



CHAPTER - I
THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

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CHAPTER - I

THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

The history of education is as old as the history of social life of humanity. When man began his social life, he tried to set himself in a certain mode of behaviour in order to remain in the cohesive group of the society. He wanted the young ones too, of the society to follow these patterns. The informal education began here i.e. at home within their settlements. This is the story of beginning of education in every primitive society. The fact that education plays an important role in the society and that education and society are closely related is not a newly conceived idea. Education is the means by which each society protects its tradition, perpetuates changes in its culture and even expresses its willingness to accept changes.

In modern societies where education is more concerned with changing knowledge rather than conserving it, where it is diffusing knowledge to wider circles from one society to another than with preserving the culture of a particular group, where science and technology are prominent goals, education and the economy become closely geared until education system occupies a strategic place as a central determinant of the economic, political, social and cultural character of the society.

The political systems of modern societies play a major role in the education of a society. The political system exerts a direct influence on the education because in most cases, it is the government, which gives the financial aid to education, and more over, it is the government, which provides regulatory legislation in respect to the educational policy. As Ottoway (1953) says "Education is always the expression of the authority of the some social group and in our civilization this group is the state". Brubacher (1962) too has similar observation when saying that

“if one allows himself to reflect on educational practice of the present century, he will note a number of problems whose solution at bottom involves political ideologies.”

1.1 The path of education in India – The Political Leadership and Education :

In the remote past of our country, it had a Dravidian culture. The excavation at Harappa and Mahenjodaro have shown the advanced way of living of Dravidians as compared to the people in the other parts of the world in those early times. These Dravidians were later subjugated by the Aryans and a new culture known as Aryan culture began to flourish in this land.

The early efforts for educating the child during the early Aryan period were confined to the father of the child. Slowly the place of the father began to be taken up by another person who was thought to be well – versed in those arts, crafts and knowledge in which a child has to be trained. This person began to be named ‘Guru’, ‘the expeller of the darkness’ or teacher. The society was stratified into ‘varnas’ and these ‘varnas’ became hereditary and were allotted specific vocations. The societal restrictions were so tight that the children of each ‘varna’ practiced the same vocation for ages. The potter’s child learned pottery and a Brahmin’s son learned ‘mantras’ to perform religious ceremonies. The ‘Kshatrias, and ‘Brahmins, were better placed among the ‘varnas’ in terms of availing education on subjects like religious texts (especially for Brahmins) and martial arts (for Kshatrias). The Social Strata were getting more and more demarcated during this period.

The early schools were ‘Ashrama’ schools. The students in these institutions had to live as the members of the family of the teacher. The ruling class gave liberal land grants to Ashrama Schools. The inmates of the school cultivated this land to grow food for their needs. Thus the organizational pattern of the ‘Ashrama’ schools was of the autonomous type. Some periods later, some of

the 'Ashramas' evolved into teacher's colonies. In these colonies the most learned were acquiring certain powers of control. There are also many indications in ancient texts that ancient Hindus were able to organize big institutions like the present - day residential Universities. The Universities of Takshashila, Nalanda, Vikramshila, Odantpuri and Vallabhi were some of the important seats of learning.

During the Muslim Period, we find the educational institutions of two types, the Muktabs and Madrasas. The Muktabs were the elementary schools and the Madrasas were providing education of advanced type. The Muslim rulers were lending their patronage to these institutions by giving them land grants.

When the British came to this country there were four types of institutions run by the Indians. They were Elementary Schools and the Schools of Learning. The Elementary Schools were again of two types – Persian schools and the schools teaching through the modern Indian languages. The schools of learning were 'Pathshalas' of Hindus and 'Madrasas' of Muslims. All schools of learning whether for Hindus or Muslims, were receiving pecuniary assistance from the rulers and the rich people. The Elementary Schools of this period were humbler institutions in three R's. They hardly had any endowments either from the state or from the public. The Schools were running mainly on the contributions of the parents.

After 1765, when the English East India Company emerged as a political power, it began to give its serious attention to the education of the Indian people and it resulted in the establishment of a few educational institutions. During the period 1765-1813 the missionaries founded a number of institutions. Their major aims in establishing of these schools were to facilitate proselytisation and to provide education to the new converts to the Christian fold. The Charter Act of the East India Company, in 1813, specified that the company should set apart an amount not less than one lakh every year to educate the people of India in a secular

and conservative fashion as opposed to the proselytising and revolutionary proposals of the missionaries.

In the year 1830 Ram Mohan Roy founded the Brahma Samaj. This started the chain reaction of the Indian enterprise in education. The renewed Charter of the East India Company in 1833 set aside all the restrictions on Indians to get a job under the company. Though this clause opened the gates of employment to the Indian youths, they were able to secure a job only if they knew English and were trained through western type of education. Thus the demand of western type of education grew and the company raised the figure from one lakh to ten lakhs to be spent on education.

On February 2, 1835, Macaulay who came to India as President of the General committee in the Government Official's Board, wrote his famous Minute on Education which on March 7, was confirmed by Lord Bentick, the then governor-general, and it became law. The Minute made it clear that the funds allotted for education can only be used for European type of education. This made education job oriented.

Woods Despatch, in 1854 on objects of Educational Policy, emphasized that the education would confer upon the natives of India vast moral and material blessings. The despatch agreed with Lord Macaulay and favoured the learning of European knowledge. Regarding the medium of instruction and the teaching of English, it made observations which favoured English, but it did not neglect the vernaculars or the spoken language of the people when it said that, "the vernacular languages must be employed to teach the far larger classes who are ignorant of, or imperfectly acquainted with English". This despatch recommended the creation of Department of Public Instruction in each of the five provinces into which the territory of India was then divided. The post of Director of Public Instruction was created to head this department and for his assistance adequate number of inspecting officers were sought to be appointed. The despatch considered that the time was ripe to establish Universities at various parts of India to be modelled on

the pattern of London University. The despatch also emphasized the spread of a network of Graded Schools all over India. It rejected the downward Filtration Theory, which has emphasized the education of classes rather than masses. The Directors recommended a multiplication of high schools. A very important contribution of the despatch was the introduction of the system of grant-in-aid. It observed that this system has been found to be very successful in England and hence was worth imitating in India

Till 1854, the Europeans were largely sharing the burden for the education of the Indians. The Indian Educational efforts were fragmentary and mostly limited to the collection of funds and to the conducting of Schools and colleges under European head masters. But by 1880, competition began between the agencies i.e. the government officials, the missionaries and private Indian enterprise on supremacy over one another so far as the functioning and organization of the schools were concerned. The Indian Education Commission of 1882, under the Chairmanship of Hunter, examined the relative merits of these agencies and recommended that the encouragement should be given to the private Indian Enterprise. The commission recommended that the Secondary and Collegiate Education should be taken of the direct control of the government by the granting of more liberal aid to privately managed schools. For primary education it recommended that it should be declared to be that part of the whole system of the public instruction which possesses an almost exclusive claim of local fund set apart for education and a large claim on provincial revenues the grants-in-aid according to the result of the examinations and also the lessening of the amounts of fees charged. The commission recommendations gave a great spurt to the private Indian enterprise. The number of students in colleges and schools also swelled.

Gokhale was the pioneer of the compulsory primary education in India. On 19th March 1910, he moved a resolution in the Imperial Legislative Council, which called for the beginning in the direction of making elementary education free and compulsory throughout the country. The Government of India accepted two

proposals of Gokhale of which one was creating a Department of Education and the other was for the publication of the yearly reviews of educational progress in India. His effort can divert government's attention towards the state of elementary education in the country. A government resolution issued on 21st February 1913 laid down principles for expansion and improvement of primary education. It formulated policy regarding secondary English Schools and it reviewed the whole question of University education.

The early 20th century witnessed a spurt in efforts for primary education. It began with the passing of Bombay Education Act, 1918 in the Bombay Legislative Council. Following it, Primary Education Acts were passed in Punjab, United Provinces, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. In 1921, the Department of Education was transferred to the control of Indian ministers, though they had no fiscal autonomy. In 1924, as suggested by the Calcutta University Commission, an Inter University Board was established to co-ordinate the activities of all the Universities represented on the Board. With the attainment of Provincial Autonomy, each and every eleven province of British India got the power to organize its own educational provinces. But the limited financial resources of the provinces could not allow them to make a major break through. But the Congress governments which came in power in seven of the eleven provinces made large allocations for education and took up the schemes of eradication of illiteracy, but the schemes came to a standstill as the war broke out and the Congress ministers resigned. In 1946, the congress ministers came back but due to uncertain political circumstances nothing substantial was done. India became independent on 15th August 1947 and a new era in the history of Indian Education began.

The political stand taken by the only major political party of the period, the Indian National Congress, during its various sessions needs to be mentioned here. The Indian National Congress has been the vanguard of the freedom movement of India especially since its joining by veteran leaders like Bal Ganga Dhar Tilak, Gopal Krishan Gokhale and finally by Mahatma Gandhi. The Indian National

Congress was primarily intended to secure the co-operation of India and the British administration in India. After the joining of many freedom loving leaders, the party changed its character and began to voice Indian aspirants. With the advent of Gandhiji, it became a mass party and people of all sections, feudal lords, capitalists, labour leaders, students, teachers, lawyers and doctors joined it.

The Indian National Congress in its third session at Madras in 1887 had passed a resolution to move the government to elaborate a system of technical education, suitable to the condition of the country, to encourage indigenous manufacturers by a more strict observance of the orders already existing in regard to utilizing such manufacturers for state purposes and to employ more extensively there at that time the skill and talents of the people of the country.

The 22nd Congress session held in Calcutta in 1906 repeated its protest against the policy of the Government. It said in its resolution that, "in the opinion of this Congress, the time has arrived for the people all over the country earnestly to take up the question of national education for both boys and girls organise a system of education – literacy, scientific and technical suited to the requirements of the country in National Lines under National Control". It shows that the country's only major political party held a stand that India should have an education on National Lines and it should be under the National Control.

In Independent India, education was made a state subject but Centre was not completely absolved of all the responsibilities for education. The centre through five-year plans made efforts to discharge its responsibilities. Three important Commissions at all India level have, since Independence, reviewed the state of education in the country and have recommended steps to recognize it. They are (i) University Education Commission (1948-49) under the Chairmanship of Dr. Radhakrishnan (ii) Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) under the Chairmanship of Dr. Mudaliar and the Education Commission (1964-66) under the Chairmanship of Dr. Kothari.

The report of these commissions and committees have given a great fillip to the programmes of expansion and improvement of education throughout the country. They have also stressed that the planning for education in this country should take place at the National Level. The Centre's role had become very prominent in education and it was because this reason that people began to think in terms of making education a concurrent subject. The Education Commission (1964-66) was seized with this problem and after a careful analysis it favoured the role which the centre was discharging at present as satisfactory and expressed views opposed to making education a concurrent subject. However, the lobbying which favoured more direct role of centre in education was successful in 1976. The 42nd Constitutional Amendment came into existence and education was put on the concurrent list.

Several arguments were put forward by those who favoured to put education on concurrent list. Some of them were :

- (i) For successful 'economic and social planning' it is essential that education should first be planned effectively. For this it is necessary that the Centre has the power to do so. The idea put forward was that the Centre not only should plan but have sufficient powers with it for implementation as well.
- (ii) Educational policies are of national importance. Therefore they should be the concern of the Centre and it should have powers to ensure uniformity in the framing and execution of national policies.
- (iii) Article 45 directed the states to introduce compulsory Primary, universal education throughout the country. Since even after nearly thirty years of independence the target to universal education from 6-14 years was far away, it was believed that something was wrong with the existing set up.
- (iv) It is necessary to ensure equality of opportunities for education to the different sections of the society, all the communities and the people in different regions could be ensured.

- (v) It was alleged that the local, vested and parochial interests were often considered as supreme at the state level when any policy regarding education was being framed or executed.
- (vi) The funds with the states were inadequate and so the centre's rôle was vital.
- (vii) For national integration national policies in education were to be speedily planned and so the centre's rôle was vital.

According to the 42nd Constitutional Amendment, the Central and State Governments are now equal partners in framing educational policies. How ever in the case of dispute, the Central Legislation has supremacy over state legislation. The executive power is given to the Union to give direction to the states. The state powers are limited to the extent that these do not impede or prejudice the exercise of the executive powers of the union. The centre can implement directly any policy like UGC, NCERT, and National Committees have higher power to shape the education of the country in all the states.

The impact of the Amendment in practice was quite limited for about 10 years. The main reason was its opposition by the next central government which was a coalition led by the Janata Party and also because of the opposition of some of the State Governments. The real breakthrough came in 1985 when Rajiv Gandhi directed his attention towards education. The Ministry of Education in August 1985 prepared a document "Challenge of Education – a policy perspective" and circulated it for nation wide debate. This document created great enthusiasm regarding educational reforms and as a consequence, in May 1986 "National Policy on Education" was formulated and presented to the Parliament at its Budget session and it adopted it. A "Programme of Action" too was prepared on the basis of the "National Policy on Education."

The National Policy on Education – 1986 and its Programme of Action have given a new orientation to our educational system. The efforts of Central government in formulating and adopting National Policy on Education are in

keeping with its enhanced role envisaged in the Forty Second Amendment of the constitution. The Central government took upon itself not only the responsibility of formulating policies for all stages of education but also of implementation of those policies. The National Policy on Education has outlined far-reaching changes in educational organization of the country. About the role of Central government in view of the Constitutional Amendment of 1976 which includes Education in the concurrent list, the policy states that it was a far reaching step whose implication is substantive, finance and administration require a new sharing of responsibility between the Union government and states in respect of this vital area of national life. It says that while the role and responsibility of the states in regard to education will remain essentially unchanged, the Union Government would accept a larger responsibility to reinforce the national and integrative character of education.

Regarding the Management of Education, the Policy envisages that at the National Level the Central Advisory Board of Education will play a pivotal role in reviewing educational development, determining the changes required to improve the system and monitoring implementation. The Programme of Action prepared by the Ministry of the Human Resource Development, Department of Education was presented before the Central Advisory Board of Education, which met at New Delhi on 1st, and 2nd August 1986. After taking into consideration the various suggestions of the Board, the Programme of Action was presented to the Parliament. Some of the vital programmes of action for strengthening management of education planned by the experts and accepted by the Parliament are :

- (i) To establish District Boards of Education and District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET).
- (ii) Working out the details, mechanics, funding arrangements for the National system of Education.
- (iii) To focus on Media and Educational Technology with special reference to Adult Education, non-formal Education, open and continuing education.

- (iv) Development and periodic review of curricula and teaching learning processes.

14.9

Since the adoption of Programme of Action in 1986, a number of vital steps have been taken to implement the National Policy on Education. Some of them are:

- (i) Uniform pattern of education 10+2=3 has been adopted by most of the states and Union territories.
- (ii) The Central institutions like NCERT and National Institute of Educational Administrators play a key role in providing training and expertise to teachers and educational administrators.
- (iii) UGC has undertaken with vigour the programmes of improvement of higher education.
- (iv) Residential Schools for the talented children known as Navodaya Vidyalayas have been opened in most of the states and union territories.
- (v) NCERT has taken up the revision of secondary level syllabus and textbooks under a collaborative arrangement in the Central Board of Secondary Education.
- (vi) For Universalisation of Elementary Education, the Central government has started taking interest in the progress and in allocating finances. For the qualitative improvement of elementary schools, a phased drive called "Operation Black Board" has been launched throughout the country.

1.2 Education at the State Level

The participation and independence of the country led the framers of the constitution to veer round to a viewpoint for a strong centre. For stopping the country from disintegration, this was considered essential. But there were also views favouring more of provincial autonomy. Thus, the Constituent Assembly

had to find a compromise in its framework of the constitution of India. The result was a "Quasi – Federal State" i.e. a Unitary State with subsidiary federal features.

The Seventh Schedule of the constitution contained three lists of subjects : the Union List with 97 topics, the State List with 66 topics, the Concurrent List with 47 topics. Education with notable exceptions fell in the State List at the time of adoption of the constitution. Its administration became a 'State responsibility'. Since 1976 it has become a Concurrent responsibility. Still the major burden of administration and management of education is on the state government. Every state of India has almost the same pattern of administrative organization. The constitutional Head of the State is the Governor of the State who is appointed by the President of India for usually a term of five years and holds office during his pleasure. The Governors are vested with Legislative, Executive and Judicial Powers which they normally discharge on the advice of their ministers.

The executive of each state, besides the Governor, has Council of Ministers who are members of the state legislature and are appointed by the Governor according to Article 163 of the Constitution. One of the ministers is given the portfolio of Education. He is given responsibility on matters of educational policy. But the minister of education may not be responsible for entire education. The other ministers control the educational matters concerned with their ministry.

The administrative chief in each state is an officer usually known as the Director of Education or Director of Public Instruction. He is the Head of Education Department of the State but works under the over all control of the minister of education. The Department of Education besides the Director of Education has a large number of officers and subordinate staff to run the administration in the state effectively. The officers of the department of education function usually at three levels. These are (i) the directorate level (ii) the regional level and (iii) the district level. In some states, there is another level, which is the

Block level. Thus in a state, the educational administration is run at different levels.

As said above, the minister of education is responsible for the initiation, direction and execution of all the educational policies of a state. He is responsible for planning of education in the state. He is answerable for any developments, progressive or retrograde steps taken in the state in the field of education. The Director of Education is there to advise him. But it still depends upon the minister as to how the educational programmes take shape in the country.

In a democracy it is essential that all policy matters should remain in the hands of the representatives of the people. It is also the most important requirement that the control of services and bureaucracy should vest in the popular ministry. Thus the minister of education exercises control over the services in the education department of the state and through the Director of Education exercises some partial control over the staff and service personnel, serving in the government and aided institutions in the state.

A few questions arise here :

- (i) What are our educational policies aiming to? Are they formulated to achieve some national goals? If so, what are they?
- (ii) If Educational Policies and Plan of Actions are formulated to achieve national goals, do ^{disparity} exists in any part of our country?
- (iii) What is the role of the elected governments in educational policy formulation?
- (iv) What exactly is this process of policy formulation by the elected government?

The answers to these questions are articulated in the Rationale of this study.

1.3 Rationale of the Study

The political system in our country exerts a direct influence on education. This holds true at the central as well as the state level due to the constitutional specifications. State governments have a direct influence on education through its various regulations on enrolment, teacher appointments, their qualifications, conditions for financing etc.

Though state policy on education developed in a country from time to time, it is the result of social, economic, cultural and complex of factors, the political ideologies exercise equally strong influences. This was borne out by the history of education during the nineteenth and first half of the present century in a number of Asian and African countries. Political factors were inter-linked with other factors in shaping educational policy of the alien governments of these countries and determining the course of educational development.

When the policy of ruling class is at large, divergent from the interests of the people as a whole, the material facilities resulting from economic development are not necessarily utilized for the development of education and the satisfaction of other urgent requirements of the people. The propertied classes invariably strive to utilize the economy primarily for enriching themselves rather than for meeting the needs of the people. Thus the government of Czarist Russia patently neglected the wants of the people as a whole, and did virtually nothing to develop public education. Lenin (1971) in this connection wrote : “the bourgeoisie, in a bourgeois state, can never spend more than the merest pittance on cultural matters as they need vast sums of money for maintaining the supremacy of the bourgeoisie as a class.”

In the post – independence period of India, the successive governments always focussed on their educational policies and programmes towards the educational development. These measures taken for educational development were

in the long run for the socio – economic and political development of the nation. Hence, the importance given to educational and economic development are visualized to be closely linked as seen in the First and Second five year plans. The various educational programmes of governments for the promotion of literacy, ensuring compulsory enrolment, providing physical facilities are essentially for the educational development. The various supportive programmes like mid day meal, free text books, free uniform, various scholarships, evening schools, enrolment of the school drop outs and the establishment of various organizational Units like Directorate of Adult Education, National Institute of Adult Education are also for the achievement of educational development. Setting up of Agricultural and Technological Universities in order to make the Nation self sufficient on food as well as technological ‘know how’ are political decisions in education for economic development.

It is needless to say that all the government-sponsored programmes for educational development are set within the framed goals of the country. The centre tries to achieve these goals through various measures. Either they carry out the programmes directly or provide ^{ep} monitory assistance to various agencies including that of the state governments. The programmes are set with one more target – a uniform growth of education in the country. It implies that everything – ranging from setting up of goals, devising various educational programmes, breaking them in to several operations, providing resources, monitoring the progress etc. is encompassed in the governmental decisions.

Inspite of having predetermined goals, well-measured programmes and using enormous resources, the imbalances in educational development seems to be very significant across our country. This imbalance is evident among various regions of the country, among various races and ^{castes} among the sex. These imbalances point its finger towards the elected governments. They raise the following questions:

- (i) How ~~the~~^{the} elected governments visualize and perceive the educational needs of the people?
- (ii) How do they frame educational goals and strategies?
- (iii) How do they formulate various measures to solve the emerging educational issues?
- (iv) How do they translate them in to educational programmes?

The ruling party machinery (parties in case of coalition governments) holds the major responsibility of various governmental interventions in education in our country. This body takes decisions on behalf of the people, the members of the party mingle with the people, interact with them, perceive their needs, discuss and take decisions in education within their ranks. In this manner, a series of interactions take place within and outside the political forums on matters of educational importance before these matters get presented in the elected representative forum of the people i.e. the legislature. The interactions within the legislative body of legislature may lead to legislative decisions and get executed in the form of Acts or laws. As a whole we can call it as the political decision making process i.e. perceiving the educational needs of the people, voicing – interacting – arriving at a consensus within the party, presenting them in legislative body, arriving at a decision and executing them in the form of Acts or laws. Any educational decisions arrived at depends upon how the majority of the members of the polity perceived the educational needs of the people, processed them and arrived at a decision within it.

This points to the possibilities of major imbalances in educational development across the country since it implies that the educational development may be due to the way the polity must have perceived the needs, formulated measures, developed the framework of programmes and their implementation. It also indicates that the governmental interventions may change with a change in the governments. A few basic questions arise due to those imbalances :

- (i) What is the very nature of political decision making which eventually may lead to development?
- (ii) What is the impact of frequent changes of the ruling party on educational decisions?
- (iii) To what extent is the sensitivity shown by the decision making process towards the concerns of education?

India, with its sub continental size, nurtures a variety of diversities in terms of language, religion and various aspects of culture. Studies of these aspects are to be collated to get a total picture of the nation at a macro level. At the same time micro level studies provide an insight into the intricacies occurring in similar contexts. Also there are many homogeneous contexts every state of the country share. They share the contexts of the similar elected bodies, procedures required to pass an act or law, conventions to be followed during elections etc. So, any study at state level i.e. at the micro context is very relevant. It is also relevant because each state also may witness change in governments, which may be ideologically different. Will a change of government at state level necessitate a change in the political decision making process? Only a thorough study will be able to give an answer.

Another significant change took place in educational arena of the country was the 42nd Constitutional Amendment of 1976. This Amendment brought education in the Concurrent List, making the responsibility of education a concern of both – the centre and state. What was the impact of the 42nd Constitutional Amendment on the political decision making process of the states? This too can be answered only through a thorough study.

The present study is an attempt to understand and answer the questions asked in the conceptual framework. Since the study is at micro level, Kerala State was taken as the sample. Some of the unique features of the state paved the way for taking it as the sample. They were :

- (i) Literacy (Kerala is declared as the first state to have 100% literacy).
- (ii) enrolment (Kerala maintained the highest rate of enrolment right from its re-organization for children of 6-14 years)
- (iii) Expenditure on education (Kerala stood among the highest in spending for education. it spent Rs.11.5 per capita income even in 1961, the highest only after Maharashtra in the country).
- (iv) education of SC/ST (it always had an enviable position among the other states in the matter of level of education among the SC/ST population of the country).

The number of non – literates per 1000 of population, even in 1960-61 was the minimum in Kerala (530.5) compared to that of India (316.5). Statistics reveal that Kerala made a steady progress in the case of literacy. It is the state to have the highest retention at the school level. The state witnessed change in the governments eight times during the 35 years of its post-reorganization period. When the governmental interventions may have a significant role in the educational development, a study of this nature seems to be very significant and relevant.

1.4 An Overview of Kerala

1. Geographical Features.

Kerala, popularly or mythologically known as the land of Parsuram, lies between North latitudes 8° 17'30" and 12° 47'40" and between east longitudes 74° 51'57" and 77° 24'74". The state is bounded on the north and north-east by the South Kanara, Coorg and Mysore districts of Karnataka, on the east by the Nilgiris, Coimbatore, Madurai, Ramanathapuram and Tirunelveli districts of Tamil Nadu and on the south by Kanyakumari districts of Tamil Nadu. The Western side of Kerala is washed by the Arabian Sea.

Kerala is hemmed between the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea. It can be divided into three natural divisions – highland, midland and lowland. The chief crops raised in the state are paddy, coconut, arecanut, rubber, ginger, pepper etc. Kerala is rich in water, a precious gift of nature. Almost all the rivers originate from the Western Ghats, the natural barrier on the eastern side of Kerala. The state has an annual rainfall of 300 cms.

2. A brief on agriculture.

As mentioned above, paddy was the main produce of the agricultural sector. The existing tenancy laws and the manner in which the land was managed, went against the interest of a progressive agricultural economy. Most of the people lived in a food gathering economy. Food production and import of rice often fell short of meeting the needs of the people. Because the purchasing power of the common man was very low and the remuneration received in kind (rice) for his labour was too little to last long. Attempts to reclaim more land for cultivation seem to have been taking place only at the turn of the Nineteenth Century. By the beginning of the 19th century the government demanded the taxes and rents be paid in cash instead of produce. Thus, cash economy was slowly taking the place of kind economy. The foreign rulers also insisted on cash economy in the 19th century.

3. A brief political history of the pre-reorganization period.

The political history of Kerala after the second Chera Empire (800-1102 A.D.) is well chronicled as history. The history of Kerala is the history of four important kingdoms – Venad, Cochin, Calicut and Koluthunad. The consolidation of these four kingdoms, later, resulted in the formulation of modern Kerala.

Venad : Rama Varma Kulasekhara was considered as the founder of Independent Venad. Ravi Varma Kulasekhara, an able administrator ruled this kingdom during the period of 1299-1314. In 1729, Marthanda Varma, the most illustrious ruler, ascended the throne of Venad and ably ruled the country till 1758. He is called 'the

maker of Modern Travancore'. Swathi Tirunal, the famous ruler of Travancore (1829-1847), was responsible for the spreading of English education in the state and various administrative reforms.

Cochin : The arrival of the Portuguese early in the 16th Century brought Cochin in to prominence. Saktan: Tampuran (1790-1805) was the most outstanding ruler of the Cochin Royal House. In 1812, the administration of Cochin State fell into the hands of Colonel Munro, the British Resident who became the first Diwan of the State. Political consciousness was slowly building up during the early decades of the 19th Century in the State.

Calicut : The Zamorins – Samuri in Malayalam – rulers of Calicut came in to prominence only at the beginning of the 14th Century. Calicut became a free port under the Zamorins and trade in spices flowed through this port to foreign markets.

Kolthunad : Kolthunad Kingdom consists of mainly the Malabar Coast. Its early history is not known. The history of the Malabar Coast from the close of the 15th Century may be broadly divided into three periods, i.e. Portuguese, Dutch and British.

The political history of Kerala since 16th Century is necessarily the political-interference of the foreigners beginning with the Portuguese. They were followed by the Dutch, French and British, each one trying to dismantle the other through bloody battles. Though settled in the name of trade they remained a party to native kings when rulers had to settle scores with the neighbours. This, in turn, weakened the battle power of the native kings and resulted in the slipping of power in to hands of the outsiders. The rivalry between the foreigners went on till mighty British put everything under their control by the early 19th Century.

By 1848, India had been unified and the political supremacy of the British in India had become an accomplished fact. By the Act of 1858, the British Crown assumed the direct administration of the Indian dominion from the East India Company. Malabar was part of the Madras Presidency and it was ruled by

distinguished civil servants. Travancore and Cochin made remarkable progress in the educational and cultural fields under their enlightened Maharajas.

4. A brief on Education during the pre- reorganization period.

The education in the early history of Kerala owe largely to Buddhism. The Buddhist monks were pioneers in the field of education. The Buddhist 'Viharas' contained schools or colleges for offering instruction and hence they served as centres for the dissemination of learning as well. The 'Ezhuthupalli', the Malayalam term for the elementary school, seems to be a legacy of the Buddhist period, for the Buddhists used to call their 'Viharas' by the term 'pallis'. In later days the people of Kerala copied the Buddhist example of running educational institutions alongside their temples.

The age of Second Chera, (800-1102 A.D) Empire saw remarkable progress in the fields of education and learning. Vedic schools and colleges attached to temples sprang up in different parts of Kerala. These institutions called 'Salais' were richly endowed by the rulers as well as by private philanthropists. Hundreds of young men were given free food, free clothing and free tuition in these institutions. The 'Salais' offered specialized courses of studies such as philosophy, grammar, theology, law etc. In fact, each temple accommodated within itself a centre of learning in the traditional 'Gurukula' style. There were also libraries attached to the temples with good collection of books on a wide variety of subjects.

The Gurukula style of education was enjoyed by only a Selected group of people i.e. upper castes of the state which maintained a rigid caste system. But with advent of the foreign rule, the rigidity of the caste system disintegrated. Among the more important forces that were working towards the relaxation of caste rules were English education, the public school system, the railways and the enactment of equal laws for all, and their impartial administration without distinction of caste or creed.

In rural areas, each village had its own 'Eluthasan' or hereditary village school master, who received the pupils in his own house and accepted such payments as the means of their parents admitted of. These masters taught the children (boys and girls being taught together) reading and writing, the multiplication table, the recitation of Sanskrit hymns, and in some rare instances Sanskrit poetry, drama and rhetoric. As children of all standards were taught by a single teacher, their progress was necessarily slow. The government took steps for the first time only in 1890 to diffuse elementary education, when the old village schools began to disappear. They ceased to exist altogether in towns, while in rural parts their number decreased immensely. The immediate effect of this change was a retrogression in literacy since the growth of primary schools of the modern type could not keep pace with the decay of the old indigenous schools. The measures taken like setting up of more schools, however, during early decades of 20th Century for the extension of elementary education had besides making up for the disappearance of the old schools, also provided a more useful and efficient system of education for the masses.

When the prejudices of the higher castes were thus overcome to a great extent through the agency of education, the Government of the State began to organize measures for the amelioration of the condition of the deprived population. Among the various measures adopted by the government, the earliest and the most effective had been in the field of education. special concessions had been extended to children of the deprived classes by the Education Department and the opposition of the higher castes against the admission of these children in schools was tactfully overcome, so much so that they sat side by side with the children of the higher caste Hindu castes. Education, both English and Vernacular, was made free for the depressed children and they were supplied with clothes, books and other school requisites.

It was six decades since the old and popular 'pyal' school of 'Eluthashans' were superseded by the year 1956 in favour of schools of the modern types, and

throughout this period, the course of the new system of education had been marked by the study and uninterrupted progress. The achievement of the educational agencies in the state, both 'sirkar' and private, was a matter to be proud of especially in its primary object i.e. conquering ignorance and bringing the minimum knowledge of letters to all was being fulfilled in an ever increasing measure.

5. A brief on the role of the Indian National Congress in the fore front of political developments in the state.

The birth of Indian National Congress on 28th December 1885 was a great historical event. The First Malabar District Political Conference was held at Palghat in 1916 under the Chairmanship of Dr. Annie Besant. Thereafter almost every year such political conferences were held.

During the same period, Travancore was also not free from the political agitations. A branch of the Indian National Congress was formed at Trivandrum in 1919 on the initiative of A. K. Pillai, V. Achuta Menon and others. Their first action was to boycott foreign goods. A branch of Indian National Congress was started at Trichur in Cochin State.

The first All Kerala Political Conference was held at Ottapalam under the President ship of T. Prakasam. It was attended to by all prominent leaders of Malabar, Travancore and Cochin. The most important event that took place during the period was the Malabar rebellion of 1921. The 'Vaikom Satyagraha' (1924-25) was a new experience to the people all over the state. The road surrounding the famous Mahadevar Temple was the scene of the historical 'Satyagraha' which was intended for opening the roads to Harijans.

The Government of Cochin passed an Act of Constitutional Reforms, in 1938. Unsatisfied by the reforms, Cochin State Praja Mandal was formed in 1941

for achieving responsible Government in Cochin. In 1946, the Maharaja issued a message expressing his willingness to transfer all departments except law and order and finance to responsible ministers of the legislature. The first popular ministry of Cochin under Panampilly Govinda Menon assumed office in 1946.

In Travancore, in 1932, there was an important agitation known as 'Nivarthana' agitation. The agitation was organized by the Ezhava, the Muslim and the Christian Communities. They demanded representation in the state legislature in proportion to their numerical strength in the state. As their demand was rejected, a joint political congress known as Samyukta Rashtriya Samiti was formed. In 1938 the joint political congress was renamed as Travancore State Congress. When Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer announced a new constitution embodying some reforms which was known as 'American Model', the State Congress of Travancore rejected it. The agitation emanated from it was suppressed.

In 1946, the British declared their intention to leave India after transferring power. Under the Indian Independence Act 1946, British authority over native states had to end from the date of their withdrawal. Each native state had the liberty to determine its own relation with the new government of India. Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, Diwan of Travancore, announced that Travancore would become an independent sovereign state. But he had to leave the state following an attempt on his life on which he was injured. Immediately after the incident, Travancore acceded to the Indian Union. The first popular ministry consisting of Pattom A. Thanu Pillai, T. M. Varghese and C. Kesavan was sworn in on 24th March 1948. The policy of integration of Indian States was soon initiated by the Government of India. This led to the merger of the Princely States of Travancore and Cochin and the formation of a new Travancore – Cochin State on 1st July, 1949. Malabar continued as part of Madras State till the formation of Kerala State.

As early as 1928 the state people's conference held at Ernakulam had passed a resolution calling for the formation of 'Aikya' Kerala. The Payyannur

political conference endorsed this view. In 1946, Kerala Provincial Congress was formed under K.P. Kesava Menon and it convened an 'Aikya' Kerala conference in April, 1947 at Trichur. It was attended to by a number of delegates from Travancore, Cochin and Malabar. On 1st November, 1956, a new state of Kerala was formed as per the State Re-organisation Act, 1956. The new state comprised Kasargode taluk of South Canara district, Malabar district of Madras State and Travancore-Cochin State excluding the Tamil speaking taluks of Thovala, Agastheevaram, Kalkulum, Vilavancode and Shencottah.

An overview of Kerala was an attempt to trace the history of the state in brief, which showed tremendous progress in the field of education. As mentioned earlier, in a democratic state, most of the educational changes are initiated due to the governmental interventions. This in turn, points towards the actual process behind these interventions i.e. the political decision making process in education. This study, as its title correctly points out, 'A study of the political decision making process on education in Kerala State', is an attempt to understand this process.