growth of educational system is not an unmixed blessing. Behind the façade of the robust statistics of the spectacular growth, all is not well with the Indian educational system, particularly the higher educational sector. One of the concerns, the serious one, is related to the “Quality”. Kothari Commission observed that “the situation in higher education is unsatisfactory and even alarming in some ways, the average standards have been falling and the rapid expansion has resulted in lowering quality. The content and quality are inadequate to our present needs and future requirements. Even those who are broadly aware of the situation fail to notice its poignancy…”

The most striking feature at the beginning of 21st century is that education has become an “internationally traded commodity” (Philips – 2002). With the advancement of information and communication technologies, any university on the globe can offer its education to any person of any country. A perspective student is aware of availability of “Quality Education” and is ready to go and study anywhere. He is not restricting himself to his native city, state, or country. Education is under serious consideration as a service under General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) / World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Under this liberalization, privatization, and globalisation conditions, the demand will be for “Quality” only. 21st Century needs a flexible generalist rather than a specialist. The flexible generalists are persons equipped with necessary levels of knowledge, skills, and values to adjust
readily to different job settings and life situations. They should be adaptable to multiple career changes. According to Prasad (2004)\(^5\) “the education should focus on the whole development of an individual apart from his occupational training. Learning to learn is one of the four key skills to be developed among learners”.

Thus, we observe that the objectives of educational system have moved from preparing clerks of British time to quantitative production of graduates to the future of producing multi-capable and flexible generalists, with a complete development in all dimensions, but not restricted to subject expertise. This leads to the ancient concept of ‘self-realisation’ or in other words, ‘realisation of self-capabilities, but not in specialisation of a particular subject.

From this discussion, it is evident that the importance of ethics and values in educational system are re-emerging. Especially for sustenance and growth in this new era, they are very essential (P. Sivaswaroop – 2004).\(^6\) To put it in a different sense, the need of the hour is “Quality Education”. Drawing attention towards higher education, the Kothari Education Commission had observed that “there is a general feeling in India that the situation in higher education is unsatisfactory and even alarming in some ways that the average standards have been falling and that rapid expansion has resulted in lowering of quality”.\(^7\) A similar and rather more serious concern for quality of higher education was again expressed in the government of India’s Document, “Challenge of Education” – the Policy Perspective (1985). Even after a lapse of about two decades of the observations made by Kothari Commission and it stated that the “whole process of higher education was warped, disoriented and become dysfunctional, producing a number of unemployable young men and women”.\(^8\)
Education is indeed a necessary ‘Utopia’ for our society as was rightly pointed out by Jacques Delors in his ‘report of the International Commission on Education for the twenty-first century learning: The Treasure Within’(1996). With all its ramifications, it remains to be the most vital input in the process of human development. While basic education is required to equip the common member of the society with the ‘essential skills for living a constructive life within society’ and works as an indispensable ‘passport to life’, secondary education is essential for accelerating and sustaining high level economic growth besides other aspects of social development. Higher education, on the other end of the continuum of educational system, is the ‘driving force of economic development and the focal point of learning in a society’. It is both a repository as well as a generator of knowledge and is the main vehicle of passing on the accumulated experiences, both cultural and scientific, of human society. For developing societies like ours, higher education also has significant implications for school education and adult literacy programmes. The emerging world view suggests that in the days to come the role of knowledge capital in the process of development will pre-dominate the physical capital and this clearly indicates that the importance and relevance of higher education is going to grow further.

‘Access’, ‘Equity’ and ‘Quality’ are the three contemporary challenges to be overcome by the higher educational system, today. Equal importance should be attached to all the three to ensure sustainable socio-economic benefits of higher education. Equally important an issue, along with the three, now the higher education being confronted with is the ‘Relevance’, not only in Kerala or India, but across the world.

Social changes take place in the society so rapidly that the university system is always exposed to new process of change. The universities and colleges should be sensitive to the changing conditions of
society and shifting patterns of thought and behavior and must be ready to meet new demands and challenges. Therefore, the “stakeholders of higher education” en-block must accept the responsibility of assuring the “major four” – Access, Equity, Quality, and Relevance – in higher education.

The various education commissions and committees appointed by the University Grants Commission (UGC), the central and state governments, on different occasions, have attempted to go into the details of some areas of the subjects mentioned. A few researchers also have made studies on the problems and weaknesses of the higher educational system in Kerala in a general way touching periphery only. No systematic enquiry into these aspects of higher education in the state, mainly dealing with the “Quality” side, has been done hitherto.

Quality assurance is now increasingly being defined in terms of international norms and standards and is viewed as the responsibility of multiple agencies such as government, professional bodies, accrediting agencies, national associations, and multinational organisations committed to the provision of quality education within and across national borders. In India, this emphasis on quality has resulted in an all round concern, and the decision of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) to announce the calendar year 2002 as the ‘Year of Quality in Higher Education’ has given the quality initiatives, the much needed stimulus.

In its endeavor towards institutionalising a quality culture, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) has adopted a multi-layered approach through the National Action Plan (NAP). This plan was announced and accepted at the meeting of the education secretaries of all the states held in New Delhi, organized and conducted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). The four stages of the plan are.
1. SWOT analysis of institutions;

2. Self-study, assessment and accreditation of institutions;

3. Remedial measures in the case of weak and less privileged institutions; and

4. Implementation of ‘quality sustenance’ activities in accredited institutions.

This study attempts to analyse the multifarious aspects of academic bodies in their attempts to assure ‘Quality’ in higher education in the state of Kerala and their effectiveness in introducing qualitative changes in the organizational set-up and also in the designing and implementing of varied academic programmes, so that, a guaranteed higher education of international standard could be rendered by our portals of higher education. However, the specific objectives of the study can be finalised only after review of literature.

**Review of Literature**

New information is getting added to an already done work and new materials and inventions coming on an alarming rate to modify it. An investigator who is not fully aware of what has gone before has little chance of making a worthwhile contribution. Therefore, it is very essential to have a glimpse of the works already accomplished in the field and the present status of the study.

The relevant studies relating to the topic have been undertaken mainly by the various commissions and committees appointed by the governments – central and states - from time to time. These attempts spread across Indian Independence – both before and after. Also some isolated attempts have been made by individual researchers interested in the field.

The reports of the various learned commissions and committees provide invaluable information and insights. Though they do not directly
deal with the topic, they were of immense help for pursuing the project. They mainly include the University News published from New Delhi, by the Association of Indian Universities; the statutes of the universities in Kerala, particularly the university of Kerala, university of Calicut, and MG university; the Encyclopedia of Higher Education (rightly called the *Magnum Opus* of Higher Education); the NAAC News (a quarterly newsletter of the ‘National Assessment and Accreditation Council’, Bangalore, India);


In presenting a detailed review, the subject matter has been divided into four parts:

1. The observations, suggestions, and recommendations by the various commissions and committees in the national level.

2. The observations, suggestions, and recommendations by the small number of agencies appointed by the state of Kerala, for the purpose.

3. The observations made by researchers and individuals interested in the topic

4. The views appeared in the mouthpieces of UGC, universities, NAAC, and other agencies in higher education in India and in Kerala.
The observations, suggestions, and recommendations of various Commissions and Committees in India

For a better review, this part is again divided into two:

- Reports of commissions and committees relating to the pre-independence period.
- Reports of commissions and committees relating to the post-independence period.

A. Reports of commissions and committees: Pre-Independence period

The Education Despatch of the Court of Directors (Wood’s Education Despatch), July 9, 1854.\textsuperscript{13}

This document of immense historical importance was known as the Magna Carta of Indian education, written at the instance of Charles Wood, the then President of the Board of Control. It contains,

- Educational policy
- Medium of instruction
- Creation of department of public instruction
- Establishment of universities
- Evolving of a system of grant-in-aid
- Encouragement to educated Indians to take up employment in the government, and
- Spreading of education among women.

The ‘Desptch’ contains the following proposals:
• Establishment of universities, in London style, with a chancellor, vice-chancellor, and fellows who constitute a ‘senate’.

• Proposed to establish universities at Calcutta, and Bombay upon the general principle and procedures driven in the Despatch.

➢ Indian Education Commission 1882-83.  

The first Indian Education Commission was appointed by Lord Ripon on Feb.3, 1882. Sir William Hunter was the chairman of the 22member Commission.

Terms of Reference:

To enquire in to the manner in which the principles of the Despatch of 1854 had been effected and to suggest measures to carryout the policies laid down in the Despatch.

Recommendations:

• Grants to aided colleges for building, furniture, library, and apparatus of instruction

• Levying of fees in the government and aided colleges, establishment of scholarships in colleges for bright as well as poor students.

• Both the main recommendations were aiming of quality improvement of higher education in India.

➢ Indian Universities Commission 1902

Many universities were established – as per the recommendations of the Indian Educational Commission 1882 – and assured a substantial extension of collegiate education and westernisation of the content of education.
Lord Curzon appointed the Indian Universities Commission, on Jan 27, 1902, with Thomas Raleigh as its chairman.

Terms of reference:

To enquire into the conditions of the universities in British India, and to make available proposals for improving the standards of universities, and advancement of learning.

Recommendations:

- The universities should make better provisions for advanced courses of study;
- University examinations for the award of degrees and for uniformity in the nomenclature of the degrees in arts and science at the different universities.
- Number of members in the senate and syndicate was prescribed
- Teachers representation at the senate, from affiliated colleges
- Quality improvement through common Lingua Franca – English.

➢ Indian Universities Act, 1904.16

Embodied the main recommendations of the Indian Universities Commission, 1902, the Imperial Legislative Council passed the first Indian Universities Act, on March 21, 1904.

The Act, among other things, contains the very rudimentary, basic, and the inevitable aspects for a high quality higher educational system in the country. A glimpse of the Act goes as follows:

- By this Act, the scope of the universities was enlarged.
Universities were given the right of teaching as well as the right of conducting examinations.

Universities were also given the right to conduct research;

Minimum number of members – senate, 50, maximum 100, term five years.

Election of members to senate.

The syndicate was accorded legal status.

Territorial jurisdiction for the universities.

Calcutta University Commission, or Sadler Commission, 1917 - 19.17

The government of British-India appointed the Calcutta University Commission (1917), with Dr. Michael Sadler, the then Vice-Chancellor of Leeds’ University, submitted its report in 1919.

Though the commission was appointed to go into the problems of only the Calcutta university, the problems that it studied were more or less common to other Indian universities too.

Recommendations:

Among other things, the pertinent recommendations were:

- Intermediate colleges for arts, science, engineering, and medicine, either attached to selected high schools, or as independent entities.

- ‘Honours’ courses together with ‘Pass’ courses

- Three-year degree courses – after intermediate.

- Special board for women’s education
- Special committee, including external experts, for appointing professors and readers.

- Training for teachers to improve quality of teaching.

The error-free selection process of quality teachers, and their regular training programmes, envisaged in the report, and the recommendation for Honours course for bright students highlight the need for quality higher education in India.

➢ Hartog Committee – 1928-29.\textsuperscript{18}

The Simon Commission – A British-India Statutory Commission for enquiring into the social, political, and economic progress of India – appointed an auxiliary committee known as Hartog Committee, under the chairmanship of Sir Philip Hartog, the then Vice-Chancellor of Dacca university, in 1928.

The Committee filed its report in Sep.1929. The Committee, in its report, stated that the universities/colleges were overcrowded by students who were not eligible for university education and further expansion in the field of university education had been gained at the cost of ‘Quality’.

The Committee recommended further that the universities/colleges should consider the training of bright and self-reliant citizens as their primary function. In fine, the Committee stood fast by ‘Quality’ rather than the ‘quantity’ aspect of higher education in India.

➢ The Sargent Commission – 1944.\textsuperscript{19}

As a landmark in the history of higher education in British-India, the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) – the oldest and the most important advisory body of the government – appointed a commission
named “Sergeant Commission” under the chairmanship of John Sergeant, the educational advisor to the government of British-India in 1942.

The report (1944) on the post-war educational development in India was mainly focused on the quality side of higher education, and hence it was an eye-opener to the government.

According to the report, the university education in India did not fully satisfy the requirements of a National System of Education (NSE). In order to raise the standard of higher education in India, the conditions of admission should be revised. It envisaged a re-organization/re-engineering of the university system, and strongly advised for the abolition of the two-year intermediate course, with the transfer of the first year to the high-schools, retaining the second year in the universities. It also advised for a three-year degree-course in universities and colleges.

Keeping attention on quality higher education, the report stated emphatically the importance of establishing a high standard post graduate study, and research in ‘pure’ and ‘applied’ aspects of subjects.

Establishment of Technical Schools and Technological Departments in universities/colleges, and the admission to these courses based on strict quality were also in the suggestions.

B. Reports of Commissions and Committees: Post-Independence period

Committee on Secondary Education – 1948.20

The first committee, in free India, on secondary education was appointed by the government in 1948. The committee was ‘Committee on Secondary Education in India’, headed by Dr. Tara Chand, joint educational advisor.
Recommendations:

When we look from the angle of ‘Quality Enhancement of Higher Education’, the following points emerge from the recommendations:

- Admission to the degree courses should be preceded by a course of primary and secondary education for a period of 12 years.
- Refresher courses for teachers after every five years
- Pay-scales of the teachers should be revised so as to motivate them to cope with the changing situations.

University Education Commission -1948-49.²¹

Shortly after independence, on 4.11.1948, the government of India constituted a commission known as “University Education Commission” of which Dr. S. Radhakrishnan was the chairman. Dr. Tara Chand, former V.C. of Allahabad university, Dr. Hussain, V.C Aligarh Muslim university, Dr. A. Lakshmanaswamy Mudaliar, V.C., Madras university, Dr. Meghanad Saba, dean, faculty of science, university of Calcutta, and five other eminent personalities in the field of education were its members.

The report says: “It is the primary duty of a university/college to maintain the highest standards of its teaching and examinations. A university/college is a place of higher education where the personality and capacities of the students are developed to the utmost by teachers who should themselves be at work at the frontiers of knowledge in their respective fields. The success of a university/college is to be judged as much by the type of graduates the institution turns out and by the amount and quality of research contributed by its teachers and research students. It must be clearly recognized that there is no conflict involved between the two functions of a university/college viz., to educate its members and to advance the frontiers of knowledge. The two functions are, in fact, complementary to
each other. Unless high standards of teaching and examinations are maintained, research will suffer, since research can continue uninterruptedly only if there is a regular supply of graduates well prepared by general education for specialized research work. On the other hand, if research is neglected by teachers, their teaching will lack vitality and will rapidly become stale. A degree must always be what a university makes it by the kind of teaching it imparts and the type of intellectual and social life it provides for its members. If our universities are to be the makers of future leaders of thought and action in the country, as they should be, our degrees must connote a high standard of scholarly achievement in our graduates”.

The Commission noted that many of the universities did not compare favorably with the best of British and American universities in respect of their teaching and examination standards. Unless highest standards of teaching in the universities are ensured, the degree given by them will not command recognition and respect.

The commission further observed: “…our universities should maintain the academic character of their work on a level recognised as adequate by the universities of other countries. universities are our national institutions and to keep up our national prestige, our degrees must be such as to command international recognition…”

➢ Secondary Education Commission – 1952-53.22

The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53), appointed by the government, under the chairmanship of Dr. Lakshmanswami Mudaliar, the then Vice-Chancellor of Madras university, was the fifth education commission in the history of education commissions in India.
Recommendations

The two-year ‘intermediate’ stage in the college be replaced by a one-year ‘pre-university course with the other year being shifted to the higher secondary stage, making it a four-years of education. The ‘Degree Course’ in colleges was to continue as a three-year course.

➢ Committee on Model Act for universities - 1961.\textsuperscript{23}

To make an evaluation of the organizational structure of the universities in India and to prepare a model Act for universities, the Ministry of Education appointed a Committee in December 1961, under the chairmanship of Dr. D.S. Kothari.

Recommendations:

- the right development of universities, autonomy of universities from external control, and internally democratic administration are the pre-requisite for quality of higher education.

- the President of India, in the case of central universities, and the Governor of the state in the case of state universities, should be the visitor of the universities. He should not be,

- included in the list of officers of the university, but should have an independent position with well-defined powers. There should be a chancellor elected by the court. The V.C. should be elected by the court from among three persons recommended by a majority of the members of the executive council. There should also be a pro-V.C. chosen by the V.C.

- the academic council should be the sole authority for determining the courses of study and their decisions should not need the approval of any other authority in the university.
• for meeting the increasing demand for administration, evening and correspondence courses can be run by colleges and universities.

• the college/university has the power of appointing teachers and other employees.

➢ Education Commission – 1964-66.\textsuperscript{24}

Education Commission 1964-66, popularly known as “Kothari Commission” under the name of its Chairman Prof. D.S. Kothari, was appointed by a government resolution in July 1964.

Terms of reference mainly were to advice the government of India on:

• the national pattern of education; and

• the general principles and policies for development of education at all stages and in all aspects.

The commission submitted its report on June 26, 1966. The publication of the report is an epoch-making event in the history of education in India. The report is entitled “Education and National Development”.

• This is the sixth commission in the history of Education Commission in India.

• The unique features of the commission were its comprehensive review of the entire educational system, and its international composition. The commission included seven Indian members and five others; one each from Japan, France, the UK., the USA, and the USSR.

The commission identified three important facets of the big programme that would bring about the desired ‘Educational Revolution’:
Internal transformation so as to relate it to the life, needs and aspirations of the nation.

Qualitative improvement so that the standards achieved are adequate, keep continually rising and, at least, in a few sectors become internationally comparable; and

Expansion of educational facilities broadly on the basis of manpower needs and with an accent on equalization of educational opportunities.

Regarding quality of education, the report mentions:

“The Quality education is crucial for national development and the nation must be prepared to pay for the quality. The major programmes for qualitative improvement include raising the economic, social, and professional status of teachers and improving the quality and scope of teacher education and in-service programmes, radical reform especially in science and mathematics, vigorous improvement in the method of teaching and evaluation, and providing quality textbooks and other teaching materials, search for introduction of nationwide programmes of school and college improvement where each institute finds congenial conditions to strive continuously to achieve the best results of which it is capable, the establishment of ‘quality’ schools to act as pace-setters in their districts and the creation of five or six major universities, revitalizing the system of supervision and reorganizing the state departments and the recognition of the educational structure on the 10+2+3 pattern”.

Committee on Governance of universities – 1969.\(^\text{25}\)

The UGC appointed a Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. P.B. Gajendragadkar, in June 1969, to report on the governance and quality administration of universities in India.
The Committee filed its reports in 1971 to the UGC. The recommendations of the committee on “the structure of university functions and powers of the statutory bodies, service conditions of the staff and the related areas” contain the following points stressed:

- Social commitment on the part of universities and colleges,
- Greater participation of academics, administrators, and students in the affairs of the universities and colleges.

The report proposed that:

- At least one university in a state should be a “City university”, set up by the union government with the concurrence of the state government.
- Post graduate education should be limited to university departments and if extended to colleges, should be in a carefully planned and selective basis;
- The senate and syndicate can be continued and the academic council must be empowered.

➢ Challenges of Education: A Policy Perspective – 1985.²⁶

The Ministry of Human Resource Development, government of India, prepared a document, to be instrumental to frame new policies for the further development of education, containing four chapters:

- education, society, and development
- an overview of education
- development – a critical appraisal, and
- an approach to educational re-orientation.
This document became the basis of the National Policy of Education (NPE), 1986.

- The National Policy of Education (NPE), 1986.²⁷

The National Policy of Education positively recommends for a new dawn of higher education in India. The Policy contains the extracts of the recommendations given by various commissions and committees appointed in the field of higher education hitherto. Following is a glimpse of the contents regarding the quality management in higher education:

- The system of affiliation must go. Instead a more creative system of relationship and understanding must come in between the university and colleges.

- Autonomous departments in universities and autonomous colleges replacing affiliated colleges must come.

- Research must get priority along with teaching. High quality and serious research in universities and colleges will get sufficient financial support.

- Transformation of teaching methods using the marvels of I.T. and modern electric and electronic gadgets

- Re-designing of academic programmes and courses and re-engineering of curriculum and syllabus so as to fit for the present situations.

- state councils for higher education for state-level planning and co-ordination of the programmes and projects of higher education.

- Setting up of national level research centres within the university system
Establishment of rural universities as per the pattern envisaged by Mahatma Gandhi for the development of rural areas.

Selective admission to higher education, and promotion of interdisciplinary research.

Setting up of a National Apex Body (NAB) covering higher education in general.

The universities and colleges will be provided with more facilities so as to provide quality education and the overall development of the stakeholders.

Programme of action on NPE (1986)

The Ministry of HRD, department of education, government of India, prepared a Programme of Action (PA) for the implementation of the NPE. The chapter Five of the document contains the following:

- Setting up of a National Apex Body covering higher education in general, agriculture, technical, medical, legal, and other professional areas.

- Setting up of state councils of higher education in each state.

- Setting up of an autonomous body named accreditation and assessment council, under the auspices of the UGC, for maintaining and raising the quality of institutions of higher education.

- Five hundred colleges – autonomous – in the seventh plan period; gradually replacing the existing affiliation system

- Setting up institutions having close ties with national laboratories and agencies within the universities. Updating and re-engineering the curricula and programmes and courses
Reviewing the management patterns of universities and their statutory bodies and regulating the admissions in universities and colleges on the basis of merit and the availability of facilities.

Being a sound and vivid milestone on the way of higher education in India, the New Education Policy have been widely discussed and thereby subjected to various fine tuning on its way. For example, the report of the Gnanam Committee on “Towards New Educational Management (1987-90)” appointed by the UGC, New Delhi; the report of the conference on “four decades of development (review)” organized by the ministry of HRD and the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, UGC, 1989; and the report on the proceedings of the V.C.s conference on “decentralisation of higher education system, held at the university of Kerala, on October 8, 1991 had influenced the NEP in improving its contents with a view to provide quality higher education to the stakeholders.

Kerala based studies

In the best interest of providing quality to higher education in the state, the government of Kerala, universities, and other organizations in the state have constituted various commissions and committees.


Terms of reference: To study the feasibility of introducing the “direct payment system” in the state.

Recommendations:

- The state government to meet the expenditure towards the salary of teaching and non-teaching staff of private colleges in the state.
In Kerala there has been an increasing demand for higher education. Trying to cope with this the state has to ignore its resource constraints.

The expenditure on education has not been linked to manpower growth.

Enrolment has not been restricted to availability of resources which led to the lowering of standards in the field of higher education.


The Kerala Educational Research Centre, Thiruvananthapuram, sponsored a commission under the chairmanship of the well known educationist Prof. Samuel Mathai, in 1980.

Terms of reference:

To study about the Christian colleges and their performances in Kerala. The commission filed its report in 1982. It was a thorough study using data collected through questionnaires and discussions with the principals, staff, students, and the members of managements. The Report points out the inherent weaknesses of government colleges as well as the colleges run by the universities in the state. They lack academic and financial freedom, students’ indiscipline and violence affected the smooth functioning of the colleges. Heavy enrolment of students created problems for proper management of the colleges. Library and lab facilities are weak and the available facilities are under utilized. Teachers were not dedicated to their works and most of them are antagonistic towards management. They were not involved in decision making. Better is the performance of Christian colleges in the state. Being governed by the Christian seminaries and the priests, the management of Christian colleges in Kerala is sound. However, as the
part of the common fabric, the students’ indiscipline and the antagonistic attitude of teachers are the same in Christian colleges also.

➢ High Level Committees.\(^{35}\)

Five high level committees were constituted in 1982, on different subjects. The aim was to get the details for the state Planning Board to have a help in its study on the different aspects of the state’s Economy and Development.

In its report on “Higher Education”, the sub-committee observed:

- A large number of colleges had been started in the state without the required physical infrastructure, laboratories or library facilities.

- Higher educational institutions had resorted to criteria other than merit in selecting the faculty so that it led to the lowering of standards of higher education.

- The standard of teaching is very poor in many of the colleges.

- There are frequent strikes of works by students on various reasons and many-a-time on silly grounds, including the tendency to support political parties.

- The system of capitation fees is very ardent in the state.

- The Director of Collegiate Education failed to exercise any power.

- Private managements accept huge amounts of capitation fees for the admission of students and receive rich donations for appointments of teachers and non-teaching staff which results in eroding the quality of higher education.
A commission was constituted by the state government of Kerala in March 1984. The chairman of the commission was Dr. Malcolm S. Adiseshiah.

Terms of reference: To study about the requirements of sub-section (1) of section 71 of the Kerala university Act, 1974, which provides that “the government may at any time and shall at the expiration of 10 years from the commencement of the Act and thereafter at the expiration of every 10 years, constitute a commission to enquire into the working of the university”, and to enquire into and report on “Working of the university”, and “the financial position of the university, including the financial positions of the colleges and departments”.

Recommendations:

- The commission opined that as is envisaged in its Act, a constant monitoring of the working of the university at fixed intervals by the government is a healthy practice and hence essential.

- The commission observed that the communal rotation and reservation quota system for the recruitment of staff in the affiliated colleges is one of the reasons for the deterioration of standards of higher education in Kerala.

- The commission observed the unnecessary and excess political interference in the affairs of the university so that it lost its autonomy and sunk to the level of a government department.

- Establish and maintain live contacts with the National Research Funding Agencies and Nationally Recognised Institutes and Research Centres for making full use of the facilities and resources and thus enhance quality.
- Provide autonomy to the department with sufficient infrastructure and excellent faculty.

- Establish one Board of Study for one discipline for better coordination and control.

- The Board of Studies is appointed by the syndicate on the basis of proposals made by the V.C as per rules.

- The office of the dean must be invested with greater responsibilities. He is the executive officer of the faculty.

- The headship of department might be rotated on the basis of seniority for a period of three years among the dedicated professors of the department.

- Adequate finance, staff, limited enrolment, effective leadership of principal, adequate facilities, and excellent management are the sure proof of quality in higher education.

- Commission for University of Calicut (1984)\(^{37}\)

One of the high level commissions appointed by he state government of Kerala was the commission for university of Calicut.

Terms of reference:

The commission was constituted to enquire in to the working of the university of Calicut under the provision of the Calicut university Act, 1975.

Recommendations:

- The commission filed its report in 1985 and the report contains recommendations for quality enhancement in educational and
administrative aspects of the university. The major recommendations were similar to those given in the report on the university of Kerala.

- The report warned against the free play of politics in the affairs of the university.

- The election to the governing bodies of the university must be replaced by rotation on the basis of seniority or on the basis of nomination by the Chancellor so that merit can overpower any other forces in such forums. And the merit results in quality of service.

- The report recommended for semester systems, internal assessments, and the systems of cumulative records for PG courses.

- The office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor must be abolished and the V.C and the deans should be vested with sufficient power for functions.

- A centre for “Research on Higher Education in Kerala” should be started under the auspices of the universities in the state to study and research the problems of higher education.

➢ Committee for Autonomous Colleges (1984).\(^{38}\)

The government of Kerala set up an expert committee under the chairmanship of Dr. K. Gopalan, the then V.C. of Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT) to study the various aspects of the proposal to have autonomous colleges in the state.

The committee filed its report in April, 1985. The report contains mainly the apprehensions of the respondents who were the university employees, teachers, students, educational administrators, representatives of the private management, and the public. The report says:
The government can establish autonomy to colleges in the state provided:

- The teachers will become more responsible
- The colleges will not enjoy any special privilege
- The regulations regarding the admission, appointments and the like will be applicable to theses colleges also.
- A proper control mechanism will check the misuse of power.
- The report warned against the misusing of power but the private managements, and the teachers which may lead to corruption and victimization of staff and students.
- The report also warned the unholy influence from politicians and communal leaders.
- Autonomous colleges will be considered elitist, enjoying special status and privileges while ordinary colleges classified as of second grade.
- For ensuring quality of higher education, the Commission recommended strongly for de-linking pre-degree course from colleges.

- Rastogi Committee 1997.39

The Committee was a panel of 10 persons, set up by the UGC, after the terms of reference were finalized in consultation with the Ministry of Human Resource Development, government of India.

Focus: Making recommendations to the need for improving the quality of education; the necessity of attracting and retaining talented persons in the
teaching profession; and advancement of opportunities to the persons who are opting teaching profession.

The recommendations were to be in harmony with those of the fifth central pay commission of K.C. Pant. The report expressed that “academic Profession is the mother of all professions in society. The status of the profession or those who serve in the profession should be commensurate with the role this profession plays”. The committee, however, “compared the teaching profession with only Group B Services in the government”. In contrast, the minimum qualifications for entry in to the teaching profession are higher than that required for any other profession – a masters degree with 55 per cent marks plus the National Eligibility Test or State Eligibility Test (NET / SET) passed. Further, for promotion / selection as Reader or Professor, Ph. D. is an essential qualification.

The critical examination of the reports of various commissions and committees:

The manifold Commissions and Committees agree with the importance of teaching and research and its application for the welfare of mankind and for the development of the nation. All of them acknowledge that the quality and competence of teachers depend on the ability of institutions to recruit and retain talented and well-qualified persons and also to provide a work environment that encourage them to enhance their performance effectively. They agree that academic profession is the mother of all professions in society. Hence, the status of the profession or those who serve in the profession should be commensurate with the role this profession plays.

Successive Committees of the UGC, including the Radhakrishnan Commission (1948), the Education Commission under the chairmanship of Prof. D.S.Kothari (1964), the Sen Committee (1973), and the Mehrotra
Committee (1983), were all for improvement and upgradation of status, pay-scales, promotional avenues, infrastructure, etc., and they did make efforts towards improvement. In fact, many of the recommendations of these committees were unfortunately never implemented.

The minimum qualification for entry into the teaching profession is higher than that required for any other profession – masters degree with 55 per cent marks or more with the National Eligibility Test or State Level Eligibility Test (NET / SET) passed. For promotion / selection as Reader or Professor, Ph.D. is an essential qualification. In fact, entry into science departments as lecturers without Ph.D. is unthinkable and most new appointees in other disciplines are M.Phils with NET / SET passed. But, for this category of professional, the salaries, professional avenues, service conditions, and other perks are meager.

Had the Kothari Commission norm of granting autonomy to at least 10 per cent of the colleges in the country (11000 colleges in India in 1966 when Kothari Commission filed its Report) been carried out in letter and spirit, there would have been nearly 1100 autonomous colleges in the country, today. However, in reality there are only around autonomous colleges in the country.

Ban of affiliation is another gray area mentioned in almost all the commissions and committees appointed after independence. But, still we follow the colonial trend. Other than India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh which continue to be wedded with to the affiliating system – (a legacy of the colonial past) – no other country in the globe has the affiliating mode in higher education.

The panacea to addressing the issues of forging a new philosophy and concept of education with a national vision and holistic perceptive relevant to national needs could have been easily, painlessly, and effectively
achieved had we implemented the suggestions pointed out by the very worthy commissions, at least in parts.

Important Research Studies and Papers.

Dr. R. Gangadharan Nair, a renowned educationist took a study of Higher Educational Institutions in Kerala, in 1989.\(^\text{40}\)

The objectives the study were:

- to study the cultural and social environment of higher educational institutions in Kerala,
- to examine the rate of growth in enrolment and expenditure of arts and science colleges
- in Kerala the role of government and private agencies in running them.
- to ascertain how far these institutions are successful in exploiting and utilizing finances
- to compare their effectiveness in government and private colleges in Kerala.
- to identify the peculiarities in the organizational structure of higher educational institutions.
- to measure the leadership style of principals of the arts and science colleges
- ascertain the level of academic participation in decision making.
- to examine whether there was motivation of any kind among teachers to acquire higher skills, and
to develop a functional model for the effective management of higher educational institutions.

The findings of the study:

- Higher education, being a social need and due to the adherence to the ‘Social Demand Approach’, the crucial problem faced by the higher education in the state is the problem of number of students heading for.

- Un-utilisation of the financial resources is detected. More than half of the financial resources placed at the disposal of the colleges in the state remained unutilized during the period of study. Compared to government colleges, private colleges were better in utilizing financial resources.

- The practice of following a proper planning for management of institutions with a set of objectives is totally absent, both in government colleges and private colleges.

- In almost all cases, the principals of colleges functioned in a benevolent autocratic style. No effective delegation of power, nor any consultation or participation in decision making.

Suggestions:

Dr. Gangadharan Nair put forward a functional model, totally workable, for the better management of the higher educational institutions so as to enable them to provide quality education to students. The model is primarily based on four managerial functions of

- Planning
- Delegation
• Participative decision making, and
• Effective use of information system.

The Report went ahead further:

• The posts of principals should be selective,

• Particular training/orientation programmes should be conducted for principals,

• Pay scales of principals should be equal to that of senior professors of universities,

• Teachers must get enough opportunities for career improvement and they must acquire higher qualifications,

• Inter-personal relationship between teachers and the students must be ardent and there must be a separate cell for ensuring the good relationship between teachers and students in each institution.

Dr. M.V. Pylee, the former V.C. of the Cochin University of Science and Technology, Cochin, in his Paper on “Governance of universities”, 1994 has stated the real crisis of higher education in the country which is very similar to the state as well. “Higher educational institutions are to be the ‘centres of excellence’. Instead they are becoming the centres of mediocrity, partisan politics, and conflicts”- he opines.

For the re-organisation of the present system of governance and to reform and re-vitalise the universities, the learned academic puts forward a series of suggestions.

The Governor of the state assuming the chancellorship by virtue of office will do no good for the university and instead an eminent educationist
or a well-known professional or public servant shall be appointed as the Chancellor/Visitor.

There is no need for a minister as Pro-Chancellor in the university system. Such a post is unnecessarily incorporated to inject additional doze of politics in the governance of universities, which will destroy the quality and merit of administration.

Setting up a “National Education Commission” (NEC) by the union government would help the country to have quality higher educational sector. This Commission should prepare a panel of well qualified persons, from far and wide of the country, fit for the prestigious posts of V.Cs.

Dr. Pylee is of the opinion that the Pro-V.C should be a well known educational administrator, who should be appointed in consultation with the V.C.

The Senate (court) is unnecessary and should be abolished. What all powers have been exercised by the senate can be given to the syndicate. And the syndicate should be a compact, homogeneous body with representatives form different segments of the university, the government and the public. No room shall be provided in the syndicate for politicians, and hence no elected member or political representatives in the apex body.

Deans, professors, and principals of colleges should be chosen for syndicate by rotation. Outside experts from professional bodies, research institutions, industries, and students representatives should be included.

Abolition of the affiliating system and the introduction of the system of autonomous colleges are other cardinal recommendations of Dr. Pylee.

In the Ph.D thesis, “Role of Academic Bodies With Special Reference to the Academic Programmes in the universities in Kerala, by R. Sushama”
Cochin University of Science and Technology, Kochi observes that the structure of higher education in Kerala is not different from that of the country as a whole. This state too has laid down high emphasis on quantitative expansion in terms of number of institutions, students and teachers. Deterioration of standards is the main criticism leveled against the system of higher education in Kerala also. The report on higher education by the state high level committee on education and employment has identified many causes for the falling of standards in the sphere of higher education in the state. Among these, overcrowding in the institutions of higher education owing to unrestricted admission has been identified as the root cause for the phenomenon. With the granting of the facility for private registration for university admission for those students who were unable to get admission to regular courses, the number of students opting for conventional higher education increased greatly. This led to a mushroom growth of coaching institutions called “Parallel Colleges” and the advent of such parallel institutions marred the quality of higher education.

According to the thesis, the main evils that afflict our higher education and dismantle the quality are “the poor quality of teaching, indiscipline, and poor motivation among teachers, appointment of teachers in colleges on the basis of donations, instead of merit, politically oriented trade unionism among teachers, qualitatively poor examinations and evaluation systems, meager infrastructural facilities in universities and colleges, political interference in the autonomy of higher educational institutions, political free-play in the appointment of Vice-Chancellors and other top functionaries, of the universities, poor leadership at the higher levels of administration both in the universities and colleges, and above all the indifference on the part of parents, society, and the government”.

“Education has been given the epithet of ‘industry’, because it produces the manpower of different skills and efficiency for the production
process of the country. Whereas, the products of the other industries are valued for their usefulness in the production or final consumption, the product of education is valued for its productivity in the production process. It is the quality of the output of educational institutions, particularly that of higher educational institutions, determines the quality of other components…”

Significance of the Study

Today, the Indian higher education system is one of the largest in the world not only in size, but also in the varieties of courses offered and in the levels of attainment in different sophisticated subjects. Every eighth student enrolled for higher education on the globe is an Indian. The growth of higher education has been exponential and as impressive as in any other field of national activity such as agriculture, industry, banking or transport.

The most literate state in India is Kerala. Being at the top of the educational pyramid, higher education in the state has a key role to play not only for academic pursuit and augmentation of knowledge, but also for national development. It has been observed by several educationalists and academics that though the number of higher educational institutions has increased by leaps and bounds, the quantitative expansion has been accompanied by qualitative deterioration and the standards have declined enormously.

The structure of higher education in Kerala is not different from that of the country as a whole. Kerala has laid high emphasis on quantitative expansion in terms of number of institutions, students and teachers. Deterioration of standards is the main criticism leveled against the system of higher education in the state. The report on higher education by the state High Level Committee on Education and Employment has identified many reasons for the falling standards.
In spite of the near-total literacy and the only leading state in the country in Universal Adult Education Programme (UAEP), Kerala displays a very sad predicament in the case of quality education. To recover the situation and to establish quality along with the quantity of higher education in Kerala, we must apply the internationally accepted and time-proven management concepts to our higher education. There lies the significance of the present study.

The present study throws light upon such an attempt that the much valued management strategy of “Total Quality Management (TQM)” could be very well applied to cure the illness of the present day higher education in the country, particularly in the state of Kerala, so that the de-railed and the quality-degraded higher education shall be brought back upon the right track.

Higher Education cannot be a ‘Hit and Miss’ exercise. Higher education is required to be “High” enough. Many universities and colleges apply TQM as a tool to enhance the quality of higher education in India as well as abroad. The concept of quality is accepted by everyone and TQM literature in higher education is available in plenty. In a world of ever increasing competition, privatisation, and internationalisation of education, many educational institutions in India and abroad apply TQM principles in education. The Round Table on Internationalisation of Higher Education 2002 recommends an “open door policy for education, academic structure, cafeteria-type approach (choice of subjects and courses by the customer) and internationalization of curriculum”. All these highlight the need for TQM in Higher Education (TQM in HE).

“Total Quality Management in higher education means improving the quality of courses, input instructional processes, resource management processes and structures as well as student support service output and linkages with world of work and other organizations”.

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The available literature reveals that no empirical or comprehensive study on the topic has been made so far. Hence, here is an attempt which throws some light up on the present status of higher education in the state of Kerala – both quantity-wise and quality-wise, and what are the measures to be taken for rectifying the maladies.

**Objectives of the Study**

The overall objective of the study is to examine the standard of higher education in the state and to spot the gray areas in higher education where we must concentrate, so that, we can perpetuate the very essential ‘Quality in Higher Education’. The specific Objectives of the present study – “Total Quality Management in Higher Education in Kerala”- are:

- To examine the trend and pattern of higher education in Kerala,
- To identify the reasons for the present hue and cry against the pattern of higher education in Kerala.
- To assess the impact of ‘Quality Education Drive’ (QED) in Kerala.
- To highlight “Quality Consciousness” among all connected with the higher educational institutions viz., management, faculty, students, parents, and the society at large;
- To find out the reasons for the quality deterioration in higher education in Kerala and to suggest the ways and means to correct the melodies.

**Hypotheses**
It is assumed that there has not been any concerted action from the government and higher education authorities to improve the quality of higher education hitherto. What we have witnessed so far is all but “much ado about nothing”, instead of developing a comprehensive paraphernalia that goes well beyond the narrow confines of quality to encompass all areas of education excellence. No room shall be left to turn quality in higher education an uncertain trumpet.

The following hypotheses have been formulated on the basis of the objectives of the study.

- The quality of higher education highly depends upon the quality of faculty. There is a significant relationship between the quality of teachers and the quality of the taught.

- The quality of higher education is judged mainly by the strength of ethical and pedagogical principles it embodies.

- Quality assurance is not a mono-act by faculty, rather, it is the aftermath result of a synergistic relationship of all concerned with the educational institutions namely, the faculty, students, parents, management and the government.

- Quality of higher education is not a “one-for-ever” attempt, instead, it is a continuous process of improvement and change.

- The issues that the higher education in Kerala are many: dwindling finance; lack of autonomy; outdated syllabus and curricula; lack of accountability of faculty, ministerial staff and that of management; and political freeplay in the campus. All these affect quality of higher education in Kerala.

**Methodology**
No comprehensive study has been done on the topic so far in Kerala. However there are a few related works as is mentioned in the review of Literature. The study is related to the total net-work of arts, science, and commerce colleges in Kerala. Wherever required, it may refer universities and professional colleges. Similarly, going down to the ladder, it may touch the higher secondary and school level education too, wherever it is so required.

So the population size is fixed at the entire arts, science, commerce colleges which are aided and affiliated to the university of Kerala, university of Calicut, Mahatma Gandhi university, and Kannur university in Kerala. The affiliated but un-aided colleges in the state do not find place in the population of the study.

Sufficient primary data were collected from students, teachers, parents, and private managements who run higher educational institutions in the state. Extensive personal interviews were conducted to collect information. Questionnaires, opinionnaires, personal letters, and telephonic interviews were resorted for collecting primary data. The sample units were selected at random. An equal parity was maintained in selecting sample colleges under various universities.

The secondary data were collected from the publications of UGC, AICTE, and various universities in India. Official publications of central government and state governments were very helpful. Magazines, calendars, and news letters published by various colleges and universities were other sources of high-value data for the study.

The theses submitted and published by researchers, the project reports submitted at universities, papers submitted at seminars conducted at colleges and universities were very helpful. The reports of the famous commissions and committees appointed by the government of India, state
governments, UGC, universities, and students organisations were refereed to collect very valuable information. The University News, the Statutes of the universities in Kerala, particularly the university of Kerala, university of Calicut, and MG university, the Encyclopedia of Higher Education, the NAAC NEWS, the universities Handbooks, UGC Schemes 2003 etc., mentioned in the review of literature were the authentic sources of secondary data for the study. Books, journals, magazines and periodicals, and news-papers were highly depended on for the secondary data. The UGC sponsored seminars the researcher attended at various institutions were the real fountains of information. The national and international seminars attended at Cochin University of Science and Technology and Chennai University were really eye-openers. For the analysis of data collected, the researcher followed the simple arithmetical and statistical measures and methods.

Limitations of the Study

The study is related to the higher educational network of the arts/science/ and commerce colleges in Kerala. There are about 344 arts and science colleges spread under four universities, namely, university of Kerala, university of Calicut, Mahatma Gandhi university, and Kannur university. Of the total colleges, 38 are government colleges, 148 are private aided colleges, and the rest 158 colleges are private un-aided ones. To be more precise, about 82 per cent of the ‘affiliated-aided colleges’ remain in the private sector, and 18 per cent remain with the government.46

The present study covers the undergraduate and postgraduate courses run by the affiliated – aided colleges in the state. The professional courses do not come under its purview. The study may, however throw light upon the secondary education offered by high schools in the state, wherever it is required because the secondary education is the real bedrock of higher
education. Similarly, the present study touches universities and professional colleges wherever it is necessary.

The major limitations of the study are:

- The faculty, who are the integral part of higher education, are afraid of management and higher authorities in airing out their views confidently and plainly. Many-a-time they are constrained to hide some material facts and hence their responses are skewed.

- The students who are the direct benefactors of higher education, fail to give a reliable response due to ignorance and lack of exposure. In their terminology, quality means only smooth running of regular classes. They do not know the real implications of quality of higher education.

- The parents, who are the real stake holders of higher education, misinterpret the quality of higher education and they think that quality means only a good score in the mark list and hence their responses based on the thought of good score is also skewed.

- It is very cumbersome to compare all arts and science colleges under various private managements in Kerala and this may have affected the study. Colleges under Christian management are leading ahead in quality variables and the colleges under other private managements and government ownership lag behind.

- Absence of a sound and reliable database on higher education is another setback which might have affected the study.

- No sincere efforts or momentum from higher education authorities or from the government in enriching quality of higher education in the state hitherto. Hence there was difficulty in collecting data.
In spite of these shortcomings, the present study is genuine and sincere attempt to highlight the exact anatomy of higher education in Kerala.

**Scheme of the Study**

The broad frame-work of this research work is presented in eight chapters.

The first chapter serves as an Introduction to the topic explaining the history of higher educational scenario in India and in the state of Kerala, the Review of literature, the Significance for such a study, the Objectives and Scope of the study, Hypotheses, Methodology, Limitations and the Scheme of the study.

The second chapter deals with the higher educational scenario in the country. For a better analysis, the subject matter has been divided into three categories – pre-independent, post independent, and the latest scenes.

The third chapter depicts higher educational scenario in the state of Kerala. The status of school education and higher secondary education, polytechnics and other technical categories are also mentioned.

The fourth chapter defines Total Quality Management (TQM) and suggests its applications in higher education in Kerala.

The fifth chapter explains the trends and pattern of education in Kerala. The sixth chapter is explaining the total quality management in higher education in Kerala. The seventh chapter is total quality management in education – assessment, challenges and vision of higher education in Kerala. All these three chapters contain the crux of the study, i.e., analysis part of the present study.

The eighth chapter gives Summary, Findings and Policy Implications. It also contains the suggestions and conclusions.
References


8. Ibid., p. 2.


12. Ibid.


14. Ibid.


16. Ibid.


