GROWTH OF SCHOOL EDUCATION IN KERALA : PATTERNS AND DIFFERENTIALS

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I hereby affirm that the research for this dissertation titled "***Growth of School Education in Kerala: Patterns and Differentials***" being submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy was carried out entirely by me at the Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram.

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Certified that this dissertation is a bonafide work of ***Ambili C S***. This has not been considered for the award of any other degree by any other university.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Importance of School Education

Education is a crucial factor for economic development as well as social upliftment in any population. Its role in the development of human capital is undisputed. Human capital refers to the abilities and skills of human resources of a country. The formation of human capital occurs mainly through qualitative improvement in human abilities and skills. Shultz (1961) had remarked that education is a form of productive investment. It widens the range of choices available to people; but more importantly, an educated population provides the type of labour force necessary for economic development and growth of a country.

Education is the key to national prosperity and welfare. Apart from contributing to the increase in lifetime earnings, consumption and investment, it also enhances the quality of life. Educational activities involve production and distribution of knowledge, whether undertaken in regular institutions of learning or elsewhere. Education enhances the quality of life which in turn leads to an improvement in education. Notwithstanding the fact that any kind of education contributes to well-being, the emphasis in the present study will be on formal schooling as majority of the educational activities take place in institutions of learning.

In the modern age, school forms the starting point in the process of getting educated and the elemental institution in education. Cohen contends that "school is an institution devoted to

instruction with specialised personnel, permanent physical structures, special apparatus (of which texts are important part), formal and stereotyped means of instruction, a curriculum and rationally defined, manifest objectives" (Cohen; 197Ø; p.56)

Functioning of the educational system in a society is influenced to a large extent by the characteristics of the region and its historical background. Based on socio-political, geographical, demographic and economic factors, spatial developments differ. Uneven educational development could trigger disparate economic development processes.

The importance of developing and improving education in a developing country like India needs no mention. The role of schooling in the process needs further attention as the state wants to improve the socio-economic conditions of the people through better education. In spite of a common national strategy for development of the social sectors,India has been witnessing differential rates of development in school education at the regional level. However, Kerala stands out among all the states for not only its achievements in the field of education, but also for the subsequent achievements in improving the physical quality of life as reflected in its low birth, death, and infant mortality rates, high literacy rate, and a sex ratio favourable to women. Kerala's remarkable educational achievements stem from a combination of factors including the nature of the British colonial presence, enlightened Travancore and Cochin rulers and most importantly the workers and peasant movements (Nair, 1981; and Franke, 1996). The performance of the educational system in Kerala

has captured national and international attention, and so merits deeper understanding and analysis.

The issues to be studied in the school education system could take many shapes and features. School education could be at the primary level or secondary level. The issues could be purely sociological, economical or even psychological in nature. Here, the issues are analysed in a socio-economic perspective, with the development aspect of many social groups as the core of the analysis. The questions of educational inequalities based on sex, social status, region, personal attributes, etc have become some of the major issues of analysis in some studies (for example, Byrner, 1978).

Theoretically speaking education provides for vertical mobility and it can equalize status of individuals coming from different social strata. Indian society is characterised by many types of social and economic inequalities which have affected the social fabric. Education for the weaker sections of the society such as the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes could improve their fortunes.

Regional imbalances in school education and literacy rates are, to a great extent, the consequences of variations in regional development. Similarly, though women in Kerala have made rapid progress in education, particularly during the recent decades, the levels of their education seem to be quite uneven among different districts and regions as well as among different social groups within the state. The better the women's educational status, the higher will be, other things being equal, their socio-economic opportunities. Educated women constitute an important input in the

process of socio-economic development. Women with appropriate education would contribute to the building up of a strong nation by rearing up able and ideal citizens.

The major problem of school education in most of the developing countries is the shortage of resources. In our mixed economy, school education is provided by both government and private agencies. Kerala's school sector is characterised by the existence of a fairly large private sector. The type of school ownership also controls the process and admission to schooling and contributes to differentials in educational patterns.

In our study, we concentrate mainly on regional and sex-wise differentials in educational expansion in different sectors in Kerala. Since a macro-level enquiry into the state's educational sector would not give insights into regional, management-wise, community-wise and sex-wise differentials, we have to delve into the disaggregate levels. Since available statistics are on the basis of administrative units, we are constrained to conduct the analysis only on an inter-district basis.

The purpose of the study is to look into the educational development of Kerala by taking into account various indicators of educational development like enrolment, teacher-pupil ratios at the different levels of school, number of schools, expenditure per pupil, and percentage of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe students.

Review of Literature

Balanced regional development in education is essential for the overall development of a society. The process of educational development, like economic development, has never been homogenous in its regional spread nor neutral to prevailing social formation. In India every plan document has highlighted the importance of education in economic development and reduction of regional disparities. But empirical evidence shows that even after five decades of planning, the distribution of education across different regions remains highly skewed. Several studies have established the existence of regional disparities in educational development in India.

The studies related to the field of school education development in India could be classified into the following groups; i) Studies of regional disparities (across states as well as within states at district level or more micro level) in one or more of the many variables affecting the school education, ii) Studies which examine the socio-economic factors for differential performance across regions and among variables at a micro level, iii) Studies which discuss the macro factors affecting school education including finances and policies. Most of the studies which we have reviewed are studies in the Indian scenario.

Regional variations in educational development may arise from unequal distribution of inputs across regions. Educational inputs include schools, school facilities and teachers. The following studies have dealt with these aspects.

Scholars who attempted to analyse the regional disparity questions tried to look at the differences existing across different states in India. One such attempt by Rudolph and Rudolph (1969) discussed the problem of regional disparities in educational growth in India by classifying the states into two broad categories: (i) belonging to Heartland and (ii) belonging to Rim land. According to the authors these two categories of states differ significantly in terms of the pattern of education due to differences between them with respect to language, history, economy and social structure. The British rule added to the regional variations, which had already existed between the Rim land and the interior Heartland, by inequitable allocation of resources to education among the states, determined on the basis of convenient economic and socio-political criteria. The authors also found that Rim land states stood far ahead of Heartland states in terms of educational development. The variable chosen for analysis was enrolment as a percentage of total population.

Tilak, has made several studies exploring the differentials in school education at the regional level and for different variables. In one of his earlier attempts to find out inter-state disparities in educational development in India for the period 1974-75, he used the cost involved in the education process as the variable (Tilak, 1979). He used two types of weighted composite index of educational development: i) constant cost weighted index, using cost proportions at all-India level as weight and ii) varying cost weighted index, which used cost in each state separately to find the weight. The study found glaring disparities in educational development among states in terms of the cost involved. He also

found that out of the 21 states of India, Manipur, Nagaland, Kerala and Himachal Pradesh were advanced in educational development while Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa were extremely backward. Using correlation and simple linear regression analysis, he concluded that the major factors responsible for the disparities were socio-economic, demographic and geographical. Tilak suggested that a critical minimum social investment was necessary to change the overall socio-economic and demographic patterns.

In one of his studies at a state level, using composite index of rank order, Tilak observed that regional inequalities in educational development existed across districts of Andhra Pradesh (Tilak, 1987).

In order to estimate regional disparities in educational development in India, Panchamukhi (197Ø) used the principal component analysis for determining the cost differences in the urban schooling set up. Tilak and Bhatt (1989-199Ø) and Singh and Bansal (1993), have highlighted large intra-state disparities in educational development among Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, and Bihar. Enrolment ratio, number of educational institutions and teacher-pupil ratio were the variables used for the analysis. In addition to these variables Tilak and Bhatt used enrolment ratio among girls and percentage of SC/ST population to total enrolment. Their study developed a composite index and cost-weighted index both yielding the same results namely that disparities do exist. Singh and Bansal contented that with increased level of education, regional disparities increased and that dropout rate, which varied across districts, tended to decrease for both boys and girls over

time. Teacher-pupil ratio also declined with expansion of levels of education.

In one of the micro level studies about the development of school education, Sujatha (1989) examined the process of education, particularly elementary education, in an isolated, predominantly tribal area in Arunachal Pradesh. While discussing growth of educational facilities, enrolment ratio, teacher-pupil ratio, dropout patterns etc, she found that wide variations existed even among the districts in this small state in terms of spatial distribution of primary schools, average number of villages, size of population served per primary school, accessibility to educational facilities and availability of trained teachers.

Physical as well as economic accessibility of schools was the topic for analysis in some of the studies which dealt with regional variations in education. In one such study, Padmanabhan (1986) in his analysis of the disparities in educational development among states and districts, contented that disparity in educational financing was the root cause. He analysed inter-district disparities for the years 1970-71 and 1976-77 and inter-state variations for the years 1976-77 and 1982-83. In his opinion, physical accessibility to school was an important problem; but equally important was economic accessibility. Disparities in access within a region occurred due to socio-economic inequalities among the population. Since states differed in size and population, location of schools should be planned taking into account all these various factors.

Raza et.al. (1984) who examined inter-state variations in school accessibility in India found that both population coverage and average distance varied across districts. His study showed that geographical factors affected physical accessibility. Hilly districts of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, dry regions of Rajasthan and tribal belts in Uttar Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh had poor physical accessibility to schools. Punjab and West Bengal are states which had relatively good accessibility.

The attempt to link the lack of availability of schools to the existence of high illiteracy levels was done by Sinha, Sachidananda (1993) in Bihar in 1981. He found out that in those places in which all the three levels of education facilities were available, literacy was high. He also found that school facilities (LP, UP and Secondary) had a positive relation with enrolment and retention of women and SCs/STs.

Many studies have tried to look into the gender differentials in education and development of schooling. Inter-community variations, especially the variations among the weaker sections and different social groups have also formed the subject of several studies made in India.

Raza and Agarwal (1984) examined different aspects of regional variation in the development of higher education in various states of India for the year 1980-81. He found that spatial variations (across states) in enrolment per lakh of population were very large. He attributed them to the following factors: i) differences in population density (low density areas having high enrolment

rates) ii) concentration of institutions, and iii) backwardness of districts. He also found out that there existed male-female differentials in education across states. Further, variations existed also between Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes on the one hand and the general population on the other.

Women's education is essential for development of society and also for reduction in population growth (King and Hill, 1993). But there existed sex-wise imbalances in education, right from very early times. Women have traditionally been assigned the role of tending children and doing household chores. Even though this attitude has changed in recent times, the disparity persists in several regions, as large number of studies have shown.

Raza et.al. (1984), Tilak and Bhatt (199Ø), Singh and Bansal (1993) and Mehta (199Ø.a) highlighted the disadvantageous position of women in terms of education. Tilak and Bhatt exposed the male-female disparities in levels of education using Sopher's index of inequality and suggested that in Haryana inter-district disparities (measured by the coefficient of variation) are less among males than among females. Singh and Bansal in their article on Punjab concluded that during the period 1973 to 1986, inter-district variations in male literacy remained the same whereas that of female literacy came down. The reason for the disadvantageous position of women in Uttar Pradesh, according to Mehta, was inadequacy of schools exclusively meant for women. Over the years enrolment of both men and women has increased, more for men than for women.

Unni (1998), in her study of Mehsana district of Gujarat, made on the basis of a household survey of primary school children belonging to the age group 6-14, observed that gender differences in schooling increased with age and that while the proportion of boys going to school increased with age that of girls declined after the age of 10-11 years at which stage girls normally attain puberty.

Besides regional and sex-wise disparities there also exist inter-community differentials. For example, the scheduled caste population has much less access to educational facilities than the general population. In the past, education had remained for several centuries the monopoly of the upper castes. As a result of the social reform movements of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, the disparities were reduced to some extent, in different parts of the country. Moreover, the constitution of India has provided for priority treatment for the educationally disadvantaged groups. Some studies have examined the question of disparities among scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and between them and the general population in terms of educational development.

Panwar and Vyas (1993) found that in Rajasthan female literacy was very low (11.42 per cent) compared to that of all-India and that gross enrolment ratio was higher and dropout rates lower for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes than for the general population of the state. The retention rates were 31.54 per cent at the primary level, 70.87 per cent at the middle level and 71 percent at the secondary level, thus indicating relatively low

dropout (and high retention) rates at the secondary level. Teacher-pupil ratios at the primary, the middle and the secondary levels were 1:45, 1:29 and 1:2Ø respectively. Discrimination in the provision of educational infrastructure against girls and scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in rural areas was a major inhibiting factor to educational development of Rajasthan. The authors conclude that by providing adequate school and hostel facilities for girls, free mid-day meals, scholarships to all students and incentives to teachers, enrolment and retention rates could be raised considerably and the educational distance between Rajasthan and the rest of India narrowed down within the span of a few years.

Raza et.al (1985) reviewed the changing situation of literacy among the scheduled tribes of various states and union territories using Census data from 1961 to 1981. He compared the performance of the tribals with that of non-tribal population in terms of literacy. He found that female literacy among tribals was much lower than among non-tribals except in Mizoram and Manipur. There existed male-female disparity in education both in the case of scheduled tribess and the general population. The tribal districts with very low levels of inequality were in Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Lakhshadweep and Nicobar. The tribals had, in general, little access to institutions of formal learning even at the elementary level. Needless to mention, most tribal habitations are poorly served by higher level educational institutions.

Sarkar (1986) examined educational growth disparities in terms of literacy based on Census data. He also examined the status of enrolment, literacy and primary education among various social

groups in the rural areas of West Bengal and Bihar. In Bihar, education was found higher among women of three social groups: Hindus, Muslims and Scheduled Tribes. Enrolment rate in the case of Scheduled Caste Hindus was high for both sexes in rural West Bengal compared to rural Bihar. In general, women had lower education than men among all the social groups in both the states. The male-female disparity in education was small for upper caste Hindus and high for Muslims. The dropout rate was higher in rural West Bengal than in rural Bihar.

Agarwal (1995) looked into the educational status of the various strata among the Scheduled Caste population. He found that disparities in literacy levels were higher among scheduled castes than among the general population; he attributed this finding to historical factors that had kept work separated from knowledge. As one moved from urban to rural areas, inter-state and intra-group differentials became sharper. Also male-female differentials widened. The explanation for the co-existence of economic and social deprivation in the case of scheduled caste population was sought in the fact that the proportion of work force to total population was higher among them than among the non-backward communities.

Mehta (199Ø.b) also analysed the educational status of different groups of population, particularly the socio-economically disadvantaged groups, i.e., the scheduled caste and scheduled tribes and women, with reference to the pattern of expansion of different levels of educational facilities, the relative differentials which existed in the provision of education as

between the state UP and all-India, and rural-urban as well as sex-wise differentials in the utilisation pattern of different levels of education. There existed glaring inequalities of educational opportunity at regional levels and among different social groups. The rate of expansion of all levels of educational facilities except at the primary schools has been high in independent India both in the urban and the rural areas. However, the urban population enjoyed much better educational facilities at all levels than their rural counterparts. Women were in a disadvantageous position since schools exclusively meant for them were limited. Even though enrolment rates of both men and women have increased since 1950-51, it was higher for men and for urban areas. Participation at different levels of education by the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population was lower too. It was observed that enrolment rate increased with income both in the rural and the urban areas.

Mehta (1990.a) was concerned with the effect of a given level of educational opportunity in widening the already existing socio-economic inequality. He also examined whether and if so how, education could serve as an instrument for reducing imbalances in income distribution as between SCs/STs and the general population. His analysis was based on primary data collected from two hundred households-one hundred each from rural and urban areas-of Lucknow. He found that the extent of participation of SCs/STs was lower than of the general population at the different levels of education. These differences widened with higher levels of education. The drop out rates were high for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, though they narrowed with higher levels of education. Per capita

income was negatively related to dropouts for both groups of the population. SC/ST population got better advantage of education in terms of employment than the general population. Mehta concluded that education reduced inequality in opportunities of economic gains between SC/ST and the general population. If opportunities at the secondary and higher levels of education were more accessible to these disadvantaged groups, the equalising effect would have been much larger.

Unni (1996) also analysed and found that social (caste) status of household is a major factor affecting schooling. While a large proportion of children belonging to upper castes attend schools, the proportion of school- going children is smaller among the backward caste households. This she attributed mainly to the small perceived benefits of schooling and the higher opportunity cost of children's education in backward caste households.

Ahmad and Nuna (1993) identified wide disparities in the level of literacy among the tribal population in the districts of central India for the year 1981. Even in the case of urban literacy, some districts remained backward. Villages, which were most backward in terms of literacy, were the ones which had large proportion of tribal population. Larger villages had, in general, sizeable non-tribal population, and therefore showed higher levels of literacy.

In order to understand the regional disparities in educational development it is important to have an idea of expenditure incurred on education, or in other words, cost of education. Cost of education is incurred at two domains - the public and the private

domains, otherwise known as the individual and the institutional domains. Individual (private) cost of education includes fees, hostel charges, and transport facilities. Institutional cost, also known as cost of supply of education, includes recurring costs (eg. expenditure on salaries, scholarships) and non-recurring costs (eg. expenditure on buildings, furniture).

Tilak (1985) analysed the cost of education in India in the private and public domains. He estimated the private cost of education on the basis of a sample survey in Andhra Pradesh. He found that both public and private costs varied across socio-economic groups. Private cost varied positively with household economic status. Private cost of backward and rural population was found to be lower than that of their forward and urban counterparts.

National Council of Applied Economic Research (1994) in a study of 15 major states in India including Delhi and covered more than 15000 households, found that, from the point of view of households, elementary education was very costly; households incurred huge expenditure on elementary education in all states both in urban and in rural areas, and on girls and boys. Annual expenditure per student ranged between Rs.290 in Bihar and Rs.773 in Kerala in 1992-93. It was also found out that expenditure was higher in rural areas than in urban areas; not much difference existed, however, as between households with respect to boys' and girls' education. Except Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Delhi, state's expenditure on girls' education was lower than that of boys' education and the difference was large in Punjab and Haryana. The proportion of income spent on education systematically

increased with household per capita income levels both in rural and urban areas-which implied a positive and rather high income elasticity of household's expenditure on education. The study also found that the level of expenditure on education increased with the economic status of students or households; i.e. richer households spent progressively higher than the poorer households.

These studies did not look into the aspect of expenditure incurred by pupils on private unaided schools separately. Moreover, the above studies considered private expenditure on education across states and did not consider private expenditure within states.

Because of the public good characteristic of school education, especially the primary level education, and its high social benefits, the prime responsibility to provide school education, particularly at the primary level, rests squarely with the government. To ensure equality of opportunity in education and to improve the physical quality of life, government's role in education is all the more significant. Nevertheless, the private sector has also come in a big way investing in school education. The private sector schools, particularly unaided schools, are increasing in number; so also is enrolment of students in them. Some studies have made enquiries into the relative effectiveness of the public and the private education systems.

Jimmenz et.al (1995) made studies of a few developing countries such as Colombia, Tanzania , the Philippines, Thailand, and the Dominican Republic, with regard to efficiency of public and private schools. They made comparisons in respect of cost and

achievements. The choice of schools by households was found to depend upon household income, parents' education and occupation and the relative cost of schooling. In Colombia and the Philippines, household income of students in private schools was about twice as high as those of students in public schools. But in Tanzania the difference was much lower and public schools attracted students from high-income families. In Thailand and the Dominican Republic, private school students came from families with better-educated mothers and with fathers employed in white-collar occupations. In Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Tanzania, more males than females attended private schools; in Thailand and the Philippines, females predominated in private schools. In general, the average private school student came from a more advantaged back ground than his counterpart in public schools. But the magnitudes varied across countries.

Students in private schools were found, in general, to out-perform their public counterparts. Only the Philippines study has looked into the public-private effect across socio-economic groups. The authors found that variation in socio-economic status did not reverse, up to a reasonable extent, the private school effect. But the magnitude of the private school effect decreased with socio-economic status. The study also found that unit cost for private schools was lower than for public schools and as far as learning was concerned private schools provided as much as three times more learning than public schools provided, thus indicating the higher efficiency of private schools. The reasons for the observed differences included the following: i) absolute resources available; ii) differences in the input mix selected; and iii)

differences in management and organization. With respect to input mix, in Thailand private schools made more efficient use of teachers by recruiting candidates with lower qualification, giving them more in-service training and promoting them to better teaching processes; in the Dominican Republic students had more access to text books. In other words, the preference of private schools is for slightly higher student-teacher ratios and slightly lower teacher qualifications. Thus, they save on resources to be spent on other inputs related to the learning process, such as textbooks, other instructional materials and instructional time. More-over private schools had greater autonomy than public schools, an additional factor which, to some extent, led to the differences in performance as between public and private schools.

These studies were focused on secondary school students, and the conclusions drawn by them may not hold for other levels. The cost estimates for Colombia and Tanzania were not precise as a number of schools did not provide the necessary information.

Though Kerala has been in the forefront of educational development, among the states of India,not many studies exist with regard to district-wise differences in educational development.

Nair (1993) made a region-wise analysis of educational development in Kerala dividing the state into two regions -Travancore-Cochin, and Malabar. He found that enrolment as a percentage of total population in standard I and standard II were higher for Malabar, a fact which he attributed to the relatively higher birth rates in Malabar. Enrolment rate in the case of girls was lower in Malabar.

Dropouts remained higher too in Malabar. Inter-community differences were not examined in this study.

Salim (1997) analysed the cost of higher education in Kerala. The institutional cost of education was calculated for the period 1976-77 to 1989-90. Private cost was estimated through an on-the-spot study of selected colleges. Over the fourteen year period, i.e. 1976-1990, the per pupil share of equipments and books increased in engineering colleges while it was the share of buildings and books which rose in the colleges of general education. Salary was the major component of the recurring cost. It was also found that pupil-teacher ratio, average pay of the teachers and the ratio of non-teaching to total cost were the significant factors influencing unit recurring cost of higher education in Kerala. The influence of enrolment on unit cost was only marginal. Higher education was appropriated mostly by students belonging to the middle and upper income groups and those from the forward communities. Private cost of higher education depended upon household income. The system of higher education was almost entirely financed by the government. Since all students are equally entitled to the government subsidy irrespective of income level, instead of reducing the inequalities it has aggravated the inequalities as higher education is appropriated mostly by students belonging to upper and middle income groups. This study was confined to higher education. Further, the analysis was on the basis of selected institutions, not on the basis of districts or regions.

Not many studies exist on spatial and sex-wise differentials in educational development at the school level in Kerala. The question of disparities in education with respect to SC/ST and the general population, across districts too remains to be analysed. The impact of demographic transition on enrolment differentials in government and private schools, both aided and unaided, is also a question which calls for research attention.

Though several studies on educational disparities exist, the majority of them pertain to educationally backward states. Not many studies have looked into this question in educationally developed states or regions. It is against this background that the present study of patterns and differentials in school education of Kerala becomes relevant.

Objectives

The major objectives of the study are to examine

1. the trends and patterns in the growth profile of schools (student enrolment, drop outs, teacher-pupil ratio etc.) in the state;

2. the extent of disparity at different levels of school education across districts;

3. inter-regional differences at various levels of school education, among social groups and between males and females; and

4. the profile of the extent of diversion of enrolment from government and private aided sector to private unaided sector and the reasons therefor.

Variables and Data Sources

The variables used in this study for examining the growth of education in Kerala are growth of schools, enrolment ratios, drop out rates, teacher-pupil ratios etc for general population of students, and for vulnerable groups such as women, scheduled cstes and scheduled tribes at different level of schooling across districts and by management. The study is based on secondary sources of data such as Economic Reviews, Statistics for Planning, Educational Statistics, and Administration Reports of Education Department (for various years) and the decennial Censuses.

Methodology

The analysis of the progress of school education in the pre-independence period would be made on the basis of existing literature on the topic. The analysis of enrolment and drop out would use the simple arithmetic of ratios and percentages and statistical averages. The study plans to use Sprague's formula of interpolation to calculate single-age-wise data from grouped age-wise data. Similarly, Sopher's Index would be used for calculating the (coefficient of) inequalities in the analysis of the gender aspect education.

Chapter Schemata

The study is presented in the following order: The second chapter will be an attempt to analyse the development of institutions in school education in the pre-independent period as well as in the pre-1956 period in a historical context. In the third chapter, the profile of school education in Kerala for the general population

across is attempted. The focus of attention in the fourth chapter is on the gender-related (in)equalities as well as inter-community disparities (mainly scheduled castes and scheduled tribes). The fifth chapter summarises the findings of the study.

CHAPTER II

SCHOOL EDUCATION IN KERALA– A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Kerala is unique in terms of its educational development. Its celebrated position in the field of education, especially school education, was not a sudden phenomenon. It could be attributed to the efforts, gradual and sustained, stretched over a long period of time, of rulers of the erstwhile princely states of Travancore and Cochin, the several reform movements that helped to improve the socio-cultural and economic conditions of the suppressed communities, the Christian missionaries who popularized the western schooling system from the early days of the colonial rule and the legislation of the state governments during the period since independence, which changed the basic structure of the society, improved the welfare of the weaker sections and increased the access of the masses to education and health care.

The state of Kerala came into existence in 1956. It was carved out of the three different political entities which had existed earlier: Travancore and Cochin under princely rule and Malabar under direct British rule. Educational development in these three regions had been disparate due to a variety of factors, economic, cultural and political.

Prior to the establishment of the British hegemony, education in this region had been of the traditional, indigenous type (Narayanan MGS; 1986). Educational opportunities were a mirror reflection of the economic power wielded by different sections. They were accessible to socially and economically privileged

sections of society, mainly owners of the means of production. As Nair (1989) puts it, the distribution of educational opportunities was in those days determined by the pattern of distribution of ownership and control of land, the basic means of production.

SECTION I

I.A. Education during pre-independence period

The indigenous system of education that existed in India on the eve of British colonialism had been mostly in the line of the "gurukula" type, the medium being the vernacular and the syllabus, mostly oriented towards training in the traditional vocations of the respective caste groups. But this system began to decline with the advent of the British rule. Britishers felt the necessity of introducing the western type of education in the Indian states as they were in need of producing an indigenous set of people who could perform the functions of "clerks" which they needed to facilitate their administration.

Britishers followed the same educational policies in the states of Travancore and Cochin which were run by the British Residents and in the Malabar region which was a part of the Madras Presidency. While the British policy happened to be effectively implemented by the kings in Travancore and Cochin, Malabar remained neglected due to the indifference of the British rulers and political unrest in the region.

i) Travancore

Governmental efforts for the promotion of education began in Travancore following the Charter Act of 1813. In 1817, Rani Laxmi

Bai of Travancore under the influence of Colonel Munro, the British Resident and Dewan, issued a rescript which resolved that "the state should defray the whole cost of education of its people so that there might be no backwardness in the spread of enlightenment among them; that by diffusion of education they might become better subjects and public servants, and that the reputation of the state might be advanced thereby" (cited in the Report of the committee appointed by H.H, The Maharaja of Travancore for providing a new university; 1924; pp 12-13).

In 1817, in Travancore and in 1818, in Cochin, schools were started to promote education in the medium of Malayalam. But the establishment of such schools did not yield much result in the field of education as they were in no way superior to the indigenous schools, which already existed.

The beginning of the Western type of education was laid in Travancore during the second decade of the 19th century when Protestant Missionaries were invited from England to come to the state and start a process of establishing English schools with a view of converting people to Christianity. The Missionaries opened schools in different parts of the state. The activities of the Missionaries were primarily centered among the lower castes and the Syrian Christians.

The Missionaries also were the pioneers in women's education in the state. Mrs Baker and Mrs Fenn, both wives of Missionaries started the first girls' school of the modern type (Tharakan, 1984). The contribution of missions to the educational development

of lower castes was so remarkable that during a period of fifteen years i.e., from 1875 to 1891, the number of literates among native Christians, who were predominantly lower caste converts, doubled (Nagam Aiya V, 1906).

The contribution that the Missionaries made to the cause of education in the state was significant not purely in terms of the numbers that they turned out, but in terms of the awareness that their efforts instilled in the minds of the depressed classes about their social rights and in the minds of the privileged classes about the threat to their social power inherent in giving support to the Missionaries in the field of education (Nair, 1989). Available information on education in the three constituents of the present state of Kerala around the year 1820 shows that in Travancore region there were 264 public institutions for education for a total population of 906587, the proportion being one institution per 3434 people. Cochin had 70 institutions for 223033 people yielding a proportion of one school for every 3186 people (Ward and Conner 1898, pp. 46-50). As far as area is concerned, Travancore had been endowed with a school for every 25.49 sq. km and Cochin with one school per 19.45 sq.km.

Malabar, which happened to be relatively backward in education on the eve of independence, had remained fairly developed during the early 19th century with 759 schools and an enrolment of 14155 students out of a population of 907575. Out of every seven children of school going age, Malabar had one in school and one school per 1196 population in 1822 (Chopra P N et.al; 1979; p.223); See Table 2.1.

Table: 2.1

Educational Institutions and Scholars around 1820

Regions	Institution	Scholars	Total Pop	Population per school	Institutions per Sq.km
Travancore	264	-	906587	3434	25.49
Cochin	70	-	223003	3186	19.45
Malabar	759	14155	907575	1196	-

Source: Tharakan (1984); Achutha Menon (1911) and Dharmpal (1983)

Though institutions are important as far as education is concerned, from the point of view of the supply side, it is even more important to examine educational institutions by type of management. Broadly speaking, two types of schools that were in existence were run by government and private managements as in the present day. Government schools were owned and managed by the governments of the princely states. Private schools were of two categories: private aided and unaided. Private aided schools were those managed by private authorities, but received large grants from the kings for their establishment and functioning. In other words, they were semi-government schools. On the other hand, unaided schools operated autonomously and were entirely self-financed.

The second half of the 19th century laid strong foundations of rapid and massive educational development in Travancore. Several radical changes took place in the social and economic life of the people of Travancore and Cochin around that period such as abolition of slavery and removal of restrictions in the use of public roads and on work by members of backward communities. The introduction of institutionalized type of education in the Malayalam medium directly under the agency of government and the

introduction of the grants-in-aid system, were the most significant features of the educational policy of the Travancore government during the 186Øs. By the end of the 19th century, Travancore and Cochin regions had over-taken Malabar in terms of educational development.

Distribution of educational opportunities among communities was highly uneven. Though the government of Travancore had taken steps to provide educational facilities to the depressed castes, they had little access to government schools. Even in private aided schools, opened specially for backward castes, attendance was very limited. This was a reflection of the general socio-economic backwardness, low literacy levels and consequent low degrees of awareness that existed in these communities. Table 2.2 shows the sex-wise and community wise disparity in terms of literacy level in the state of Travancore in 1891.

Table:2.2

Sex-wise literacy levels among communities Travancore, 1891.
(in percentage)

Community/Religion	Males	Females
Hindu a) Forward		
Brahmin	51.7	7.2
Nair	37.5	6.9
b) Backward		
Ezhava	12.1	Ø.1
Channar	5.1	Ø.4
c) Depressed Communities		
Kuruva	Ø.Ø	Ø.Ø
Paraya	2.9	Ø.3
Pulaya	Ø.4	Ø.Ø
d) Christians	21.3	3.3
e) Muslims	11.4	1.7

Source: Nair (1989) p. 271

Literacy rate among women even of the high castes and socially higher strata of society remained comparatively low.

Though the Missionaries had taken the initiative to develop girls' education through establishment of schools specially for them, girls' education remained a neglected area till the mid 186Ø's. The first decided effort of Government to encourage women's education was taken in 1865-66 when it took over the management of the Cantonment School for girls in Thiruvanathapuram started by Zenana mission (Nair, 1989).

The twentieth century witnessed several new developments in the field of education. Increasing participation of various communities in education, particularly backward and depressed communities, was a milestone in the history of educational development of Travancore. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Christians, Nairs and Ezhavas had their own schools. From the 189Ø's onwards, the government of Travancore had begun to take special interest in the education of the backward communities. In 19Ø4, the Government decided to bear the entire cost of primary education of backward classes. In 19Ø8, the scheme was extended to all communities and primary education was made completely free. Later in 1911-12, even pupils from depressed communities began to be admitted to government schools. The removal of restrictions on the backward castes against attending government schools, provision of lump-sum grants to pupils belonging to backward castes (Velu Pillai, 194Ø) and introduction of the mid-day meal programmes in the early 192Øs (Nair, 1981) were aimed at removing the barriers to

the early 1920s (Nair, 1981) were aimed at removing the barriers to educational access which existed among them and to bring them up to a level with the upper castes.

Though private and government efforts paved the way for expanding the school education system, many loopholes existed in terms of the quality of teachers, materials and requirements of standards to be met at each stage. In order to remedy these shortcomings, a new Education Code was introduced in the state in 1910.

The Education Code of 1910 effected a thorough re-modelling of the education department by prescribing the qualification of teachers, regulating school term fees, textbooks and the rules regarding the recognition and grant-in-aid to schools. The government appointed a Director of Public Instruction for the co-ordination of the educational activities (Velu Pillai, 1940).

A large number of unrecognized schools, which were inefficient in management and instruction, were abolished. But this deficiency was made up by the government through starting new schools and introducing the shift system. These efforts yielded rich results. Within the next four decades, the number of middle and high schools increased more than four times and the number of students, nearly seven times; see Table 2.3.

Table: 2.3

Educational Institutions and Scholars; Travancore: 1901 and 1947

(figures in numbers) 1901			1947	
Level of school	Institution	Scholars	Institutions	Scholars
Malayalam School High & Middle	58	11707		
English Schools High & Middle	103	17246		
Total(High and Middle)	161	28953	826	222115
Primary Schools	3505	154726	3146	860018

Source: Report of the Administration of Travancore 1900-01 Trivandrum(1902), Appendix; Report on the Administration of Travancore 1946-47 (1948).

ii) Cochin

The educational development of Cochin was very much similar to that of Travancore. As in Travancore, Missionary efforts led to the opening up of an English school near Ernakulam in 1818, by Rev. J Dawson (Nair, 1981; p.272). The attention of the Cochin Government was drawn to the problem of education of the masses only in 1890. As a result, a department of vernacular education was organised and government vernacular schools were opened in most of the villages. A large number of private schools began to receive grants-in-aid from the same year (Achutha Menon, 1911).

Most of the government efforts in Cochin to improve school education during the pre-independence period took place in the first half of the 20th century. Following Travancore, which introduced an Education Code in 1910, the state of Cochin introduced one in 1911 to bring about standardisation of the school education system in the state. The Education Code of 1911 made

primary education free and granted scholarships to poor students. This Code was revised in 1921 by which the qualification of teachers were raised, fee exemption granted to children of depressed classes, half fee concession made applicable to backward caste students and scholarship rules reformulated. As a result, Cochin State witnessed remarkable progress in education in terms of educational institutions and enrolment; see Table 2.4.

Table: 2.4

Institutions and Students; Cochin: 1915-1929

Level of schools	1915		1929	
	Institutions (Number)	Strength (Number)	Institutions (Number)	Strength (Number)
UpperSecondary Schools	14	142Ø	38	5128
LowerSecondary Schools	17	3272	53	1ØØØØ
Primary School (Recognised)	25Ø	39453	576	117314

Source: Krishna Menon (1932), ed. p.182

In Cochin also, as in Travancore, opportunities were unevenly distributed among various socio-economic groups; see Table 2.5.

Table: 2.5

Literacy rates among selected communities, Cochin: 1911, 1921 and 1941 (in percentage)

Level of Schools	1911			1921			1941		
	Male	Fem	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Total
Hindu Backward (Ezhava)	15.4	1.2	8.2	18.6	3.3	1Ø.6	5Ø.4	2Ø.5	34.7
Hindu Forward (Nair)	41.3	13.7	27.1	42.9	2Ø.Ø	31.Ø	75.7	52.9	63.2
Hindu Depressed (Pulaya)	Ø.9	-	Ø.5	1.6	Ø.3	Ø.9	16.Ø	3.9	9.8
Muslim (Rawther)	14.Ø	Ø.4	7.3	22.7	1.2	12.9	-	-	-
Christian	31.2	11.1	21.2	35.1	17.2	26.2	68.Ø	51.7	59.8

Source: Nair, PRG (1989), p. 3ØØ

In order to attract backward community students and girls to schools, fee concession schemes were started in Cochin from 1914 onwards (Nair, 1989). Special schools were opened for backward community students. Also special scholarships, free meals, books etc. were offered (Cochin Administration Report 1917-18, p.1Ø93). In spite of all these measures, the literacy rates among depressed communities continued to remain low.

iii) Malabar

Malabar had, in common with Travancore and Cochin, strong traditions of education. The indigenous system continued to exist among different higher castes of Hindus, Christians and Muslims (Nair, PRG, 1989). As in the case of Travancore and Cochin, though Christian Missionaries were the pioneers of English education in Malabar also, their activities were quite limited and the growth of western system of education progressed at a slow pace since the Christian community formed only a small minority in Malabar.

During the early part of the 19th century, though the Malabar region had fared better in terms of institutions and scholars than Travancore and Cochin, the situation had completely changed towards the end of the 19th century. The educational retrogression of Malabar was due to a variety of factors such as the mutual animosity of the British and the Muslims, the contempt on the part of the high caste Hindus like Namboodiris towards the English language and the reluctance on the part of the Muslims to attend schools opened for the Hindus (Nair, 1989). Further, the Muslims and the depressed communities could not take to education owing to serious economic and social constraints.

Unlike Travancore and Cochin, Malabar was under direct British colonial rule which gave only scant attention to the socio-economic development of that region.

Even after the dawn of the twentieth century when social reform movements were raging in different parts of India, Malabar remained nearly dormant and its educational backwardness continued. In fact the educational distance between Malabar on the one side and Travancore and Cochin on the other, widened. While the literacy rate in Travancore more than doubled during 1901-31, from 14.9 per cent to 31 per cent, Malabar recorded only 6.3 percentage points of increase from 11 per cent to 17.3 per cent.

Table: 2.6

Progress of literacy in Malabar and Travancore, 1901 to 1951 (in %)

Region/Year	1901	1911	1931	1951
Malabar	11.0	13.3	17.3	35.2
Travancore	14.9	18.0	31.0	54.6

Source: 1. Census of India 1961, Vol.III & IX.

I.B. Private efforts in education:

The remarkable achievements in education in Kerala may be attributed to enlightened government policies and active public support and participation. However this achievement would not have been possible in the absence of private efforts by the community-led and other private organisations.

i) Travancore

The Christian Missionaries undertook pioneering efforts to introduce the modern system of education. They had been encouraged by the government and British Residents in establishing educational institutions for the people as early as the first decade of the nineteenth century. They also started a large number of English and Malayalam schools in different parts of Kerala. In order to promote girls' education, they started girls' schools so that the parents who were not willing to send their daughters to co-education schools could send them to schools exclusively meant for them.

In fact, for low caste children who did not have access to school education in government schools for a long time, till the dawn of twentieth century, Missionary schools were the only resort. The Travancore government supported the Missionaries by providing them free land and buildings for promoting education. But when the state government began to start its own schools and encouraged growth of private schools for promoting education of all the sections of society, the primacy of the Missionaries in the field of education disappeared.

Private sector dominated the field of education in Kerala accounting for 90 per cent of the schools and 80 per cent of the students in 1890-91. In Travancore nearly 90 per cent of the schools and 75 per cent of the students were in private schools. In Cochin the corresponding proportions were 96 per cent and 83 per cent. Malabar was ahead of the other two regions in this respect,

with 95 per cent and 94 per cent respectively (Salim and Nair, 1996, p.173).

By the end of the 19th century, the majority of the schools in Travancore and Cochin were owned by Christian managements. Realising the importance of education for progress and growth, other communities including the depressed and backward communities, began their own educational institutions. Various organisations such as Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDP), Nair Service Society (NSS) and Sadhu Jana Paripalana Yogam (SJP) started opening schools, the majority of which depended on the grant-in-aid from government. The number of institutions and enrolment in them increased in consequence.

Table: 2.7

Growth of Institutions and Enrolment, Travancore 1910-1915

	Institutions				Scholars			
Year	Govt	PA	PUA*	Tot	Govt	PA	PUA	Tot
1910	498	1329	1908	3735	68589	82123	66956	217668
1911	517	805	326	1648	79526	56491	23648	159668
1912	703	837	158	1698	106215	59902	12658	178775
1913	828	856	79	1763	132616	65530	6825	204971
1914	841	863	67	1771	146291	72289	753	225341
1915	1020	870	146	2036	174940	76770	13213	264923

* include 1895 unrecognised schools
Source: Velu Pillai TK, (1940), pp 720

ii) Cochin

In Cochin also Government encouraged private agencies in establishing schools for the spread of elementary education among the masses and a large number of schools were given grant-in-aid. Out of 715 recognised institutions in 1929, more than two-thirds were run by private agencies.

The high rate of growth of private schools enabled the government to withdraw from direct educational efforts to some extent, see Table 2.8. Since the dominance of the private sector was observed to be more in the primary and the lower secondary levels, the government had to devote more of its attention to higher levels of education.

Table: 2.8

Private institutions in Cochin - 1929

Private Institutions	Total	Private	Private schools as % to total
Upper Secondary Schools	38	15	39.47
Lower Secondary Schools	53	39	73.58
Primary Schools	576	445	77.25
Total	67Ø	5ØØ	74.63

Source: 1. Krishna Menon (1932) pp.176-18Ø.

iii) Malabar

Though Missionary efforts were not pronounced, private efforts were not totally absent in this region. A large number of local efforts emerged in different parts of Malabar during the early decades of the 2Øth century. Table 2.9 shows the different types of institutions which existed in Malabar in 1926.

Table: 2.9

Number of Educational Institutions at the School Level, Malabar:1926 and 1931.

	1926					1931				
	govt	Mun	Local	PA	PUA	Govt	Mun	Local	PA	PUA
Secondary	4	5	16	41	1	2	5	19	93	Ø
Elementary	31	111	77Ø	1981	126	74	123	1321	2548	68

Source: Gazetteer of the Malabar District (1933), Vol.II 1933,p.1Ø9 & 185.

SECTION II

II.A. Girls' Education

The matrilineal system prevalent among a few influential communities, particularly Nairs, till about the third decade of the 20th century distinguished Kerala and its women from the rest of India. Under this system women had a high status and importance in their families and they also inherited ancestral property. This system had an important role in determining social attitudes in Kerala towards women's welfare, education and health (Gulati, Leela and Ramalingam; undated; pp. 2-3). To some extent this system has been one of the major factors of educational progress of Kerala even from very early times.

Organised efforts to develop women's education on the modern lines began with the establishment of the first girls' school in Travancore by the wives of Missionaries. However by the dawn of the nineteenth century, enrolment of girls formed only less than one-fourth of total enrolment; see Table: 2.10.

Table: 2.10

Number of girls enrolled in Travancore region-1894-95 to 1903-04

YEAR	No of schools	No of pupils	No of girls	girls as % of TE
1894-95	2816	131294	28933	22
1897-98	3371	165489	38433	23
1900-01	3683	184639	44974	24
1903-04	3727	197385	46332	23

Source: Thomas A.J (1990)

In Cochin women's education recieved special attention. Reduction of fees and starting of new schools for girls led to rapid development of enrolment. Cochin was far ahead of all other states

in British India in terms of girls' education at all levels of school (Thomas, AJ; 198Ø, pp. 43).

In Malabar, since the majority were Muslims, not much efforts went to promote education of the women. As a consequence, Malabar remained backward in terms of women's education, Table: 2.11 shows the details of sex-wise school enrolment in Malabar for the year 1921 and 1931.

Table: 2.11

School Enrolment in Malabar: 1921 and 1931

	1926			1931		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Elementary	168678	76781	245459	223432	119625	343Ø57
Secondary	161Ø4	3247	19350	1567Ø	436Ø	2ØØ3Ø

Source: Gazetteer of the Malabar District, Vol.II, 1933, pp. 1Ø9 & 186.

Despite the regional disparities in women's enrolment, Kerala occupied a prestigious position among the different regions of India during that period.

II.B. Depressed classes:

Education had remained the privilege of the upper castes during the pre-British period. However learning and acquisition of skills were not exclusively confined to them. But certain sections of the backward communities like the Ganaka (or astrologer) were educationally as advanced as any higher caste (Nair, PRG; 1981, p. 26). Other communities, such as the architect and the sculptor, acquired skills in their professions through hereditary transmission mechanisms of knowledge and skills. The nature and

extent of education received by different castes varied according to their hierarchical position in the caste pyramid. In short, caste and caste-related occupation determined a person's education.

i) Travancore

In 1894-95, the Travancore government earmarked funds for the establishment of special schools for backward communities. In the next year it opened 15 schools, intended exclusively for the education of children belonging to depressed communities. Church organisations also started several schools for these sections of the population and the government provided liberal grants-in-aid (Nair, 1989). In 1896-97, the government also instituted scholarships for students belonging to the backward communities.

In 19Ø4 the Government decided to meet the entire cost of primary education of the backward communities; primary education was made totally free in 19Ø8. Also restrictions on depressed communities (former agrestic slave communities) regarding admission to government schools were removed in 1911-12. By 1928-29, all specialist schools meant for backward classes had been turned to general schools (Nair, 1981).

Another praiseworthy decision taken by the Government of Travancore in 1935-36 was the provision of lump-sum grants to pupils belonging to backward communities. (Velu Pillai, TK; 194Ø, p.735-36).

ii) Cochin

As in Travancore, the Missionaries were the initiators of education of the depressed classes in Cochin also. Impressed by their

efforts, the government took administrative measures to encourage them. Measures were taken in 1911, 1921 and subsequent years to exempt children of depressed communities from payment of tuition fees and to grant scholarships to girls, the depressed classes and other backward castes including Muslims.

iii) Malabar

Though Missionary efforts were not so strong in Malabar as in Travancore and Cochin, the government undertook measures to improve the educational level of backward communities, the Muslims and the Cherumans, a depressed caste. Though special schools and grants-in-aid were introduced, they were not properly utilised by these communities. Some scholars have expressed the view that the explanation for the poor educational performance of Malabar lay in the socio-economic and political conditions that prevailed rather than in the passivity of the government or the apathy to education on the part of the Muslims (Thomas, AJ; 1990 p.50).

Having briefly reviewed the course of educational growth of the three regions of Kerala prior to its formation, we now turn to a discussion of the educational development of the state in recent decades.

SECTION III

Educational development in Kerala since independence:

At the time of independence, Travancore and Cochin were separate states and Malabar was a district of the Madras presidency directly under the British rule. Travancore and Cochin stood ahead of Malabar in educational development.

In 1947-48, there were in Travancore more government schools than private schools; in Cochin private schools predominated. Consequently, nearly two-thirds of the enrolment in Travancore was accounted for by government schools in Cochin. More than two-thirds of the enrolment was in the private sector schools. Of the total enrolment, the proportion of girls was about two-fifths in both the states.

The princely states of Travancore and Cochin were integrated into a single state of Travancore-Cochin with effect from July 1949. The present state of Kerala came into existence on 1 November, 1956 as a result of the reorganisation of states on linguistic basis.

The educational growth in Kerala since independence has been quite impressive in terms of number of institutions, enrolment, teachers, expenditure and growth of literacy rate. Primary education had been made compulsory in Travancore by 1945. In Cochin also, compulsory education was in force from the late 1940s. The scheme was extended to the whole of Kerala soon after its formation.

The Kerala government abolished tuition fees in school education by different steps, during the 1950s and the 1960s. At the time of the formation of the Kerala State in 1956, wide disparities existed in the levels of educational development as between the Travancore-Cochin region and the Malabar region; see Table: 2.12

Table: 2.12

Percentage of Enrolment in school education to total regional population.

		LP			UP			HS		
Year	Region	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1957-58	T-C*	8.3	7.4	15.6	2.2	1.8	4.Ø	2.1	1.4	3.5
	Malabar	5.8	4.7	1Ø.6	2.1	1.3	3.5	Ø.8	Ø.3	1.2
1961-62	T-C	13.7	12.4	13.1	7.Ø	5.9	6.4	3.4	2.7	3.Ø
	Malabar	12.8	1Ø.2	11.5	4.9	3.1	4.Ø	1.9	1.Ø	1.5
1965-66	T-C	16.3	14.6	15.4	7.7	6.5	7.1	4.8	4.1	4.5
	Malabar	15.7	12.5	14.1	5.4	3.4	4.4	2.8	1.6	2.2
1967-68	T-C	17.Ø	15.5	16.3	8.1	6.9	7.5	5.1	4.6	4.9
	Malabar	16.8	13.6	15.2	6.Ø	3.9	4.9	3.Ø	1.7	2.3

* Travancore-Cochin

Source: Nair, PRG (1989); and Calculated from Administration Reports of the Department of Education for various years.

The above table depicts the disparity in the levels of enrolment, which existed between the Travancore-Cochin and Malabar at different points of time. The disparity increased with the levels of education. The disparity in enrolment between the sexes was higher in the Malabar region. In all these respects, the distance between the two regions decreased progressively during 1957-58 to 1967-'68.

Not only were the disparities reduced, but the rates of enrolment at all the levels increased too. The overall growth of the school education sector in Kerala during the period 1957-58 to 197Ø-71 is indicated in Table: 2.13

Table: 2.13

Growth of Schools by Level and Type of Management; Various Years

Schools by Level	1956-57	1960-61	1961-62	1965-66	1970-71
L.P	7082	6672	6928	6761	6886
U.P	1665	1917	1925	2458	2544
H.S	763	888	989	1151	1384
Total	9510	9477	9842	10370	10814
Govt.schools as % of all schools	21.5	36.3	40.0	39.2	37.7

Sorce: Administration Reports of the Education Department; Various years.

Conclusion

This chapter has looked into the educational system as it evolved in Kerala since the advent of the British in this region. It was seen that due to the socio-economic and political factors which prevailed in these regions, the development of institutionalized education system was disparate. Factors such as the efforts of the Missionaries, played an important role in promoting western education in the region, including that of women's education and edcuation of the depressed communities. The governments of Travancore and Cochin encouraged Missionary efforts and started departmental schools. Special efforts were made also to uplift the weaker sections of society by providing them fee concessions, scholarships and lump sum grants. In this endeavor of mass education, local communities and social reform movements also joined on a large scale, thus relieving the burden and responsibilities of government to some extent. After the formation

responsibilities of government to some extent. After the formation of Kerala state, the educational efforts of the government and the private agencies gathered further momentum and have led to a process of equalisation of the educational levels of the population across regions and among communities.

CHAPTER III

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM IN KERALA: A PROFILE

The school education system in the state has several interesting features such as different types of management, different kinds of courses and syllabi, different media of instruction, different types of promotion policies and different rates of expansion of the school system across regions. These features are explained below.

Schools by Management

As in the case of any other merit good, the government has a large role to play in the education system with regard to policies and controls. Not only in policy decisions, but also in terms of providing financial assistance, the role of the government is one of great significance. The role of the private sector in educational development in India has been totally different from its role in the other sectors. Private educational institutions imply *privately managed* institutions, not necessarily privately funded institutions. Thus, private schools are of two types: *aided and unaided.* It is only the latter that fully qualifies for the nomenclature 'private'. The aided private do not provide any significant financial relief to the government, as more than 95 percent of their recurring expenditure, and even some part of their capital expenditure, are met by the government (Tilak, JBG; 1995; p.64).

The private sector is slowly but steadly expanding, though its present size is still small. It is interesting to note that while voluntary contributions to government institutions have come down

significantly, the number of profit-making private institutions have increased. These trends reflect a shift from motives of philanthropy and charity on the part of private enterprise to profit-making and greed (Tilak; 1995; p.65).

Though private-aided and private-unaided schools are large in number in Kerala, and the preference for these schools is explicitly and conspicuously revealed by the consumers of education, public financing of education continues to be essential due to its public good and merit good characteristics. Theoretical discourses on the social sector services such as education and heatlh, emphasise the need for a large role of government. The reasons often cited are that since education is a merit good, its social benifits are not equal to its private benifits. Moreover, there exist positive externalities of education in the sense that buyers of education confer external benifits to those who do not buy education. Since societal benifits exceed private benefits in the case of school education, it is the duty of any government with a welfare motive to make sure that it is provided to every one, including the socially and economically deprived classes and castes. This aim would not be served if the education sector is to be left to the private agencies alone, which may not take much initiative in providing it to the needy population; they would, in all probability, treat it only as a private good. Since education at a broader level need not bring in the expected profit to the private agencies, the help of government is needed in the form of aid in the areas where government provision is not sufficient. Therefore the Government has to volunteer in providing school education by starting their own schools and by giving aid to

private schools started and managed by private agencies which satisfy certain rules and regulations of the Government.

Government schools are run with the welfare motive of making them available to all people free of cost. They are open to boys and girls of the school going age, irrespective of the caste, class and creed. No tuition fees are charged in them. In aided schools also, which are managed by private agencies but are largely financed by the Government, tuition fees are not levied. But fees are imposed for admission, athletics, picnics and similar purposes. The government finances the recurring expenditure of aided-schools incurred on salaries of staff and maintenance of school buildings. In addition, building grants are also paid. However, the appointment of teachers is the privilege of the management, subject of course to rules and regulations in force.

Private unaided schools are, on the other hand, managed and financed entirely by private agencies. These schools which charge high fees are accessible, in general, only to the high income sections of the society. While in Government and private aided shools, salaries of teachers are fixed on Government norms, and payments are made from the public exchequer, private unaided schools pay low salaries and are not bound by any rules and regulations.

Schooling in terms of different layers

In Kerala the school education system is divided into three stages: lower primary, upper primary, and secondary (referred to as high school in the state). Some government schools have the pre-primary

school sector attached to them. However, it is the private sector which mainly run the pre-school nursery system, with the lower and the upper kintergarten stages. The lower primary stage consists of four (I-IV), the upper primary three (V-VII) and the secondary (VIII-X). At the post- secondary level, there exists the higher secondary or the plus-two stage. In certain schools vocational courses are conducted with a view to equipping students for skilled jobs or higher vocational education.

Medium of Instruction

The major media of instruction in schools in Kerala are Malayalam and English. Schools near the state borders teach in other languages also such as Kannada or Tamil. The majority of the unaided schools follow the English medium.

Different Syllabi

In Kerala most schools follow the state syllabus, which is applicable to all the state government schools and private aided schools. The Central schools follow the Central Board of School Examination (CBSE) syllabi prescribed by NCERT and the Indian Council of School Education (ICSE). Some unaided schools also follow this syllabi.

Qualification of teachers

The prescribed qualification of teachers at the primary level is matriculation and teachers' training certificate. At the secondary level, degree qualification in a subject (such as BA, BSc, and BCom) and B.Ed degree are required. At the higher secondary (plus-

two) level, the qualification prescribed is postgraduation plus a teaching degree.

The Introduction of 'whole promotion' system

Till 1972, the government and the private aided schools followed a policy of promotion of students from one class to the next strictly on the basis of examination. The policy was found to result in large proportions of students being detained in given classes from year to year. This practice has also led to large scale dropping out.

In the year 1972-73, a major policy decision was taken by the government with regard to class promotion. According to this new policy, all students in standard I were to be promoted to the next higher class every year. Similarly, in standards II to VI, detention should not exceed 5 to 10 per cent (except on ground of attendance) and; in the higher standards detention should not exceed 15 to 20 per cent (except in cases of shortage of attendance combined with unsatisfactory academic progress) (Govt of Kerala: 1979, pp. 45-46). Because of the possible effect of the 'whole promotion' system on enrolment and retention, we focus in our study the performance of the school education system in Kerala since 1973-74.

In the rest of the chapter we discuss the school education system and its growth during the past quarter of the century in terms of schools, teachers and students.

Profile of the School Education System and its Growth

(I) Schools

Table 3.1 furnishes data on the number of schools and their growth rates for the quinquennial periods since 1971.

Table: 3.1

Number of schools Kerala, 1971-75 to 1995-96

Year	IN NUMBERS				GROWTH RATES			
	LP	UP	HS	TOTAL	LP	UP	HS	Total
1971	6886	2544	1384	10814				
1971-75	6965	2600	1512	11077	1.15	2.2	9.2	2.4
1975-80	6970	2739	1680	11389	0.07	5.3	11.11	2.8
1980-85	6849	2856	2397	12102	-1.7	4.3	42.7	6.3
1985-90	6812	2892	2430	12134	-0.5	1.3	1.4	0.26
1990-95	6694	2912	2486	12092	-1.7	0.69	2.3	-0.35
1995-96	6728	2964	2573	12265	0.5	1.8	3.5	1.43
1971-75 to 95-96					-2.3	16.5	85.9	13.4

Source: GoK; Education Department; Various Administration Reports and Education statistics.

During the period since 1971-75, the total number of schools increased by only 13 per cent: -2.3 in lower primary, 16.5 per cent in upper primary and 85.9 per cent in secondary. The reason for the decline in the number of lower primary school is upgradation into upper primary (and in a few cases to secondary) schools. Some schools were closed down too due mainly to decrease in enrolment.

The trend at the state level is observed at the district level also; see Table: 3.2

Table 3.2

Number of schools in different districts of Kerala

DIST	LP			UP			HS			Total		
	70-71	85-86	95-96	70-71	85-86	95-96	70-71	85-86	95-96	70-71	85-86	95-96
TVM	524	507	500	193	212	217	129	225	234	846	944	951
KLM	699	483	482	265	209	211	171	202	211	1135	894	904
ALPY	647	416	405	226	147	148	178	185	190	1051	748	743
PTTA		432	421		133	141		165	167		731	729
KTYM	614	484	469	236	198	204	183	234	241	1033	916	914
IDKI		220	219		110	113		128	134		458	466
EKLM	583	501	493	219	202	208	202	279	292	1004	982	983
TCR	557	535	521	224	225	226	154	235	243	935	995	990
TR-C	*3624*	*3578*	*3500*	*1363*	*1436*	*1468*	*1019*	*1653*	*1712*	*6004*	*6668*	*6680*
PLGT	552	558	546	213	220	235	94	138	151	859	916	932
MLPM	798	827	833	206	336	347	62	159	186	1058	1322	1366
WYD		126	127		72	77		57	61		255	265
KZKD	851	733	724	308	322	326	97	165	180	1256	1220	1230
KNR	1069	759	739	454	342	366	114	152	168	1637	1253	1273
KSGD		264	259		141	145		98	115		503	465
MLBR	*3262*	*3267*	*3228*	*1181*	*1433*	*1496*	*367*	*769*	*861*	*4810*	*5469*	*5585*
KERAL	*6886*	*6845*	*6728*	*2544*	*2869*	*2964*	*1384*	*2422*	*2573*	*10814*	*12136*	*12265*

Source: Administration Report (1970-71), Educational Statistics (1985-86), and Economic Review (1995-96)

The percentage of schools at the upper primary stage is found to be higher in Malabar than in the Travancore-Cochin region. On the other hand, the percentage share of Malabar is far lower. The changes, in terms of numbers and percentages, of the three levels of school, for the periods 1970-71 to 1985-86, and 1985-86 to 1995-96 are given in Table 3.3.

Table: 3.3

Number and percentage Increase/Decrease in schools (selected years)

	Travancore-Cochin				Malabar			
YEAR	LP	UP	HS	TOTAL	LP	UP	HS	TOTAL
1970/71 - 85/86	-46 (-1.3)	73 (5.4)	636 (62.5)	664 (11)	5 (0.2)	252 (21.3)	402 (109.5)	659 (13.7)
1985/86 - 95/96	-78 (-2.2)	32 (2.2)	59 (3.6)	12 (0.2)	-39 (-1.2)	63 4.4)	92 (12)	116 (2.1)
1970/71 - 95/96	-124 (-3.4)	105 (7.7)	695 (68.3)	676 (11.3)	-34 (1.0)	315 (26.7)	494 (134.6)	775 (16.1)

Source: Derived from Table: 3.2
Figures in brackets show the growth rates.

Though the government dominates in financing education, the number of schools owned by them are lower than those in the private sector. The growth in the number of schools over the years have also been more significant in the private sector; see Table 3.4.

Table 3.4

Number of schools in Kerala in terms of the management over the years

YEAR	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS				GROWTH RATES			
	GOVT	PA	PUA	TOT	GOVT	PA	PUA	TOT
1971	4076	6634	104	10814				
1971-75	4320	6642	115	11077	5.99	0.12	10.58	2.4
1975-80	4336	6915	138	11389	0.37	4.11	20.00	2.8
1980-85	4464	7353	285	12102	2.95	6.33	106.5	6.3
1985-90	4483	7333	318	12134	0.43	-0.27	11.58	0.3
1995-95	4453	7297	342	12092	-0.67	-0.49	7.55	-0.3
1995-96	4457	7309	499	12265	0.09	0.16	45.91	1.4

Source: Administration Reports and Educational Statistics of various years

Though private schools grew in number in the state more rapidly, the growth and spread of private schools, especially those of the unaided schools are largely confined to a few developed districts of the state as may be seen from Table 3.5.

Table 3.5

District-wise Growth of Schools by Type of Management, 1970-71 to 1995-96

Dtstrict	Government		Private Aided		Private Unaided		TOTAL	
	70-71	95-96	70-71	95-96	70-71	95-96	70-71	95-96
TVM	495	521	339	378	12	52	846	951
KLM	542	413	578	457	15	34	1135	904
ALPY	425	319	617	401	9	23	1051	743
PTTA		255		439		35		729
KTYM	358	296	661	570	14	48	1033	914
IDKI		173		274		19		466
EKLM	395	361	584	548	25	74	1004	983
TCR	238	253	689	703	8	34	935	990
TR-C	2453	2591	3468	3770	83	319	6004	6680
PLGT	283	308	570	587	6	37	859	932
MLPM	451	539	607	780	0	47	1058	1366
WYD		139		113		13		265
KZKD	370	328	879	870	6	32	1256	1230
KNR	518	272	1110	969	9	32	1637	1273
KSGD		200		220		13		519
MLBR	1622	1866	3166	3539	21	180	4810	5585
KERAL	4076	4457	6634	7309	104	499	10814	12265

Source: Same as of table 3.4

The increase in the number of educational institutions in the two regions of Travancore-Cochin and Malabar from 1970-71 to 1995-96 is shown in Table 3.6.

Table: 3.6

Increase in the number of schools-Region-wise 1970-71 to 95-96

Region	Government	Pvt.Aided	Pvt.Unaided	Total
Travan-Cochi	138 (5.6)	302 (8.7)	236 (284.3)	676 (11.3)
Malabar	244 (15.0)	373 (11.8)	159 (757.1)	775 (16.1)

Source: Derived from Table: 3.5
Figures in brackets show growth rates.

The above tables show the following facts:

a) the largest number of government schools (12 per cent of the total government schools) in a district is in Malappuram, an educationally and socially backward district, while Wynad and Idukki, also backward districts, have very few government schools.

b) the northern districts in Kerala (of the Malabar region) have more private aided schools than the southern districts (of Travancore-Cochin) have. This probably reflects government's effort to promote private initiatives in backward region so as to improve education in these areas.

c) Private Unaided schools are concentrated in urban areas. The districts of Ernakulam, Thiruvanathapuram, and Kottayam account for their major share. Private unaided schools cater in general to urban, elite sections.

d) The respective shares of government, private aided and private unaided schools in the different districts have remained more or less unchanged during 1971-1996.

About 90 per cent of the population has a lower primary school within their habitation; only about two per cent of the population has an LP school at a distance of more than 2 kms. Correspondingly, 70 per cent of population has an upper primary school within their habitation; whereas for 10 per cent of the population, their nearest upper primary school is more than two kms away; see Table. 3.7.

Table 3.7

District wise Distribution of Population with or without Primary Schools (LP and UP) -1986-87 (in percentage)

	Within the Habitation		Upto 1 KM		1 to 2 Kms		more than 2 kms		Tot No. of Hab
DIST	LP	UP	LP	UP	LP	UP	LP	UP	
TVM	82.9	69.6	9.Ø	1Ø.Ø	3.9	9.9	4.2	1Ø.4	449
KLM	8Ø.7	57.1	11.5	11.9	6.8	22.1	1.Ø	6.9	672
ALPY	88.1	69.7	8.3	12.2	3.4	13.4	Ø.Ø	5.6	36Ø
PTTA	9Ø.1	73.5	8.8	14.4	1.1	8.9	Ø.Ø	3.1	353
KTM	87.Ø	73.Ø	6.Ø	8.Ø	4.Ø	9.Ø	3.Ø	1Ø.Ø	379
IDKI	79.1	77.1	1Ø.7	3.1	Ø.Ø	Ø.Ø	1Ø.2	19.4	163
EKM	83.2	63.8	4.3	5.8	6.7	12.3	5.8	17.6	586
TCR	71.3	5Ø.9	17.Ø	15.2	9.6	22.5	2.Ø	11.4	842
PLKD	92.1	69.6	3.9	4.9	2.Ø	13.Ø	1.2	12.5	453
MLPM	94.4	73.Ø	2.7	5.Ø	1.9	12.Ø	Ø.7	1Ø.Ø	574
KZHD	96.3	65.7	3.4	15.3	Ø.3	15.1	Ø.Ø	3.8	512
WYND	99.Ø	86.9	Ø.1	2.5	Ø.4	1.1	Ø.4	9.5	84
KNR	96.Ø	86.Ø	2.Ø	4.Ø	1.5	6.Ø	Ø.5	4.Ø	52Ø
KSGD	97.5	78.7	Ø.1	2.1	1.2	6.3	1.2	12.9	234
KERA	87.7	69.2	6.7	8.9	3.6	12.4	2.Ø	9.5	6181

Source:Report of the Fifth All-India Educational Survey, Kerala State, 1986-87, pp.122-23.

Uneconomic Schools in the state

Owing to rapid decline in birth rate and consequently in the number of children reaching the school-going-age, schools are becoming 'economically unviable'. The 'uneconmic schools' came to 1289 in 1994. Ironically, many of them are in the private aided sector and the highest number of such uneconomic schools exist in Kannur district, while the lowest was in Malappuram. Table 3.8 shows the district-wise distribution of uneconomic schools in 1994.

The discussion on fertility transition and its impact on school enrolment will be taken up presently. While some of the government and aided schools were on the verge of unviability, the government allowed new schools in the unaided sector, as a result of which enrolment in the former sector declined further.

Table 3.8

District wise number of uneconomic schools-1994

	Government			Pvt Aided			Total
Dist	LP	UP	HS	LP	UP	HS	
TVM	27	4	2	7	2	Ø	42
KLM	16	2	Ø	16	1	Ø	35
ALPY	42	6	Ø	35	3	Ø	86
PTTA	4Ø	1Ø	1	1Ø8	1Ø	1	17Ø
KTM	58	16	1	74	19	1	169
IDKI	25	5	Ø	12	1	Ø	43
ERKM	38	5	1	5Ø	8	1	1Ø3
TCR	17	2	1	49	7	Ø	76
PLKD	14	1	Ø	13	Ø	Ø	28
MLPR	5	Ø	Ø	7	Ø	Ø	12
KZKD	41	6	Ø	111	5	Ø	163
WYND	1Ø	1	Ø	2	Ø	Ø	13
KNR	59	6	Ø	227	8	Ø	3ØØ
KSGD	28	1	Ø	2Ø	Ø	Ø	49
KERA	42Ø	65	6	733	62	3	1289

Source: Government of Kerala; 1994

(II) School Accessibility

Physical accessibility to schools is a problem in Kerala only in a few remote rural areas, tribal settlements and coastal areas. As a proxy for physical accessibility of schools, the average area covered by each school for the general population is used; see Table: 3.9.

Table 3.9

Average Area covered by each school (in Square Kilometres)

DIST	Government		Private Aided		Private Unaided		Total	
	75-76	95-96	75-76	95-96	75-76	95-96	75-76	95-96
TVM	4.3	4.2	6.5	5.8	146.1	42.2	2.5	2.3
KLM	8.2	6.Ø	8.Ø	5.5	385.Ø	73.3	4.Ø	2.8
ALPY	4.4	4.4	3.1	3.5	171.2	61.5	1.8	1.9
PTTA		1Ø.4		6.1		75.5		2.4
KTM	7.3	7.4	4.4	3.9	183.7	45.9	2.7	1Ø.8
IDKI	31.8	29.Ø	28.9	18.3	843.5	264.2	14.9	2.4
EKLM	6.7	6.7	5.2	4.4	89.1	32.5	2.8	3.1
TCR	12.2	12.Ø	4.4	4.3	379.Ø	89.2	3.2	4.8
TR-CO	**8.3**	**8.3**	**6.4**	**5.7**	**235.1**	**67.1**	**3.6**	**3.2**
PLGT	15.2	14.5	8.1	7.6	56Ø.Ø	121.1	5.2	2.6
MLPM	6.9	6.6	5.9	4.6	Ø.Ø	75.5	3.2	1.9
WYD		15.3		18.9		163.9		2.3
KZKD	9.Ø	7.1	4.3	2.7	745.8	73.3	2.9	8.Ø
KNR	1Ø.2	1Ø.9	5.Ø	3.1	634.Ø	92.7	3.3	3.6
KSGD		7.1		9.1		1Ø4.8		3.8
MLBR	**9.8**	**9.4**	**5.5**	**4.9**	**793.9**	**97.Ø**	**3.5**	**3.1**
KERAL	**8.9**	**8.7**	**5.9**	**5.3**	**343.9**	**77.9**	**3.5**	**3.2**

Source: Calculated from Administration Report (1976) and Economic Review (1996)

The state had, on an average, a school within every 3.5 Km as early as the early 197Øs; the position has improved to an average 3.2 Kms in the mid-nineties.

Regional disparities are visible in terms of the distance covered by schools. While in geographically large and sparcely populated districts like Wynad, Idukki and Palakkad, the average distance to be travelled to reach a school is high; the smaller and densely populated districts like Alappuzha and Kozhikide have better school/area ratio. The situation causes concern since the former districts inhabited by large numbers belonging to the weaker

sections of the society like the tribals who are backward in education.

Geographical proximity alone cannot be treated as a factor that determines accessibility of schools. Accessibility depends also on affordability. While the government provides school education almost freely, aided schools charge several items of fees other than tuition fees; and unaided schools charge large sums of money by way of tuition and other fees, transportation and tour charges and donations. As a result, availability and accessibility of government and private aided schools is important.

*(III) **Enrolment***

The student who is the reciever of education is the most important person in the process of schooling. In Kerala children start going to school at the age of five or six. Kerala has had almost 100 per cent enrolment in standard I as early as the 1960s. However, the number of children in the school-going age have been on the decline in Kerala over the past three-to-four decades due to decrease in fertility rates. Enrolment in standard I acts as a lagged function of the number of children born.

Table 3.10

Enrolment in School (standard I-X) and Enrolment in Standard I

Year	Children enrolled in School (I-X)	Students in Std I (II)	Percentage of students in standard I
1971	4799522	800470	16.67
1972	4950632	841163	16.99
1973	5019944	679316	13.53
1974	5125894	647649	12.63
1976	5155040	633551	12.29
1981	5602953	631479	11.27
1986	5716151	630639	11.03
1991	5901101	601030	10.19
1996	5627753	519048	9.22
1997	5534224	507072	9.16
1998	5437091	475301	8.74

Source: Economic Reviews 1997 and 1998

The table shows that while the number of students enrolled in standard I have been continuosly on the decline (though the enrolment ratio is 100 per cent) since 1973, due to fall in fertility rates, the number of students in school have kept on increasing till about the turn of the 1990's. The possible reason for the latter phenomenon could be 1) the high and increasing retention rates of students in school, particularly at the upper primary and the secondary levels; 2) fertility decline was taking place at varying rates across districts and regions; 3) mortality rates of children were declining, and enrolment ratios in some areas (mostly in the Malabar region) were increasing. For the state as a whole, the proportion of children in standard I to total number of students in the school system decreased from about 14 per cent in 1973 to nearly 9 per cent in 1998.

Average number of students per school

Students may choose to study in any type of school: government school, private aided school or private unaided school. Given the

present system of education and the social mileu, the private unaided sector exercises considerable amount of discretion-even discrimination-in admission of students. The entry barriers to admission are several including prohibitively high tuition and other fees and eligibility tests. Even now, therefore, the average number of students per school is the highest in government schools and the lowest in unaided schools; see Table: 3.11.

Table 3.11

Avarage no of students per school

Year	Govt	PA	PUA
1972-73	5Ø4	447	326
1985-86	5Ø2	459	319
199Ø-91	512	472	466
1995-96	472	456	385

Source: Calculated from Administration Reports and Educational Statistics of various years.

However, with increase in the number of schools and the decline in the population reaching the school-going age, the average number of students per school at all levels and types of management are on the decline; see Table: 3.12.

Table 3.12

Average number of students in Kerala according to district

	GOVT		PA		PUA		Total	
	72-73	95-96	72-73	95-96	72-73	95-96	72-73	95-96
TVM	638	542	546	515	397	7Ø3	597	54Ø
KLM	543	448	529	495	324	477	533	473
ALPY		355	5Ø7	518	25Ø	383	5Ø2	444
PATA		239		284		367		272
KTM	526	261	498	373	224	395	5Ø4	338
IDKI		354		397		284		376
EKLM	589	364	612	535	356	483	595	468
TCR	638	554	558	5Ø1	235	595	575	518
TR-CO	**569**	**4Ø6**	**541**	**456**	**313**	**485**	**549**	**438**
PLGT	422	592	361	517	468	4Ø1	381	537
MLPM	335	646	353	58Ø	Ø	163	345	592
WYND		522		578		211		53Ø
KZKD	567	515	355	423	486	227	417	443
KNR	337	496	317	344	283	813	233	7Ø
KSGD		511		411		123		454
MLBR	**4Ø5**	**563**	**342**	**456**	**384**	**2Ø8**	**363**	**484**
KERA	**5Ø4**	**472**	**447**	**456**	**326**	**385**	**467**	**459**

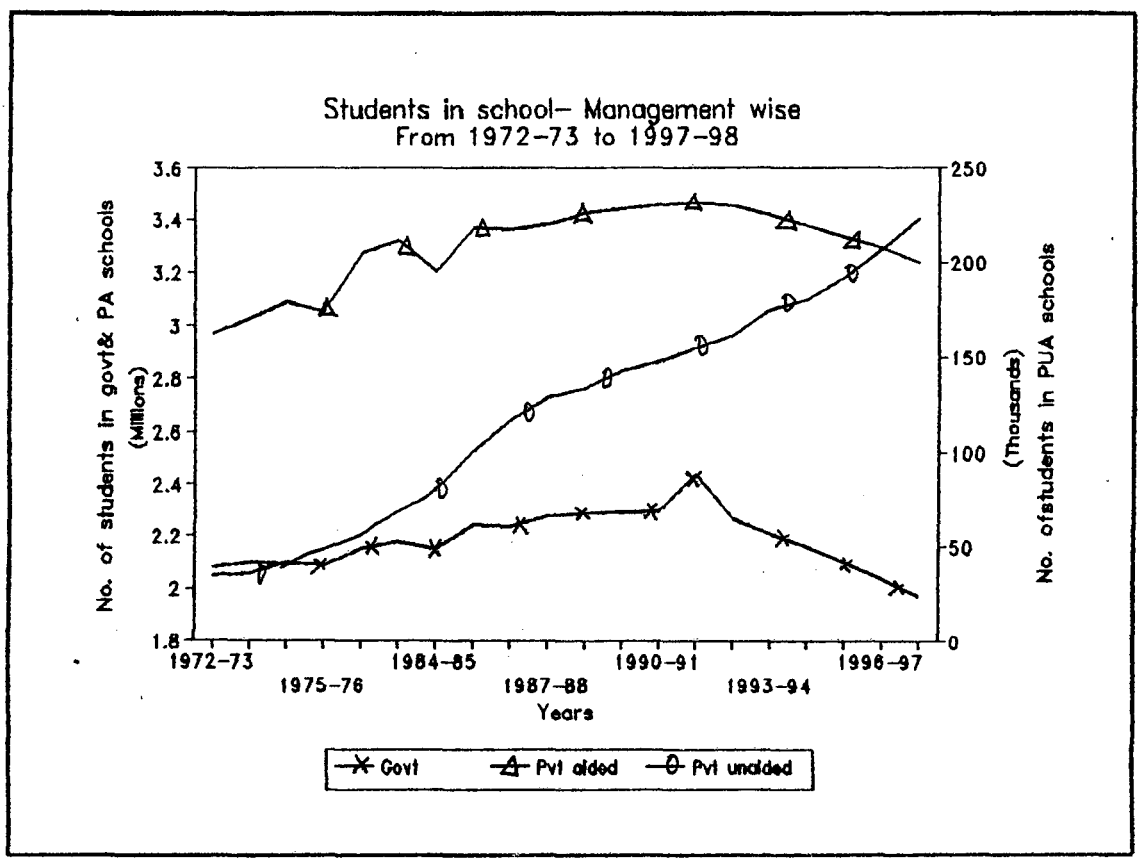
Source: Calculated from Administration Report (1972-73), Records of D.P.I, and Economic Review (1996)

For the state as a whole, the average number of students per school has decreased. However, the decrease is seen to be confined mostly to government schools. In private schools, both aided and unaided, it has, on the whole, increased. The increase has been quite significant in the private unaided sector. On an average, in the 197Øs, Thiruvananthapuram and Ernakulam had the highest number of students per school, and Malappuram had one the lowest. By the 199Øs, the situation had totally changed. This change could be attributed to three factors: first, with the decrease in the number of children reaching the school-going-age, the southern which had already reached a high ratios of enrolment, experienced a fall in enrolment in standard I. Secondly, increase in the number of schools led to reduction in the number of students per school.

On the otherhand, the enrolment ratio had been low in Malappuram to begin with; with rise in enrolment ratio, the average number of students per school increased. Thirdly, the fertility rate was higher in Malappuram and the decline in the rate began much later than in other parts of the state. Even though the number of schools increased, the increase was not adequate to outweigh the forces which tended to increase enrolment.

The number of students in the government and the private aided schools, was on the increase till the end of the 198Øs; since then, a steady decline is observed. On the other hand, a steep increase in enrolment in the private unaided schools is visible, especially since the late 198Øs; see graph 3.1.

GRAPH 3.1



The fact that the average number of students per school is the highest in government schools in all the selected years is proof enough that they are the most easily and readily accessible to all sections of the people. It is the elitist groups which send children to unaided schools; the elitist bias is much weaker in the case of aided private schools. The general impression in the state seems to be that education imparted by private both aided and unaided schools is higher than in government schools. This impression and the consequent bias has infected the rest of the population also as a result of which more send their wards to private schools from year to year. Table: 3.13 gives the percentage shares of enrolment in standard I in the three categories of schools.

Table 3.13

Distribution of enrolment in standard I among different types of schools (in percentage)

Year	Govt	Pvt Aided	Pvt Unaided
1971	43.8	55.7	Ø.4
1976	43.4	55.7	Ø.8
1981	42.3	56.5	1.1
1986	41.4	56.3	2.2
1991	4Ø.Ø	56.5	3.5
1996	37.7	57.6	4.7
1997	37.Ø	57.9	5.Ø

Source: Economic Review; 1997

Although the private unaided sector even now accounts for only a small proportion of the total number of students, its share has been increasing rapidly in recent decades. Together with the aided sector, private schools now get more than 6Ø per cent of the new admissions to standard I.

Measuring Enrolment ratios

Enrolment ratio is a better measure than absolute enrolment figures to understand the trends. It is termed as the ratio of the number of children enrolled in a particular standard or level to the population belonging to that relevant age group.

$$\text{ENROLEMENT RATIO} = \frac{\text{No. of children who are enroled in schools}}{\text{No. of total children in the age group concerned}}$$

There are two measures of enrolment: gross enrolment and net enrolment. Gross enrolment ratio refers to total enrolment of children in a standard or a level as a proportion of children in the population in the relevant age group. Net enrolment rate consists of enrolment of children in a standard or level belonging to the relevant age group only, as a proportion of the total number of children in the population in that age group. In otherwords, while all children irrespective of age, enrolled is taken as the numerator for calculation of gross enrolment, only students of the relevant age group is considered for finding net enrolment. In the present study we use the gross enrolment ratio since data regarding the age structure of students enroled are not available. Since we are using census statistics for the population in the relevant age group, the analysis is restricted to the census years.

Gross enrolment ratios of Kerala for selected years are given in Table: 3.14.

Table 3.14

Enrolment at different levels of school: selected years

Year	SAPL	SAPU	SAPH	LP ER	UP ER	HS ER
1961	1914262	1366757	1111354	2109249 (110)	932139 (68)	416364 (37)
1971	2248338	1721319	1600233	2886612 (128)	1319373 (77)	744647 (47)
1981	2334341	1932478	1942762	2596390 (111)	1735592 (90)	1317296 (68)
1991	2319245	1839991	1809101	2421398 (104)	1933080 (105)	1552527 (86)

Source: Educational Statistics and Administration Reports of Education Department-various years.

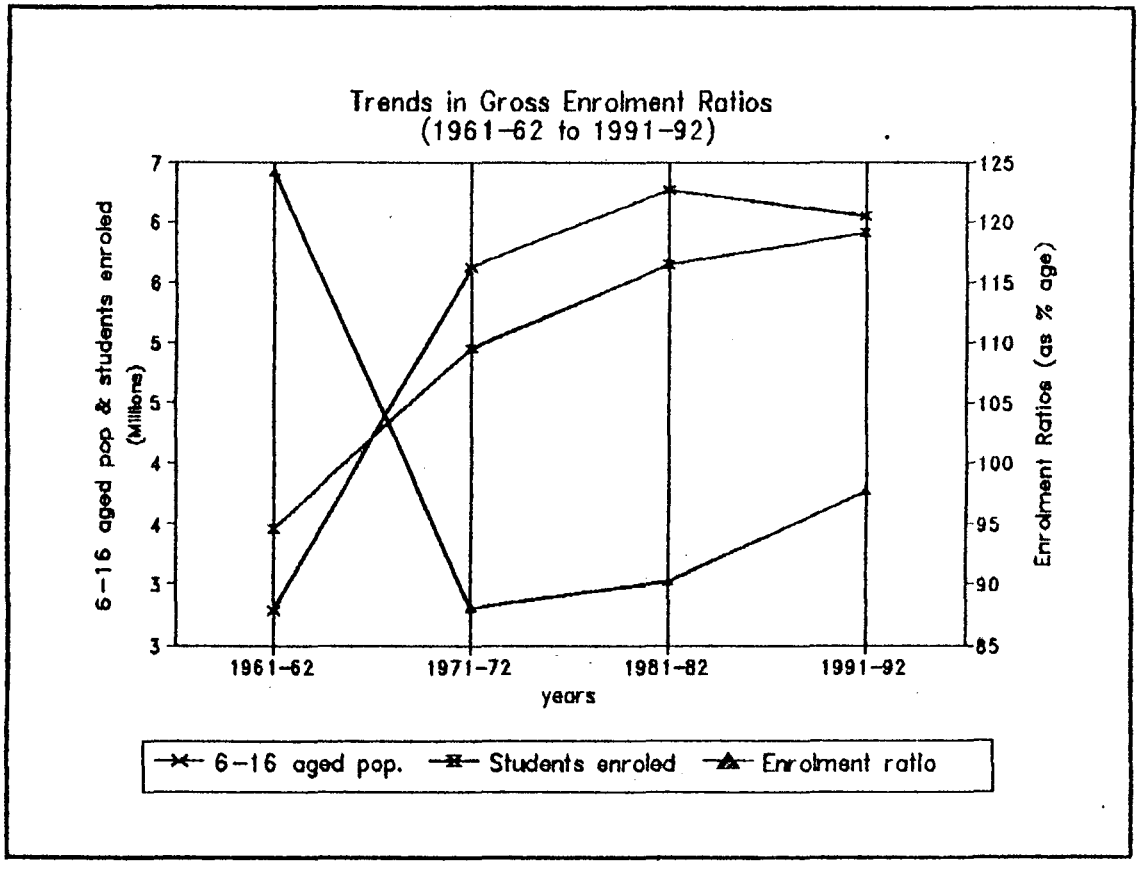
SAPL- School-going age population in LP section.
SAPU- School-going age population in UP section.
SAPH- School-going age population in High school section.
LPER- Actual enrolment in LP section.
UPER- Actual enrolment in UP section.
HSER- Actual enrolment in High school section.

Figures in brackets show gross enrolment ratios.

There is more than hundred percent enrolment in all the selected years at the lower primary level. The major reason for the enrolment ratios exceeding 100 is enrolment of children belonging to age groups below or above the appropriate age group also. Over the years, some degree of homogenisation of the age group has taken place, due to strict enforcement of rules regrding age of admission to school and reduction in grade repetition rates. The ratio reported for the upper primary level is higher than that for the lower primary level, for the year 1991; the increase in the ratio could be due mainly to admission of students (after private study, in standards I after admissions at the opening of the school year) to VIII.

The steady increase in the enrolment ratios at the upper primary and seondary levels over the years is a sure indication of the higher levels of average schooling attained by children in successive periods of time; see also graph 3.2.

GRAPH 3.2



To understand regional disparities in enrolment ratios, an analysis is attempted across districts. However, we face some difficulties with the available data. In the Census data available, single-age-wise data are available only for the state, not for the districts separately. While single-age-group data helped us to calculate seperately enrolment ratios of different classes for the state as a whole, such an exercise is not possible for the districts. What

we have for the district level are data on particular age groups of ages, say, Ø-4, 5-9, 1Ø-14, 15-19, 2Ø-24, and 25-29. For further analysis, we have made an attempt to calculate the single-age-wise data from the grouped data using one of the interpolation methods, namely "the Sprague Fifth Difference Formula" (Henry S Shryock, 1976; p.535). This method requires grouped data to be equally spaced for six points and as a result we have taken the above figures. From the derived data, an average for the two consecutive standards was taken as enrolment and using this method, an average enrolment ratio was calculated for the lower primary, upper primary and secondary school levels; see Table: 3.15.

Table 3.15

Enrolment ratios in the districts of Kerala

Dist	LP		UP		HS		TOTAL	
	1971-72	1991-92	1971-72	1991-92	1971-72	1991-92	1971-72	1991-92
TVM	126.7	1ØØ.9	79.5	99.9	52.8	84.8	9Ø.5	95.6
KLM	126.1	98.3	85.1	1Ø1.3	56.8	88.9	93.4	96.3
ALPY	128.2	97.6	94.3	1ØØ.9	67.Ø	94.2	99.8	97.5
PATA		98.5		1ØØ.7		94.1		97.8
KTM	12Ø.2	1Ø6.Ø	84.5	1Ø6.9	55.8	94.5	91.Ø	1Ø2.6
IDKI		91.Ø		99.2		79.1		89.8
EKM	129.1	1ØØ.9	83.8	1Ø4.6	5Ø.9	91.5	92.8	99.Ø
TCR	134.2	1Ø9.1	79.9	1Ø6.5	49.1	82.6	93.5	1ØØ.Ø
TR-CO	**129.4**	**1Ø2.5**	**86.9**	**1Ø4.3**	**55.9**	**88.5**	**95.5**	**98.8**
PLGT	113.7	1Ø7.5	58.6	1Ø1.9	36.1	73.Ø	75.5	95.5
MLPM	131.5	1Ø7.2	43.Ø	1Ø4.9		76.2	74.Ø	97.8
WYD		1Ø5.9		1ØØ.6	2Ø.1	75.6		95.4
KZKD	127.2	1Ø4.3	7Ø.5	11Ø.3	38.Ø	88.6	85.4	1Ø1.3
KNR	114.7	1Ø3.2	65.4	1Ø5.Ø	37.6	85.7	79.1	98.5
KSGD		1Ø2.9		99.7		71.Ø		92.8
MLBR	**128.8**	**1Ø7.1**	**67.5**	**1Ø6.2**	**39.5**	**8Ø.9**	**86.1**	**99.2**
KER	**125.2**	**1Ø3.3**	**75.4**	**1Ø3.7**	**47.4**	**84.4**	**88.Ø**	**97.7**

Source: Calculated from Administration Reports and Educational Statistics of Education Department and Censuses.

District-wise enrolment ratios do not show much difference; some small difference is however observed between the southern and the northern districts. The overall enrolment ratio was 88 percent in 1971-72; in the range of 90 to 100 in the Travancore-Cochin region, and 74 to 85 in the Malabar region. The corresponding ratios for 1991-92 was 98 per cent; 90 to 103 per cent in the Travancore-Cochin region and 93 to 101 percent in the Malabar region. Thus, we find that the inter-district disparities which existed in 1971-72 at the level of total school enrolment has almost entirely disappeared. At the separate levels also, the differences have virtually disappeared. At the lower primary level, gross enrolment ratio was more than 100 in 1971-72 in all the districts; the excess of enrolment over the normal 100 came down in all the districts by 1991-92 and remained in the range of 91 (in Idukki) to 109 (in Thiruvananthapuram). At the upper primary level, enrolment ratio increased in all districts, but at a higher rate in Malabar than in Travancore-Cochin, with the result that the ratio was about 100 in all districts. At the secondary level, we observed the largest rate of increase in both the regions and in all districts. In fact, the enrolment ratio for the state as a whole for the secondary sector almost doubled from 47 in 1971-72 to 84 in 1991-92. Further, the inter-district and inter-regional differences have considerably decreased. Their rates remained in the range of 73 (Palakkad) to about 95 (in Kottayam) in 1991-92.

Not only enrolment ratios, but even absolute enrolment decreased during the period under review. This apparently paradoxical finding is explained by the decline in fertility rates and the consequent decline in the school-going population. The impact of

fertility transition on school enrolment is discussed in greater detail in the following section.

Fertility transition and its impact on enrolment

The trends in absolute enrolment figures depend, other things remaining the same, on the number of children in the relevant school-going age group. This figure varies with changes in population growth rates. Fertility transition in a particular period would have an influence on the number of children reaching the age of school enrolment, but with a time lag, say five years.

Irudaya Rajan and Mishra (1996) bring out the role of fertility transition in Kerala and its implications for educational planning- in terms of the number of schools required, number of children availble at the school-going age and the protection of teachers that would become necessary as a result of schools becoming 'economically unviable'. We use the findings of this study here to bring out the implications of fertility transition on the education scenario.

The number of children of the age group between Ø-14 in the districts of Kerala have declined rapidly in recent decades; see Table: 3.16.

Table 3.16

Proportion of children (Ø-14) to the total population in the districts of Kerala.

Districts	1961	1971	1981	1991	decline 1961-91
TVM	43.6	39.3	32.3	27.7	15.9
KLM	44.1	4Ø.4	34.Ø	28.Ø	16.1
ALPY	42.Ø	38.Ø	31.8	25.9	16.1
PTA	-	-	-	26.2	
KTM	43.2	4Ø.1	31.7	24.8	18.4
IDKI	_	_	35.6	28.8	
EKM	42.4	39.5	32.3	25.7	16.7
TCR	42.Ø	4Ø.6	34.1	27.3	14.7
PLKD	4Ø.8	39.7	36.4	31.9	8.9
MLPM	_	43.4	41.6	39.Ø	
KZKD	42.9	4Ø.7	36.4	3Ø.4	12.5
WYND	_	_	38.8	33.Ø	
KNR	42.4	41.3	37.6	31.7	1Ø.7
KSGD	_	_	_	34.8	
KER	42.6	4Ø.3	35.Ø	29.6	13.Ø

Source: Irudaya Rajan and Mishra (1996)

Since 1961, the proportion of children in the total population has been on the decline and the trend is expected to continue. Thus the fertility transaction in Kerala during the past forty years has had an impact on the age structure. It is well-documented that not only has the proportion of children to total population declined, but also that the absolute number of children below four years of age is on the decline in almost all districts of Kerala, excepting Thiruvanathapuram and Malappuram.

There has been of course a steady rise in school enrolment rates. But this was a long term trend and not one that began in the late 195Øs or early 196Øs. In 1961-62, the enrolment in lower primary schools in Kerala as a percentage of the population in the age group 6-1Ø was above 1ØØ. In other words, hundred percent, or near hundred percent, enrolement in Kerala was achieved as early as the

1980s. Even during the period of decline in the population of school-going-age groups, more resources were being pumped into the educational sector. As enrolment rates were already high at the primary level, the increase in expenditure hardly produced any further change in primary level enrolment rates. Irudaya Rajan and Mishra linked the decline in fertility rates to the increase in 'uneconomic schools' in the state. An 'uneconomic school' is defined by the government, for administrative purposes, as one which does not have the minimum strength of 25 pupils per standard, as prescribed in the state education rules.

In 1994, there were 1289 uneconomic schools in Kerala. The numner of lower primary schools accounted for 89 percent of the uneconomic schools. Of them, 491 were in the goverment sector and 798 in the private aided sector. For an LP school, the minimum effective strength of students prescribed is 100. In 1994, 1026 LP schools were found to fall under the 'uneconomic category'.

(IV) Wastage

Wastage is the greatest bane of school education in India, particularly at the primary level. Wastage includes drop out and stagnation. Wastage in the larger sense, for a given course of education, can occur in two stages. At the first stage it can occur during the period the students undergo the course and at the second stage after their passing the course. We discuss only wastage of the first stage. The first kind of wastage arises due to the students' leaving a course without completing it and is refered to as wastage due to dropouts. Wastage due to stagnation which is the second type occurs due to the students' passing the

course in a period longer than the prescribed duration of the course.

For calculating the drop-out rates, the method used is the following. Standard II is taken as the base level for all subsequent standards/years. This level is used taking into account the possible trend in admitting students at any time of the year in standard I, a practice prevalent in Kerala especially in the rural areas. On the assumption that the students in a given standard would move on to the next higher standard in the following year, the difference in the number of students between a given standard in one year and the number of students in the next higher standard in the next year before is taken for calculating drop out rate.

Drop out rates for selected base years (Std II as base year upto the tenth standard, thus for the next eight years) are given in Table 3.15. As per the figures, of the students who joined second standard (in 1972-73), 10 out of 100 dropped out from the same standard while moving to the third standard in (1973-74). When this same batch entered the next higher class, another 3 dropped out, totalling 13 and so on. Similarly, of the students who joined in second standard in 1972-73, only 40 percent reached tenth standard. However, by 1975-76, the dropout ratio at the third standard came down to around 2-3 percent; and by the time they reached the tenth standard during the latter half of the 1980's the drop out were 42 out of 100 who joined standard II nine years earlier. In the 1990's, the drop out ratio from the beginning of schooling of a batch to the end of secondary education is seen to have been lower

still, and stood at around 36 percent; see Table: 3.17 and graph 3.3.

GRAPH 3.3

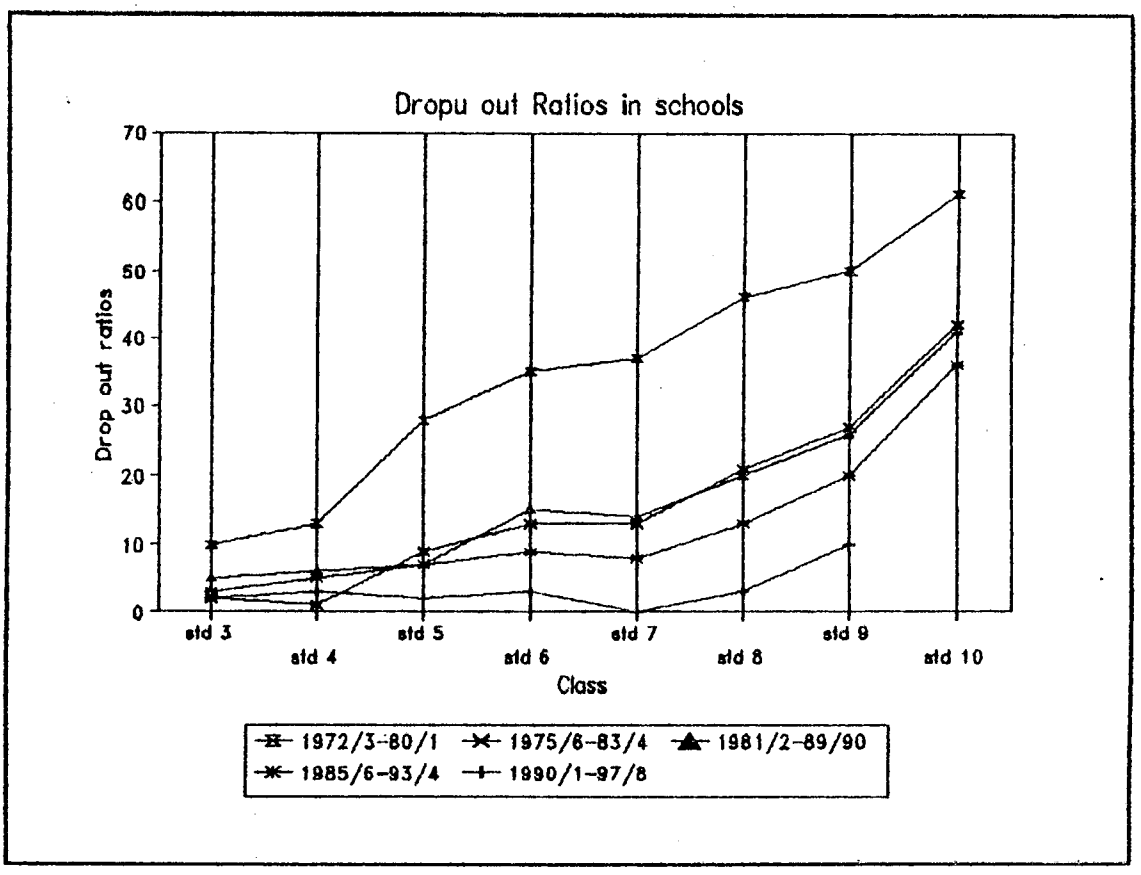


Table 3.17

Dropout rates of students (various periods)

Period	2-3/2	2-4/2	2-5/2	2-7/2	2-8/2	2-10/2
72-73 to 80-81	0.10	0.13	0.28	0.37	0.46	0.61
75-76 to 83-84	0.02	0.01	0.09	0.13	0.21	0.42
80-81 to 88-89	0.03	0.04	0.07	0.20	0.20	0.42
85-86 to 93-94	0.03	0.05	0.07	0.08	0.13	0.36
90-91 to 97-98	0.02	0.03	0.02	-0.01	0.03	

Source: Calculated from Educational Statistics and Administration Report of various years by the Education Department, Govt of Kerala.

The achievement of the state in reducing the dropout ratio to a great extent need not be uniform across the districts of the state. Regional differentials in terms of the drop out ratios may be seen from Table 3.18. Two periods of time have been taken for a comparative analysis of drop out rates - 1974-75 to 1982-83 and 1988-89 to 1996-97.

Table 3.18

Drop out in the districts of Kerala (in percentage)

	1974-75 to 1982-83					1988-89 to 1996-97				
	LP		UP		ALL	LP		UP		HS
DIST	2-4/2	2-5/2	2-7/2	2-8/2	2-1Ø/2	2-4/	2-5/2	2-7/2	2-8/2	2-1Ø/2
TVM	-92	16	19	22	**41**	9	8	9	11	**31**
KLM	-99	1	5	11	**33**	2	2	Ø	2	**26**
ALPY	-89	5	4	7	**28**	Ø	-2	-8	-7	**18**
PTA						5	3	Ø	1	**21**
KTYM	-97	6	4	9	**33**	5	3	2	-1	**23**
IDKI	-98	11	29	26	**46**	3	-1	-3	9	**37**
EKLM	-1ØØ	9	7	16	**4Ø**	1	-2	-6	-5	**22**
TCR	-94	12	18	23	**46**	2	2	1	5	**32**
TR-C	*-95*	*8*	*11*	*16*	*38*	*4*	*2*	*Ø*	*2*	*26*
PLGT	-89	14	32	39	**57**	3	4	8	15	**41**
MLPM	-92	25	41	51	**68**	2	3	3	12	**39**
WYD						6	6	9	15	**43**
KZKD	-94	16	22	28	**58**	1	-1	-6	Ø	**28**
KNR	-97	12	31	38	**56**	Ø	1	-5	3	**32**
KSGD						3	5	9	18	**43**
MLBR	*-93*	*17*	*31*	*39*	**58**	*2*	*3*	*2*	*9*	*37*
KERA	-95	12	19	25	**46**	3	2	1	6	**31**

Source: Same as of table 3.17
Note: Negative figures in drop out rates here are due to larger number of students at the higher levels of classes than those enroled in second standard.

The reasons for enrolment in higher standards exceeding that in second standarde are due to the following reasons. 1) Children after private study are admitted to schools especially till the 7th standard which results in the children in the higher standards

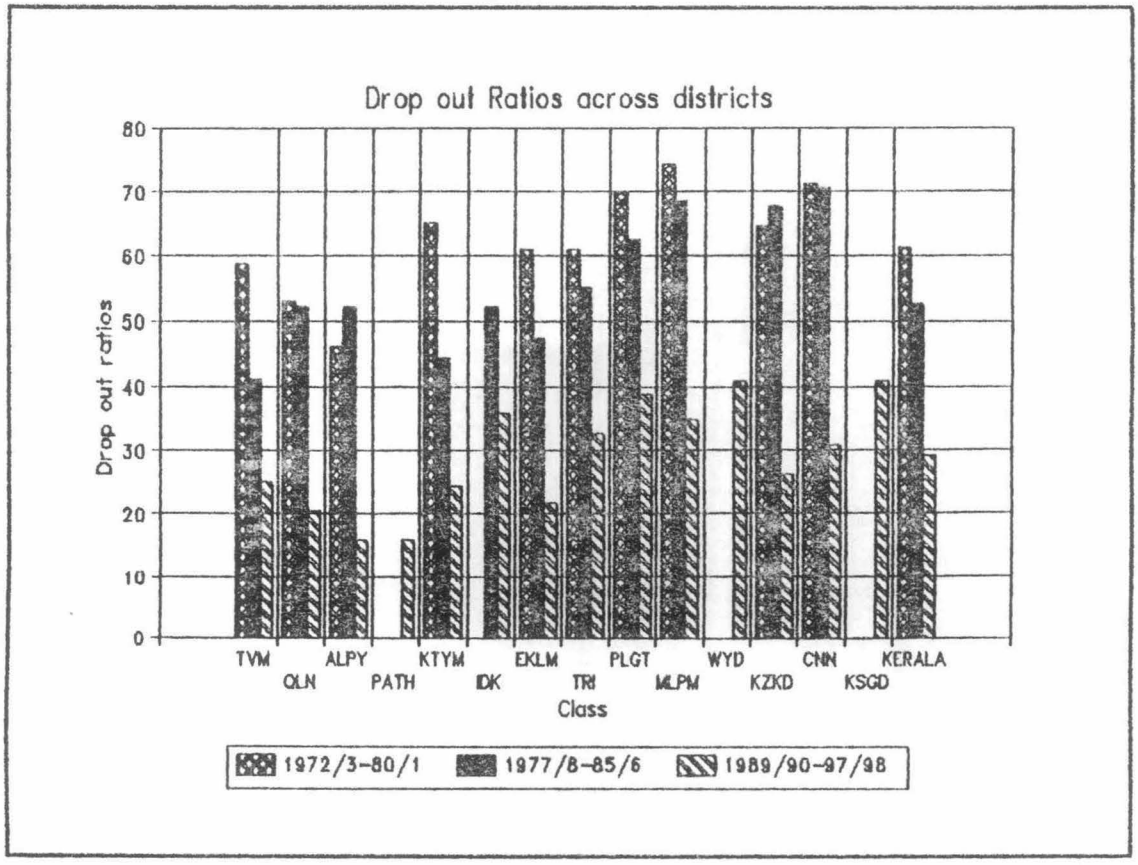
exceeding that of the second standard. 2) Detention of students in schools from second standard onwards also must have resulted in the under estimation of drop out figures.

The northern districts of Kerala had higher drop out ratios than their southern counterparts at all levels, during the first period. In the first period, Malappuram had a dropout ratio of around 70 percent, while Allapuzha had only 28 percent. The reasons are quite well known: the backward district of Malappuram lagged in the education front, while Alleppey was a socially advanced district which had been in the vortex of several social reform movements and political upheavals. The northern districts have improved substantially as is shown by the decline in dropout rates. However, they still lag, albiet marginally, behind the southern districts.

This south-north disparity in drop out ratios comes out clearly in graph 3.4 (p.78).

An interesting fact to be noted here is that drop out ratios are higher in the districts of Wynad, Palakkad, Kasargod, Malappuram and Idukki, where majority of the tribals and backward communities are concentrated. The educational status of the vulnerable sections will be taken up for discussion in the next chapter.

GRAPH 3.4



(V) Teacher-pupil ratio

Quality of school education is an important factor moulding the future of a region. A large number of factors determine quality. We discuss a few of such physical factors. Teacher-pupil ratio, proportion of trained teachers to total number of teachers, proportion of women teachers, type of school buildings etc. are some among them. Of the various factors, those relating to teachers are more imprtant than others. A low teacher-pupil ratio implies, other things being equal, better quality education.

Table 3.19

Teacher-pupil Ratio in schools of Kerala, 1972-'73 to 1996-'97 (selected years).

YEAR	Total Students	Total Teachers	Teacher-pupil Ratio
1972-73	5Ø58154	157936	32.Ø3
1975-76	5179916	158611	32.66
1979-8Ø	5499683	175715	31.3Ø
1984-85	5435292	175623	3Ø.95
199Ø-91	59Ø11Ø1	191ØØ8	3Ø.89
1994-95	5717345	19Ø73Ø	29.98
1996-97	5534224	219Ø22	25.27

Source: Calculated from Administration Reports of the Education Department of the Government of Kerala, and data collected from the Office of the Directoe of Public Instruction, Thiruvananthapuram.

The ratio is seen to have been coming down steadily, from 32 in 1972-73 to 25 in 1996-97; see Table: 3.19. The implication is that with more teachers available to take care of a given number of students, personalised attention on each student must have increased and the quality of schooling, as a comsequence, must have improved. The decline in pupil-teacher ratio is seen in all types of schools, government, private aided and private unaided; see Table: 3.2Ø.

Table 3.2Ø

Teacher-pupil ratio by Management

YEAR	GOVT	P A	PUA
1972-73	34.25	3Ø.68	3Ø.6Ø
1974-75	34.69	33.22	32.53
1979-8Ø	31.93	31.43	
1984-85	32.53	3Ø.Ø7	27.25
199Ø-91	31.9Ø	3Ø.18	32.94
1994-95	3Ø.75	29.44	31.13
1996-97	25.28	25.54	21.48

Source: Calculated from Administration Reports and Educational Statistics of various years.

The decline is observed also in respect of the different stages of school: lower primary, upper primary and secondary, as may be seen from Table: 3.21.

Table 3.21

Teacher-pupil Ratio in Schools; Kerala; stage-wise.

YEAR	LP	UP	HS
1972-73	36	29	24
198Ø-81	36	33	29
1985-86	36	28	2Ø
199Ø-91	34	32	26
1991-92	34	31	27
1995-96	33	3Ø	27
1996-97	33	3Ø	17

Source: Same as table 3.19

In 1995-96, the ratio was 33 at the lower primary, 3Ø at the upper primary and 17 at the secondary stages.

The teacher-pupil ratio is not seen to be uniform across the districts, even though inter-district differences are not very high. In general the ratio is higher in the northern districts. Malappuram, for example, had in 1996-97, 34 students per teacher in the government schools and 3Ø students per teacher in the private aided schools. Only in the private unaided schools was the ratio low; see Table: 3.22 below.

Table 3.22

District-wise Teacher-pupil ratio, Kerala, according to Type, 1972-73 to 1996-97.

	Govt		PA		PUA		TOTAL	
DIST	72-73	96-97	72-73	96-97	72-73	96-97	72-73	96-97
TVM	35	25	31	25	27	19	33	24
KLM	38	23	31	23	2Ø	22	34	23
ALPY	34	24	31	24	3Ø	37	32	24
PTA		2Ø		21		22		21
KTYM	39	2Ø	29	23	24	22	32	22
IDKI		22		25		17		23
EKLM	37	21	31	24	25	23	33	23
TRI	3Ø	24	33	26	2Ø	23	32	25
TR-C	**36**	**22**	**31**	**24**	**25**	**23**	**32**	**23**
PLGT	29	29	31	28	25	23	3Ø	28
MLPM	29	34	3Ø	3Ø	Ø	19	29	31
WYD		26		3Ø		21		27
KZKD	39	25	3Ø	25	34	18	33	25
KNR	29	24	3Ø	25	14	18	29	25
KSGD		25		27		2Ø		26
MLBR	**3Ø**	**27**	**3Ø**	**29**	**3Ø**	**2Ø**	**31**	**26**
KERA	**34**	**25**	**31**	**26**	**31**	**21**	**32**	**25**

Source: Same as of table 3.19

The sad fact however remains that inspite of the fall in teacher-pupil ratio, the quality of education, judged in terms of the performance of school students has deteriorated according to several studies. The reasons for this paradoxical result are not examined in the present study.

One of the factors which facilitated, or made it inevitable, for the decline in teacher-pupil ratio seems to be the decline in the number of school-going children. One of the consequences has been the emergence of a large number of schools as 'uneconomic'. When schools become 'uneconomic', some teachers should have been 'thrown out' of services; but such teachers are retained in services,

keeping them in a separate category of 'protected teachers'. The number of protected teachers in 1983 were 435Ø, which had, with great efforts, brought down to 21Ø1 in 1993. Among them, 1172 were primary school teachers, 651 special teachers and 278 high school teachers.

Conclusion

The foregoing analysis reviewed the growth of the school education system in its various aspects: number of schools, area served per schools, number of students, number of students per school, enrolment of students at different levels of school, drop out ratios, number of teachers and teacher-pupil ratios. These variables were analysed both at the state level and at the disaaggregate level of districts, for the past quarter of a century. The analysis was also done according to the different types of school- government, private aided and private unaided-and according to level of school-lower primary, upper primary and secondary. We observed that though there has been an overall improvement in facilities in terms of the number of schools, teachers etc, and in terms of physical availability of learners- in terms of the increase in enrolment ratio (though a decrease in the absolute number of students is observed due to decrease in birth rate and subsequently in the number of children reaching the school-going-age) and decrease in terms of drop-out, indicating high retention rate, there still exists some disparity, though minimal, across districts, among different types of schools and at the different levels of school. The reasons for the improvements were traced to factors such as facilities and geographical and economic accessibility.

The impact of the demographic transition, particularly decline in fertility rate, is seen to have been strong in all the districts; but the impact has acted with varying degrees of intensity and at different points of time in the different districts. The government virtually underwrites the entire educational expenditure in the state, since the unaided sector is still small, though growing very fast, particularly in recent years.

Even though education has become near-universal, especially at the primary level, in all parts of the state, it is not clear if the benifits of education have accrued equitably to all the vulnerable sections of society such as backward communities and women. To this question, we turn in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

SCHOOL EDUCATION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS

For the balanced educational development of any region, educational facilities and opportunities should be made accessible in an equitable manner to all sections of society. Education is envisaged as the single-most important catalyst of socio-economic change. Socio-economic change involves bringing into the system the socially and economically weaker sections of the population including women on to an equal footing with the rest of the population.

The Constitution of India provides for equality, freedom and liberty for all; yet we see in India steep inequalities of caste, creed and tribe and rural-urban divide. Despite pro-active policies and laws for girls and women, women still remain educationally backward, economically deprived and socially suppressed.

In Kerala, the scenario is quite different. Yet, the socio-economic and political developments that swept the state seem to have failed to incorporate certain communities and regions and women, in full measure. These outlier islands of backwardness in education are discussed in this chapter.

Expanding and equalising educational opportunities imply access to participants in all parts of a region and equal or nearly equal enrolment ratios for various segments of the population including those belonging to weaker sections. Therefore the main concern is not just accessibility and availability of opportunities to people in general, but in terms of the unprivileged and under-privileged groups.

SECTION I

Trends and patterns in Women's Education

The demand for women's education arose as a concomitant of social reform movements which began during the closing decades of the nineteenth century. Social reformers viewed women's education as an integral ingredient of improvement of family and society. With growth in education, education becomes the stimulus for further education. For instance, educated boys prefer educated girls as brides, and accelerates the process of girls' education (Karuna Ahmed, 1989).

Girl's education remained an area of major policy concern in India since independence and is seen as central to the social, political and economic development of the nation and of women themselves. Sex-discrimination in education and economic opportunities is less in Kerala than in India for a variety of socio-cultural factors including the matrilinear system which had existed among some communities. But there are reasons to suspect that women have still to achieve an educational status equal to that of men in Kerala.

One of the unique features of the Kerala population pointed out frequently by scholars is the sex-ratio favourable to women. As per the 1991 census, there are around 1Ø36 females for every 1ØØØ males in the state. Does this favourable situation hold for enrolment in schools as well? An analysis of the age-group-wise data shows that among children below 1Ø years, the sex ratio is in favour of males. Boys have exceeded girls in number, since the

1970s in the age group of 6-10 and 10-13. Taking the lag effect, we may observe that, virtually, the sex ratio must have started moving slowly in favour of the male child since the mid-1960s. The favourable male to female child ratio means that there are more male children in the school-going age group; see table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Sex-wise distribution of School Age Population

	6-10		10-13		13-16		6-16	
	boys	girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	girls
1971	50.7	49.3	50.7	49.3	49.4	50.6	50.3	49.7
1981	50.7	49.3	50.7	49.3	49.2	50.8	50.2	49.8
1991	50.5	49.5	50.7	49.3	49.6	50.4	50.3	49.7

Source: Calculated from Decennial Censuses for Kerala (various years)

However, the percentages of boys and girls in the age group who attend school (taking 6-10 age group as the children going to the lower primary school, 10-13 as going to the upper primary school and 13-16 to the secondary school) show a more skewed picture, skewed in favour of males, meaning that a larger proportion of male children are attending schools than girl children.

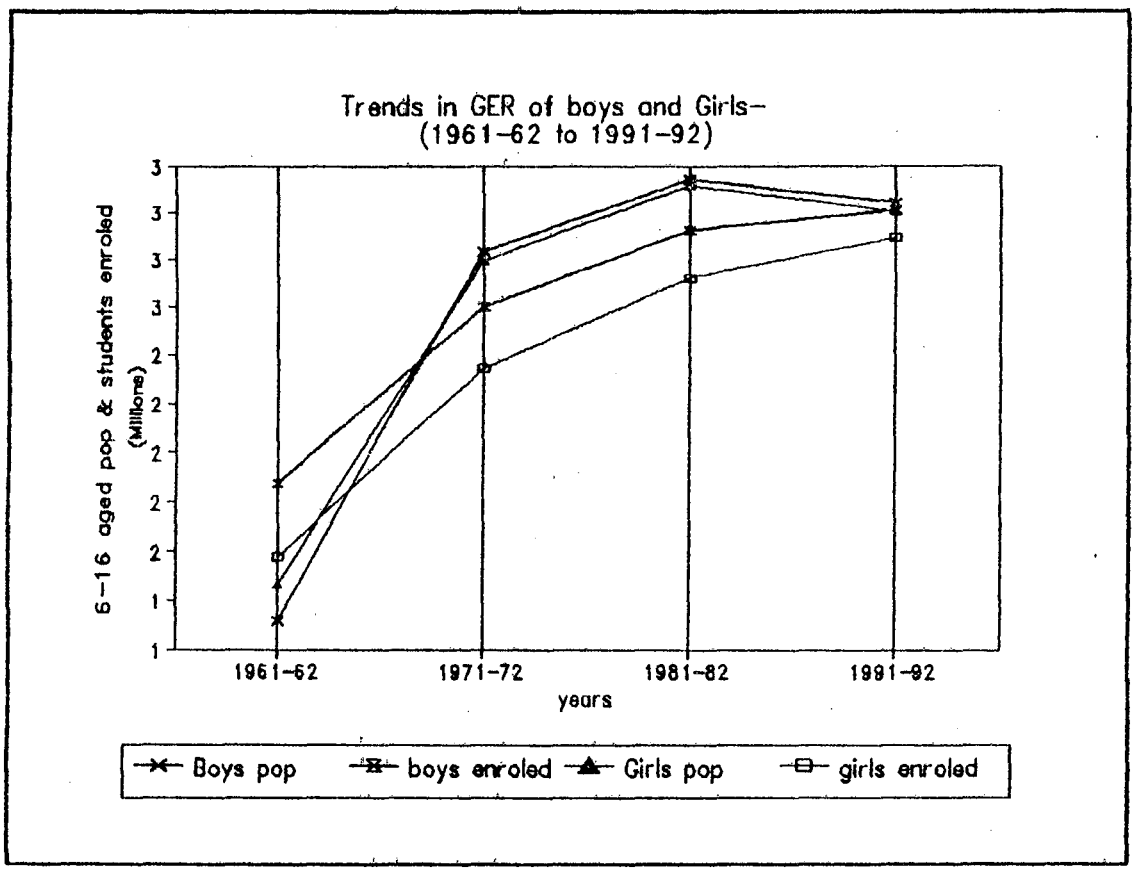
Table 4.2
Sex-wise distribution of Enrolment, by Levels of School

	LP		UP		HS		total	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	girls
1971-72	52.3	47.7	53.6	46.4	52.1	47.9	52.6	47.4
1981-82	51.6	48.4	52.4	47.6	51.3	48.7	51.8	48.2
1991-92	51.3	48.7	51.4	48.6	50.0	50.0	51.0	49.0
1997-98	51.1	48.9	51.6	48.4	49.4	50.6	50.8	49.2

Source: Calculated from Administration Reports and Educational Statistics of various years

Comparison of Table 4.1 with Table 4.2 shows that, while the proportion of female children in total children in the age group 6-1Ø was around 49 plus percent in 1971, 1981 and 1991, that of girl students in total enrolment in the lower primary schools was slightly lower, around 48 plus. But the share of female students in total school enrolment has been continuously on increase, showing that gender discrimination in school education has been decreasing; see also graph 4.1.

GRAPH 4.1



A district -wise analysis of the share of boys and girls is made next to examine the sex-discrimination question at the disaggregate level; see Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

District-wise, percentage distribution of Enrolment by Sex, 1991-92

91-92	LP		UP		HS		TOT	
DIST	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
TVM	50.64	49.36	50.49	49.51	49.27	50.73	50.17	49.83
KLM	50.11	49.89	51.24	48.76	49.59	50.41	50.30	49.70
ALPY	50.56	49.44	50.86	49.14	49.67	50.33	50.37	49.63
PTA	51.19	48.81	51.00	49.00	49.99	50.01	50.76	49.24
KTYM	49.28	50.72	50.51	49.49	49.67	50.33	49.78	50.22
IDKI	49.91	50.09	49.82	50.18	49.09	50.91	49.63	50.37
EKLM	50.82	49.18	50.95	49.05	49.57	50.43	50.46	49.54
TCR	50.94	49.06	50.11	49.89	49.14	50.86	50.12	49.88
TR-Co	**51.16**	**48.84**	**51.41**	**48.59**	**49.49**	**50.51**	**50.77**	**49.23**
PLGT	50.39	49.61	49.78	50.22	48.47	51.53	49.63	50.37
MLPM	50.90	49.10	50.93	49.07	49.94	50.06	50.64	49.36
WYD	50.08	49.92	50.47	49.53	49.44	50.56	50.02	49.98
KZKD	51.25	48.75	51.27	48.73	50.50	49.50	51.03	48.97
KNR	50.33	49.67	50.87	49.13	50.16	49.84	50.45	49.55
KSGD	49.72	50.28	50.43	49.57	50.11	49.89	50.05	49.95
MLBR	**51.35**	**48.65**	**51.40**	**48.60**	**50.74**	**49.26**	**51.22**	**48.78**
KERAL	50.55	49.45	50.67	49.33	49.62	50.38	50.30	49.70

Source: Calculated from records of D.P.I

It is interesting to note that though the proportion of boys is higher than that of girls in the school system as a whole, the proportion of girls is higher at the secondary level in most of the districts and for the state as whole. Only three districts- Kottayam, Idukki and Palakkad- have larger proportions of girls in the total school system. Among them, Kottayam is an educationally advanced district in which total literacy was first achieved in Kerala. However, the other two are educationally backward districts. The reasons why in these backward districts enrolment of girls tends to be higher have to be examined. But such an exercise is beyond the scope of our present enquiry.

In most of the districts, the proportions of girls in the high school section are larger, except in Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasargode. The reason for higher ratios of girls could be their lower drop out ratios; boys are, may be, dropping out from high school in larger numbers, in search of jobs.

The enrolment ratios of both boys and girls have remained above 100 percent at the lower primary section; see Table 4.4. However, the ratios for 1991-92 are nearer to the normal implying that homogenisation of the age of first standard enrolment in school has taken place to a great extent; see also graph 4.2. The degree of homogenisation achieved is higher among the southern districts of Travancore and Cochin than those of Malabar. Table 4.5 gives sex-wise enrolment ratios for the three levels of school for 1971-72, 1981-82, 1991-92.

Table 4.4

Sex-wise Enrolment Ratios by Level of School

	LP		UP		HS		TOT	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
1971-72	132	123	81	72	48	44	92	85
1981-82	114	109	93	87	70	65	93	88
1991-92	106	103	106	104	86	85	100	98

Source: Calculated from Administration Reports and Educational Statistics of various years and Censuses.

District-wise enrolment ratios for boys and girls for the different levels of school are given in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

District-wise Enrolment ratios by Level of school

	1991-92								1971-72	
	LP		UP		HS		TOT		TOT	
DIST	boys	girl	boy	girl	boy	girl	boy	girl	boy	girl
TVM	101	101	100	100	85	85	96	95	95	86
KLM	100	97	101	102	90	88	97	95	97	90
ALPY	99	96	102	100	95	93	99	96	100	100
PATA	98	99	102	99	94	94	98	98		
KTYM	111	101	109	105	93	96	104	101	91	91
IDKI	95	87	103	95	79	79	93	87		
EKLM	102	100	106	103	91	92	100	98	94	91
TCR	110	108	110	103	83	82	102	98	96	91
TR-Co	**103**	**100**	**104**	**101**	**89**	**89**	**99**	**97**	**96**	**91**
PLGT	108	106	105	99	77	69	98	93	83	68
MLPM	108	106	106	104	78	75	99	97	83	65
WYD	108	103	102	99	76	75	97	94		
KZKD	105	104	110	110	88	89	101	101	91	79
KNR	105	101	106	104	86	85	100	97	85	73
KSGD	107	99	103	96	75	67	97	89		
MLBR	**107**	**104**	**106**	**103**	**81**	**78**	**99**	**96**	**86**	**72**
KERA	106	103	106	104	86	85	100	98	92	85

Source: Calculated from Censuses, Administration Reports and Educational Statistics

An index of relative enrolment in terms of the ratio of female enrolment to male enrolment has been calculated as a measure of comparison of gender inequality in schooling. It is seen that for every 100 male children enrolled, 84 females were enrolled in 1961-62; the proportion increased to 96 percent in 1991-92. The index has always remained higher at the high school level confirming our earlier observation that more boys than girls drop out of the school system from the secondary level (Table: 4.6).

GRAPH 4.2

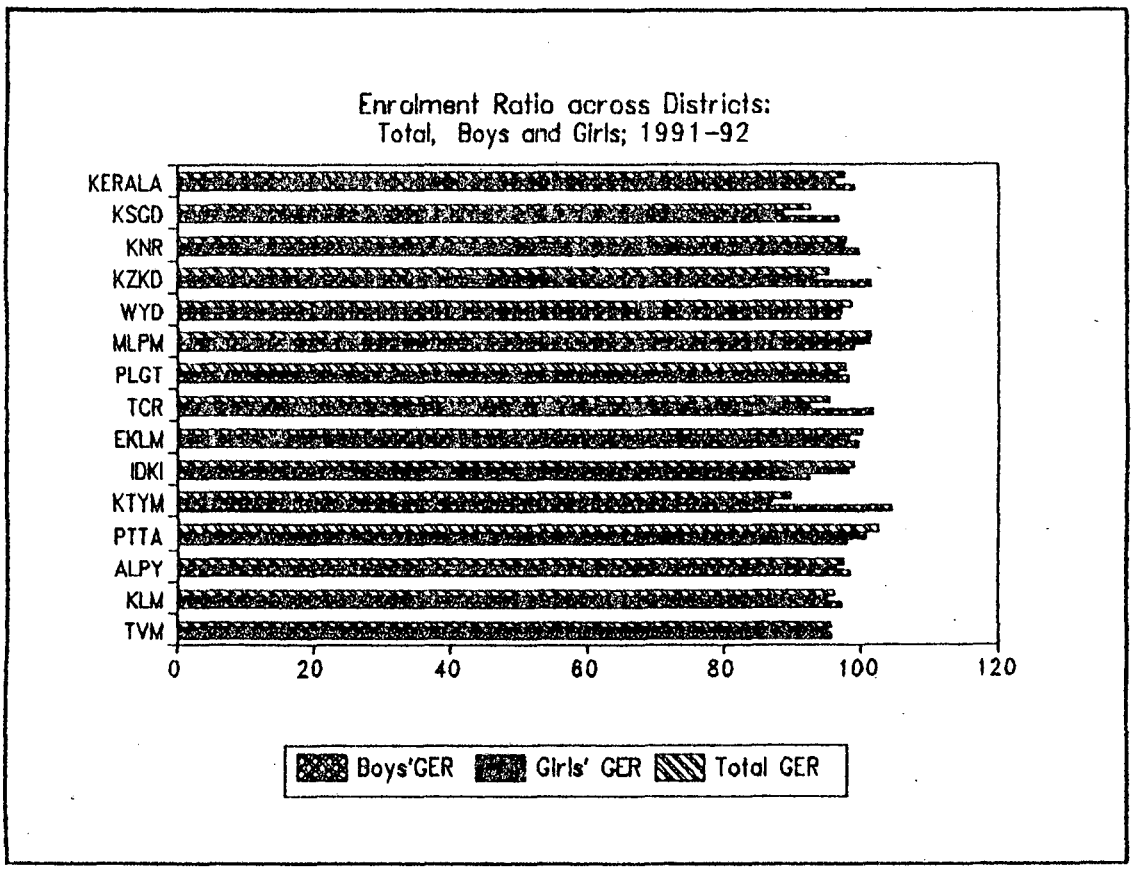


Table 4.6

Index of Relative Enrolment

	LP	UP	HS	Total
1961-62	88.79	79.30	74.16	84.30
1971-72	91.25	86.54	91.96	90.08
1981-82	93.95	90.99	94.76	93.22
1991-92	95.11	94.52	99.91	96.15

Source: Calculated from Administration Reports, Educational Statistics and data collected from D.P.I (various years).

The extent of gender inequality in enrolment may be measured using several methods. Sopher's index of inequality is found to be useful in this context since the measurement is between binomial elements.

Sopher's Index of inequality:

Measures of inequality are of two types: both absolute measures and relative measures. Absolute measures (such as range, mean deviation, quartile deviation, standard deviation and variance), though simple to calculate, are not highly reliable. This shortcoming applies also to some relative measures like mean deviation, quartile deviation and coefficient of variation. David Sopher (1974) proposed a measure of inequality particularly suited when measurement is to be made between two groups of population only.

Sopher's index in its original form is as follows.

If X_1 and X_2 represents the respective percentage values of the variable of groups 1 and 2, then the index of inequality, D is given by the following equation.

$$D = \log (X_2/X1) + \log [(Q-X_1/Q-X_2)]$$

where $X_2 > X_1$

and Q=100.

This can also be written as

$$D = \log (X_2/X_1) + \log (Y_1/Y_2)$$

where X_1 and X_2 are enrolment ratios of girls and boys respectively and Y_1 and Y_2 are

$X_1 + Y_1 = 100$

$X_2 + Y_2 = 100$

However, Kundu and Rao have introduced a modification to this index that Q>200 which provide better results as this index becomes sharper at lower enrolment than at higher levels (Tilak, 1984).

We have used the Sopher's index as modified by Kundu and Rao, to find out the index of inequality in enrolment between males and females; see Table: 4.7.

Table 4.7

Sopher's Index of Gender Inequality in Enrolment at Different Levels of School.

	LP	UP	HS	TOT
1971-72	Ø.17	Ø.19	Ø.14	Ø.16
1991-92	Ø.Ø6	Ø.Ø6	Ø.Ø2	Ø.Ø6

Source: Calculated from Table 4.4

It is seen that gender inequality in enrolment was low in Kerala even in 1971-72. It has come down further to insignificant levels by the early nineties. According to this index also, inequality in enrolment is the lowest at the secondary level.

Table 4.8

Sopher's Index of Gender Inequality across Districts

DIST	1971-72	1991-92
TVM	Ø.19Ø	Ø.ØØ8
KLM	Ø.139	Ø.Ø39
ALPY	Ø.ØØ1	Ø.Ø44
PATA		Ø.ØØ8
KTYM	Ø.ØØ4	Ø.Ø74
IDKI		Ø.113
EKLM	Ø.Ø59	Ø.Ø25
TRI	Ø.Ø9Ø	Ø.Ø67
TR-Co	**Ø.Ø83**	**Ø.Ø43**
PLGT	Ø.339	Ø.111
MLPM	Ø.4Ø1	Ø.Ø49
WYD		Ø.Ø64
KZKD	Ø.242	Ø.ØØ3
KNR	Ø.267	Ø.Ø53
KSGD		Ø.16Ø
MLBR	**Ø.3Ø6**	**Ø.Ø64**
KERALA	Ø.163	Ø.Ø53

Source: Calculated from Table 4.5

Inter-districts differences in the index, which were already low in 1971-72 also have come down sharply by 1991-92. The decline in the districts of Malabar has been particularly remarkable.

Enrolment of girls compared to that of boys is the highest at the secondary level. It is interesting to note that while there exists a small male bias in initial enrolment, the drop out rates of girls are lower than that of boys, particularly at the high school stage.

Table 4.9

Sex-wise Drop out Rates from School

	74-75 to 82-83		1988-89 to 96- 97	
DIS	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
TVM	38	43	25	37
KLM	3Ø	36	21	31
PTTA			17	26
ALPY	26	3Ø	12	23
KTYM	25	4Ø	15	3Ø
IDKI	4Ø	51	28	44
EKLM	36	44	15	29
TCR	4Ø	52	24	4Ø
TR-Co	**34**	**41**	**2Ø**	**33**
PLGT	58	56	35	48
MLPM	7Ø	66	33	45
WYD			37	49
KZKD	57	58	22	35
KNR	56	55	25	38
KSGD			4Ø	47
MLBR	**58**	**57**	**3Ø**	**43**
KERA	43	48	25	38

Source:Calculated from Administration Reports and Records of D.P.I

Girls' drop out ratio in school education (II-X) was much lower than that of boys at both the points of time. Interestingly, all

districts show the same pattern. Drop out ratios of girls are the lowest even now, in the southern districts of Kerala, particularly Pathanamthitta, Alappuzha, Kottayam and Ernakulam. This is sharp contrast to the all-India picture which shows that enrolment of girls is much lower than that of boys and drop out rates are higher for girls than for boys.

Several studies have looked into the reasons for the high female retention in the education system in the state, as sharply different from the experience in the rest of India. Usha Nair gives the following reasons (Nair, Usha, 1998); see Table: 4.10.

Table 4.10

Parental perceptions and perception of practitioners (teachers) about reasons for continuance of girls in schools in Kerala

	Parents	Teachers
1.Better economic standing of household	14%	34%
2.Parental education	20%	51%
3.Parental motivation	71%	66%
4.Parental support like:		
4.1 Payment of fees other than tution fee/fund	18%	36%
4.2 Provision of books & stationary	5%	38%
4.3 Provision of adequate food & clothing	-	40%
4.4 Creating space &time for studies at home	1%	36%
4.5 Provision of academic support (own/paid)	-	36%
5.Self motivation of the girl child	0.2%	43%

Source: Nair, Usha (1996)

Among the reasons, parental motivation is seen to have been the strongest. Parental education is also found to be a strong supportive reason.

One of the consequences of high female education in Kerala has been the pre-dominance of women teachers in the school system. Some

authors are of the view that high proportion of female teachers is an indicator of the high quality of education, particularly of girl students (Raza, Moonis; 199Ø, p. 112). Women teachers understand the problems of girl students better than male teachers understand them. The proportion of women teachers at the different levels of school, for selected years from 1972-73 on, are given in Table: 4.11.

Table: 4.11

Proportion of Women teachers (in percentage)

Year	LP	UP	HS	Total
1972-73	5Ø	48	43	48
198Ø-81	55	53	52	53
1985-86	62	58	55	59
199Ø-91	65	61	58	62
1995-96	7Ø	66	62	66
1996-97	71	66	66	67

Source: Same as of Table: 4.9

The increasing dominance of women in the teaching job is evident from the fact that their share has increased from less than one-half in the early seventies to two-thirds in 1996-97. The proportion remained, and continues to remain, the highest at the lower primary level.

Women teachers predominate in all the districts. In general, it is again the districts of Malabar-with the exception of Palakkad and Malappuram-which lag behind in this respect also; see Table 4.12.

Table 4.12

Proportion of Women teachers, District-wise (in percentage)

DIST	TOTAL		LP		UP		HS	
	72-73	96-97	72-73	96-97	72-73	96-97	72-73	96-97
TVM	47.51	72.51	5Ø.92	76.61	46.18	69.99	44.53	71.69
KLM	45.66	73.17	53.2Ø	76.71	43.17	73.85	39.55	7Ø.91
ALPY	53.51	77.93	6Ø.47	82.93	54.79	77.78	46.58	74.24
PTTA		63.94		83.69		79.21		51.17
KTYM	57.Ø5	77.32	68.81	84.19	55.76	77.5Ø	44.97	73.38
IDKI		71.Ø8		7Ø.96		68.57		71.88
EKLM	56.ØØ	76.13	61.17	82.64	56.9Ø	78.49	49.38	63.27
TCR	6Ø.24	81.Ø6	65.43	86.68	6Ø.31	81.93	52.44	77.25
TR-Co	**54.51**	**76.24**	**6Ø.29**	**81.11**	**52.57**	**76.12**	**46.28**	**73.58**
PLGT	44.98	73.9Ø	48.21	71.56	44.75	67.54	38.28	79.2Ø
MLPM	33.ØØ	6Ø.22	32.68	62.27	33.Ø6	53.1Ø	34.58	65.41
WYD		57.Ø9		63.32		54.69		54.27
KZKD	34.12	51.3Ø	35.83	53.44	32.59	47.44	31.17	52.47
KNR	35.45	55.8Ø	37.28	6Ø.67	35.Ø3	57.21	3Ø.88	5Ø.63
KSGD		48.56		54.19		46.83		45.24
MLBR	**36.64**	**56.49**	**37.68**	**61.1Ø**	**36.Ø4**	**54.74**	**32.93**	**53.54**
KERA	47.49	67.41	5Ø.2Ø	7Ø.86	47.61	65.98	43.12	65.9Ø

Source: Same as of Table 4.9

SECTION II

School education among the SCs and STs

During the past half a century since independence, all governments in India have been making concerted efforts through a variety of schemes for upliftment of the disadvantaged communities such as scheduled castes and tribes. Opening of schools in habitations with a higher concentration of disadvantaged populations, free education, merit scholarships, free uniforms and mid-day meals are some such schemes.

The proportion of the SC population in Kerala has been on the increase during the period under review; on the contrary, the

proportion of the ST population sharply declined during the period. In 1991, the scheduled castes formed 11.7 percent and the scheduled tribes Ø.6 percent of the total population of Kerala; see Table 4.13.

Table: 4.13

Proportion of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to Total Population, Kerala, 1971, 1981, and 1991 (in percentage).

	Scheduled Caste			Scheduled tribe		
Year	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1971	8.3Ø	8.32	8.28	1.26	1.28	1.25
1981	1Ø.95	1Ø.87	11.Ø3	Ø.54	Ø.55	Ø.54
1991	11.66	11.55	11.75	Ø.55	Ø.54	Ø.56

Source: Decennial Censuses (various years)

The district-wise percentage distribution of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes is given in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14

District-wise distribution of SCs and STs, 1991 (in percentage)

District	SC	ST
TVM	11.9Ø	5.Ø4
KLM	1Ø.59	1.21
ALPY	6.59	Ø.87
PATA	5.47	2.16
KTYM	4.71	5.61
IDKI	5.44	15.66
EKLM	8.37	1.54
TCR	11.59	1.26
TR-Co	**64.67**	**33.35**
PLGT	13.11	11.Ø5
MLPM	8.86	3.29
KHZD	6.4Ø	1.68
WYD	Ø.96	35.82
KNR	3.16	5.68
KSGD	2.84	9.12
MLBR	**35.33**	**66.65**
KERALA	1ØØ.ØØ	1ØØ.ØØ

Source: Calculated from Census's Primary Abstract of SCs and STs 1991

Relatively speaking, while the scheduled castes live among, or near to, habitations of the other sections of the population, scheduled tribes live in their own, isolated habitats. As a result, while the scheduled castes mingle with and emulate the practices and life styles of the mainstream population, the scheduled tribes do not.

Children of these communities study in Government and aided private schools rather than in unaided private schools due to indigence. Government and private aided schools provide them with lump-sum grants, free mid-day meals, etc which act as incentives for joining and continuing education in the system. Table 4.15 shows the distribution of SC and ST students in government, private aided and private unaided schools for a few selected years.

Table: 4.15

Percentage distribution of SC and ST students by type of School: Kerala (selected years)

Years	SC			ST		
	Govt	PA	PUA	Govt	PA	PUA
1984-85	44.28	55.33	Ø.39	56.33	43.53	Ø.14
1990-91	43.92	55.36	Ø.71	54.15	45.27	Ø.58
1997-98	41.79	57.15	1.Ø6	53.13	45.88	Ø.99

Source: Calculated from the records of D.P.I.

A definite shift in favour of aided and unaided private schools is observed among both scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. In the case of scheduled castes, the percentage of enrolment in government schools declined from 44.28 per cent in 1984-85 to 41.79 per cent in 1997-98; in the case of scheduled tribes, the corresponding decline was from 56.33 per cent to 53.13 per cent. The proportions of both these groups enrolled in private aided schools correspondingly increased. The more interesting observation to

make however, is that though the proportion of children enrolled in private unaided schools increased in the case of both the communities, the rate of increase was higher among the scheduled tribes. As a result the proportion of enrolment in private unaided schools of both these communities has almost disappeared. The proportions are however still small, at around one per cent.

In all the districts, the shift towards private unaided schools is observed among scheduled tribes. There is shift away from government schools in all the districts except Thrissur and the hill districts of Idukki and Wynad; see Table 4.16

Table: 4.16

District-wise, Percentage distribution of SC students by Type of School, 1984-85 and 1997-98

DIST	GOVT		PA		PUA	
	84-85	97-98	84-85	97-98	84-85	97-98
TVM	65.Ø6	61.1Ø	34.37	36.63	Ø.57	2.27
KLM	48.66	44.47	5Ø.82	54.67	Ø.52	Ø.86
ALPY	45.11	4Ø.Ø2	54.75	59.36	Ø.13	Ø.61
PATA	38.88	36.82	6Ø.49	62.12	Ø.64	1.Ø6
KTYM	36.Ø4	33.78	63.54	65.12	Ø.42	1.Ø9
IDKI	44.63	45.17	55.Ø4	53.66	Ø.34	1.17
EKLM	42.79	31.78	56.24	65.75	Ø.98	2.48
TCR	31.9Ø	32.2Ø	68.Ø3	67.16	Ø.Ø7	Ø.65
TR-CO	**45.38**	**41.95**	**54.16**	**56.68**	**Ø.46**	**1.36**
PLGT	37.6Ø	37.17	61.89	62.11	Ø.51	Ø.72
MLPM	48.Ø3	46.4Ø	51.95	53.24	Ø.Ø2	Ø.35
WYD	51.26	53.94	47.65	44.75	1.Ø9	1.32
KZKD	36.21	34.38	63.69	64.97	Ø.1Ø	Ø.66
KNR	44.26	35.74	55.74	63.99	Ø.ØØ	Ø.28
KSGD		59.84		4Ø.Ø4		Ø.13
MLBR	**41.64**	**41.52**	**58.13**	**57.94**	**Ø.22**	**Ø.54**
KERAL	44.28	41.79	55.33	57.15	Ø.39	1.Ø6

Source: same as of Table 4.15

Similar tendencies are observed in the case of scheduled tribes also; see Table 4.17

Table: 4.17

ST enrolment-share of STE in Govt, pvt and PUA schools

	GOVT		PA		PUA	
DIST	84-85	97-98	84-85	97-98	84-85	97-98
TVM	65.67	64.83	33.92	32.77	Ø.41	2.4Ø
KLM	53.61	53.85	46.39	46.15	Ø.ØØ	Ø.ØØ
ALPY	55.88	49.92	44.12	49.76	Ø.ØØ	Ø.32
PATA	64.82	43.87	35.18	55.31	Ø.ØØ	Ø.82
KTYM	32.74	29.94	67.Ø9	68.94	Ø.17	1.12
IDKI	66.66	63.52	33.15	34.62	Ø.19	1.86
EKLM	44.15	43.1Ø	53.12	5Ø.54	2.72	6.36
TCR	46.16	39.41	53.84	6Ø.51	Ø.ØØ	Ø.Ø8
TR-C	**55.65**	**52.73**	**44.Ø5**	**45.41**	**Ø.3Ø**	**1.86**
PLGT	81.4Ø	65.16	18.51	31.47	Ø.Ø9	3.37
MLPM	66.64	51.99	33.36	47.9Ø	Ø.ØØ	Ø.11
WYD	58.Ø8	56.78	41.9Ø	43.Ø3	Ø.Ø2	Ø.19
KZKD	6Ø.93	38.48	39.Ø7	61.25	Ø.ØØ	Ø.27
KNR	4Ø.43	35.47	59.57	64.53	Ø.ØØ	Ø.ØØ
KSGD		45.31		54.62		Ø.Ø7
MLBR	**56.8Ø**	**53.33**	**43.18**	**46.12**	**Ø.Ø2**	**Ø.55**
KERAL	56.33	53.13	43.53	45.88	Ø.14	Ø.99

Source: same as of Table 4.15

Apart from changes in the distribution of enrolment among the three types of schools, a more interesting aspect of educational expansion, is growth in enrolment. We have figures for enrolment of SC and ST students; but the corresponding figures of population of SC and ST of the school-going age of 6 to 16 are not available. Though age-group-wise data are available, for 1981 (1991 data not available till now) we are not able to apply the Sprague's Method of Interpolation which involves converting grouped data into single age data (which we had used in the previous chapter to find the enrolment ratios) since this method requires the grouped data to be

equally spaced for six points; this piece of information is not available in the Census figures for SCs and STs. It becomes thus difficult to calculate enrolment ratios of these communities separately. What we have attempted therefore is to find the distribution of enrolment by levels of school; see Table 4.18.

Table: 4.18

Percentage Distribution of School Enrolment of SCs by Levels

Year	STD I	LP	UP	HS
1973-74	15.56	6Ø.34	26.7Ø	12.96
1975-76	14.64	53.3Ø	31.38	15.33
1982-83	11.65	46.6Ø	31.4Ø	22.ØØ
1985-86	11.35	46.61	31.52	21.87
199Ø-91	1Ø.37	43.84	32.28	23.88
1994-95	8.97	39.4Ø	33.6Ø	27.ØØ
1997-98	8.3Ø	38.38	32.62	29.ØØ

Source: calculated from Administration Report, Dept. of education, records of D.P.I and Statistics for planning

The proportion of enrolment in standard I to total school enrolment of scheduled caste students is seen to have declined from 15.56 percent in 1973-74 to 8.3Ø percent in 1997-98. This fall may indicate two things: one, enrolment in standard one is falling due to decline in fertility rates; two, the average number of years of schooling of scheduled caste children is steadily increasing. The figures for the L.P, U.P and HS sections for the different years shown in the Table depict that the rate of increase was higher for HS than for U.P.

District-wise details of enrolment proportions among scheduled castes for the same period are given in Table 4.19.

Table: 4.19

District-wise Percentage Distribution of school Enrolment of SCs by Levels of School

DiST	STD I		LP		UP		HS	
	73-74	97-98	73-74	97-98	73-74	97-98	73-74	97-98
TVM	13.67	8.64	62.66	38.57	25.90	32.53	11.44	28.90
KLM	14.98	7.77	56.36	35.92	30.62	32.45	13.02	31.63
ALPY	13.25	7.38	53.83	34.25	28.86	31.70	17.31	34.05
PATA		7.10		33.15		32.24		34.61
KTYM	14.01	7.79	57.35	35.55	28.73	32.25	13.92	32.20
IDKI		9.17		42.41		32.80		24.79
EKLM	13.20	8.12	59.49	36.67	28.48	32.93	12.03	30.40
TCR	19.41	8.42	66.74	39.10	23.62	33.10	9.63	27.81
TR-C	**14.64**	**8.11**	**59.48**	**37.15**	**27.70**	**32.56**	**12.82**	**30.29**
PLGT	17.21	8.72	62.56	41.92	19.58	33.36	17.86	24.73
MLPM	23.61	8.49	70.75	39.86	20.61	32.80	8.63	27.34
WYD		9.17		40.46		32.66		26.89
KZKD	19.05	8.05	61.82	36.77	27.55	31.87	10.63	31.35
KNR	17.52	7.84	60.23	36.37	25.84	32.95	13.93	30.68
KSGD		10.48		47.36		30.88		21.76
MLBR	**18.99**	**8.62**	**63.54**	**40.41**	**22.97**	**32.71**	**13.49**	**26.89**
KERL	15.56	8.30	60.34	38.38	26.70	32.62	12.96	29.00

Source: Administration Reports and Records of D.P.I

The proportion of enrolment in standard I has declined in all the districts. In 1973-74, it varied from 13.20 per cent in Ernakulam to 23.61 per cent in Malappuram. By 1997-98, the range narrowed to 7.10 percent in Pathanamthitta and 10.48 per cent in Kasargod. Thus we find that the forces of homogenisation of the age of enrolment, decline in fertility rates, increase in retention rates and consequently increase in the average number of years of schooling per student, have been working in all the districts. Inter-regional differences have almost completely disappeared in the case of enrolment in standard I. In Malabar the proportion was 8.11 as against 8.62 in Travancore and Cochin in 1997-98.

Table 4.2Ø shows the percentage distribution of school enrolment of scheduled tribe students in standard I and at the different levels of school for selected years from 1973-74.

Table 4.2Ø

Percentage Distribution of School Enrolment of Scheduled Tribes by Levels of School

year	Ist std	LP	UP	HS
1973-74	17.72	62.75	25.36	11.89
1975-76	18.67	6Ø.72	26.88	12.4Ø
1982-83	15.55	58.9Ø	26.53	14.57
1985-86	15.28	56.Ø1	28.81	15.18
199Ø-91	14.91	54.99	28.41	16.6Ø
1994-95	11.82	47.45	31.78	2Ø.77
1997-98	12.16	48.35	29.75	21.9Ø

Source: same as of table 4.18

As is the case of SCs, the share of ST enrolment in the upper primary and high school section has recorded significant increase; may be due to lower drop out (or high retention) rates. A clear distinction to be noted between the structure of enrolment as between scheduled castes and scheduled tribes is that while in the case of SCs, the proportion of enrolment in standard I has dropped to 8.3Ø percent by 1997-98, in the case of Scheduled Tribes, it remained at 12.16 percent. The corresponding proportions for high school were for 1997-98, 29.Ø percent and 21.9Ø percent respectively. These figures indicate that scheduled tribe children enrolled have a lower average number of years of schooling than the scheduled caste children have.

Table 4.21

Share of Enrolment of ST students in the Districts of Kerala

	STD I		LP		UP		HS	
DIST.	73-74	97-98	73-74	97-98	73-74	97-98	73-74	97-98
TVM	9.71	8.51	51.27	34.63	35.35	34.32	13.38	31.04
KLM	21.70	8.49	65.53	39.48	25.11	32.20	9.36	28.32
PATA		8.72		40.60		33.15		26.25
ALPY	19.51	8.59	63.41	37.68	34.15	36.09	2.44	26.23
KTYM	15.40	7.58	57.61	36.99	24.92	29.26	17.47	33.75
IDKI		10.08		43.89		31.68		24.43
EKLM	15.74	9.01	59.91	40.51	24.05	34.59	16.04	24.90
TCR	20.94	11.95	62.39	51.44	35.04	24.81	2.56	23.74
TR-C	15.12	9.18	57.95	40.61	27.19	31.86	14.86	27.53
PLGT	22.11	18.35	75.25	61.83	15.84	25.42	8.91	12.75
MLPM	22.14	14.83	58.02	59.76	29.01	27.04	12.98	13.19
KZKD	20.20	8.49	68.80	39.30	23.90	32.79	7.30	27.91
WYD		14.77		54.15		27.91		17.95
KNR	21.72	10.02	68.90	48.25	22.91	28.33	8.19	23.42
KSGD		8.62		40.30		32.49		27.21
MLBR	21.16	13.69	69.10	52.37	22.95	28.40	7.95	19.23
KERAL	17.72	12.16	62.75	48.35	25.36	29.75	11.89	21.90

Source: Administration Reports and Records of D.P.I

Table 4.21 shows the distribution of ST enrolment in the different districts. Decline in the proportion of enrolment in standard I is registered in all the districts; however, the proportion of enrolment in the Ist standard in the Travancore-Cochin region has shown a Lower figure than Malabar. This does not mean that the absolute number of students enrolled in the first standard have declined in Travancore-Cochin compared to Malabar, but merely that drop out rates have declined more in the Travancore-Cochin region. This may be also an indication that the drop out rates (and therefore the average level of schooling) of tribal students in the Malabar region are higher at the high school level. In the Travancore-Cochin region, scheduled tribe students in the upper

primary and high school level accounts for higher proportions indicating that larger proportions of the scheduled tribe students enrolled in the lower classes are retained in high school level also.

Table: 4.22

Proportion of Scheduled Caste Children who Drop out before Standard X to children enrolled in Standard II, eight years earlier.

	83-84 to 91-92			88-89 to 96-97		
Distr	Total	Boys	Girl	Total	Boys	Girl
TVM	40.48	44.75	35.94	42.84	50.99	34.12
KLM	59.95	62.91	56.85	42.26	47.86	36.13
ALPY	54.12	55.92	52.27	27.08	30.74	23.07
PATA				35.85	43.94	26.75
KTYM	40.94	48.98	32.00	34.61	42.67	25.59
IDKI	69.25	72.06	66.18	62.66	68.00	56.98
EKLM	48.37	53.92	42.25	39.71	47.84	31.34
TCR	53.51	59.51	47.09	48.78	57.71	39.09
TR-CO	**47.13**	**51.84**	**42.09**	**42.32**	**49.47**	**34.60**
PLGT	55.55	55.00	55.02	54.72	59.94	49.29
MLPM	42.34	39.77	45.08	39.35	43.16	35.38
WYD	55.50	55.80	55.20	49.29	53.90	44.47
KZKD	35.88	39.49	31.87	30.48	37.07	23.57
KNR	70.13	73.54	66.24	40.40	48.54	31.44
KSGD				59.98	64.67	54.90
MLBR	**48.36**	**49.07**	**47.60**	**45.47**	**50.77**	**39.91**
KERALA	47.52	50.96	43.84	43.45	49.93	36.51

Source: Calculated from Records of D.P.I, various years

The drop out ratio of students belonging to the SCs is higher than that of the general population. About 48 per cent of students enrolled in standard II in 1983-84 had dropped out from school before reaching standard X in 1991-92. Interestingly, the drop out ratio of girls are seen to be lower than that of the boys in this community in all the districts. The proportion declined a little to about 44 percent for the corresponding period, 1988-89 to 1996-97.

Of special interest is the observation that in Malappuram in which drop out ratio was higher for girls in the earlier period has also reversed the pattern in the latter period. Idukki, Kasargod and Palakkad are found to be the districts which still have drop out ratio of 50 percent or above.

Table 4.23
Dropout among ST students STD 2-10

	83-84 to 91-92			88-89 to 96-97		
Distr	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls
TVM	21.63	27.65	16.13	29.12	40.17	18.65
KLM	89.66	93.94	84.00	57.14	63.51	50.00
ALPY	67.33	69.64	64.44	30.26	33.33	25.81
PATA				64.04	76.85	49.47
KTYM	21.10	33.79	9.32	10.37	39.09	16.22
IDKI	57.08	58.83	55.12	61.13	65.50	56.75
EKLM	17.43	9.43	25.00	14.29	17.81	9.43
TCR	40.48	60.76	6.38	26.60	36.59	18.87
TR-CO	**43.14**	**49.67**	**36.05**	**42.90**	**49.40**	**36.05**
PLGT	86.75	82.59	90.97	85.01	83.81	86.56
MLPM	79.01	68.37	91.57	79.40	76.56	82.01
WYD	71.52	72.49	70.53	73.40	75.34	71.30
KZKD	58.18	68.97	46.15	72.45	77.00	67.71
KNR	84.60	84.07	85.20	79.38	82.86	75.50
KSGD				57.14	66.06	46.68
MLBR	**69.33**	**68.77**	**69.33**	**73.81**	**76.39**	**70.94**
KERALA	60.22	62.07	58.25	64.66	68.56	60.38

Source: same as of table: 4.22

Strangely enough, while in the case of all other communities, the drop out ratio was decreasing, among the STs, it has increased from 60 percent to 65 percent. Is it an indication of the frustration on the part of ST students with the education system? There is a clear north-south divide, showing that in the south the drop out ratios of the scheduled tribe students are lower. The relatively low drop out ratio in the south could be a sign of their better socio-economic status than in the north. The drop out ratios in the districts of the northern region are very large, to the extent

of 80 to 85 percent, as seen in the case of Palakkad, Malappuram and Kannur districts. districts.

The reasons for the extremely high rates of drop outs from among the tribes is an important area of enquiry, but cannot be taken up in the present exercise. Some clues to their dismal performance available from other studies may be however cited. The study by Krishnan (1998) on the "Awareness and Utilisation of Educational development schemes by tribals of Wynad", finds that the levels of awareness and utilisation of educational development schemes are low among the scheduled tribes of Wayanad, and that wide inter-community differences exist in this respect among the different tribal communities. The author has remarked that all the schemes meant for educational development can succeed only when their inertia in matters of education is removed (Krishnan C, 1998).

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have tried to examine the disparities in school education among the different vulnerable groups in Kerala. The analysis of the gender aspect showed that the state has almost completely wiped out gender discrimination in school education. Kerala is far ahead of other states in India in this matter. Similarly, in the case of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe communities also, the educational gap between them and the rest of the society is declining rapidly. These communities have recognized the importance to be given to education and this is evident in terms of increasing enrolment ratios and declining dropout rates. However, the scheduled tribes still remain far behind even the scheduled castes in matters of education.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Education is considered the key to human development. Kerala has the unique distinction among the states of India as the state which has achieved universal literacy and education, achieved in an environment of relatively low economic development. It is not however clear whether the educational achievements of the state also imply that they have reached all regions and all the groups of the population without inter se disparities. The present exercise constitutes a modest enquiry into this question.

The study begins with a historical review of the process of educational development in the state. The review is confined mainly to the period since the beginning of the British supremacy in this region, at about the close of the eighteenth century. The review highlights the signal role played by foreign missionaries, native princes and the indigenous Christian church in the promotion of modern institutionalised education. It also refers to the pioneering role of these agencies in the promotion of education to women and several backward communities. Malabar which had fared better in education compared to Travancore and Cochin till the British came, was, however, pushed far behind them. Since then Malabar plunged into educational backwardness under the direct British rule unlike Travancore and Cochin under the rule of native princes.

At the time of the formation of the present Kerala state, Malabar stood at a much lower level than Travancore and Cochin due to their historical processes. The educational backwardness of the Malabar region was reflected in school enrolment ratios and structure of the educational system. Since the Kerala government has followed since 1956 a vigorous policy of educational expansion with clear discrimination in favour of the Malabar and the vulnerable and backward sections of society, much of the disparities are supposed to have disappeared.

The present school system in Kerala is mosaic of various types of management, multiple media and diverse syllabi. The school education system of the state is characterized by different managements (government, Private Aided, Private Unaided), different layers (LP, UP, HS), different media of instruction (Malayalam, English, Canada and Tamil), different syllabi (CBSE, ICSE, Kerala) and different qualifications for teachers (BEd, TTC etc).

Detailed investigation into the patterns and differentials in school education was conducted for the past quarter of a century, since the early 197Ø's. This period was chosen taking into consideration also of the period provides comparable time series data since a major policy change was introduced in june 1972, according to which detention of students in various classes was virtually abolished. There was to be no detention at all in standard I; and detention in classes II to IX was to be limited to prescribed limits of about 5 per cent of the strength in a class.

Analysis was made of variables like schools, accessibility to schools, enrolment, dropouts and teacher-pupil ratios and according to districts and regions.

It was observed that the share of the private unaided system is small in the state even though it is fast expanding. Its activities are confined mainly to urban areas of relatively developed districts, catering to the better off sections of society. It is disturbing to note that while private unaided schools were rapidly increasing, government schools and private aided schools are declining in terms of enrolment.

Physical inaccessibility to schools is not found to be a major problem in the state. By 198Øs, 9Ø percent of the population had LP schools and 7Ø percent had UP schools within their habitations. The schools are within walkable distances of the students concerned.

The average number of years of schooling per student has increased during the past few decades due to variety of factors: whole sale promotion, increase in the number of upper primary and secondary schools and better levels of awareness about the need for schooling among weaker sections.

Notwithstanding the sweeping changes made in the primary school curriculum (with the introduction of DPEP syllabus), the enrolment of students in the government and the aided primary schools is on the decline. The pattern points to the high rate of

marginalisation of government and aided schools, on which the state government spends bulk of its educational budget.

At the level of primary education, Kerala has already achieved universalisation of education. At the high school level, enrolment and retention ratios have increased. The enrolment ratio peaked for Malabar only in the late 198Øs whereas for Travancore and Cochin it had happened much earlier. Indications are that disparities in enrolment ratios across districts and regions have virtually disappeared.

Dropout ratios however varied across districts and regions. They continue to be higher in Malabar than in the Travancore-Cochin region. Further, they are seen to be the highest in the districts of Wyanad, Palakkad, Malappuram, Kasargode and Idukki. These are districts in which socio-economic development are low and the proportions of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and other backward communities in the population are higher.

Teacher-pupil ratio is an important indicator in determining the quality of school education. The teacher-pupil ratio has been showing improvement in recent years. However, the data used in the analysis for teachers are of the sanctioned number, the number of teachers in position in the schools. Inter-district variations in teacher-pupil ratio are minimal.

One of the major questions which the study intended to examine is the educational performance of the vulnerable sections of the society such as women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

Our analysis shows that in respect of school education, there exists little disparity in performance as between girls and boys. However, the enrolment ratio is slightly lower for girls in standard I. At the higher levels of schools, the number of girls is found to be higher than that of boys due to higher drop out rates of the latter. The different measures used for our analysis such as relative enrolment and Sopher's Index of inequality establish the high degree of gender equality in education that now prevails in the educational scene in Kerala. Inequality has declined at the level of all the different districts.

Drop out rates in other states in India are for girls than for boys. However, in Kerala, the situation is different. The boys opt out of the education system, particularly after completion of middle school system; may be, due to employment opportunities for them in regions outside the state and country.

The islands of educational backwardness in the whole system are the Scheduled tribes. The Government has been making sustained efforts to uplift them educationally through a variety of schemes such as scholarships, fee concessions and mid-day meals. The scheduled castes of Kerala are distributed among the different districts; however, the Malabar region accounts for the majority of this population in the state. The tribals who even at present live in isolation from the rest of the society have low enrolment and retention ratios and the gender disparity in educational performance among them in high.

This is not the case with the scheduled castes. Owing to their inter-mingling with the rest of the society for long periods of time, the educational distance between them and others has virtually disappeared.

In spite of the fact that the scheduled tribes remain even now educationally more backward than others including scheduled castes, the age of enrolment in standard I has become homogenous, total enrolment has declined due to decline in fertility rates, and the mean years of schooling have increased, for all communities. In the overall reckoning, the Malabar region remains, however, marginally behind the rest of Kerala in the matter of educational development.

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