

**SOCIAL CONTEXT OF GIRLS' SCHOOLING
IN KERALA : A STUDY OF MALABAR
REGION (1900-1950)**

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CERTIFICATE

Certified that the dissertation entitled "**SOCIAL CONTEXT OF GIRLS' SCHOOLING IN KERALA : A STUDY OF MALABAR REGION (1900-1950)**" submitted by **Ms. SREELEKHA R. NAIR** in partial fulfilment of the degree of Master of Philosophy is entirely her own work and has not been considered for any other degree either in this or any other university.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

Literacy and basic education are today seen as necessary requirements for social opportunity and effective freedom in a democratic society. They facilitate the ability to resist oppression and to reduce inequality in life chances. The link between female literacy, status of women and overall development is particularly emphasised. Female literacy is found to have a positive and statistically significant impact on child survival and quality of life. Education is seen to promote decision making and provide new opportunities for women. At the societal level it alters the perception of gender roles and widens the spread of socially permissible activities by women. (Dreze and Sen, Tilak) It is hence of concern that literacy levels especially that of women in India are abysmally low. Table 1 gives literacy levels and primary schooling in certain selected states of India. As can be seen female literacy and schooling have not received adequate attention in India even after about half-a-century of independence. Rajasthan has the lowest female literacy rate. Bihar is a close second with 17.4 per cent

females going to primary schools. Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh also have low levels of female literacy and primary schooling. In this dismal scenario performance of Kerala has been striking. As many as 86.2 per cent women were literate according to the Census of 1991. Kerala's performance in respect of living standards including literacy and basic education has been hailed as the 'Kerala model' of development in the context of developing third-world countries. Though Kerala lags behind many of the states of the Indian union in terms of per capita domestic production which has consistently been below the national average, the composite index of quality of life which includes education places Kerala far above that of India as a whole as well as most parts of the developing world. The idealization of the concept of 'Kerala model' has resulted in inadequate attention being given to the social context of development. This is especially pertinent in the case of literacy and education in general and that of women in particular. Socio-historical factors which were operative in this particular region allowed Kerala to reach a threshold level of literacy at the time of independence. However, it is important that there were considerable variations in female literacy and education in the first half of the twentieth century in the different regions of the state, as well as among different castes and religious groups within a region. Literacy in general and female literacy in particular, was poorer in the Malabar region as

compared to Cochin and Travancore in the first half of the twentieth century. Only after the 1960s did Malabar begin to significantly catch up with the rest of the state. This is of interest as variations between the three regions in terms of literacy were not very significant until the beginning of this century. It would be important to understand the factors responsible for the educational backwardness of Malabar especially in relation to the education of girls in the first half of this century.

GENDER AND EDUCATION - A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mainstream theories in sociology paid little attention to the question of gender. Functionalists, in their attempt to explain the systems of society by defining the functions of its parts, ignored aspect of conflict and change. Existing sexual division of labour within the family and in the societal sphere was seen as contributing to the stability of the society. Any challenge to the existing relation between sexes was seen as a challenge to the existence of society itself. According to functionalists, education is expected to establish a continuity between the family and the school. The implicit assumption here is the familial role will govern women's choices within the education system. Marxism underscores the element of conflict in every aspect of life and links this contradiction to the economic relations of production. According to Marx the dominant class uses education to legitimize and spread the existing ideology. Marxists (especially Engels) take into account

exploitation on the basis of gender. However, gender relations are seen as an inevitable consequence of the prevailing economic system. They therefore hold that gender exploitation can be abolished only with the abolition of capitalism and in this process the structure of gender exploitation will be automatically done away with.

Ethnomethodologists give importance to interaction among individuals in the school system. They show in their theory how some students are differentiated against some others at an individual level. However, ethnomethodology fails to recognise the importance of patriarchy that works at the systemic level and which contributes to the exploitation of women at the individual level as well as women specific problems in education.

Major contributions in the sociology of education such as Bowles and Gintis, Bernstein, Althusser etc. view education system as an institution that helps reproduce the statusquo either ideologically, culturally or socially. Nevertheless the importance of gender did not receive attention. They failed to recognise patriarchal structures operative at the educational level though they recognise the inequality that exists within the educational system that keeps the disadvantaged groups at the periphery. The 'new' sociology of education which developed as a reaction to the inadequacies of the early sociology of education also failed to look at the aspect of gender.

Young who belongs to the 'new' sociology of education recognises that there is need to recognise that knowledge as 'no more than the socio-historical constructs of a particular time'. (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985 : 290), However, there is no mention as how this is linked to see the stereotyping of gender roles as normal. Esland and Keddie are concerned more with the 'content' of education. According to them 'educational knowledge', which is transmitted by the schools to students in the form of curriculum, is dominated by teachers' view of 'what is to be educated'. Keddie analyses how teacher expectations determine educational development in schools. She also relates teacher expectation to social classes. To her it is the teachers' knowledge of the students' background that determines their assessment of the pupils' capacities. However Keddie ignores how educational achievements of girls are determined by teachers' views on 'what ought to be educated' to them. Also how gender stereotyping in schools by the teachers reinforce the traditional roles of girls and how an initiative to behave differently is seen as 'deviance' by teachers and strictly punished by them. Esland and Keddie also argue that 'everyday' knowledge which is identified with working class is as important as the 'academic knowledge' of the middle class. Nevertheless, they do not pay any attention to the fact that women's viewpoints and knowledge are only different and no way inferior to the knowledge of men and their world view.

Another important limitation of these studies is the lack of focus on the effects of early socialization and the education system on gender inequality. Socialization is in line with tradition and the social institutions of family, kinship and marriage. "It is closely intertwined with the process of role socialization of boys and girls which eventually leads to the dichotomising of masculine and feminine roles or gender asymmetry" (Chanana, 1988 : 9).

The feminist perspective emphasizes the structural subordination of women. Three feminist frameworks with differing emphasis are briefly reviewed in the following section (Liberal, Marxist and Radical). Liberal feminists have their goal in a just society. Their aim is to secure equal opportunities for both sexes. They advocate the removal of barriers that prevent girls reaching their full potential. Education is seen by them as an active agent of equality, humanitarianism and social justice. Legislations in the educational field would lead to the same educational opportunities for both sexes and attempts to forcibly impose masculine or feminine characteristics would have to be done away with. Gradually gendered psychological inequalities would disappear. However, liberal feminists presuppose the existence of shared or collective norms orienting human beings to achieve their ends in society. This is contradictory to the existing facts. Conflicts and social disturbance predominate in the present society.

Also equality of opportunity does not necessarily result in equality of outcome. The importance of prior socialization of students before entering the education system is ignored. Thirdly, the education system is not an independent system as such but is conditioned by the wider social structures. It is too simplistic to believe that any reform in education would automatically head to gender equality.

Marxist feminists perceive gender relations as subsumed by more fundamental structure of the class system and particularly within the structure of the contemporary capitalist class system. This leads to their understanding that women of markedly different class backgrounds have fewer life experiences in common than women of any particular class have with the men of their own class. They acknowledge that within any class, women are less advantaged than men in their access to material goods and possibilities for self-actualization. They attribute the cause of this inequality to capitalism itself. Women, thus are unequal vis-a-vis men not because of any basic and direct conflict of interest between the genders, but because of the working out of class oppression, with its attendant factors of property inequality, exploited labour and alienation, Marxist feminists look at education within capitalism using the categories of class. They first offer an account of the educational system under capitalism and then proceed to suggest measures which will do away with the defects of the capitalist system of

production. Since the capitalist system requires the continuous production of both forces and relations of production, it requires the active collaboration between the base (economy) and superstructure (religion, family, education). The reproduction of skills requires a technically efficient but a submissive labour force and this in turn necessitates the existence of an educational system which effectively socializes the working class and the ruling class to assume appropriate future roles. This is true of sexual division of labour also. The mechanisms where by this is done are disguised by the apparently neutral character of the school. The solution offered by Marxist feminists is the destruction of class itself. A working class revolution that destroys class system by making all economic assets the assets of the entire community also will free society from the by-product of class exploitation, gender inequality. The communist revolution is the key to the fulfilment of women's potentialities. However, gender inequality is one of the basic inequalities that exists within class, caste and other social categories and abolition of class alone will not automatically lead to the destruction of gender inequality. The fact that within any class women are less advantaged than men rather than vice versa, seems in Marxist feminists to have no immediate structural cause.

The emphasis on patriarchy as the most fundamental structure of oppression distinguishes Radical feminists from Marxist feminists. They

perceive patriarchy as violence against women. Violence may take the form of overt physical cruelty but may be hidden in more complex practices of control like under paid wage and unpaid household drudgery. According to Radical Feminists women are carefully controlled to be used as compliant tools by men. Men and male-dominated organizations use various power resources economic, ideological, legal and emotional to sustain this system of subordination. Education system is seen by Radical feminists as a system which contributed to the reproduction of gender relations. The solution against oppression of women must start with the basic reworking of women's consciousness. This process of 'consciousness raising' can be done through revisions of curricula texts changes in pedagogy, the extension of scholarship on gender and making students' organizations as important agents of discussion etc. However Radical feminist have been faulted for their exclusive focus on patriarchy. This focus seems to simplify the realities of social organization and social inequality and thus to approach the issue of ameliorative change somewhat unrealistically. Also 'consciousness raising' of just one section of society- women - is not enough. But they don't answer the question. - How to go about boys' attitudinal change?

Studies on gender and education in India broadly use the liberal framework with a focus on increasing equality of opportunity in education

for women. The emphasis has been on understanding the response of girls to education in relation to the wider social context and specifically constraints imposed by institutions of family, caste and community. Social reform movements with some attention to educational structure as well has been discussed. The study of socialization, the cultural definition of what is masculine and feminine and the constraints on women's education has been specifically emphasized. The manner in which family and kin group through life cycle rituals internalize in girls a sense of inferiority and gender identity has been emphasized. For example puberty is an important point of departure in the life of a girl and in her education. Restriction on movement are associated with liberty. Naturally education receives a back seat. (Leela Dube, 1988 : 174).

The role of social reforms and missionaries in confronting caste and communal structure and expanding opportunities for girls has also received emphasis. Educational has largely been seen as an agent of social reform rather than social change. In fact, it has been noted that education has not led to even change in women's self-perceptions and has been allowed when it has not threatened the power relations within the family. (Kartekar, 1988 : 129). Similarly education policy has been seen to play a more conservative role in tune with large social and cultural expectations. There has been some studies on schools and the role of curriculum and classroom

processes vis-a-vis gender (Parthasarathi, 1988 : 208). Some works on gender deal with sex stereotyping of women in school textbooks. The studies, by and large, do not raise large issues of structural change with the exception of Kamat who notes that 'whether it is a question of women's education, or of their social advance and liberation, they cannot be separated from the issue of the socio-structural transformation of Indian society.' (Kamat, 1985 : 245).

An important dimension which underlies a number of studies is that of inter-regional and intra-regional variations in girls' education. In a study on the education of women in pre-independence India Chanana analyses differential enrolment of girls in pre-independence period. The differential educational performance of girls in the presidencies as well as within different communities are explained in terms of socio-cultural factors. Purdah, child marriage, loyalty to traditional learning etc. among various religious communities and social prejudices against education of girls are seen as specific constraints which come into play in different regions. The role of institutional intervention (single-sex schools), missionaries and social reform movements are also analysed to explain variations. hence a single framework cannot explain the reality in educational field. The interplay of patriarchy and economic factors in delimiting girls' schooling necessitates a combination

of Radical and socialist feminist outlooks to study the trends in girls' education of a region.

In the context of regional variations and women's education it is surprising that there has not much research attention been on education of girls and women in Kerala which has since the turn of the century been far ahead of the rest of the country. Studies which focus on education in Kerala ignore the aspect of gender (Jeffrey, Tharakan, Issac, Nair etc.). The main attempt of these theories has been to find out the reasons for the high overall literacy in Kerala. In this context the high levels of literacy have been attributed to the practice of matriliney, the efforts of missionaries and royal patronage. Early expansion of education among women and lower castes and other disadvantaged groups was also taken as one of the reasons for the relatively high level of literacy in Kerala.

A more careful look at data on literacy in Kerala in the first half of the twentieth century especially indicate not only disparities in literacy between men and women but specific regional variations in female literacy rates (Table 2). It is significant that the Malabar region (which came under direct colonial rule as part of the Madras Presidency) which has been seen educationally the most advanced region in the presidency (according to the reports on public instruction) lags behind the other two regions of the

princely states of Cochin and Travancore. This 'literacy lag' becomes sharper after the 1920s. It is only after 1960 that Female literacy in Malabar actually began to catch up with the rest of Kerala.

THE PROBLEM

The Malabar region is of particular interest not only because of the specific colonial context but also the rigid social structure of the region, inter-regional variations in female literacy in the decades prior to independence in the region, historical factors that constrained and facilitated the spread of girls' education in different parts of the state, the significant proportion of minorities, British policy initiative or lack of them in education and the role of missionaries and social reform movements. The inter-play of socio-cultural and political factors in the specific context of girls' education in Malabar given the larger developments in education in the state become particularly relevant for study.

OBJECTIVE

The present study attempts to analyse the social context of girls' education in the Malabar region of the present state of Kerala. The study broadly covers the pre-independence period from 1900 to 1950. This is the period when disparity in female literacy in Malabar in comparison to other regions becomes increasingly pronounced. While the study focuses

on Malabar, other regions of Kerala also will be dwelt upon to incorporate a comparative perspective. The study will attempt to deal with the trends in schooling of girls in Malabar as compared to Cochin and Travancore in the first half of the twentieth century. The study will try to discuss whether the backwardness of girls' education was a part of the general educational backwardness of Malabar. The economic, socio-cultural and educational factors which led to disparities in schooling in the context of the specific historic period under study among different communities is also discussed. The official education policy and the nature of schools in the region and their influence on girls' education are analysed to find out the educational status of girls in Malabar. More specifically the study will try to present trends in literacy rates and primary schooling of girls in the Malabar region in the period of 1900-1950. The work will try to analyse the social factors that constrained the spread of education among girls in Malabar in particular with reference to other regions of Kerala.

The study is divided into five sections. Chapter I discusses how the question of gender and education has been placed in existing literature. Chapter II gives a brief overview of the socio-economic structure and gender relations in Malabar. An attempt is made there to locate Malabar region in the colonial context of the time period under study. This understanding of the social and historical peculiarities of the region becomes important

before going for a discussion on the general educational situation in Malabar in Chapter III. Chapter IV attempts to understand and explain patterns of literacy and schooling of girls in the region. Policy measures adopted by the British and the causes for failure of these measures are also discussed. Chapter V presents summary and conclusions.

CHAPTER-II

MALABAR REGION : SOCIO -ECONOMIC STRUCTURE AND GENDER RELATIONS

The section discusses the socio-economic structure of the Malabar region within the larger context of society in Kerala at the turn of the nineteenth century. It highlights the structural transformation taking place in the region within the changing political back drop. Malabar economy was undergoing some important structural transformations like changes in crop pattern etc. during the period under study. These changes started with the period under study. These transformations in the economy had their impact on the interrelations between different strata of people in Malabar. Gender relations within and between different sections of population are also discussed.

The state of Kerala today comprises the pre-independence regions of Travancore, Cochin and Malabar. Malabar district which was a part of Madras Presidency comprises of the present day districts of Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur and Wynaad. Eventhough there has been a dearth of material and information to write an uninterrupted history of Malabar, history of Malabar is traced back to the Cheras, one of the great

triarchy of South India. (Innes, 1951 : 29). References to this part of India were in the accounts of merchants of Rome and Egypt and various geographers like Pliny the Elder. According to history Malabar became a collection of independent states or principalities at the extinction of the rule of certain 'Perumals'. These principalities were called 'nads' and were under different 'Rajas'. These 'Rajas' ruled different ' nads' like Kolattiri, Vattanad, Parappanad, Kurumbranad, Wallwvanad, etc. The smallest of them was the Zamorin of Kozhikode. The various 'Rajas' were constantly at war with one another. Arabs who were having trade relations with Malabar settled down there and mingled with the local population.

Mappillas who constitute the majority of Muslim population in Malabar trace their ancestry to these Arab settlers. Arrival of Vasco da Gama in 1498 A.D. at Kappad near Kozhikode turned a page in the history of Malabar. The Portuguese became the major trading force though they did not become any major political power in the region. The Dutch who followed them also did not have any significant political influence in the region. The British who came last to Malabar for trade transformed themselves into the major political power in Malabar later in history. The Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the British took advantage of the petty political hostilities between different 'Rajas' to pursue their commercial interest. The political history and trade of Malabar were interconnected to such an

extent that external forces of the trading companies had their say in the relation between different 'Rajas'.

It was at this time that Haider Ali conquered Malabar in 1766. Later his son Tipu also attacked Malabar and the hostility between Muslim supporters of Tipu in Malabar on the one hand and the British East India Company which became powerful by then on the other, was overt. During the Mysorean conquest lasting from 1766 to 1793 British used every opportunity to strengthen their position in Malabar, both economically and militarily. British supremacy over Malabar was established by the Treaties of Srirangapattinam (or Seringapatam) dated 22nd February and 18th March, 1792. (Logan, 1951 : 473). The ruling families of the kingdoms and principalities in Malabar accepted British supremacy and many of them were pensioned off. Malabar became a part of Madras Presidency and was under the direct rule of British collector. For the administrative convenience of the British Malabar district was divided into five divisions of Calicut, Malappuram, Palghat, Tellicherry and Wynaad. Travancore and Cochin had a resident in their land as the political agent of the British. British policy in all three regions of Kerala was guided by the single aim of stabilising their rule by building political alliances with ruling and non-ruling powerful families.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF MALABAR

The population of Malabar comprised all the religions of India—Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Jain, Buddhist and Parsis. According to the census of 1901, 68 percent of the people were classed as Hindus, 30 percent as Muslims and less than 2 percent as Christians. Other religions together did not constitute even 1 percent of the population. The distribution of population of the major religious communities varied in different districts. Palghat taluk within the district of Malabar had the highest number of Hindus. Muslim were most numerous in Ernad taluk. (GOI, 1908).

Traditional Hindu social structure with different castes organised hierarchically would be seen in Malabar. The uniqueness of Hindu 'varna' system in South India, that is absence of 'Kshatriyas and 'Vaisyas, was true of Malabar also. Local 'jatis' were peculiar to Malabar as would be seen in customs, professions. Caste could broadly be divided into 'Brahmins', 'Nairs', 'Tiyans', 'artisans' and 'agrestic' slaves. The Brahmins occupied the highest place in caste hierarchy. They were not a homogeneous group within Malabar. Nambutiri Brahmins were considered ritually the purest and they were the indigenous Malayali Brahmins. Even within this sub-caste, there were many subdivisions like Nambutiripad, Mussat, Nambidi, Elayad, etc. depending upon the ritual status. These sub-castes were not

allowed to interline or intermarry and these norms were rigidly followed. The other subcastes were mainly immigrant Brahmins from the nearby regions of Madras and Canara. They were considered as inferior to Nambutiri Brahmins in ritual hierarchy and were mainly found in pockets. Their settlements were found mainly in border districts. Palghat taluk of Malabar district had the highest number of Tamil Brahmins. All Brahmins were patrilineal. Among Nambutiris only the eldest son could inherit the property and marry from within the caste. Younger sons, if any, established marital relations called 'sambandham' with Nair women. Nambutiri Brahmins engaged themselves mainly in studying and teaching 'vedas' and as priests in temples. Tamil Brahmins took up trade, agriculture and other services as their occupation.

Below the Brahmins stood a sort of intermediate castes or 'antaralajatis' who were broadly known as 'ambalavasis'. Their distinctive function was temple service. There were many subcastes within them with different titles and all of them were associated with some kind of temples services. They differ within themselves on the matter of law of inheritance. Some follow 'makkathayam' and others 'marumakkathayam'¹. Kshatriyas or the ruling castes are conspicuously absent in the whole of South India. But

1 'Makkathayam' is the system of sons inheriting the property of their father and 'marumakkathayam' is the system in which the sisters' children inherit the property. Literally the former means descent through one's sons and the latter descent through one's sisters' children.

the ruling families used to claim the title of 'Kshatriya' and generally were recognised as an admixture of superior castes and Nairs. Presence of 'Rajputs' or 'foreign Kshatriyas' was also reported. It is said that the ruling families of Kottayam and Parappanad belonged to this category. However, their number is very limited.² Vaisyas as a vama was generally absent in Malabar. However, the trading class of 'Muttans' and 'Tharakans' claimed themselves to be Vaisyas. They were present only in Palghat taluk of Malabar district. They formed a very negligible proportion of the total population.

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The main caste group of the Hindu population was Nairs. Nairs were the militia of the district till the British conquest. They formed a cluster of subcastes who were engaged in different occupations from administration and supervision to agriculture and accounting. Nairs were considered by the Brahmins as 'Sudras' in the vama hierarchy. (Jeffrey, 1976 : 14). Despite this ritual inferiority they were the most powerful caste in Malabar economically and socially. Unlike Brahmins, Nairs were matrilineal and followed 'marumakkathayam' under which the right to inheritance to a man's property was given to the daughter of one's sisters. It is said that this was adopted to prevent alienation and fragmentation of property. At the same time females had the right to inherit the property of their mother

2. According to the census of 1881 there were only 362 kshatriyas in Malabar.



directly. "The custom had also much to commend it in a society organised, as it then was, when the Nayars were the 'protectors' of the state and could seldom except in old age, settle down to manage the family affairs." (Logan, 1951 : 173). With British supremacy martial service of the Nairs was no more needed. This led to the comparative impoverishment of Nairs. With "Comparative poverty, the race was fast degenerating." (Logan, 1951 : 173). A caste hardly distinguished from the Nairs was Ezhuthachhans who were the teachers in the village elementary schools known as ezhuthupalli. Kaniyans or astrologers came next in the hierarchy. They were also very limited in number.

The 'avarnas'³ or polluting castes in Malabar had a two-tier structure. The Tiya caste comprised the upper tier of the structure of the polluting castes and they were identical to the Izhavas of Travancore. They were numerically the largest section of the Hindu population in Malabar. (Logan, 1951 : 143). They were traditionally toddy tappers. Below the Tiyas in the caste hierarchy were 'Panans' (barbers of polluting castes and umbrella makers) 'Kavaras' (basket makers) and 'Cherumars' (agrestic slaves)⁴. 'Cherumars' were found in significant numbers in Malabar. Ernad, Walluwanad and Pannani taluks had the highest number of 'Cherumars.'

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3. Savarnas were considered as higher castes in malabar while avarnas were the lower castes.
 4. In the accounts of ancient and medieval writers the term cherumars denoted all persons that are now distinguished as scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. The term originally was applied to the aboriginal inhabitants of the region.

In the census of 1871 the 'Cherumars' numbered 99,009 in Malabar and in 1881 only 64,725. The significant decline in their population was attributed to conversion to Islam. Conversion to Islam helped these castes to rise in the social hierarchy. (Logan, 1951 : 197). Though slavery had been abolished by the British in 1792, it continued due to poverty of the slave castes.

The Muslim population in Malabar consisted of Mappillas who were the converts to Islam and immigrants from neighbouring areas of Madras Presidency. 'Mappillas' formed one-third of the total population of Malabar. They played an important role in the social and political history of Malabar. They mainly belong to the 'Sunni' sect of Islam. The second half of nineteenth century saw an uneven increase in their population due to natural causes and conversion... "the converts to Islam have in Malabar been drawn chiefly from the slave population. (Logan, 1951 : 148). Apart from the 'Mappillas' there were immigrants like 'Rawthers' and 'Labbais'. They were found mainly in the border taluk of Palghat of Malabar district.

Christians in Malabar belonged to four major sects of Christianity— Syrian, Romo-Syrian, Roman Catholic (Latin Rite) and Protestants of all denominations (Logan, 1951 :199). The Syrian Christians trace back their

origins to the arrival of apostle Thomas in A.D. 52. (Chandy, 1995 : 9). Jains, Buddhists and Parsis were there in Malabar district and their number was quite negligible.

ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF MALABAR

Malabar of the ancient period had a self-sufficient economy. Paddy, coconut, tapioca and different kinds of vegetables and fruits were grown in adequate quantities for self consumption. Flourishing trade, especially in spices, linked Malabar with foreign economies. All the major European countries including Britain had trade relations with Malabar. It was the Portuguese who were the first European power to take over trade and commerce in Malabar. Before the Portuguese the entire foreign and inland coastal trade was in the hands of the Muslims especially 'Mappillas' of Malabar. The British took over the reins of trade and commerce from the Portuguese and subsequently began controlling the administration of the district also. Malabar economy became a part of the colonial economy directly controlled by the British.

The economic organisation of Malabar during the British rule has to be understood at two levels. One was the relation between the British as rulers and the people of Malabar and the other was that between the people of district themselves. The terms of agreement with different 'Rajas'

were always dictated purely by the business interests of the former.⁵ (Logan, 1951 : 476). Political policies of the British, as mentioned earlier were aimed to achieve stability of their rule. This stability was a pre-requisite for fulfilling their commercial concerns. This task could have been difficult without friendly allies in these areas. This understanding is reflected in state policy and strategies such as conferment of privileges to satisfy the ruling families. (Logan, 1951 : 474). These included giving regular pensions and other privileges to the ruling families of Calicut, Chirackal, Walluwanad, etc. Non-ruling, economically powerful families were given back all the lands they had once owned⁶ (Innes, 1951 : 69). A policy of non-interference in dealings between land owners and their tenants was adopted. Land owners were largely Hindus while Mappillas were the tenants. The British policy of non-interference, among other things, resulted in the bitter relation between Hindus and Mappillas on one side and Mappillas and British on the other. Mappilla outbreaks against the Hindus were very frequent. Even before these 'outbreaks' many clashes were reported in many areas of the Malabar district. (Logan, 1951 : 478-485).

As mentioned earlier traditional economy of Malabar was self-sufficient.

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5. The fifth, sixth and seventh terms of agreement between Kadattanad Raja and the British (25th April 1792) is an exemplary illustration of this point.
 6. During the Mysorean conquest of Malabar Tipu confiscated lands from Hindus and a large number of them fled to Travancore. Once the British defeated Tipu they all came back to Malabar.

The relation with land for the people of Kerala was 'within the framework of a natural economy' (Namboodiripad, 1967 : 82). Though commercialisation had begun prior to the century daily lives of the people were not affected by the market relations. Social mobility of the lower classes was absent.⁷ Tillers did not have the right over land and were tied to the land. These labourers were bought and sold by the land owners with the land. This was the state all over Kerala and Malabar was no exception. Establishment of British rule hastened the process of development of market relations in Malabar in nineteenth century. (Namboodiripad, 1967 : 82). Cultivation of cash crops was encouraged and this disturbed balance between cash crops and food crops grown in the area. In addition to that the balance of trade and the constituents of imports and exports showed changes. With encouragement given to the plantation crops the equilibrium of natural economy got disturbed. The case of staple food rice can be taken to prove this point. "Four or five centuries ago Kerala was self-sufficient with regard to this primary and most essential need of human life. Today however, local production is less than 50 percent of consumption, nearly 60 percent of the local needs being supplied from outside. No other province in India is so deficit as regards food as Kerala." (Namboodiripad, 1967 : 82).

7. Lower classes invariably corresponded to the lower castes and higher caste people were the land owners. Mappilla and Chrisitan land owning families were also there.

The average annual import of rice during the seven years 1874-75 to 1880-81 A.D. was to the value of Rs.12 lakhs. This increased to Rs 52 lakhs by 1911, an increase of more than four-fold.

The import of rice was accompanied by increasing export of tea, coffee, rubber, cardamom, etc. Of these cash crops only coffee was exported in the mid-nineteenth century. However, by the 1930s tea, cardamom and coffee was of over Rs. 3 crores in Travancore alone. (Namboodiripad, 1967 : 83). The trend in Malabar was similar. This change reflects significant transformations in the pattern of agriculture. In Malabar, the total acreage under cash crops in 1937-38 was around 50 percent of the total land under cultivation. The three cash crops of coconut, are canut and pepper together accounted for two-thirds of the acreage under paddy. The use of land for the cash crops rather than paddy made the Kerala economy increasingly vulnerable to trends in the world market. However, this was not accompanied by transfer of modern technology and the advancement of the techniques of production necessary for the full-fledged capitalist economy. This was because of the fact that it was profit and not the commitment to the capitalism nor the growth of Kerala economy that was in the minds of the colonial rulers.

The political consequences of British conquest and the economic

outcomes as discussed earlier brought about certain changes in the relations among the different social strata. Occupational opportunities in the form of government services, petty trade etc. started developing. An economy of wage-labour began to emerge due to the commercialisation of crops. Bonded labour was made illegal with a series of legislations passed by the British. Trade and commerce provided opportunities for a large section of population. Many of the erstwhile polluting castes took to trade and commerce and obtained economic and social mobility in the relatively fluid economic structure. However, it did not allow radical transformation in the the social structure. The administrative officers and accounting went to traditionally well-to-do castes who had the opportunity to get English education in Malabar. Main beneficiaries were Nairs and Brahmins. "In Malabar, Nayars came to comprise two-thirds of constabulary by 1920." (Menon, 1994 : 16). Mappillas' position became worse because they boycotted education due to rivalry with the British. They became more inward looking. There was rampant illiteracy and educational backwardness among them. Naturally they were unable to exploit the employment opportunities.

GENDER RELATIONS IN MALABAR

Gender relations in Kerala have been viewed as far more progressive and liberal compared to the rest of India. (Logan, 1951). Sex ratios were

also in favour of women in Malabar.⁸ But this might have been true when we talk about the rules of female seclusion in a comparative perspective. However female seclusion was regarded as a criterion of status by certain higher castes like Nambutiri Brahmins and Mappilla Muslims in Malabar. Also gender relation was complex and varied across castes, religions and regions within Malabar depending upon factors like tradition and custom and social institutions like family and marriage. Perspective of freedom itself differed to women of different sections.

Of the major three religious sections of Malabar namely Hindu, Muslim and Christians, Christians were the most enlightened section as far as gender relations within the religion are concerned. Christian women had considerable amount of freedom and autonomy though 'the systemic integration of religion and patriarchy in the social, cultural, economic and political realm' (Chandy, 1995 : 65) was prevailing in the colonial Malabar too. There was no system of female seclusion and purdah among them. Nevertheless Christians of Malabar were purely patrilineal and the system of inheritance denied the right for women to inherit.

Mappillas practised both marumakkathayam and makkathayam. "Mappilla women appear in public without veils but among the 'better class'

8. According to the census of 1881 sex ratio was in favour of women (1014/100) in Malabar. This trend continues till today with 1043/1000 in 1991 for Malabar.

it is usual to envelope the head and person but not the face in the longrobe. They are very scrupulous about the chastity of their women, who however, enjoy much freedom" (Logan, 1951 : 198). But as veil was used among the 'better class' it is obvious that there was some kind of value attached to it. Muslims women of the district were at double disadvantage. First of all the relation of the Muslims especially mappillas⁹ with the rulers and the other religion section of the district was not cordial. This naturally prevented the scope of social relations and mobility of the population in general and women in particular.

The estrangement of mappillas from the ruling British was another factor which affected women adversely. Gender specific orthodox practices and customs of mappillas like early marriage for girls etc. also were factors to be considered to understand the rigidity of the structure of gender relations.

Hindu caste organization did not represent a uniform pattern of relation between the sexes within it. Variations of the institutions of marriage, family and systems of inheritance had much to do with the variations for the gender relations too. Thus practice of hypergamy, patriliney, matriliney among certain sections and the complex marital relation between the castes which

9. The discussions in this work on Muslims revolves around Mappilla Muslims as they form the majority of Muslim population of the district.

practice patriliney on the one hand and matriliney on the other all contributed to the variations.

Women of the highest Malayali caste, namely Nambutiris, epitomized the seclusion and misery of the 'weaker sex'. The very name 'antarjanam' or 'agattammamar' (in-doors people) explains the situation of their life. After attaining puberty strict seclusion was imposed on them and they were not to be seen anywhere outside the house. In contrast, mobility of men did not have any constraint. "They must not look on the face of a human being of the male sex except their husbands, and, when compelled to travel, they are invariably be preceded by a crier, in the person of a Nayar woman called 'vrshali' (maidservant)¹⁰ who warns off male travellers by a long-drawn shout of 'Ahayi' Besides, this they are protected by their large cadjan Umbrellas. (Logan, 1951 : 127) Social institutions of family and marriage also contributed to the ordeal of Nabutiri women. The practice of hypergamy was the rule for women. The system of inheritance and succession followed by Nabutiris was based on the rule of 'primogeniture'. Only the eldest son could marry from within Nambuiri caste and would inherit the property from father. Younger sons, if any, had to marry Nair women and under no circumstance, they were allowed to marry Nambutiri women. This resulted in frequent practices of polygyny by Nambutiri men.

10. Bracket in the quote is added.

The strict practice of hypergamy for Nambutiri women ensured that they were not marrying from lower castes. This meant a complete control over the sexuality of Nambutiri women by Nambutiri men. Compulsory purdah, denial of right to divorce and to inherit family property were other social norms, which acted as constraints on freedom and autonomy. Trial of Nambutiri women when she was suspected by her Kinsmen of 'illicit' sexual relations was the most humiliating practice prevailed among them. This trial was known as 'smartha vicharam'. The suspected woman was thereafter called 'sadhanam' (thing or commodity) and was isolated and given food just needed for survival. Finally when the trial was over and the woman accepted guilty (which was very easily possible with the measures taken), She was left to her destiny by her kinsmen!

Nair women enjoyed greater freedom and mobility as compared to Nambutiri women. Nairs were traditionally matrilineal. They lived in joint families called 'taravadu'. Male members of the joint family had rights over the family property while they were alive and on their death the property was inherited by their sisters and sisters' children. The practice of matriliy did not imply complete freedom and autonomy for Nair women. Patriarchal norms were also pervasive. Of course girls had the right to choose their husbands but were often guided by the opinions of their elder male managers

of the household.¹¹ The ceremony of marriage among Nairs was called 'sambandham' and was a very simple one. The give and take of a cloth (pudava) by the husband and wife respectively was the ceremony. Nair women could have marital relations with Nair and Nambutiri men. This aspect of the Nair system of Kinship and marriage brings in the question whether Nair matriliney was introduced to facilitate the smooth functioning of the rule of 'primogeniture' of the Nambutiris. This is so because the systems of inheritance and marriage of Nambutiris and Nairs were complementary. Nambutiri system of Kinship and family would not have survived without this peculiar rules of Nair residence and marriage. Hence the question is how far matriliney prevalent in Kerala contributed to the autonomy of Nair women.

Further, the marital relations of Nair women, by law, could be ended at the will of Nair women. Reality could have been much more different. "The fact, at any rate of recent years, is that, although the theory of the law sanctions freedom in these relations, conjugal fidelity is very general. Nowhere is the marriage tie — albeit informal — more rigidly observed or respected, nowhere is it more jealously guarded or its neglect more savagely avenged .

11. These mahagers wre called 'Karanavars' and were the real authority was with them.

Tiyas of North malabar used to follow 'marumakkathayam' and 'matriliny' while in South Malabar 'makkathayam' and patriliney were in vogue. This is an excellent example of variations of practices, customs and systems of inheritance within the same caste across regions. Tiyas' marriage ceremony was similar to Nairs but was more formal and elaborate. Bride price had to be paid by the bridegrooms' party to the brides' party at the time of marriage. Tiya women enjoyed more autonomy and freedom. In this matter they were compared to Nair women.

CHAPTER-III

EDUCATIONAL SITUATION IN PRE- INDEPENDENCE MALABAR

This chapter analyses trends in literacy and elementary schooling in Malabar. While the focus of the discussion is on Malabar, an attempt has been made to provide comparative perspectives relating to the other regions of Kerala namely Travancore and Cochin. Regional variations in education within Malabar as well as patterns of literacy and schooling along various religious groups and castes are also explored. The nature of educational institutions in Malabar have also been dealt with. The attempt is to understand developments in education within the social context of Malabar. As adequate data on elementary school enrolments during the period under study are not available the discussion uses literacy rates also as an indicator of educational development. Due to paucity of data and gaps in available information the study is at best only an attempt to present broad trends in literacy and schooling in Malabar.

SCHOOLS IN MALABAR

A variety of schools catered to the needs of literacy and education.

in Malabar in the nineteenth and early twentieth century are dealt with in this section. They included traditional or indigenous schools and those which were started during the British period.

INDIGENOUS SCHOOLS

Malabar's traditional education system was quite strong as in the rest of Kerala. These indigenous schools were widespread all over Malabar and generally every village had its local schools. They were called 'ezhuthupallis', 'kalaries', 'vedapatasalais' and 'madrasas'. 'Ezhuthupallis' or 'kudipallikudams' were the primary schools in villages where reading, writing, arithmetic and rudimentary knowledge of agriculture and meteorological sciences were taught. Importance was given to memorising passages which were orally taught. Learning was primarily by rote. Children used to write on rice grains and sand and at higher levels on palm leaves. It has been suggested that these schools originated due to the efforts of early Buddhist and Jain monks who were concerned about education. Their 'pallis' or non-vedic religious centres became centres of popular education as well." (Tharakan, 1984 :1914). The teachers of these village schools were known as 'asans', 'ezhuthachhans' and 'vadhyars'. These schools were conducted in verandahs of public places, houses of 'asans' or shades of trees. The teachers, most often, belonged to families which traditionally

had the right to teach in these schools. Students could pay either in cash or in kind which was 'dakshina' traditionally. In addition gifts were given to teachers on auspicious occasions like 'onam', 'vishu', etc.¹ Indigenous schools brought elementary learning to almost all the sections of the population. These institutions were those "for popular education which brought basic educational facilities within the reach of caste and communities other than Brahmins". (Tharakan, 1984 : 1914). Intermediate castes and Nairs flocked the schools. However, the polluting castes who formed a very large section of the population did not have access to these schools.

Formal and semi-formal institutions of training were available for the militia. These institutions were known as 'kalaris'² Access to kalaris was also decided by the status and position in the society. Nairs who were the traditional military class constituted majority of the student population. 'Vedapatasalais' and 'sabhamats' were institutions of higher learning. They were exclusively for the Brahmins where higher education especially in the 'vedas' was imparted. 'Madrasas' attached to mosques used to impart elementary level of education for Muslims. Rote-learning of passages from 'Koran' was the practice. Literacy and indigenous education were widespread

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1. Both are harvest festivals and most often parents of students preferred to give gifts in kind to cash.
 2. 'Kalaris' are a sort of gymnasium where martial arts were taught and practised by the privileged sections in Kerala.

among the 'Mappillas' in Malabar. However, "there were resentments against learning their language, Malayalam among them." (Kunju, 1989 : 251).

The arrival of the British in Malabar had a significant impact on the development of education. Their policy aimed at promoting literacy and education in Malabar. However, the emphasis was on formal education based on the western model. The language of instruction was English. This official encouragement of English education resulted in the destruction of indigenous institutions. Adequate information is not available on the closure of these institutions. The magnitude of the problem can be seen in table 4 which shows the number of indigenous schools which were closed in just two years. The epidemic of small pox was widespread in Malabar and is also seen as one of the most important reasons for the decline in indigenous education and has been termed as 'sad state of affairs' in the report on public instruction in Madras Presidency (1873-74). In some places the masters fell victims to the small pox and in others they had to close their schools because the parents were unwilling to let their children run the risk of being struck by the goddess in their way to and from the school." (GOI, 1973-74 : 303). This is however, could not be the sole reason for the closing down of their schools. In some parts of Kerala especially in Travancore even in the second half of the twentieth century after the modern education was developed, these schools functioned as pre-primary,

preparatory schools. The reasons are elaborately discussed later in the chapter.

British intervention in education which began in the nineteenth century resulted in different kinds of schools which were broadly divided into three kinds of schools : state schools, private local fund board and municipal schools and army schools. In state schools included provincial schools, zillah schools, anglo-vernacular schools, taluk schools, muhammedan schools, hill schools. Private local fund board and municipal schools included salary grant schools, local fund schools, training schools, result schools, girls' schools (salary grant and result schools).

Result-grant schools and salary grant schools were tied to the results. In the result-grant schools students were given certain amount as scholarships based on their performance and minimum attendance in the schools was necessary to sit for the examinations. In the case of salary grant schools teachers were given grants to teach in the schools and their grants depended on the number of students and promotion of educational standard in their schools.³ (GOI, 1873-73 : 303).

LITERACY AND SCHOOLING IN MALABAR,

The levels of literacy and schooling in Malabar at the beginning of

3. Other schools in the above list need no explanation. Their names themselves suggest the nature of the school.

the twentieth century assume special significance because the disparity between different regions of Kerala namely Travancore, Malabar and Cochin in the matter of literacy was not very significant at the close of the nineteenth century. However, the beginning of the twentieth century the gap in the rate of literacy between these three regions has been widening. This is shown in Table 2. In 1891 the general rates of literacy were 12.9 percent and 13.4 percent for Malabar and Travancore respectively.⁴ In Malabar, at the beginning of the twentieth century "only one in every six men could read and write and only three in every hundred women" (GOI, 1908 : 281). By 1911 the rate of literacy in Travancore was 15.0 per cent while in Malabar it had fallen to 11.1 per cent. In the decade that followed almost a quarter (24.2 percent) of the total population was literate in Travancore while in Malabar it was only 12.7 per cent. This gap in literacy between Malabar and other regions of Kerala widened over the years and continued well beyond the 1950s. However, after independence and creation of 'Aikya Keralam' (United Kerala), the situation of Malabar improved substantially in almost all the fields and it started catching up with the rest of Kerala.

The strong tradition of indigenous schools discussed earlier in the

4. To show that Malabar's position in education deteriorated at the beginning of the twentieth century a comparison with Travancore and Cochin becomes relevant especially because these two princely states stood at the top in the case of literacy among the Indian states at the beginning of the twentieth century.

section is likely to be a significant factor in the relatively high rates of schooling in late nineteenth century in Kerala in general and Malabar in particular. It is, in fact, this tradition that helped Kerala to be at the top in the case of literacy and primary schooling. A 'habit of schooling' among the people of Kerala was created due to these reasons and has been referred to by later commentators. (Jeffrey, 1992). Table 3 gives an idea of access to indigenous institution in Malabar in early nineteenth century. In 1873-74, there was only one elementary school in Malabar for every 6,6,44 inhabitants as per the report on public instruction in Madras Presidency (1873-74). It was this factor that contributed to the backwardness of Malabar in literacy and schooling at the beginning of the century. In Travancore there were 3,683 educational institutions providing one school per 792 persons and 1.9 square miles area and 119 schools per taluk of the state on an average. By 1900-01, primary schools in Travancore constituted 95.2 per cent of total schools and 83.7 per cent of the total students were going to primary schools. "In the neighbouring Madras Presidency (of which Malabar was a part)⁵, by the end of nineteenth century, primary schools constituted only 76 per cent of schools and primary school students constituted formed only 57.3 per cent of the total students population. (Tharakan, 1984 : 1913). Access to education in Travancore appears significantly better than Malabar in the case of literacy and schooling at the beginning of the twentieth century.

5. Bracket within the quote is added.

REGIONAL VARIATIONS WITHIN MALABAR

Within Malabar there were considerable variations in matter in literacy and schooling. North Malabar has higher literacy compared to South malabar and Ernad. Ernad is mentioned in the Malabar District Gazetteer (1908) as having an 'unenviable' distinction of being the most illiterate taluk in the district. Calicut is referred as a town having low position educationally among the town of the Presidency. Nevertheless, Calicut, Kottayam and Kurumbranad were included in the list of ten best educated regions of the Presidency. (GOI, 1908 : 281)

Wynaad was educationally the most backward region within Malabar district (Table 5). Over the three decades from 1901 to 1921 it did not show significant improvement in literacy. Ernad closely follows Wynaad. Kottayan, Calicut, Kurumbranad and Chirackal have comparatively better higher rates of literacy. There is no significant change in this trend over the years from 1901 to 1921 for which data are available.

In 1870s Ernad and Walluwanad taluks were officially recognised as backward regions by the district administration under the British. This was mainly because of the presence of socially and economically backward sections of the population such as Mappillas, Cherumars in these two taluks. In fact it was noted that "literacy varies in different parts of the

district in inverse ratio with the Mappilla and Cheruman population” (GOI, 1908 : 281). These two castes constitute more than 37 percent of the total population of Malabar district. It is significant that Palghat which did not have much Mappilla population also fared badly in the field of education and literacy. The reason for the educational backwardness of Palghat is not explained by the authors of the District Gazetteer (1908). However, this is probably a result of the presence of a higher proportion of Scheduled Castes and Tribes there. A look at the percentage of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes population in the present day modern districts of Kerala which formed the administrative divisions of Malabar district reveals that Palghat has the highest number of a total of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population⁶ (14.03 per cent). Moreover, Palghat is predominantly agriculture region and is one of the main rice growing areas. The number of agrestic slaves was high and this section did not have access to education. Similar to the variations within Malabar district, a pattern of variation in literacy and education across religions and castes within Malabar is also striking. The following section discusses the variations across religions and castes.

6. Palghat's 12.51 (Census 1971) is the highest percent age of Scheduled caste population in any district not only in Malabar but all over Kerala. Similarly, highest percentage of the total SC and ST population in Kerala is in Palghat.

VARIATIONS OF LITERACY AND SCHOOLING ACROSS RELIGIONS AND CASTES

Hindus constituted the majority of the population and in absolute numbers also majority of the literates were Hindus. Hindus constituted the highest proportion of the scholars in indigenous system. However, Muslims formed 30.5 per cent of the total number of students. Muslim population in Malabar was also 30 per cent. The educational situation of Muslims in indigenous institutions was very encouraging. However, it became bad in the later part of nineteenth century. The beginning of twentieth century witnessed very low level of literacy among the Muslims. Table 6 shows the rates of literacy among Hindus, Muslims, Christians and other religious sections. Christians have the highest proportion of literates to their total population. The high literacy among Christians is consistent for the three years available. 'Others' were also doing better than Hindus and Muslims.⁷ But they are far below the Christians and other in the percentage of literates. Percentage of Muslim literates to their population was the lowest. This pattern is consistent during the first three decades of twentieth century.

The following section tries to analyse the state of Mappilla education in Malabar.

7. Others include small number of Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, etc.

MAPPILLA EDUCATION IN MALABAR

Mappillas constitute one-third of Malabar's population and majority of Muslims in the region. After the Mappilla outbreak of 1894, the Mappillas of Ernad and Walluwanaad were officially recognised as backward castes. They were educationally and socially backward contributing to the general educational backwardness of Malabar. Education of Mappillas was seen as the most difficult problem which the educational authorities had to deal with in Malabar. (GOI, 1908 : 281). Religious reasons were said to be one of the reasons for indifference of Mappillas to secular education.

As discussed earlier Muslims in Malabar were the least developed section as far as literacy was concerned. Mappilla education and schooling were also treated as backward by the British. British policy towards Mappilla education had always been governed by the experience of a series of Mappilla outbreaks that occurred in 1836. "It has long been recognised that in the long run the best safeguard against the recurrence of Mappilla outbreaks will be the spread of education in the caste..." (GOI, 1908 : 282). Education and schooling of Mappilla children were hence given priority by the British. A plan was devised by the British authorities for improving the quality and content of the primary and basic education of Mappilla

children in 1871-72. Every mosque had a small school attached to it in Malabar. Education of Mappilla children was imparted here about which reference has been made in the section on the indigenous education. These were mainly institutions for religious instructions. This was mainly to add an element of elementary instruction in the vernacular to the religious teachings. 'Mullas' the teachers in these schools were offered small salaries and inducements for the above purpose. These were part of the salary grant schools discussed earlier. For the children a scheme of result implemented in 1871-72. According to that each child was to get grant on being successful at annual inspections. The inspectors were only Muslims and were appointed for this specific purpose. Grants to Mappilla schools had been paid from provincial funds from 1886 onwards. The distribution of these funds were left to the local boards and these local boards had to contribute a sum of not less than Rs.10,000/- towards education of Mappillas. Mappillas of Emad and Walluwanaad were officially recognised as backward castes and special incentives were given to them. The grant in aid given to them was 75.1 higher than the standard scale.

In spite of all these measures, the development of schooling was reported as slow among Mappillas. "The President of the District Board expressed his conviction that results were not commensurate with outlay" (GOI, 1908 : 282) in 1898, Mapiilla schools were reported as closed in

many parts of Malabar in spite of the measures mentioned above. (GOI, 1893-94 : 6). Table 7 shows that the percentage of Muhammedan student population in Malabar was consistently less than 15 per cent. The period between 1929 and 1940 shows a very marginal increase of 1.2 per cent in the percentage of scholars to the total. Muslim student population. The various reasons for the stagnant state of literacy and schooling are discussed later in the chapter. Similar variations among Hindus across castes are also seen in Malabar. The following section discusses variations of literacy and schooling across various castes.

CASTE AND LITERACY IN MALABAR

As discussed earlier in the section on indigenous education, the traditional system of education in Malabar did not give equal opportunities for all the sections of the people. As shown in the Table 3 at the beginning of the nineteenth century out of 14,155 students around 16 per cent were Brahmins (2,235 students). Sudras constituted 31 per cent of the total students. Sudras include the different clusters of Nairs and other castes lying between Brahmins. Vaisyas constitute only a limited number of total population in Malabar. So, the low percentage of Vaisya students' to the total student population (0.7 per cent) is not at all surprising. At the beginning of the twentieth century Brahmins, intermediary castes and Nairs were doing well in the schools as reported by the district gazetteer.

Parayans, Pulayans, Kuravans, Nayadis, Cherumars, Paniyans and Kuricchains have been registered as backward castes in Malabar at the beginning of the twentieth century. Of these Paniyans and Kuricchains were recognised as aboriginal and hill tribes. As admitted in the gazetteer (1908) very little was being done for the education of the backward castes. No school had been opened for the hill tribes. (GOI, 1908 : 282). In 1903-04 less than 2.5 per cent of Panchamas of school going age were under instruction. So far we have discussed the kind of schools in Malabar, regional variations in literacy and schooling and variations across religion and castes.

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN MALABAR — A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

In Chapter-III an attempt was made to understand the interplay of various factors. Education was backward in Malabar compared to other regions of Kerala, particularly Travancore. There is, however, need to explain the poor spread of girls' education in Malabar. This section is an attempt to explain the educational backwardness of Malabar as compared to Travancore. A number of reasons have been offered to explain this backwardness of Malabar.

THE STATE AND EDUCATION

The 'progressive policies of Travancore Royal family' in terms of their encouragement of vernacular education and primary schools. The 1817 Royal Rescript issued by the Rani of Travancore is considered as the most important landmark in the history of education of Travancore. (Tharakan, 1984 : 1917). This Rescript accepted the responsibility of giving assistance to village primary schools. This has been seen as a turning point in the educational history of Travancore because it decided to support primary education by making a shift in the earlier policy of supporting higher education. Thus vernacular mass education was promoted by the state through aiding primary schools. It was this fact of patronage that was wanting in the educational policy of Malabar. Nevertheless it should be remembered that Travancore's state policy of promoting higher education was also a response to popular protests against the neglect of village schools due to the growing inability to pay local teachers there. The Government agreed to pay for two teachers in each school, "one well versed in Malayalam and Astronomy and the other in Tamil and Arithmetic". (Tharakan, 1984 : 1918). The interest shown by the people of Travancore, to revitalize the village schools, through representations to their government was unique in itself. This interaction between the government and the inhabitants was lacking in Malabar.

British Policy statements in education reflected in the 'Woods Despatch of 1854' also included emphasis on primary education. However, Malabar (being a part of British India) in general lagged behind Travancore. The success of any policy lies in its effective implementation. The commitments and compulsions leading to the accomplishment of the policy statement were not there in Malabar as explained above and, the British rule was 'a rule from above' and not committed to the interests of the people. In Travancore, on the other hand, there was always a need to show the public that the Royal family was ruling 'for the people'. Further the difference in the nature of administration in Malabar which was under the 'imperial' British and Travancore which was a 'native state' under Provincial Administration is to be noted. In the event of commercialization of agricultural economy, the proverbial three R's. i.e. the ability to read and write in vernacular and arithmetic was enough in Travancore to secure a lower or middle level job in government. But proficiency in English and Secondary education were necessary for a job of the same grade in Malabar. This discouraged mass vernacular schools; but at the same time, did not promote English education in the same ratio. Since Macaulay's minutes of 1835, the emphasis in Malabar was on Western, English Education.

ECONOMY AND EDUCATION

An earlier section briefly discussed how Malabar economy was linked to the world market and how fluctuations in the prices of commodities in the world market were affecting the crop patterns in Malabar. Even the World Depression of the 1930s affected this region. "Depression had levelled these entrepreneurs and enforced a shift towards subsistence crops. By 1945 Malabar was in the grip of severe food shortage. These remarkable shifts highlight two seemingly contradictory trends within the agrarian economy. The first was the growth of a class of small, cultivators, premised on the availability of land and the high world prices of cash crops, like coconut and pepper. The second trend, heightened by Depression, was the increasing dependence of these cultivators on the large land owning tharavadus of the region both for subsistence as well as access land." (Menon, 1994 : 9). The colonial economy, thus, had a role in accentuating the friction in the relations between the landowners and tenants. This role of the agrarian economy in the Mappilla outbreaks and the friction between Mappillas and uppercaste Hindus has been emphasised by many authors.

The growing communal unrest must have had somewhere been influenced by the fact that majority of the landlords were upper caste Hindus.

But it has been argued that "... Small cultivators participated willingly, and to their profit.. Seen in this light Malabar does not seem to be an anomaly within the large south Indian economy, for which recent work suggests that the region should be seen as one characterised by independent market-oriented small farmers rather than of agrarian dependent under the sway of rural magnates." (Menon, 1994 : 22). The friction between Mappillas and upper caste Hindus were there even before the beginning of the century is reported by Logan and exploitation of suppression in economic terms were reported to be the reason too (Menon, 1994 : 22). But an explanation for this communal unrest and the unfriendly relation between the state and the Mappillas in terms of economic factors will be an understatement. That is precisely why an 'economic determinist' illustration of the educational backwardness of the different communities and Malabar cannot be given full acceptance. Economic reasons could have been ones of the reasons but could not be the only one.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN MALABAR

Lack of social demand for mass vernacular education in Malabar was partly due to the communal tension and social unrest prevailing in that region. The relation between the government and certain sections of the population was far from cordial communal tension was prevalent in

the area during the first half of the twentieth century. There was suspicion and hatred between religious sections, especially between Mappillas on one side and Nambutiris and Nairs on the other. The series of Mappilla rebellions during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (first of which was in 1836) alienated Mappillas who formed the major part of the population from the ruling British. As discussed in the earlier chapters, British policy towards the educational development Mappillas was aimed at pacifying them (GOI, 1908 : 284). Special measures were taken by the British for improving the state of Mappilla education. Discord between Hindus and Mappillas, two major sections of the population, did harm the educational interests of the Malabar region. The revolts of Mappillas had its origin from the existing power relations too. "As a community the Mappillas had enjoyed relatively favourable conditions under the Mysorean rule in the second half of the eighteenth century; but there was a reversal of the position on British take over of the district in the last decade of the century, and soon the Mappillas in the interior were in a general state of revolt" (Menon, 1989 : 25). After the murder of H.V. Conolly, Malabar district collector, the police-force was reorganised to deal with the problem. Mappillas were not ready to attend the schools where Hindu pupils were studying. It was mainly to substitute this opportunity of secular education that result bound grants-in-aid were introduced in schools associated with

mosques. But the sincerity of British authorities in this direction is questionable.

The first half of the twentieth century in Malabar has been characterised by communal tension and the revolt of 1921 had its immediate cause related to the national politics. The suspension of Khilafat and civil disobedience acted as catalyst for the furtherance of the tension. The policy of the British towards its war enemies influenced the pan-Islamic sentiments of the Mappillas. Sudden suspension of the Khilafat movement by the Congress must have had given a death blow to the popular belief that the British Raj was coming to its end. Also the short marriage of political convenience and expediency between Congress and Khilafat took up the cause of local agrarian inequalities also in Malabar. When the movement was withdrawn, Mappillas who formed the major parts of tenant population responded aggressively to the feeling of 'relative deprivation' which was already existing there.

REFORM MOVEMENTS

Reform movements which had a positive impact on the literacy and education of the masses in Kerala in general were mainly caste movements. However the impact varied from region to region due to reasons like the organizational strength of the movement in the region etc. Advancement

of Travancore in the field of literacy and primary education compared to Malabar was credited partly to these caste based reform movements which stressed the role of education for social mobility.

Izhavas, Pulayas, Nairs, Nambutiris and Nadars of South Travancore formed caste organizations to bring about social reforms from within. Though the manifest intentions of many of these organisations were to protest the caste inequality and to alter traditional institutions of family and inheritance in their forms, certain latent functions were also served in the form of progressive social changes. These reform movements gave impetus to the incoming legislations too.

The Izhava caste reform movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century led by Sri Narayana Guru was one of the most important reform movements in Kerala. It was the most sweeping mass movement that Travancore had known. The movement was called SNDP movement (Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam) after its most prominent leader and inspirer, Naryana Guru. Narayana Guru, Kumaran Asan and Dr. Palpu, the Izhava leaders of the movement gave importance to education of the members of the caste. As declared by Dr. Palpu in the SNDP meeting, they were to make sure that there was no man or woman left without primary education. (Ramachandran, 1995 : 108). Similarly Pulaya reform movements stress on education was also remarkable. Ayyankali, the leader

of the Pulayas in Travancore, gave same importance to the issue of access to schools as to the problem of untouchability and access to public roads. The story of Nairs burning down a government School in Travancore where Ayyankali tried to get admission for a Pulaya girl is widespread in Kerala. Ayyankali fought back by organizing a strike of agricultural labourers and upper castes had to finally yield to the demands of the Pulayas. Expansion of literacy rates among the agricultural workers of Travancore in the first few decades of the twentieth century was due to the spread of small literacy among these castes who constituted the agricultural workers. Nairs and Nambutiris also took up reform measures within their castes. Both these were highly placed in the caste hierarchy of Kerala having economic and power resources at their disposal. Reforms in Nair caste were at two broad levels. One was within the caste in relation to the social institutions of marriage, family and inheritance. The socio-economic changes taking place in the society was beyond their control and it necessitated and dissolution of the 'taravadus' which acted as the centres of production and activity. New developments in the agrarian economy and relations and the growth of a sector of government jobs were not fitting to the joint families of Nairs. Young generations came out as rebels against this and the emphasis naturally was on modern education. The second aspect of the reform was the protest against the caste hierarchy where, though were

privileged in many respects, they had to suffer at the hands of the Brahmins who considered Nairs as 'Sudras' in the vama hierarchy. Hegemony of the Nambutiris as challenged at the ritual level and socio-political sphere too. Thus the two broad levels of Nair reforms were connected and brought out a movement which was progressive' in some respects. Establishment of schools and colleges was an important step in this direction. This was an inevitable part of the power struggle aimed to break the hegemony of the Brahmins who were above them and to defend the existing favourable power equation vis-a-vis Izhavas and other lower castes who were growing assertive. Yet it contributed positively to the spread of literacy and primary education.

Nambutiri reform movements were spearheaded by the young within the caste who were protesting against the reactionary practices of the caste and the right to modern education. Rights of Nambutiri women were upheld by the youngmen of the caste and this itself necessitated a radical change in the marriage practices within the caste (see the second chapter). One important difference Nambutiri caste movement was having with the rest of the caste-reform movements was that of place of origin. All other caste movements had their centre of activity in South and Central Travancore. Nambutiri caste reform movement originated in Malabar and

also had close links with the awakening of the youth there. It was associated with the freedom movement.

There were reform movements among various communities of Christian also in Kerala. These reforms were linked with the missionary activities and a brief discussion on this would be done in the section on missionary activities. Muslim reform movements also started in Travancore and later spread to the Malabar region. In this reform movement, Travancore and Cochin led Malabar, on account of the spread of education in these areas earlier than Malabar (Kunju, 1989 : 151).

Similar to the caste movements, the Muslim reform movements also had an facet of protest against the existing social and economic power relations. They were also the voices against the orthodox ulemas who possessed the greatest obstacles against modern education. Vakkam Abdul Qadir Maulavi stood for the educational and cultural revival of the Muslims. He faced stiff opposition from the orthodox section of the Muslim community itself. The Islam Dharma Paripalana Sangham at Nilakkamukku, Hadiyyul-Islam Sangham of Pallippuram, Chirayinkizh Taluk Samajam and Lajnattul-Muhhamadiyah Alleppey were the important organizations that worked for the spread of education among Muslims in Travancore. Activities of reformers spread to Malabar also. Earliest of the reformers in Malabar was Chalilakatt

kunjahmad Haji at Vazhakkad. He emphasised the use of different tools of educational to help facilitate the spread of mass education. K.M. Maulavi is who was disciple of Kunjahmad Haji also worked for the spread of mass education. The two opposite interests represented by orthodox ulemas an oneside and the reformers on the other led to clashes, even physical conflicts. Nevertheless gradual spread of modern education resulted from this.

The policy measures undertaken by the British could not do away with the hatred developed by Mappillas as an aftermath of the suppression of 'Mappilla outbreaks'. It was this opinion that developed in them a deep hatred towards the English language and western education even though the British government made several efforts to educate the Mappillas (Ali, 1990 : 33). It was this hatred and opposition against modern education that was taken advantage by the ulemas who fought against the progressive sections who opted for the reform. However, this general opposition was existing towards vernacular education also. "The study of malayalam, their own native language, they designated as Aryanezhutt (language of Hindus) was treated as anathema' (Kunju, 1989 : 251). This must be one of the important reasons for the backwardness of vernacular education and literacy among them.

ROLE OF THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

First half of the nineteenth century witnessed the building up of the base of missionary institutions in Travancore. The second half of the century, on the other hand, saw the expansion and diversification of missionary educational activities in the region. (Tharakan, 1984 : 1923). The areas of activity for the missionaries, in the first half were mainly the education for the lower castes and women and technical training. The expansion of the missionary activity in the second half was facilitated by the grant-in-aid from the government. Here were conditions set by the government for the improvement and maintenance of the standard of the schools. Regular inspections were held in the village schools which received aid. Schools where religious curriculum was predominant were not given grants. There were two types of enterprises involved within the missionary activities - Protestant mission and Syrian Christian missions. It was the Protestant Mission that took bold initiatives for the education of the lower castes and women. Syrian Christian missions included both Catholic and non-Catholic missions. Catholic Syrian Christian missions were late comers in the field of education. Investment were made by the missions in the form of schools and this had the support of the establishment of the different denominations like Jacobite, Marthoma etc.

Contrary to this situation the only Protestant mission at work in Malabar

was the Basel German Evangelical Mission founded by Gundert. Gundert was the first Government Inspector of Schools for Malabar (GOI, 1908 : 284). Basel Missionaries were the pioneers of western education in Malabar and missions schools numbered fifty and education over 5000 pupils. Education upto fourth standard was compulsory for all children belonging to the mission. This was one of the reasons for the comparatively better position of the Christians in education in Malabar.

This chapter attempted to present the general state of literacy and schooling in Malabar at tried to analyse the social context existing at that period of time in history. Chapter IV will be dealing with girls' literacy and schooling in Malabar. The general trend which is discussed in the present chapter will be helpful to have an understanding of that topic

CHAPTER-IV

GIRLS' LITERACY AND SCHOOLING IN MALABAR

This chapter is an attempt to analyse the state of girls' literacy and schooling in Malabar in the context of the general trends in literacy in schooling discussed earlier. Both inter and intra-regional variations in girls' literacy and schooling are discussed.

Literacy rates of girls in Malabar from the late nineteenth century (table 2) definitely show a consistent rise except between 1891 and 1901. The comparison between Malabar, Travancore and Cochin testifies to the fact that until the beginning of the twentieth century Malabar was no way behind Travancore and Cochin in the case of literacy in general and female literacy in particular. Prior to 1900, female literacy rates in Malabar increased from 0.8 per cent in 1871 to 3.9 per cent in 1891. Travancore and Cochin had literacy rates of 3.5 and 5.6 respectively. Here Malabar had an edge over Travancore. However, from the beginning of the twentieth century onwards Malabar tends to lag behind the rest of Kerala in female literacy. The gap between the regions tends to subsequently widen and the rate of female literacy continues to be the lowest in Malabar. It is found that

the rate of increase in female literacy in the first decade of the twentieth century was 0.5 percent in Malabar while in Travancore the rate was 1.9 per cent and in the case of Cochin a remarkable 4 percent. Between 1911 and 1921, the rate of increase in female literacy was 1.4 per cent in Malabar. This decade bore witness to the significant progress of Travancore in female literacy. This progress was never challenged after that though 1931 showed slight decrease in female literacy as compared to the 1921 rate. The literacy lag sharpened between Travancore and Malabar and subsequently 1941 saw female literacy at 36.1 in Travancore. The rate of increase for the decade was more than double the rate of literacy of 1931 itself. In 1951 the difference between female rates of literacy of Malabar and Travancore was 16 per cent.

BRITISH POLICY TOWARDS GIRLS' SCHOOLING AND NATURE OF SCHOOLS IN MALABAR

British policy in Malabar was aimed to promote girls' schooling. A number of measures were taken by the British authorities in that direction. Several kinds of schools were established and these are discussed in chapter III. The grants-in-aid scheme adopted by the British in 1871-72 was specifically targeted to promote schooling of girls' also. As mentioned earlier two systems of schools were started — salary-grant schools and

result-grant schools. Salary-grant schools were those where teachers were paid grants in accordance with the number of girls who studied in the school and the general educational standard and quality of the school. Salary and grants of teachers were tied to these factors. In result-grant schools, girls were paid grants by the government and local boards. A minimum number of attendance was required for girls to sit for the examinations. Grants given to girls students depended on the results of these examinations. Only successful students were given the grants. Girls were given 'higher' grants as the part of a policy of positive discrimination in favour of girls' schooling. Schools for girls only were recommended to attract the students, especially from higher castes. Thus mixed schools and girls' schools used to admit girl students in Malabar. Schools for girls only were to be staffed with females.

British policy, as discussed above, was not very successful in attracting girl students in large numbers. The policy of giving higher grants for girls was not a sufficient incentive for parents to send their girls to schools. Flaws in the implementation of the official British educational policies could be observed. Implementation of these policies seemed to have been influenced by the consideration of economy of expenditure. British policy itself was guided by this consideration since 1906. Official policy, since 1906, was to encourage mixed schools due to constraints of the budget.

The revised grants-in-aid-code and educational rules prescribed in 1907 were aimed at this purpose. The rigid gender norms especially among upper castes did not favour co-education of both sexes at that period of time in history. Retention of girls in higher classes would, naturally, have been a problem.

REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN GIRLS' LITERACY AND SCHOOLING IN MALABAR

We have seen in the previous chapter that general rates of literacy varied between regions within Malabar district. The same trend is true of girls' literacy and schooling also. Table 5 shows the regional variations within Malabar from 1901 to 1921. Though the rate of female literacy is not very high in any of the regions, Wynaad has the lowest percentage of female literates in these three years. Over the years it shows a very marginal rate of increase which is not even one percent. Palghat comes as a close second to Wynaad. However, the two decade from 1901 to 1921 show some improvement in the rate of female literacy. Ernad is another region which shows very low level of female literacy. In the case of Ernad the rate of literacy shows a decline in the decade between 1901 and 1921 from 2 percent to 1.7 per cent. Calicut and Kottayam had the highest level of female literacy for all the three decades. Their position is almost consistent. Ponnani also had better females literacy rates compared

to many other regions. However, female literacy rates of the region were low in 1901. It had shown a consistent increase over the period of two decades.

Gender Disparity Ratio, as given in table 5, reveals that gender disparity was the highest in Wynaad in all the three decades as per the table. In the case of Palghat also gender disparity is quite high. Calicut, Ponnani etc. showed low gender disparity though female literacy is not very high there. Ernad, Walluwanad etc. also exhibit low level of gender disparity. However, in these regions the literacy level in general is very low. Walluwanad had significant improvement over the years and had comparatively better literacy rate of 23.1 per cent in 1921. These trends altogether point to the fact that backwardness of female literacy in these regions cannot be explained in terms of the general educational backwardness of the region alone. This may be only one factor contributing to the backwardness of female literacy. This clearly points out that there were other factors also working in the region leading to gender differentials in literacy and schooling.

SCHOOLING OF GIRLS—PROBLEMS OF ENROLMENT AND RETENTION IN MALABAR

Schooling of girls in Malabar used to receive special attention in

traditional indigenous system. Malabar was one of the two regions of British Presidency which had higher participation of female students. (Dharampal, 1983 : 36). Table 3 represents the state of girls' education in the first half of the nineteenth century. While a significant number of girls did attend these schools there was inequality in access to traditional education. Boys constituted majority of the students. With the decline of the indigenous institutions, girls' schooling received a set back. The western, English system of education could not successfully attract girls to schools. It is reported that only 520 girls were attending schools for girls' only in 1873-74. Malabar district was specially mentioned in the Report (1873-74) for the extensive demand for female education. The declining state of girls' education was taken note of by the authorities. "... and if timely effort be not made to supply efficient means of female education, we may soon have in Malabar that general disparity in the education of the two sexes which is deplored in the other parts of India". (GOI, 1873-74 : 40).

In 1902-03, there were 1695 girl students in schools for exclusively for whereas there were 46,771 boys at the primary stage in boys' schools. Similarly only 508 girls students were attending the three upper secondary schools for girls while 3557 boys were enrolled in upper secondary schools for boys. (GOI, 1915 : 59). Table 8 shows the number of girls in Indian schools (public and private) under instruction and girls in public elementary

schools in Malabar for over two decades. The total percentage of girls in public elementary schools to female population in 1922 was 3 percent. It increased to 5.2 percent in 1927 and 9.1 percent in 1937. In 1941, 10 percent of the female population was in public elementary schools. Over a period of twenty years, the increase in the percentage of girls in schools was only 7 per cent. Similar trend was visible for the increase in the percentage of girls scholars in all Indian schools. Over the years from 1922 to 1941, the percentage of female population in Indian schools was only 6.5 per cent. In 1941 10.3 percent of the female population was in Indian schools. What also emerges is that the overwhelming majority of girls were at the elementary school level only. For example in 1922, 87 per cent of the total girl scholars in Indian schools were in public elementary schools only. In 1929, this had increased to 92 per cent. That is, of the total 113970 girls going to Indian schools (both public and private) 105,077 were attending public elementary schools. Similarly 96 percent of the total girl students were going to elementary schools in 1940. This shows that retention of girls in schools was a major problem.

Official Reports on Public Instruction did acknowledge that a relatively larger proportion of girls were attending lower classes and that could not be maintained in higher classes. (GOI, 1906-12 : 49). In other words transition of girls from elementary to higher stages of schooling was extremely low.

RELIGION, CASTE AND SCHOOLING OF GIRLS

Malabar had a tradition of girls' education which has been referred to in Reports on Public Instructions upto late nineteenth century. Indigenous educational institutions and private tutors were the main agencies of girls' schooling in the early half of the nineteenth century. Gender disparity was quite significant during that period also (Table 3). Gender disparity was the highest among the Brahmins followed by castes other than Brahmins, Vaisyas and Sudras. Gender disparity was comparatively less among Sudras. Among the Muslims gender disparity was comparatively low. In Malabar schooling of Muslim girls was in a comparatively better state. Malabar and Salem were the two districts in the Presidency which allowed education of Muslim girls freely at that point of time. "The proportion of Muslim girls to Muslim boys in schools being at 35.1 per cent is astonishing. Even among the Vaisyas, Sudras and other castes in Malabar, the proportion of girls to boys was fairly high at 15.5 per cent, 19.1 per cent and 12.4 percent respectively; the proportion of the totals being 18.3 percent". (Dharampal, 1983 : 35-36).

A decline in the schooling of girls, visible in the first half of the twentieth century, has already been highlighted. Gender disparity among the Muslims widened over the years as shown by table 7. Percentage of female scholars to the population of Muslims was almost half of the percentage of male

scholars to Muslim population in 1940. Total number of Panchama female scholars in 1907 was 138. The total number of females students was 20,380 and the percentage was a mere 0.7 percent. Percentage of boys was also not very high (5.2 per cent). Backwardness of female education among Panchamas was partly due to the general educational backwardness.

An earlier section discussed the state of female literacy and schooling in Malabar. Backwardness of girls' education was partly due to the backwardness of education in general in Malabar. Nevertheless certain factors which were gender-specific operated exclusively as constraints on girls' education. A number of factors appear to be responsible for the drop-out of girl students and poor enrolment ratios in higher classes. Most important reasons seem to be the influence of traditional gender norms and customs that defined women's roles and constrained their mobility. Traditional social institutions in Malabar were not flexible enough to allow girls to attend schools after a certain age. Practices of purdah, early marriage etc. were some of the obstacles which prevented girls from attending schools. Pre-puberty marriages and female seclusion were frequent in the case of Brahmins and Muslims as discussed in Chapter -II.

Female education was also not linked with employment opportunities and the economy of the region. Role of woman was limited as housewife

and mother even among most liberal groups. There were a limited number of female teachers. But going out to work by women was not socially respected and most of the women went to work due to their bad economic conditions. Non-availability of female staff in girls' school was treated by the Reports on Public Instruction in Madras Presidency as one of the important reasons for the dropping of girl students in higher standards. "The smallness of the number of women teachers available has led to men being freely employed even in Government Schools". (GOI, 1906-12 : 49). The inhibition and suspicion of parents of girls, especially higher caste girls, towards the schools opened by the British could have been one reason. Schools opened by the missionaries were looked at with suspicion by the parents of girl students. But education of boys was not affected by this suspicious attitude of parents.

CHAPTER-V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The discussion thus far highlighted the educational backwardness of Malabar in terms of literacy and schooling in general and that of girls in particular in the first half of the twentieth century. We have seen in the first chapter how mainstream sociology and sociology of education look at gender. Neither of them has given adequate attention to the aspect of gender. Sociology of education in India remained mainly under the influence of liberal ideology. It had been concerned with equality of opportunity in schooling for different sections of Indian society. Equality of outcome was not a matter of concern for them for quite long. Present day sociology of education, however, gives importance to equality of access and outcome. This shows a broadening in the understanding of the social reality on the part of the theorists.

The social and economic structure and gender relations of Malabar have to be understood before analysing the trends in schooling. These structures facilitate or constrain the development of education in a region. Traditional social stratification on the basis of caste was the rule in Malabar as far as Hindus were concerned. Hindus formed the majority of the

population. Muslims were one-third of the total population. Apart from them, Christians, Jains, Buddhists and Parsis also were there. Gender relations were rigid in Malabar though early commentators talked about greater autonomy of women. Norms of seclusion and purdah existed among Brahmins and Muslims. They too had a role in delimiting girls' schooling.

Chapter III deals with the nature of schools, British initiatives in educational policy and trends in enrolment ratios in Malabar. General educational backwardness was existing in Malabar compared to other regions of Kerala. These are explained by various factors like state intervention and popular demand for education, role of missionaries etc. All these developments came earlier in Travancore and Cochin when compared to Malabar. These could be assumed as some of the reasons for the progress of Travancore in education in contrast to the backwardness of Malabar. Analysis of girls' literacy and schooling is in the larger context of understanding of the general trends in education. There are certain gender-specific factors too which constrained girls' education. This kept girls' schooling and literacy at a lower level in Malabar.

The backwardness of girls' education was, only in a general sense, part of the general educational backwardness of Malabar. Literacy levels and enrolment ratios in general were low and level of girls' schooling and

literacy even lower. However, the lag in female literacy and schooling suggests that there were other factors also which made female literacy rates lower. An equal treatment of girls and boys in the case of schooling was not present in Malabar. This was the situation from the beginning of the twentieth century though the situation was better in nineteenth century. In fact in the later half of the nineteenth century Malabar was officially praised in various Reports in Public Instruction in Madras Presidency for its distinctiveness as a region with an orientation towards literacy and education. This was attributed to the sociological differentiation of Malabar with other parts of the Presidency. The greater freedom and autonomy given to women, lack of institutional opposition to literacy and education etc. were treated as the differences this region was having with other parts of the Presidency. The same region was seen as educationally backward later in history in the early twentieth century. The importance of understanding the social context of the region and historical factors becomes obvious here.

The earlier discussions suggests that it was not the case of Malabar going backward but also of other regions marching forward due to various factors that existed in favour of the educational development of these regions. As already shown, the years which marked the beginning of the twentieth century showed that Malabar witnessed minimum changes in its

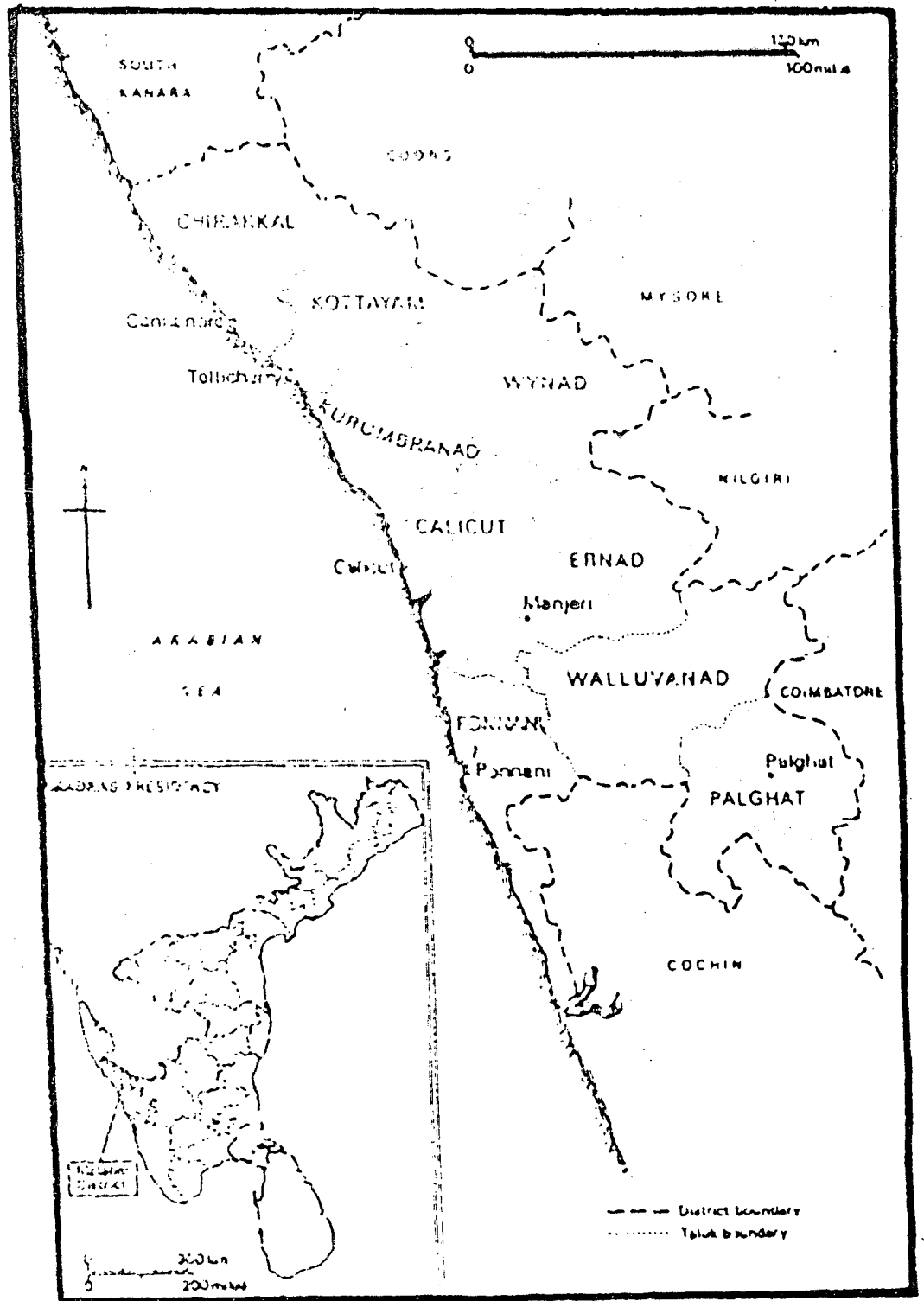
favour in the educational situation while Travancore and Cochin had maximum positive changes in educational situation due to the factors already discussed. For instance the dismal performance of Malabar in contrast to that of Travancore in the case of schooling in general and girls' schooling in particular in the first half of the twentieth century ascertain the role of public participation in the development of a region, strong social demand which is manifested in the form of public participation is the basic force which moves any society to modernity and development. Popular demand activities various agencies of government and in turn motivates people in general to work for the betterment of its own lot. This popular demand was conspicuously and painfully absent in Malabar. This can appear in the form of social and caste reform movements, based on various ideology etc. In Travancore and Cochin, these type of movements appeared earlier compared to Malabar which forced a favourable government policy and reform movements from within.

State policy and implementation can be fruitful only with active cooperation from the public. At the sometime state policy should be people-oriented and should be in accordance with the demands of the people. Imposed policies by the government will not be accepted easily by the people. Moreover the social development of a region should be connected to the structural conditions existing in the region. British policies on education

and schooling were not linked to structural problems of Malabar like unhealthy land relations, lack of awareness of population in favour of development, absence of linkage between education and employment opportunities etc.

Liberal optimism coupled with a framework to understand the interplay of economy in the society is essential in understanding the problem of girls' schooling in a region. Disguised role of patriarchy working at every level of human consciousness — both female and male — is to be properly understood while locating it in the local context of the region under study. Only a framework which accommodates all these factors in it will understand the social context of girls' education of any region.

APPENDICES



Map of Malabar District administrative divisions

TABLE 1
Literacy rates and Primary Education* by Gender in Selected States of India

States	Literacy Rates		Primary Education	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Rajasthan	20.0	55.0	15.6	41.8
Bihar	23.0	52.0	17.4	42.9
Uttar Pradesh	25.0	56.0	21.4	47.3
Madhya Pradesh	29.0	58.0	21.0	44.6
Kerala	86.2	89.0	60.5	65.8

Source : Dreze and Sen (1995) and Manorama Year Book (1997)

* Proportion of persons aged '6' and above who have completed primary education in 1992-93 (percentages).

TABLE 2
Rates of Literacy (Male and Female) and Gender Disparity Ratio* in the Three Regions of Kerala and India, 1871-1981.

Year	Persons (Total)				Males				Females				Gender Disparity Ratio			
	T**	C	M	I	T	C	M	I	T	C	M	I	T	C	M	I
1871	n/a	n/a	5.3	-	n/a	n/a	9.7	-	n/a	n/a	0.8	-	n/a	n/a	0.08	-
1881	n/a	-	10	-	n/a	-	17.6	6.6	n/a	-	2.5	0.4	n/a	-	0.14	0.06
1891	13.4	n/a	12.9	5.8	23.1	30.5	22	8.7	3.5	5.6	3.9	0.5	0.15	0.18	0.18	0.05
1901	12.4	13.4	-	5.3	21.5	21.5	17.2	9.8	3.1	3.1	3	0.7	0.14	0.14	0.17	0.07
1911	15	15.1	11.1	5.9	24.8	24.3	19	10.6	5	6.1	3.5	1.1	0.02	0.25	0.23	0.10
1921	24.2	18.5	12.7	7.1	33.1	27.3	20.9	13.4	15.0	9.9	4.9	1.9	0.05	0.36	0.28	0.14
1931	23.9	28.2	14.4	9.5	33.8	38.3	22.9	15.6	13.9	18.5	6.4	2.4	0.41	0.48	0.28	0.15
1941	47.2	43.7	n/a	15.1	58.2	55.5	n/a	-	36.1	32.5	n/a	6.9	0.62	0.59	n/a	-
1951	46.7	43.3	31.3	16.6	55.6	52.2	41.3	25	37.7	34.7	21.7	12.9	0.68	0.66	0.53	0.52
1961	52.1	49.6	38.9	24	59.3	56.6	48.8	34.3	45.3	42.8	29.4	12.9	0.76	0.76	0.60	0.38
1971	66.3	63.6	52.1	29.5	71.4	68.5	60.3	39.5	61.3	58.7	44.2	18.7	0.86	0.86	0.73	0.47
1981	74.8	75.2	63.5	36.2	78.7	79.1	69.8	46.7	71	71.5	57.4	24.9	0.09	0.90	0.82	0.53

Source : V.K. Ramachandran (1995)

Percentage of female literates

* GDR = $\frac{\text{Percentage of female literates}}{\text{Percentage of male literates}}$. When GDR is lower, gender disparity is higher and vice versa.

** T, C, M and I stand for Travancore, Cochin, Malabar and India respectively

TABLE 3
Castewise Representation of School Going Students in Early
Nineteenth Century in Malabar.

Name of the Groups	Total No. of Students	Girls	Boys	Gender Disparity Ratio
Brahmins	2,235 (15.79)*	5	2,230	0.002
Vaisyas	97 (0.69)	13	84	0.15
Sudras	4,404 (31.11)	707	3,697	0.19
Other Castes	3,099 (21.9)	343	2,756	0.12
Muslims	4,318 (30.5)	1,122	3,196	0.35
Total	14,153 (100)	2,190	11,963	0.18

Source : Dharampal, The Beautiful Tree Indigenous Indian Education in the Eighteenth Century.

* The figures in brackets show the percentage to the total number of students.

TABLE 4
**Fluctuations in the Number of Closed Lower Class Schools in late
Nineteenth Century.**

Year	Indigenous	Others	Total
1872-73	26	3	29
1873-74	59	6	65

Source : Report on Public Instructions in Madras Presidency, 1873-74.

TABLE 5
Variations of Literacy (Male and Female) within Malabar, 1901-21.

Name of the Regions	1901				1911				1921			
	Percentage of Literates			Gender* Disparity Ratio	Percentage of Literates			Gender Disparity Ratio	Percentage of Literates			Gender Disparity Ratio
	M**	F	T		M	F	T		M	F	T	
Calicut Division***												
Calicut	21.9	4.4	26.3	0.20	23.6	4.9	28.5	0.21	27.8	7.1	34.9	0.26
Kurumbranad	20.8	3.2	24.0	0.15	23.9	3.8	27.7	0.16	24.4	4.5	28.9	0.18
Malappuram Division												
Ernad	10.8	2.0	12.8	0.19	11.1	1.7	12.8	0.15	12.7	2.5	15.2	0.20
Walluwanad	14.7	2.9	17.6	0.20	17.2	3.6	20.8	0.21	18.3	4.8	23.1	0.26
Palghat Division												
Palghat	17.8	1.9	19.7	0.11	18.9	2.7	21.6	0.14	20.1	4.6	24.7	0.23
Ponnani	15.7	3.4	19.1	0.22	15.7	3.1	18.8	0.20	17.9	5.0	22.9	0.28
Tellicherry Division												
Chirakkal	18.3	2.7	21.0	0.15	22.2	3.9	26.1	0.18	26.5	5.7	32.2	0.22
Kottayam	23.0	4.3	27.3	0.19	27.8	5.6	33.4	0.20	29.6	7.3	36.9	0.25
Wynaad Division												
Wynaad	10.4	1.0	11.4	0.10	10.9	1.1	12.0	0.10	14.5	1.8	16.3	0.12

Source : Malabar District Gazetteer 1908 and Statistical Appendices for Malabar District Gazetteers 1915 and 1933.

Percentage of female literates

* GDR = $\frac{\text{Percentage of female literates}}{\text{Percentage of male literates}}$. When GDR is lower, gender disparity is higher and vice versa.

Percentage of male literates

** M, F and T stand for Males, Females and Total respectively.

*** The division is given according to the 1933 Gazetteer.

TABLE 6
Caste-wise Distribution of Literacy in Malabar, 1901-21

Name of the Groups	1901					1911					1921				
	Percentage of Literates			Gender Disparity Ratio	Percentage of Literates			Gender Disparity Ratio	Percentage of Literates			Gender Disparity Ratio			
	M**	F	T		M	F	T		M	F	T				
Hindus	22543 (80.24)***	20.3	3.7	24.0	0.18	262475 (79.43)	22.2	4.4	26.6	0.20	310610 (78.68)	24.7	6.3	31.0	0.26
Muslims	40546 (14.43)	9.2	0.4	9.6	0.04	54779 (16.37)	11.0	0.5	11.5	0.045	62385 (15.80)	11.9	0.7	12.6	0.06
Christians (5.25)	14755	37.6	19.6	57.2	0.52 (5.13)	17174	41.7	22.9	64.6	0.55 (5.46)	21561	45.1	29.3	74.4	0.65
Others****	200 (0.07)	21.7	7.6	29.3	0.35	229 (0.07)	52.8	16.1	68.9	0.30	209 (0.05)	51.6	23.4	75.0	0.45
Total	280954 (100)					334657 (100)					394765 (100)				
Average	-	22.2	7.83	30.03	0.35	-	31.9	11.0	42.9	0.34	-	33.3	14.93	25	0.36

Source : Malabar District Gazetteer 1908 and Statistical Appendices for Malabar District Gazetteers 1915 and 1933.

* GDR = $\frac{\text{Percentage of female literates}}{\text{Percentage of male literates}}$. When GDR is lower, gender disparity is higher and vice versa.

** M, F and T stand for Males, Females and Total respectively.

*** Figures in Brackets are the percentages of literates to total number of literates.

**** Others include Buddhists, Jains and Parsis.

TABLE 7
Distribution of Muhammedan* Pupils (Public and Private) in All
Schools in Malabar in the First Half of the Twentieth Century

Year	Muhammedan Population**			Muhammedan Scholars			Gender Disparity Ratio
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	
1929	496,553	507,774	1,004,327	85052 (17.3)***	36055 (7.1)	121,107 (12.1)	0.41
1937	569,032	594,421	1,163,453	98,274 (17.3)	49,948 (8.2)	147,230 (12.8)	0.47
1938	569,032	594,421	1,163,453	100,084 (17.8)	50,376 (8.5)	150,460 (13.1)	0.48
1939	569,032	594,421	1,163,453	100,140 (17.6)	51,189 (8.6)	151,329 (13.1)	0.49
1940	569,032	594,421	1,163,453	100,647 (17.7)	53,391 (9.0)	154,038 (13.3)	0.51

Source : Reports on Public Instructions in Madras Presidency 1922-40.

* Muhammedans include Mappillas, Rawthers and Labbais

** Population for 1929 is as per 1921 census and the rest is given according to Census of 1931.

*** Figures in brackets represent the percentages to the Muhammedan population.

TABLE 8
Girl Scholars in Indian Schools (Public and Private) under
Instruction and Girls in Public Elementary Schools in Malabar

Year	Female Population*	Girls Scholars in Indian School**	Girls in Public Elementary Schools
1922	1,588,139	55,310 (3.5)***	48,126 (3.0)
1927	1,588,139	90,683 (5.7)	82,673 (5.2)
1928	1,588,139	101,644 (6.4)	93,742 (5.9)
1929	1,588,139	113,970 (7.2)	105,077 (6.6)
1937	1,817,806	174,205 (9.6)	1,66,195 (9.1)
1938	1,817,806	177,815 (9.8)	170,343 (9.4)
1939	1,817,806	184,046 (10.1)	176,935 (9.7)
1940	1,817,806	192,475 (10.6)	185,175 (10.2)
1941	1,817,806	190,087 (10.3)	182,415 (10.0)

Source : Reports on Public Instructions in Madras Presidency, 1922-41.

* Female population for the years 1922-29 is according to census of 1921 and the rest is as per 1931 census.

** Indian schools here include both private and public schools.

*** Figures in brackets represent the percentages to the total female population.

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