Chapter 2

Malappuram: A Lower-End Case of the ‘Kerala Model of Development’

2.1 Introduction

Comparing the development experience of Malappuram district and Malabar region with that of Kerala is useful in understanding the role of various factors that shape the process of regional development locally. The larger pattern suggests that the state economy passed through the ‘Kerala model of development’ and entered the ‘virtuous growth’ phase from 1987-88. Within the state, there exist some variations in the way different regions followed this. For instance, developmental history of the larger Malabar region and Malappuram district in particular, is different from other parts of the state, namely the old Travancore and Cochin regions. There were differences in land distribution, land use pattern, progress in education and health, demography and standard of living; wherein the two princely states were far ahead of Malabar (Kabir, 2002; Nair, 1976 a & b; Ramachandran. 2007; Salim & Nair, 2002; Tharakan, 1997 & 2008; Varghese, 1970). Various measures of development suggest that such differences still exist; which keep Malabar as a backward region in the state (Anvar, 2003). The presence of local diversity emerging out of socio-cultural, economic, political and environmental difference is crucial in bringing about such variation in regional development.

The present chapter looks at the historical experience of Malappuram district and Malabar and tries to explore the case of Malappuram in following the ‘Kerala model of development’ and its ‘virtuous growth’ phase. The discussion covers the larger transitions that took place in Coastal, Midland and Highland regions of the region. Based on the existing literature and available evidence, the chapter argues that Malappuram has also
followed the development path which Kerala has experienced and suggests Malappuram is a lower-end case of the Kerala model.

2.2 History of Coastal Malabar and Ocean Trade

Malabar region ‘forms a single geographical and ethnic unit, preserving in many ways a singularity of customs and social organisation which marks it as a separate entity in India’ (Panikkar, 1997:1). Geographically, the Western Ghats separates the region from rest of the Madras Presidency, ‘bounded by South Kanara in the north, Coorg, Mysore and the Nilgiris in the east; the princely state of Cochin in the south and the Arabian Sea on the west’ (Lakshmi, 2012: xviii). From ancient times, the Malabar Coast has been very active in ocean trade. Unlike other trading centres like Gujarat, Konkan (West Coast), Coromandel and Bengal (East-Coast), Malabar Coast did not have a strong manufacturing hinterland to support its ocean trade. It was spices and timber that made Malabar an international trading centre even before the time of Vasco da Gama. Most probably, Arabs were the first trading group to make long voyage to the Kerala coast and other regions of the East and cinnamon from Kerala might have found its way (Menon, 2007).

The expansion of Muslim commerce, especially during the period between the eighth and the eleventh centuries on all the main routes of the Indian Ocean gradually led to the growth of ports, markets and towns on the west Coast (Lakshmi, 2012). The ships from the Malabar ports carried various products, including coconuts, areca, spices, drugs, palm sugar and bartered with other goods (Barbosa, 2009: 69-70). Malabar’s trade with the Egyptians and Asiatic Greeks was flourishing and it grew further through trading with the imperial power of Rome. Scholars identified Muziris or Cranganore as the trading centre and main port in Malabar. The close connection with Arabia, Egypt and the West has brought many Jews and St. Thomas Christians into Malabar. There was a powerful trade guild of Chetties, which also carried on commerce with Arabia and Egypt as well as with the Far East, called Manigramam (Panikkar, 1997:2-4; Menon, 2007).

The importance of Malabar Coast increased as it was in a direct link between Arabia and China. From the beginning of the 8th century, the Western trade of Malabar passed into
the hands of Muslims. Arabs gave an impetus to Malabar trade and helped Malabar ports establish close connections with Cairo, Tunis, Bussorah and other Mohammedan\(^1\) ports, which continued up to the times of Vasco da Gama’s arrival (Panikkar, 1997: 6-7). When Europe found the source of black pepper, they were trying to find the direct sea route to Malabar and it was in 1498 through the Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama that they finally succeeded. The arrival of Vasco da Gama put an end to India’s political isolation from Europe and the trade monopoly enjoyed by the Venetians and Egyptians in trading with India (Panikkar, 1960:33). From the time of the Portuguese, there were attempts to divert the trade route from West Asia to Europe directly and finally Europe succeeded in protecting their trading interest.

In the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Mappillas,\(^2\) the Muslims of Malabar (Moplah in Colonial sources), were a mercantile community concentrated along the coast in urban centres, and dominated inter-Coastal and overseas trade. ‘Almost all of the transit trade of the Indian west Coast was in the hands of Muslims. Colonies of Arab and Persian Muslims were gradually becoming established in Malabar, as in various other places between Sind and Canton from the eighth century. Gradually, the entire Malabar trade began to prosper in the hands of the industrious Mappilla merchants’ (Lakshmi, 2012:2). Origins of the Mappillas can be traced back to the ninth century, when Arab

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\(^1\) Muslim; who follow the tradition of Prophet Mohammed and Islam religion

\(^2\) The term Mappilla indicates the indigenous Muslim population of old Malabar district. The Census Report of 1871 defined Mappillas or Moplahs as a hybrid Muslim community of Malabar (Ali, 1990). The name ‘Mappilla’ is a transliteration (most common being Māppila, Māppilla, and Moplah). Though the origin of the word is not settled, it appears have been used as a title of respect. Earlier, this was used for both Christian and Muslims, but now the term tends to be exclusively used for Muslims, especially Malabar Muslims (Miller, 1992). Muslims are usually called ‘Jonaka’ or ‘Jōnaka’ or ‘Cōnaka’ Mappilla (‘Yavanaka Mappillas’) to distinguish them from Nasrani Mappilla (Saint Thomas Christians). According to a popular description, the word ‘Mappilla’ is a contraction of ‘maha’ (great) and ‘pilla’ (child), the honorary title used among the Nayars of Travancore. Later this was conferred to the early Muslim and Christian immigrants (Logan, 2009:191). Another version stresses on the literal implication of ‘child’ (pilla) and suggests that the term derived from a combination of ancient Tamil or Malayalam language; mappilla means ‘son-in-law’. Even today, a newly married Muslim is called ‘new mappilla’ in Malayalam and the same can be extended to the early Muslim visitors who married local women and thus became sons-in-law. Similarly, there exists another explanation that focuses on a combination of ‘mother’ and ‘child’ (‘mathaavu’ and pilla) and denotes the ‘offspring of foreign husbands and indigenous wives’. Some used the Arabic derivations to suggest its origin from ‘mahfil’ (gathering place, meeting place) or ‘muflīḥ’/‘maflīḥ’ from ‘falahā’ (agriculturalist) or ‘muabbar’of the verb ‘abara’ (one from over the water) (Miller, 1992). Therefore, it is very difficult to find a precise description on the origin and usage of the term.
traders brought Islam to the west Coast of India.\(^3\) The community is drawn from Arab settlers, of the descendants of Arab traders and women of the country, and of converts to Islam mainly from the lower castes of Hindu (Hardgrave, Jr, 1977). Being converts from local Malabar, they spoke Malayalam and wore the dress of the Nairs and followed the matriarchal system which was very common in Malabar. The dress, customs and way of life of Mappillas were different from other Muslims, from places like Arabia, Persia, Gujarat and the many other nations that came to trade with India (James, 2003: 68-69).

Under the patronage of the Zamorin of Calicut, Mappillas had considerable autonomy in ocean trade. For several years, under the leadership of Kunjali Marakars (the Muslim families from the coast) they formed a strong navy for the Zamorin. Though the origin of the Kunjalis is not very clear, there are various accounts that provide details of various fights in Malabar Coast (Menon, 2007). On the other hand, Mappillas enjoyed various kinds of privileges from the local king.\(^4\) For strengthening the navies, ‘the Zamorin Rajas of Calicut directed that one or more male members of the families of Hindu fishermen should be brought up as Muhammadans, and this practice has continued down to modern times’ (Logan, 2009:197). The Zamorin issued the decree that all those born on Friday on the Coastal areas would be of Islamic faith (Mohammed, 2007:24). In return, the Muslim traders brought the fortune of trade and remained loyal to him in protecting the Coast. Thus, the relationship between Muslim traders and local rulers remained strong.

The arrival of colonial powers disturbed the existing trade relations. The immediate challenge was to displace the Muslim traders who enjoyed some supremacy in the ocean spice trade. The colonial powers challenged the commercial interests of Mappillas and gradually started controlling the Coastal trade. Since the relationship between Muslim

\(^3\) Even before the time of Prophet Mohammed, Arabia had strong trading relation with Kerala. So, Islam might have been introduced here by these Arab traders in 7th or 8th century AD itself. Compared to the Christianity, the spread of Islam was very slow. The mission of Malik Ibn Dinar to Kerala coast and the conversion of the Chera Emperor Cheraman Perumal said to have helped this religion to spread to other parts of Kerala (Menon, 2007). This tradition has been reported in different accounts, but they differ in describing the period and details of the story. Many of them repot that this happened in 200 AD while the general impression suggests that the story happened during the time of Prophet (Nainar, 2006).

\(^4\) The fact that Muslims came as traders and did not lead to conflict with local Kings (different from the other parts of the country where Muslims came as invaders and fought with local rulers) also supports this relationship.
traders and local rulers was very strong, it took some time for the foreigners to displace the local traders from the spice trade. They tried all possible ways including bargaining with local rulers and disturbing the strong relationship between local rulers and Muslim traders. The attitude of Europeans towards the Muslim community was not just ruled by their commercial interest. For instance, attitude of the Portuguese towards the Muslims was one of inveterate hostility that motivated them to root out the trade of the ‘Moors’ and destroy the Mohammedans as a race as far as possible. Apart from commercial rivalry, the Iberian powers had inherited the hostility from their long-drawn out fight with the Moors in Spain and Africa (Panikkar, 1997: 181-182, & 1960:159). More than the economic motive, the Portuguese expansion in Malabar was closely associated with religious motivations (Miller, 1992: 61). The hostility of the Portuguese towards the Mappillas seems to have multiple motivations – economic rivalry, the territorial clashes between the Moors of Spain and the Portuguese as well as religious differences. The resistance of Mappilla traders to the Portuguese in 16th century and the relation of Mappillas with the local rulers reflect ‘the tensions between Europeans and Asians’ as well as ‘the nexus between militant trade and political power’ (Subrahmanyam, 2004: 338).

Finally, with the help of Samoodiri Raja, the Portuguese powers succeeded in displacing the Muslim traders and established their control of Malabar Coastal trade. By introducing ‘a system of fortresses, fleets and cartazes’, they gained mastery over the trade in Indian Ocean. Within a short span of time the commercial supremacy in Malabar passed into the hands of the Portuguese from the Muslims’ (James, 2003:246). Across the Indian Ocean (which was unarmed before Portuguese came), the Asian trades and ship owners were forced to buy such safe-conduct passes from the Europeans (Chaudhuri, 1985). Their commercial interest was subsequently followed by political interest – to colonise the region. Later, other European powers – Dutch, French and British also followed the Portuguese and established their commercial and colonial interest in the region. In 1792, Malabar came under the British rule as they defeated Tipu Sultan. This

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5. These ‘cartazes’-the authorization- controlled the ocean trade with specific countries. Whenever Muslim merchants used to move without ‘cartazes’, the Portuguese confiscated such ships (James, 2003:211).
conquest can be seen as the culmination of the East India Company’s quest to control the Malabar spice trade, for which the European powers had struggled for over three centuries (Panikkar 2001: 2).

2.3 Changing Agrarian Relations in Hinterlands of Malabar

The Portuguese power challenged the commercial interests of Muslim traders and displaced them from the Coastal trade, in search of new economic opportunities. When the Muslims traders withdrew from Coastal trade and came to the agrarian hinterland of Malabar, they brought the fervour of Islam, which was further heightened because of the intensity of conflict with the Portuguese (Hardgrave, Jr, 1977). In the hinterland, the traditional structure of agricultural society ‘was based on fragmented feudalism, hierarchically ordained, reaching down to the lowest stratum. The Jenmi, Kanakkaran, and the peasant shared the produce equally, working out a social equation on the basis of mutual dependence and reciprocal interests within the confines of a feudal system of exploitation’ (Panikkar, 2011: 229-230).

The existing social relations and economic organisation were defined by caste hierarchy. Though there are different views on the origin of each caste; their hierarchy was strictly followed in almost all spheres of life (Bhaskaranunny, 2005). Hindus in Malabar were divided into upwards of two hundred castes and sub-castes; each one of them was culturally demarcated from another and functioned in strict order of rank. ‘In all these social relations – whether juridical, economic, or ritual – structural distance was expressed in terms of spatial segregation. The member of a higher caste was ritually polluted if a lower-caste person approached within a specified distance⁶ – the greater the gap of rank, the greater the spatial separation’ (Miller, 1954). Since the occupation was determined by caste the mobility of labourers from one occupation to another was not allowed. For instance, ‘a low-caste person, outside his village, could, if he were a Hindu, pursue no occupation; within his village he was restricted to work spurned by the higher

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⁶The extreme form of caste-based discrimination made practiced in the region made Swami Vivekananda to describe Kerala as a ‘mad-house’ (Bhaskaranunny, 2005).
castes. Conversely, the guardians of local mores viewed cultivation as degrading work precluded higher castes from engaging in it' (Shea, Jr., 1959).

As per the caste hierarchy, Nambudiri Brahmins stood at the top followed by Nayars, Tiyyas, Parayas and Pulayas; the last two castes constituting agrestic serfs remained at the bottom. Nayars and their sub-castes like Kurup, Nambiar, Adiyodi, Pillai, Kartha, etc. enjoyed a dominant position because of their relation with Nambudiris through 'sambandham'. During the course of colonial period, Tiyyas, with the traditional

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7 It is a customary institution that framed sexual relations between men and women following marumakkatayam (matriliny). The term used to denote marriage is known to have differed according to region and social group (Kodoth, 2001). In this form of marriage, the younger sons of Brahmin families could form relationships with Nair women, but the children remained Nayars and were not eligible to inherit the father's property. Later, this system 'was transformed into a more or less monogamous and permanent union of a kind very similar to marriage elsewhere in India' (Fuller, 1975).
occupation of toddy tapping, emerged as a commercially oriented caste engaging in all economic activities such as cultivation, industrial activities, commerce, trade etc. Below them were the other section of ‘polluting’ castes such as Mukhuvas or fishermen, Kammalans, goldsmiths, carpenters and blacksmiths. The bottom of the caste hierarchy was the agricultural serf known as Cherumar, consisted of Pulayas and Parayas, who had no recognised place in society and supplied almost the entire labour for cultivation to the landlords and higher caste tenants (Prakash, 1988a).

The upper caste Hindus (Nambudiri Brahmins and Nayars) controlled the bulk of the agricultural land and dominated the economy of rural Malabar whereas the agricultural workers did not possess any means of production other than the labour. The condition of poor peasants and agricultural labourers, especially amongst the non-Cheruman and non-Pulaya peasantry was almost similar, they were left without any capital or skills to depend on. Many poor peasants remained in their small plots of lands or homesteads in which some garden crops were cultivated, or leased in such homesteads it they did not own them. Many of them were forced to send out some of their family members to work on other persons' land for wages, or take up subsidiary 'coolie' occupation (Karat, 1973b).

The caste-based social and economic organisation forced the Muslim traders to integrate with the agricultural workers who constituted the lower stratum of the hierarchy. This in turn led to conversion of many lower-caste agricultural workers to Islam, and Mappilla Muslims became a major part of the agricultural workforce. From 1831 onwards the Muslim population in Malabar increased rapidly. From a size of 269624 in 1831 it increased to 382330 by 1851, and by 1901 it was heading towards the 900000 mark. In 1891, Muslims (with population size of 759242) constituted 29 per cent of the Malabar population (2.64 millions) and this share increased to 30 per cent, 31 per cent and 33 per cent in 1901, 1911 and 1921 respectively (Dhanagare, 1977). By and large, the concentration of the Moplahs was in the southern taluks, particularly in Ernad, Valluvanad and Ponnani, (which together accounted for nearly 60 per cent of the Moplah population) and the same taluks had the largest concentration of Cherumar slave population in 1856-57. Between 1861 and 1891, the number of slaves fell while the Moplah population was increasing rapidly (ibid).
As soon as the low caste people became Muslims, their social status went up and they came out of the traditional hierarchy of castes. This attracted many from the lower castes, who had been experiencing caste-based discrimination, towards Islam (James, 2003:69). The social and economic background of these early converts to Islam varied across Malabar. In north Malabar, many of them were from propertied classes of the high castes, settled along the Coast, whereas the Mappillas of South Malabar were principally converted from the lower Tiyya, Cheruman, and Mukhuvan castes, for whom 'the honour of Islam' brought freedom from the disabilities of ritual pollution. The conversion of these poorest sections of the population helped the Mappilla community to grow most rapidly in the inland areas of South, the Ernad and Walluvanad taluks (Hardgrave, Jr, 1977).

A large proportion of agricultural workers especially in Southern Malabar until the mid-1800s, were slaves (subject to purchase, sale, and transfer with or separate from the land they tilled) and others (including mainly the cultivating leaseholders) were subject to various types of behaviour restraints limiting both the acquisition and display of wealth. In the case of cultivating tenants, increased yields merely invited the imposition of higher rents, or even ejection from their holdings by landlords seeking to appropriate the enlarged surplus (Shea, Jr., 1959).

Meanwhile, the British rulers introduced various reform measures which were essentially biased towards the land-owning upper castes, and against the poor peasants and agricultural workers. Largely, their ‘administrative and judicial tasks were complicated by the claims and counter-claims of Hindu landlords who were displaced at the time of the Mysorean conquest, and Muslim tenants who had appropriated substantial land rights from their former landlords’ (ibid). The judiciary interpreted the property rights according to the English law which allowed ‘jenmies’ 8 to secure rights of absolute ownership in land. This left the farmers in a position of either mortgagees or tenants-at-will (CDS-UN, 1975: 55-56).

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8 ‘jenmi (land lord) is the one who owns ‘jenmam’- the rule grant complete ownership over the land
The agrarian structure in Malabar evolved by the British Colonial rule provided for the State's appropriation of the largest share of the agricultural produce (Panikkar, 1978). Apart from the existing basic tenurial categories kanam⁹ and verumpatom, the British settlement officers approved the jenmam tenure which confers the jenmi with the entire right to the soil. Unlike the pre-colonial system where the jenmi had over-lordship and a share of the produce, the colonial system recognised the big jenmis as having the absolute ownership of the land (Karat, 1973a). Under the system of ‘farming’ land revenue, introduced by the British, the peasants were subject to exorbitant demands by local chieftains and their agents. The Mappillas of south Malabar refused to pay the revenue and in some places they resorted to violence (Panikkar, 2001: 56).

In 1852, after a number of peasant uprisings, government appointed the first series of commissions to inquire into the causes of these outbreaks and to suggest palliatives. The commission attributed the outbreaks to the religious fanaticism of the Mappillas and suggested the government to implement repressive measures. After receiving an anonymous petition that attributed the outbreaks to the cruel oppression of the tenants by the landlords and warned of more severe disturbances, a second commission was appointed in 1881. William Logan was appointed as the head of the second special commission. Earlier, he had served as Collector and Magistrate of Malabar, which gave him an understanding of Malabar and Mappilla society (Kurup, 2011). As a special commissioner (1881-1882), he reported that over ninety per cent of the principal jenmis in the district were Nambudiri Brahmans or Nayars. On the other hand, Mappilla agriculturalists generally occupied a subordinate position within the land tenure system. Many Nambudiri and Nayar jenmis used their new rights to control their tenants, and eviction of agricultural tenants became a real and growing problem in Malabar. Logan’s report showed that between 1862 and 1880, eviction decrees rose from 1891 to 8335. Of the four thousand odd eviction petitions that Logan received; almost three-quarters of the petitioners were Mappillas. He also presented evidence indicating that the courts were used more frequently against the Mappillas than the Hindus. Figures showed that twenty-

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⁹ Mostly, the kanam tenure was in the hands of the Nayars whereas the verumpatom was mostly with the Tiyyas, another major social group and who were considered to be a polluting caste (Radhakrishnan, 1980)
seven per cent of the agriculturalists were Mappillas, whereas more than thirty-four per cent of the eviction decrees had been passed against them (Dale, 1975). By 1880, the rate of eviction had increased so much that roughly one tenant in five had been thrown off his holdings (Shea, Jr., 1959).

In short, the introduction of three types of tenures such as Kanam, Kulikanam and Verumpattom had severe adverse effects on the agricultural sector in Malabar. It changed the history of 19th century in Malabar into ‘a continuous and occasionally violent conflict between high-caste Hindu landlords who sought to augment their rent-income, and their Moslem and Hindu tenants (many of the latter of whom were descendants of the administrative staffs of former rulers), who resisted encroachments on their tenures’ (Shea, Jr., 1959). The evolution of land holding monopoly introduced by the colonial government encouraged the landlords to resort to eviction and rack-renting; which in turn generated agrarian tension in rural areas. The Mappilla tenants revolted against the oppression of Hindu jenmis backed by the colonial state structure (Krishnan, 1993:16).

This resulted in a number of peasant uprisings in various parts of Malabar. Rural Malabar, particularly the Moplah population of interior south Malabar was highly sensitive to the slightest challenge to British power, real or insubstantial (Wood, 1976a). In fact the policies introduced by the Mysorean powers and its fall at Srirangapatna in May 1799 can be seen as the main reason that led to the first Mappilla rebellion in 1800 (Wood, 1976b).

Largely, the conflict was at two levels, the one between agricultural workers (mainly lower-caste Hindus and Mappillas) and landlords; the other one between the British and Mappillas. Most of these outbreaks were very short and small in terms of their reach. Usually they were suppressed within a few days, only three times did more than thirty Mappillas participate in an attack. Between 1836 and the Mappilla Rebellion of 1921-22, there were approximately thirty-three Mappilla outbreaks recorded in Malabar District with more than half of them in the first sixteen years of this period (Dale, 1975). However, the destruction and great loss of life that accompanied the ‘Moplah Rebellion’ in 1921 was very massive as it was expanded over some two thousand square miles, two-
fifths the area of the district, and continued for six months. About 10,000 persons died in this rebellion, including around five to six hundred landlords, policemen, and others who had aided the British military (Gough, 1968-1969).

2.3.1 Narratives on agrarian revolt in Malabar

Scholars give different accounts of this revolt; some of them describe the whole process as a classic example of agrarian class struggle, between the agricultural workers and the landlords where others find this as an outbreak of the conflict between two communities, Muslims and Hindus. ‘Given the background of the economic conditions of the peasantry, the pattern of rebel activity, and the classes to which the participants belonged, it is reasonable to suggest that the Rebellion was a continuation of the agrarian conflicts of the nineteenth century’ (Panikkar, 2011: 245). The primary reason of the revolt was the conflict between landlords and workers, but the fact that most of the landlords were upper caste Hindus and the agricultural workers were led by Mappillas, makes it difficult to reduce the narratives into a simple ‘agrarian revolt’. The interaction of personal, economic, social, and religious motives makes it impossible to reduce the long tradition of violent conflict in rural South Malabar into a single narrative.

By and large, these outbreaks were concentrated in south Malabar, in Eranad and Walluvanad taluks where the peasantry were Mappillas, holding land from Hindu jenmis. The land was primarily owned by the upper caste Hindu landlords (other than the two Mappilla jenmis in Eranad). Thus, Mappillas remained at the bottom of the social and economic structure, whereas the higher rungs or the ladder were occupied by Hindus. This situation led to conflict between the Mappilla peasantry and the Hindu landowning class, which superficially appeared to be the result of communal tensions (Panikkar, 2011).

Scholars find the Malabar rebellion of 1921 a good example of the interrelation between caste and religious communities on the one hand, and class and the modern political movement on the other. By and large, British policies, particularly granting absolute right of property to the Jenmis, changed the agrarian relations and generated acute discontent in Malabar district, and finally resulted in a number of outbreaks. In Muslim majority
areas like Eranad and Walluvanad, a series of attacks on Hindu landlords by the Muslim tenants reflected a combination of agrarian discontent and particular grievances of the Muslim community. ‘The outbreaks which first occurred in 1836 and which were repeated in subsequent years had not only an agrarian basis but also heavy overtones of Muslim fanaticism’ (Namboodiripad, 1977). It may be due to the submission to their caste and religion or their trust in feudal system or lack of an ideology (which seems to have unified the Mappillas), the Hindu peasants and agricultural workers did not follow to protest against their landlords or government. Such differences in the overall pattern of outbreaks also reflect on the possible role of religion in transforming the Mappillas (Kurup, 2011:44-45).

Map: 2.2

South Malabar, the most affected areas of 1921 rebellion

![Map of South Malabar, the most affected areas of 1921 rebellion](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:South_Malabar_1921.png) last accessed on 16th April 2013
The Malabar Special Commission 1881-82 (appointed by the Government of Madras) looked at the cause of unrest prior to the 1921 outbreak and ‘attributed the unrest chiefly to the harshness of the conditions under which the Moplahs, most of whom were agricultural labourers and poor tenants, were obliged by their landlords to work’ (Shea, 1954). Others identify some difference in the nature of revolts that took place before 1920 and after 1920. Before 1920, such revolts emerged from the peasants themselves, with some of them focusing around local charismatic leaders whereas the peasant revolts after 1920 tended to come under the guidance of regional, national, or urban-based political movements (Gough, 1968-1969). At the same time, these outbreaks can be understood in a specifically peasant context which shared characteristics with many other peasant movements in India. The religious and economic factors are not just alternative causations, but are closely related to the peasant perceptions and self-expression (Arnold, 1982). In some cases, the agrarian revolts assumed communal dimension when the land was controlled by a dominant religious group. In Malabar, the land was primarily owned by the upper caste Hindu landlords. Therefore the revolt of Mappilla peasantry of Malabar is a good example of how, in the absence of class consciousness and proper leadership, the ideological influences of religion provide moral force and justification for the struggle against exploitation and oppression (Panikkar, 2011). It is also true that the British administrative reforms in creating a new economic and political context played a key role in shaping the element of agrarian conflict. The rebellion was in many ways a climactic outbreak, and the same can be understood by ‘interpreting these incidents as a regional variant of a recurring Indo-Muslim theme, the Islamic revivalist movement’ (Dale, 1975).

Similarly, the national and international situations, especially the national freedom movements in India and collapse of Turkish Caliph\(^\text{11}\) also seem to have played their role in shaping the outbreaks in Malabar. From a fairly early date, Malabar Muslims had begun to be influenced by the notion of the Ottoman ruler as the Caliph (Khalifa) of

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\(^{11}\) Caliph is the successor of the Prophet Mohammed considered as the commander of the faithful. As a representative of God, Caliph leads and rules the Muslims while ‘ensuring the defense and expansion of the rule of justice on earth, and in thus furthering God’s purpose, helping to assure eternal salvation for all Muslims’ (Minault, 1999:1).
Muslims. Globally, Muslims were trying to retain the Turkish caliph as the global leader and this resulted in forming Khilafat organisations. By the end of 1920, the Khilafat movement had spread widely in Malabar. Tanur, the sample village from the Coastal region included in the study, was a very active centre of Khilafat activities (Salahudheen, 2007). The Indian Khilafat movement was ‘primarily a campaign by a particular group of Indian Muslim leaders to unite their community politically by means of religious and cultural symbols meaningful to all strata of the community’ (Minault, 1999:2).

Scholars identify the rebellion of 1921 in Malabar as probably the greatest anti-feudal and anti-imperialist revolt after 1857. When the revolt was brutally suppressed by the British, the Indian National Congress disowned the peasant mobilization as it culminated in violence and rebellion. Along with this, the entry of Muslim League politics (by the rich sections of the Mappilla community) restricted the growth of the nationalist movement in the southern Taluks of Malabar (Kurup, 1988). The revolt provoked heavy repression from colonial authorities, and resulted in almost total alienation of the Muslim community from the others. In some sense, ‘Muslims became introvert as a community in the wake of the repression, and followed a separate political path’ (Tharakan, 1997:174).

More than finding a single narrative, it is very useful to understand the far-reaching impact of this revolt on Malabar and Mappilla society. More specifically, how these events did shape the regional development of Malabar and its reflection on the social, political and economic life of Mappillas.

2.4 Development of Plantation Sector in Highlands of Malabar

Malabar retained its social, economic and cultural identity over time. Among others, the development of plantations and large scale migration of farmers from Travancore to Highlands of Malabar is a major event which drastically changed the course of regional development in Malabar. Though plantation agriculture was introduced at an early period, it was the intervention of British East-India Company that introduced new plantation crops and started extensive plantations which gave a new pattern of cultivation and employment options in the region. The marginal lands due to the population growth became unattractive for investors who wanted to invest in the production of commercial
crops (Tharakan, 1984a). As a result, a large number of peasants, particularly the Syrian Christians from Travancore, migrated to the emerging plantation areas in Malabar.

The difference that existed in the terms of their socio-economic conditions must have been responsible for the pattern of migration emerged in the two regions. In the beginning of the 20th century, these two regions experienced sharp difference in the class composition of the population depending on agriculture (as main occupation). In Travancore, owner cultivator formed the majority of agricultural population whereas in Malabar, bulk of the agricultural population was from tenant farmers and agricultural labourers. When Britishers captured Malabar from Tipu Sultan, they conferred absolute ownership of land (including the wasteland and forest lands) to the jenmies. The concentration of land area with jenmies led to unequal distribution of resources in Malabar. Compared to this, Travancore experienced a much more equitable system of sharing the agricultural income (Joseph, 1988).

The first wave of peasant migrants from Travancore to Malabar ‘took place in 1926 to the unoccupied dry land of Kuttiadi region. The first peasant migrant to Malabar was a sacristan of a church in Palai, an in-migrant from Vaikom taluk’ (ibid: 96). Studies find 1935-1960 as the peak period in the process of peasant migration to Malabar. Other factors such as the growth of population density; the great economic depression of the 1930s; unprecedented economic stress generated by global wars; the near exhaustion of cultivable land in Travancore; availability of vast areas of cultivable and forestlands in Malabar at cheap prices; and so on, seem to have triggered this process (Varghese, 2006).

By and large, the migration to Malabar was community and caste specific; only certain communities from certain regions could migrate (Joseph, 1988). Nilambur, the sample region in the present study was one of the few region that attracted many peasant migrants. Overall, the migration of peasants to highlands caused deforestation and environmental issues, but it played a crucial role in the regional development in highlands of Malabar.
2.5 Regional Development: Malabar and Other Regions of Kerala

In terms of regional development, there exists some difference in the performance of Malabar districts and the districts from Travancore-Cochin region. Throughout the 19th and the first half of the 20th century, the Malabar region lagged behind Travancore and Cochin regions in all socio-economic fronts, including in educational development (Salim & Nair, 2002:8). Even now, Malabar districts tend to lag behind their counterparts in economic and social development (Anvar, 2003). Prior to British rule, these three regions shared the same traditions, culture, land tenures and agricultural and non-agricultural productive and service practices. But the advent of the British rule changed the situation, wherein the land tenure, agricultural systems, trade patterns and social movements that emerged in Malabar were different from the other regions. It has been argued that ‘these differences had their impact on the level of living, inequalities in income and asset distribution, population growth rates and social sector development such as infrastructure, education and healthcare’ (Planning Commission, 2008:51-52).

There are various factors specific to the region which makes the difference in the context and pace at which the local process of development takes place. By the second half of the nineteenth century, the native feudalistic governments introduced some reforms in Travancore and Cochin regions. The agrarian legislations were modified to fulfil the requirements of fixity of tenure, fair rent and free transfer and thereby facilitated capital investments in coffee and tea plantations by the European capitalists and joint stock companies. This was followed by other administrative reforms like the Nair Regulations against the matrilineal system (which weakened the traditional feudal class and landlordism). In Malabar, as the British did not face any problem in accessing the land for plantation they never felt the necessity of an agrarian legislation. Instead, ‘they strengthened the interests of the feudal class and kept the peasantry without fixity of tenure and fair rent. This intra-regional difference in the land tenurial relations of

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12 The plantation was mainly concentrated in places like Wayanad, where the British government obtained the major part of the land through escheat and confiscation (Kurup, 1988). By early twentieth century, matrilineal descent (marumakkathayam) was followed in north Malabar (particularly by Mukkuvar; sea-fishermen of north Kerala) whereas the patrilineal descent was followed the south (Gangadharan, 2000: 64-65)
Malabar and Travancore-Cochin can be traced in the character and growth of agrarian struggles in these two regions as well’ (Kurup, 1988).

Thus, there is a difference in the way in which different regions experienced the evolution of land tenure system. On the whole, land tenures system in Travancore and Cochin led to a dynamic agricultural development resulting from commercialization of agriculture, but Malabar region lagged in this process (Tharian & Tharakan, 1986). Many of the reformation movements started from Travancore-Cochin region, where the caste-based discrimination was in its worst form. Some of the administrative reforms like granting the ownership of land to the tiller were initially implemented in Travancore, followed by other regions. The provision of private property led to a situation where education became necessary, to at least be able to read and handle property documents. This resulted in popularization of mass-education and emergence of a certain class of people who became specialists in the field. In the case of education and health too; the measures taken by the princely states were far ahead of Malabar. Unlike in Travancore, Malabar did not have any organised and mass-based demand for education (Kabir, 2002: 125).\(^{13}\) Compared to Travancore and Cochin, property relations, internal political and economic conditions and educational policy appear to have been less hospitable to educational development in Malabar. Beyond keeping the law and order, the British rulers did not give any importance to Malabar region and hence the Malabar district evolved as the least developed region in the state (Nossiter, 1982:15). Like elsewhere in British India, the indigenous system of education seems to have been virtually destroyed in Malabar by the social, economic and educational policies pursued by the British. As a result, the educational uplift of the masses in Malabar had to wait till the end of the British rule in Malabar (Nair, 1976 a & b).

\(^{13}\) For instance, Ayyankali organised many strikes and reforms to improve the living conditions of Pulaya community (a lower-caste). Among others, the strike of agricultural workers for the right to education is an important milestone in history of Kerala’s social development. As a result of the growing demand and pressure from the public, the Travancore government has approved a bill that allowed Dalit students to enrol in schools. However, the caste-Hindus did not allow Dalit students to enrol in the schools where their children were studying. Thus, Ayyankali organised the first-ever strike of agricultural labourers in 1907. For the entire year, the lower-caste agricultural workers refused to work for the upper caste landlords and same continued for one year (Chentarassery, 1991; Nisar & Kandasamy, 2007).
The poverty and misery which Malabar Muslims faced under colonial rule have kept many of them away from modern education. The attitude of Muslims towards liberal education, particularly learning English and regional languages etc., also affected educational and social reform processes in the community (Kabir, 2010:94). It has been argued that, ‘the hostile attitude of Mappillas towards western education born out of historical reasons and the absence of any major reform movements as seen in Travancore had also contributed to educational stagnation in Malabar’ (Salim & Nair, 2002:35). To a great extent, the relationship of Muslim leaders with the British remained problematic; very few Mappilla leaders like Makti Thangal supported British rule and campaigned for liberal education among the Muslims (Randathani, 2007:147-15)

The influence of such cultural factors can be reinforcing in nature and therefore affect other spheres of life. For instance, the fact that Malappuram accounts for the lowest work participation rate among the female population reflects the attitude of Muslims towards Muslim women taking any profession or job outside the home (Census of India, 2001). These factors delayed the educational reforms in Malabar, and Malappuram district evolved as one of the most backward districts in the region. It was only over time that the situation changed as large number of students from Malappuram district started entering higher and professional education.

2.6 Formation of the District

As per the States Reorganisation Act, 1956, the two princely states Travancore and Cochin were merged with Malabar district. In 1969, the Muslim League (Indian Union Muslim League – IUML) in Kerala demanded Malappuram be made a separate district. In response to this and as a reward for its political support, the United Front ministry of EMS Namboodiripad redrew the boundaries of Kozhikode and Palghat districts so as to carve out the new, predominantly Muslim district of Malappuram (Hardgrave J.r., 1977).

14 In 1949 ‘Thiru-Kochi’ was formed after merging the old Travancore and Cochin regions

15 It was Mr. P Abdul Majeed -an IUML- MLA from Mankada, who raised this issue for the first time in the State Assembly
Thus, by taking some of the Taluks from Palakkad and Kozhikode districts, the present Malappuram district was formed on 16th June 1969.

The district is bounded on the north by Kozhikode taluk of Kozhikode district and Vythiri taluk of Wynad district, on the east by Gudalur and Ootacamund taluks of Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu, on the south by Mannarkad and Ottappalam taluks of Palakkad district and Talappilly and Chavakad taluks of Trichur district and on the west by the Arabian sea (Anvar, 2003). The unique cultural composition of the district with its Muslim majority is reflected in the development history of Malappuram district and Malabar as a larger region.

2.7 Malappuram: A Lower-End Case of Kerala Model of Development

It is very useful to understand the pattern of development which Malappuram experienced in relation to the larger pattern which the whole of Kerala experienced. The dynamic role of education, especially the progress in mass-education has played a key role in shaping this pattern of development in the state. It has been argued that the change in the occupational pattern of educated work force and larger pattern of transition led to evolution of non-agrarian villages in Kerala (Pani & Jafar, 2010). Within the state, there are various local forces which bring differences in the way in which any region follows this larger pattern locally. Malappuram district too followed the larger pattern, but the interaction of various local factors shaped the precise role of education in affecting the occupation, migration and growth in the district.

The public interventions, especially the literacy campaigns, resulted in a steady growth of the literacy rate in the state since 1971. Malappuram district also experienced a steady growth in both male and female literacy rate (Table: 2.1). This growth enabled the district to catch up with the rest of the state in terms of literacy. The steady growth in literacy has led to the next level where the initial focus on the primary level gradually shifted to higher levels of school education. The distribution of schools across various levels in Kerala also reflects such a shift in the focus from mass education to higher levels. In this process, Malappuram district seems to follow the larger pattern which Kerala followed.
While considering the low base of education that Malappuram started with, the progress has been remarkable.

Table: 2.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Kerala Total</th>
<th>Kerala Male</th>
<th>Kerala Female</th>
<th>Malappuram Total</th>
<th>Malappuram Male</th>
<th>Malappuram Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>39.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>55.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>89.8</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>84.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>89.6</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>86.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>95.8</td>
<td>91.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The strategy of investing in public education was not associated with an improvement in the economic conditions in the district. For instance, the work participation rate in the district (25.17 per cent in 1981) was one of the lowest ones in the state (Census of India, 1981). Various studies identified Malappuram district sending largest share of workforce to West Asian countries (Zachariah, Mathew & Rajan, 2003). As a result of the slow progress in education and social development in the district, it is natural to see that the early migrants from Malappuram were not highly qualified in education or technical skills.

At the same time, it is very interesting to see what enabled the region to succeed in international migration, particularly to West Asian countries. It has been discussed earlier that Malabar region has a long history of international trade and Arabs were one of the prominent trade partners. Apart from the exchange of economic resources, this has led to exchange of tradition, culture, and ideas. As ‘Islam in Kerala spread early, through Arab trade and, later, travelling Hadrami saints; and Kerala’s Muslims have an unbroken, longstanding and deep direct connection with the Gulf region’ (Osella & Osella, 2008). This was further reinforced by marital relations like many Arabs settled back in Malabar and became as a part of the local tradition. Later, the functioning of the religious
educational institutions\textsuperscript{16} started by various Muslim organisations played a key role in teaching Arabic language and teachings of Islam in the region.

In many ways, Kerala Muslims are quite distinct from Muslims from other parts of the country. For instance, Kerala Muslims are not Urdu speakers but Arabic is deeply entrenched. For several years, ‘Arabi-Malayalam’ (Malayalam language written in the Arabic script) was in wide use but gradually disappeared from popular usage. Such factors suggest that Kerala especially Malabar has a strong link with Arabic and Muslim culture (Osella & Osella, 2007). This was further strengthened by the large-scale migration of workers to the Gulf countries, especially from the 1970s onwards. It has been pointed out that this historical and cultural link; between the Arab world and Kerala’s Coast, played a very critical role in various reforms that shaped Kerala Muslims (Osella & Osella, 2008). Though there is very limited empirical evidence, the exposure to Arabic language and culture of the destination country, seems to have played a positive role in enabling many workers from Malappuram to take decisions on migration. The way in which some of the migrants engage with community development programmes in Malabar; especially migrants’ contribution towards religious and secular education, suggests that migration may reinforce such links further. The role of Muslim entrepreneurs may be noted for their engagement with issues arising within the community, but are continuously reflecting on and responding to their wider Gulf experience as well as the practices of Kerala’s other communities (Osella & Osella, 2009). Similarly, studies point out that the remittance income affects the consumption pattern of the households; often a significant share of remittances is spend on weddings, house construction and other forms of auspicious consumption (Kurien, 1994; Osella & Osella, 1999). Such a pattern itself can force many people to migrate so as to generate the income necessary to follow such lifestyle.

No matter what enabled the district to large-scale migration towards West Asian countries, migration has its impact on larger pattern of development in the district. For

\textsuperscript{16} Apart from the traditional Dars attached to the masjids, they started ‘Madrassa’ (where children receive basic Arabic language and religious instruction) and ‘Arabic Colleges’ (equivalent of north Indian madrassas where advance learning takes place).
instance, this can lead to further change in the stock of human capital, occupational pattern and migration. Between 1991 and 2001 the district of Malappuram experienced a sharp decline in the share of cultivators and agricultural labourers in its total main workers, but remained one of the least urbanised Kerala districts, as ninety per cent of the population stayed in rural areas (Census of India 1991 & 2001).

Similarly, the process of migration continues but the details may change. In 1998, Malappuram district received the largest amount of foreign remittances (Rs.6156 million accounts for 17.1% of total remittances in Kerala). In the case of remittance per emigrant, the district lagged behind most of other districts (Zachariah, Mathew, & Rajan, 2003: 216). In 2008, Malappuram district continued to receive the highest amount of remittances (Rs.6486 crores). In terms of its share in Kerala’s total remittances, it has declined to 15 per cent (Zachariah & Rajan, 2012: 76). Another study found that 29.3 per cent of households in Malappuram has at least one person working outside Kerala but their counterpart from Thrissur (17 % of the households) earn an average monthly remittance income of Rs.10697 which is double that of Malappuram - Rs.5232 (Aravindan & Menon, 2010: 48). This is a reflection of the poor income earning capacity of migrant labour from Malappuram.

The overall impact of remittances on the district’s social and economic conditions has to be looked at in detail. Kerala’s Human Development Index ranks Malappuram as the lowest (14th) in the district-wise Human Development Index, with HDI value of 0.749 against 0.773 for Kerala as a whole (Centre for Development Studies, Kerala, 2005: 60). The fact that Malappuram receives the largest amounts of remittance income but remains a backward district and holds the lowest rank in the state’s HDI makes Malappuram district a useful example to study the effect of remittance-led growth on human development. More importantly, this contradictory experience provokes one to think beyond the measured well-being and reminds us about the importance of understanding the specific processes through which human development is affected. The role of diverse geography and unique cultural composition in affecting such aggregate measures cannot be ignored. The overall pattern of development shows that the regional diversity backed by other forces has affected the process of development in Malappuram. Thus, the
experience of Malappuram reflects a lower-end case of the Kerala model of development and becomes an interesting case to explore the role of geographic and cultural diversity in affecting the process of human development locally.

### 2.7.1 Sample regions: Diverse geography and cultural composition

Within Malappuram, the geography as well as the cultural composition varies across the regions and that may affect the process of development locally. Geographically, the district is diverse across Coastal areas, Midlands and Highlands areas. Culturally, the majority of district population is Muslims (68.5 per cent), but the pattern varies across different regions. The study identified three representative regions (Taluks as the administrative units) which are geographically diverse across Coastal, Highland and agrarian Midland areas. The three Taluks namely, Tirur, Perinthalmanna and Nilambur are chosen from Coastal, agrarian plain land (Midland) and Highland areas of the district and represent different geographic and environmental conditions of the district. Broadly the occupational structure varies across the regions. For the detailed study, three Gram Panchayats (GPs) were selected from the three representative Taluks. Thus, Tanur GP was chosen from the Coastal region, while Chungathara and Aliparamba GPs were chosen from the Highlands and the agriculture dominated plains.

The Coastal G.P., Tanur is known as one of the old towns and ports in the Malabar region. Tanur gram panchayat consists of two revenue villages - administrative units (Tanur and Pariyapuram). The GP has a total land area of 19.49 sq km and population size of 63208 (Census of India, 2001). Broadly, this region lags in education and other areas of development. Among the two sample G.P-wards, the first is located almost in the centre and has the fish (wholesale) market and mini harbour. The second one, further north from the town, also has a large fishing population. Traditionally, most of the households are engaged in fishing and allied activities. Other than a few engaged in the processing of dry-fish, women do not engage in fishing and allied jobs. Currently, fishing
and related activities are entirely done by Muslims.\textsuperscript{17} Interestingly, all the sample households drawn from the Coastal G.P are also Muslims.

\textbf{Map: 2.3}

Coastal gram panchayat and boundaries

\begin{quote}

The Highland gram panchayat, Chungathara was formed in 1962. According to 2001 census, the G.P. has a population of 49026 with literacy rate of 89.14%. With a total land area of 129.69 sq km, the GP has relatively a low population density (223 per sq km) in the region (Census of India, 2001). The G.P. comes under Nilambur region which was one of the key destinations for many farmers from South Kerala to migrate into when the

\textsuperscript{17}Earlier there were some non-Muslim fishing families in the region, but they moved to south Kerala.
region emerged as a plantation area. Studies have identified Chungathara as one of the places where these migrants are currently concentrated (Joseph, K.V. 1988). Therefore the sample households include a significant number of early migrant households.

Map: 2.4

Highland gram panchayat and boundaries

Among the two sample G.P-wards, the first one is located away from the town, in mostly hilly areas with a large number of rubber plantations. This ward has a number of Scheduled Tribe households belonging to ‘Paniya’ community. The other ward is closer to the town. This ward has a large number of Scheduled Caste households living in different colonies. Traditionally, a large number of workers are engaged in agriculture and plantation activities. The sample households drawn from this G.P. has representation of all religions (the only region having Christian households in the sample) and other marginal groups (the only sample which has presence of S.Ts and relatively large number of S.Cs).

The Midland gram panchayat – Alipparamba, constitutes two revenue villages – administrative units (Alipparamba and Anamangadu). According to the 2001 census, the GP has a population of 42598 with a total land area of 35.69 sq km (Census of India,
The first sample ward is mostly made up of hilly areas with a number of rubber or coconut trees and the remaining is paddy field. The second sample ward is largely around farm land and majority of the working population is engaged in traditional agricultural activities. The ward is located in the banks of river ‘Thootha’ which keep the farmland fertile and facilitates various kinds of cultivation. The earlier ward has a number of S.C. households, but the overall population is distributed across Muslims and various castes of Hindus.

Map: 2.5
Midland gram panchayat and boundaries

2.7.2 Basic socio-economic features of the sample regions

Along with the difference in their geography these regions experience sharp variation in their socio-economic status. Therefore they have to be treated individually so that the role of geographic and environmental diversity will be explained. The result confirms that there exists significant difference in their basic socio-economic characteristics. The analysis of variance calculated for the basic characteristics of households varies significantly across the three regions. As One-way ANOVA result shows, the religion and caste composition of the households, households’ relation to the village (originally
from the region or migrated from other regions), their asset possession and basic pattern of expenditure vary significantly across the regions (Table: 2.2).

Table: 2.2
Effect of region on basic characteristics of households: One-way ANOVAs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F</th>
<th>‘P’ Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>7.781</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caste</td>
<td>16.933</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family’s relation to village</td>
<td>191.144</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household’s asset index</td>
<td>14.497</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per capita monthly food expenditure</td>
<td>20.022</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per capita yearly educational expenditure</td>
<td>10.049</td>
<td>&lt;.001*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Primary Survey, 2011-12
*Reject the null hypothesis ($H_0$) when $P ≤ \alpha$
** indicates significant at 1 percent level.

All the sample households from the Coastal region are Muslims whereas the share of Muslim households in Highland and Midland regions are 36.76% and 82.07% respectively. Among the three regions, only Highland has presence of Christian households (26.48%) and the rest of the households are Hindu. This pattern reflects the unique cultural composition of the district. In terms of the caste affiliation of the Hindu households, less than 5% belong to forward castes and the majority belong to the OBCs. In the case of ST households, only Highland has their presence (3.16%) whereas SC households are present in both Highland (10.28%) and Midland (4.78%). The relation of households to the village shows that a large number of households from the Highland region (44.7%) are early migrants from south Kerala.

The geographic diversity can affect the nature of the local economies in several ways. The study constructed a simple asset index by calculating the asset price of selected household durables, vehicles (lowest price available) and land (fair value of land). On an average, a Coastal household has only 7.33 cents of land against 57.57 cents and 54.59 cents in Highland and Midland respectively. The household asset index calculated for the

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18 Based on minimum price of selected assets total asset price was calculated. Asset indicator = Total Asset Price/10000. Total asset value was calculated by adding the minimum price of selected household durables (Television- Rs.3000, mobile phone- Rs.1000, computer- Rs.10000, refrigerator- Rs.7000), vehicle (motor cycle/ scooter- Rs. 30000, car/jeep- Rs. 150000, bus/truck- Rs. 1200000) and fair price of land). The ‘Final Fair Value of Land’, published by RDOs, Department of Registration, Government of Kerala was taken. The fair price of land (Per Are) varies as Rs. 15000, Rs. 11000 and Rs. 8000 in Coastal, Highland and Midland regions respectively. [http://igr.kerala.gov.in/fairvaluesearch.aspx](http://igr.kerala.gov.in/fairvaluesearch.aspx), (last accessed on 11-04-2012)
three regions also confirm this fact where the average asset index of the Coastal household was much lower than others (4.94, 28.89 and 19.86 respectively in Coastal, Highland and Midland regions).

Due to a relatively large size of family, the Coastal households have to spend a substantial amount on food and therefore the total expenditure on food and its share in total household expenditure remains very high. At the same time, the per capita expenditure remains low in the Coast (Rs.946.94, Rs.1110.63 and Rs.1203.72 respectively in Coastal, Highland and Midland regions). The pattern of per capita monthly medical expenditure does not vary across the regions, but the average yearly per capita educational expenditure in Highland (Rs.8552.32) is much higher than that of household in Coastal (Rs.1831.52) and Midland (Rs.3097.60) regions.

Table: 2.3

| Effect of region on basic features of migration: One-way ANOVAs |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Household’s migration status     | 6.029           | .003*           |
| Presence of Non-Resident Indians | 6.352           | .002*           |
| Presence of returned NRIs        | 22.567          | <.001*          |
| Presence of Non-Resident Keralites | 16.327       | <.001*          |
| Presence of returned Non-Resident Keralites | 5.010       | .007*           |
| Immigrants to Kerala             | 1.903           | .150            |
| Total migrants in the household  | 1.413           | .244            |
| Direction of migration           | 1.553           | .212            |
| Household’s remittance (last 6 months) | 23.449      | <.001*          |
| Remittance receiving channel     | 9.401           | <.001*          |

Source: Primary Survey, 2011-12

‘*’ indicates significant at 1 percent level.

The differences in the pattern of migration affect the dynamics of migration in shaping the basic nature of the local economies in these three regions. The one-way ANOVA results shows that the pattern of migration varies significantly across the regions. The result shows that households’ migration status, distribution of NRIs, returned NRIs, NRKs, amount of remittances and remittances receiving channel vary significantly (Table: 2.3).
More than half of households (52.59%) from Midland have at least one family member who has ever migrated out of the state (including the returned migrants), against 50.40 per cent in Coastal and 38.34 per cent in Highland regions. As a result, the average amount of total remittances received by the migrant households also varies across the three regions (Table: 2.4).

Table 2.4

Distribution of households by remittance received

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Coastal</th>
<th>Highland</th>
<th>Midland</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Migrant households (share in %)</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average amount of remittance received in last 6 months (Rs.)</td>
<td>22940.38</td>
<td>31866.19</td>
<td>48978.66</td>
<td>37612.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Primary Survey, 2011-12

The details show that 32.7% of the households from the Midland region have at least one family member currently as non-resident Indian (NRIs), and the respective figure in other regions are very low. A large number of the Coastal households (35.9%) have at least one family member as returned non-resident Indians (RNRIs). Most of them had migrated to Saudi Arabia as fishermen and returned due to high risk involved in the job, low payment, legal problems or health issues or issues related to family. Many of them stayed only for a short period that was not long enough to earn anything and pay back the liabilities incurred during their migration (selling or mortgaging gold ornaments or documents of the property). In the case of internal migration, the Highland region is ahead of other regions (with 8.7% - NRKs, 2.0% -returned NRKs and 0.8% immigrant). On the whole, the total number of migrants and the direction of migration do not vary significantly across the regions.

The pattern of migration, especially the distribution of present NRIs determines the pattern of household remittance. The study finds that the pattern of remittance inflow varies significantly across the regions. The migrant households from Midland account for an average amount of Rs.17365.06 (during the last 6 months) against Rs.4157.63 in

19 The steady growth in the number of returned NRIs emerges as a serious challenge to the development strategy of the state. Studies highlight various issues related to their rehabilitation, options available for employment health and etc. (Zachariah, Nair & Rajan, 2006).
Coastal and Rs.7307.17 in Highland regions (Table: 2.4). Compared to the migrant households from Highland and Midland regions, households from Coastal region receive lesser remittances. The same can be seen as a reflection of the quality of human capital that migrants from Coastal region and options of job they have. Overall, these results suggest that the diversity across the three regions is very significant and this may be reinforced by other factors like religion, caste affiliation and pattern of migration. Since this can affect the nature of local economies and pattern of development, the study treats these regions separately and tries to understand the role of regional diversity of these local economies in the process of human development.

2.8 Conclusion

The development experience of Malappuram district, particularly the pattern of educational development that the district experienced, suggests that it has been following the larger pattern of Kerala, but in a different fashion. Its growth in education started later and it still lags behind the other districts in terms of human development. Within the district there is considerable regional diversity (often reinforced by other factors such as religion and caste) which plays an important role in the process of development. Therefore the thesis tries to understand the role of the regional diversity, religions and caste composition in relation to the dynamics of migration in three regions of Malappuram district. Given this focus, the next chapter will discuss the dynamics of education as a major factor which affects the process of development in varied ways.