

**ROLE OF ACADEMIC BODIES  
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES IN THE  
UNIVERSITIES IN KERALA**

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CERTIFICATE

Certified that the thesis entitled "ROLE OF ACADEMIC BODIES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES IN THE UNIVERSITIES IN KERALA" is the record of bona fide research carried out by Smt. R. Sushama under my guidance. The thesis is worth submitting for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy under the Faculty of Social Sciences.



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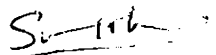
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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is the record of bona fide research carried out by me under the guidance of Prof.P.Ramachandra Poduval, Director, School of Management Studies, Cochin University of Science and Technology. I further declare that this thesis has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship or other similar title of recognition.

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

Education is an important agent for the social, economic, political and industrial development of a country. "Education within any society must be considered as a unified whole, its parts in balance and the balance in turn reflecting society's requirements and the resources available to meet them".<sup>1</sup> Being at the apex of the educational pyramid, higher education has a key role to play not only for academic pursuit and augmentation of knowledge, but also for national development. It contributes to national development through dissemination of specialised knowledge and skills. The efficient functioning of the system of higher education is vital for the progress of the country. Without good institutions of higher education, the country will not have effective, efficient and well-equipped manpower required for the progress of the country.

The panorama of Indian higher education from ancient time spreads over more than two millennia. Over the years, the growth of higher education, involving qualitative as well as quantitative changes, has been

complex.<sup>2</sup> Rich tradition of learning, predominantly religious in character was the main feature of ancient educational system in India. The education was Brahminical and Buddhist. Takshashila, Nalanda and Vikramshila were famous centres of education in North India and Ghatikas, Buddhist Viharas and Jaina Pathas in South India.

In the mediaeval period, together with many social and cultural changes that were effected, a large number of educational centres also were started. Together with Pathsalas, Madrassas also came into being and emerged as centres of higher learning which produced scholars of excellence in almost all branches of contemporary science.

The education system in India had a major structural change in its shape, size and content during the colonial period. The first three universities came into being at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras during this period and higher education was greatly influenced by the British education system. The main focus of the system was to create a class of educated Indians who could act as interpreters of the British people with the millions of Indians to help them govern India effectively.

The system of higher education underwent rapid development in the post-independent era. When the first Five Year Plan was launched in the year 1950-51, there were in India only 28 universities, 695 colleges and 174,000 students. Today there are more than 200 universities, more than 7000 colleges and nearly five million students. In spite of this already large size, the system is still expanding year after year with about 200 colleges being started every year.<sup>3</sup>

The system of higher education in India is one of the largest in the world. Every eighth student enrolled for higher education on the globe is an Indian. The absolute size of enrolment of Indian higher education may be gauged from the fact that it accounted in the early years of the eighties for about 43% of the total enrolment in the developing countries.<sup>4</sup> Since independence, there has been a rapid expansion in enrolment in the country. Both Central and State governments initiated several measures not only to enlarge the base of higher education, but also to remove in-built deficiencies and inadequacies in the educational system which was inherited from the colonial period. The rapid expansion in enrolment of students for higher education during the last twelve year from 1980-1992 is given in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1

## Higher Education: Total Enrolment in India

Year	Enrolment
1980-81	27,52,437
1981-82	29,52,006
1982-83	31,33,093
1983-84	33,07,649
1984-85	34,04,096
1985-86	36,05,029
1986-87	37,54,409
1987-88	39,10,829
1988-89	40,74,676
1989-90	42,46,878
1990-91	44,25,247
1991-92	46,11,107

Source: UGC Annual Report 1991-92, New Delhi.

With the great increase in student enrolment, the unplanned proliferation of institutions of higher learning also occurred simultaneously in the country. This is illustrated by the statistics given in the report of the

Task Force on Higher Education, appointed by the U.G.C. in July 1992.<sup>5</sup> The number of universities in 1985-86 was 149 which rose to 176 in 1990-91. The number of colleges went up from 5,816 to 7,121 and the enrolment of students from about 36 lakhs to over 44 lakhs during the same period.

It has been observed by several educationists and academicians that though the number of higher educational institutions have increased by leaps and bounds, the quantitative expansion has been accompanied by qualitative deterioration and the standards have declined enormously. It is generally complained that when compared to standards in advanced countries, Indian standards seem to be much lower. The low and poor efficiency of the system of Indian higher education system is borne out by the fact that most of the products of the system are not absorbed into the agencies where educated manpower is required. The products of the system, it is said, are not equal in quality and competence to the turnouts of the system of higher education in developed countries. The Policy Frame of the University Grants Commission highlights the major weaknesses of the Indian education system in the following words:<sup>6</sup>

"It still continues to be dominated by models and value systems adopted during the colonial regime. It

places an almost exclusive emphasis on the formal school (with its single-point entry, annual sequential promotions, insistence on full-time attendance and almost exclusive use of full-time teachers) and neglects both non-formal and recurrent education. The system is a gigantic monolith, very difficult to move or change; and in spite of its achievements, which are by no means inconsiderable, it has proved itself to be inadequate to meet our national needs and aspirations". Adverse comments on the system of higher education in our country are not only about qualitative deterioration, but also about uneasy campuses, excessive politicisation, non-teacher like teachers, lack of credibility of examinations, inadequate facilities in the institutions, socially irrelevant courses and the like.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN KERALA

The earliest known places of learning in Kerala, as in many other parts of the country, were expressions of a religious culture. The educational institutions of those times were 'Kudipallikudams' (elementary schools), 'Kalaries' (physical and military training schools) and 'Pathsalas' (vedic schools). Kudipallikudams were of Buddhist origin, Kalaries carried on a Dravidian tradition



and Pathshalas were Brahmanical.<sup>7</sup> Higher education was imparted in separate institutions called 'Salais' in South Kerala and 'Subh Matts' or Temple Universities in Central and North Kerala. These seats of higher learning came into existence in the 9th Century A.D under the patronage of the King. They were residential institutions in the nature of Gurukulas.<sup>8</sup> Education was imparted only to Namboodiri youths in these institutions. Subh Matts conducted examinations and awarded degrees. Candidates were required to submit a thesis or present themselves before scholars and prove their proficiency in learning. Seminars were held regularly in temple precincts and scholars from different places gathered at these places of learning and exhibited their learning and skill in debate and were granted formal recognition or other honours and titles. Eminent scholars were awarded the degree of Bhattathiri. These centres of higher learning resembled the famous universities in North India like 'Nalanda' and 'Takshasila', in many aspects.<sup>9</sup>

Protestant missionaries from Europe who settled in various parts of Travancore and Cochin in the early nineteenth century laid the foundation for modern higher

education in Kerala. The Governments in these two states, were run by the British Residents who encouraged missionary activities. The missionaries opened English schools in Nagercoil (now in Tamil Nadu), Quilon, Alleppey and Kottayam in Travancore and in Ernakulam and Trichur in Cochin. These schools got the approval of the University of Madras to present candidates for the Matriculation examination and in due course they developed into colleges affiliated to the University of Madras. In 1818, Rev. Mead founded the Nagercoil Seminary which was the first institution in Travancore to start regular English education. This later grew into a first grade college. In 1816, the Syrians established a college at Kottayam. In 1834, H.H. Swathi Thirunal, the then Maharaja of Travancore took the initiative to start an English school at Trivandrum, which was later raised to a college, the Maharaja's College, affiliated to the University of Madras. This period witnessed a few efforts made by the Government to promote vernacular education. A few government vernacular schools were started with the objective of creating a cadre of clerks and accountants for service in the various government departments of these states.<sup>10</sup>

In Cochin, English education had a starting in 1818, when the missionaries started a school in Mattanchery. The Maharaja's School started in 1845 became a college in 1875. English schools were being started in the Malabar area also in this period, which later developed into colleges. The Brennen high school started in 1862 became a college in 1890. The Government Victoria College was also started as a school in 1816. It developed into a college in 1838. H.H. Sir, P.K.Manavikrama Maharaja Bahadur, Zamorin of Calicut also started a school in 1877. This was converted into the Zamorin's College in 1888.

The first university in the princely state of Travancore was the University of Travancore which was established under an Act promulgated by H.H. the Maharaja of Travancore, Sir Bala Rama Varma, in 1937. Three committees had been set up earlier, in 1919, 1923 and 1932 to look into the feasibility of establishing a university in the State. The chief aims of the university were to effect a reorganisation of the system of technical and technological education in the State, to make more systematic provision for furtherance of original research in the various branches of applied science and for the promotion of Malayalam literature, Kerala art and

culture.<sup>11</sup> The Maharaja was the first Chancellor and Sir C.P.Ramaswamy Iyer, Dewan of Travancore, the Vice-Chancellor. Ten colleges which were formerly affiliated to the University of Madras transferred their affiliation to the Travancore University. In the year 1939, the Government transferred to the University additional control of all the government colleges thitherto managed by the Director of Public Instruction. In 1949, after the merger of the princely states of Cochin and Travancore, the colleges in Cochin which were affiliated to the University of Madras also came under the University of Travancore.

The Kerala state was formed on November 1, 1956 by merging the princely states of Travancore and Cochin and the Malabar region of the former Madras Presidency. The University of Travancore was reconstituted into a teaching, affiliating and federal university for the whole State and renamed as the University of Kerala under the Kerala University Act of 1957. The main objectives of the university were to provide for conservation, promotion and development of Kerala art and culture and for the gradual change of the medium of instruction into Malayalam in all educational institutions of the State and to provide for greater facilities for post-graduate studies and research

in different parts of the State.<sup>12</sup> Nineteen institutions were transferred back to the Government and the University functioned with affiliated colleges and teaching departments without constituent colleges. The administrative control of the Government colleges were brought under the Directorate of Collegiate Education in 1957.<sup>13</sup> The Kerala University Act 1969 replaced the Act of 1957. With a view to provide more representation to students from the southern districts of Kerala, in academic and administrative bodies of the University, the Kerala University Act 1974 replaced the Act of 1969.

By 1968, the University of Kerala had become one of the largest institutions in the country with about 149 affiliated colleges. To provide for urgent development of higher education in the northern districts of the State, the University of Calicut was established by Ordinance No.5/68 of Government of Kerala, ratified by Act 24/1968 of the Kerala Legislature. This Act was replaced by Act 5 of 1975. The University of Calicut took over from the University of Kerala all the affiliated colleges in the six northern districts of Kerala, Cannanore, Kozhikode, Malappuram, Palghat and Trichur. The chief aim of

the university was the reorganisation of the system of education in the State for the development of technical and technological education and research in applied sciences and for the promotion of Kerala art and culture and for the upliftment of higher education in the comparatively poorly developed regions of the northern districts of Kerala.<sup>14</sup>

In the year 1971, the Kerala Agricultural University was established under the Kerala Agricultural University Act 1971 with the aim of furthering agricultural education, research and extension in the State. The university began in 1972 with 2 constituent colleges and 21 research stations transferred from the Department of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry of the State Government.

Another university started in the year 1971 was the University of Cochin, established by the Cochin University Act 1971. This university, started as a federal type university, originally comprised the teaching departments of the University of Kerala located at Ernakulam. The University laid major emphasis on postgraduate studies and research in applied science,

commerce, industry and technology. This university was reorganised as the Cochin University of Science and Technology under Act 31 of 1986. The university has the main objective of promoting study and research in the applied sciences, technology, industry, commerce, management and social sciences that are relevant to the changing needs of the society. The territorial jurisdiction extends to the whole State of Kerala.<sup>15</sup>

By bifurcating the University of Kerala, another university named the Gandhiji University was established in 1983 by the Gandhiji University Act (Act 12 of 1985). This teaching and affiliating university was founded in order to provide for the urgent development of higher education in the areas comprised in the revenue districts of Kottayam, Ernakulam and Idukki and the Kozhencherry, Mallappally, Thiruvalla and Ranni Taluks of the Pathanamthitta revenue district of the State.<sup>16</sup> The Gandhiji University was renamed as the Mahatma Gandhi University by the Mahatma Gandhi University Act 1985.

Another university was started in the State in 1993 at Kalady, the birth place of Jagat Guru

Sankaracharya. This university, named the Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, was established by Act 5 of 1994. The main objective of the University is the study of Ancient Sanskrit Literature and Modern Indian Languages.

Although among all the States of Republic of India, Kerala has the highest literacy percentage, the number of the universities in the State is very small. And in a state where a good number of the students who pass the S.S.L.C. examination automatically opt to continue their studies for the pre-degree course, either by joining the affiliated colleges or by private registration, the need for establishing more universities of the conventional pattern or with a vocational bias does not have to be over-emphasised.

It is an accepted fact, that it is the Malabar region of the State, which earlier was part of the former Madras Presidency that does not have enough facilities for higher education. There is only one university now, the University of Calicut, to cater to the needs of the region. Considering various aspects of the desirability of



establishing one more university in the State, the Government of Kerala has taken the preliminary steps already by constituting a task force of educational experts to study the feasibility of starting a university in one of the northern districts of the State, preferably Cannannore, without much delay.

### Higher Education System in Kerala

The development of higher education in the State of Kerala which was at a slow pace till the late fifties gathered momentum during the sixties.<sup>17</sup> There has been a steady increase in the number of Arts and Science colleges in the State with the massive enrolment of students from the Third Five Year Plan onwards. Table 1.2 shows the growth in the number of Arts and Science colleges and enrolment of students in the State of Kerala for the period 1956-57 to 1991-92.

It is seen that at the time of the formation of the Kerala state in 1956, there were only 32 colleges with an enrolment of 26,402 students. But during the past 30 years, the increase in enrolment has become sixfold with the number of colleges increasing to 173 during 1991-92.

Table 1.2

Kerala: Growth in the Number of Arts and Science  
Colleges and Enrolment, 1956-57 to 1991-92

Year	No. of Colleges	Enrolment
1956-57	32	26,402
1961-62	47	41,739
1966-67	100	1,12,485
1971-72	117	1,59,216
1976-77	130	1,76,132
1981-82	172	2,69,207
1986-87	172	1,39,480
1991-92	173	1,62,334

Source: 1. Government of Kerala, Statistical Hand Book of Kerala Bureau of Economics and Statistics (various issues), Trivandrum.  
2. Government of Kerala, Economic Review (various issues), State Planning Board, Trivandrum.

Table 1.3

## Structure of Collegiate Enrolment in Kerala

1960-61 to 1991-92

(in thousands)

Year	Pre-degree	Degree (General)	Post-graduate (General)	Degree (Professional & Technical)	Total
1960-61	16.2	20.3	1.0	6.3	43.8
1970-71	60.5	49.3	4.1	7.8	121.7
1975-76	101.5	58.8	4.6	12.5	177.4
1980-81	146.6	87.5	6.0	17.1	257.2
1985-86	197.3	106.5	9.0	16.3*	312.8
1990-91	191.4*	78.9*	18.3	17.0**	288.6*

\* Includes private registration

\*\* Excludes private registration

'Professional and Technical' includes Law, Teacher's Training, Engineering, Medicine (Allopathy, Ayurvedic and Homoeopathy), Agriculture, Horticulture and Veterinary.

Source: 1. Government of Kerala, Statistics for Planning (various issues).

2. Government of Kerala, Economic Review (various issues), State Planning Board, Trivandrum.

Table 1.3 gives the structure of collegiate enrolment for the period 1960-61 to 1991-92 in Kerala. The table shows that general education constitutes nearly three-fourths of the share in total enrolment in the State. It also shows a steady increase in the rate of enrolment in all the stages though there is a slight decrease in the pre-degree and degree levels for the year 1990-91.

The structure of higher education in Kerala is not different from that of the country as a whole. This State too has laid high emphasis on quantitative expansion in terms of number of institutions, students and teachers. Deterioration of standards is the main criticism levelled against the system of higher education in Kerala also. The report on higher education by the State High Level Committee on Education and Employment has identified many causes for the falling of standards in the sphere of higher education in the State. Among these, overcrowding in the institutions of higher education owing to unrestricted admission has been identified as the root cause for the phenomenon. With the granting of the facility for private registration for university admission for those students who were unable to get admission to regular courses, the

number of students opting for conventional higher education increased greatly. This led to a mushroom growth of coaching institutions euphemistically called "Parallel Colleges".<sup>18</sup> A working paper of the Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum has referred to the growth of the parallel colleges of the State as 'operating in the free market unaided by any form of government direction and unfettered by any government control'. The parallel colleges have grown largely as a result of the prospect of making 'quick profits' owing to excessive private demand for higher education.<sup>19</sup>

The High Level Committee on Higher Education considers the rationalisation of fees the next important factor for the swelling of the admission to higher educational institutions. Compared to the conditions in other states, Kerala has an abnormally low fee structure.

Dr.M.V.Pylee, an eminent educational administrator has listed the main evils that afflict our higher education system.<sup>20</sup> They are poor quality of teaching, indiscipline and poor motivation among teachers, appointment of teachers in colleges on the basis of donations, instead of on the basis of merit, politically-oriented trade unionism among

teachers, politically-oriented trade unionism among students, qualitatively poor examination and evaluation systems, meagre infrastructural facilities in the universities and colleges, political interference in the autonomy of higher educational institutions such as in the appointment of Vice-Chancellors and other top functionaries of the universities and in the constitution of the different authorities of the universities, poor leadership at the higher levels of administration both in the colleges and the universities and indifference on the part of parents and the public.

It has been agreed by most of the academicians and educational administrators that the quality of education depends largely on the quality of teaching. Ineffective teaching and high standards of students do not go together. The selection of teachers by the private colleges of Kerala on the basis of donations rather than on the basis of merit has resulted in the intrusion of a large number of academically not-so-bright persons to the noble profession of teaching. Those who are not really motivated as teachers and who lack the calibre, competence and commitment to teaching, play havoc with the system. The High Level Committee emphasises some more reasons for the

decline of quality in teaching. Absence of a system of periodical assessment of the work done by faculty members, system of non-cadre promotions without any concern for merit and the practice of undertaking private tuitions by teachers are some of them.<sup>21</sup> There are no student-reaction surveys on the merit of teachers in Kerala as employed by some well-known universities in the West. The procedures for selection of teachers in our colleges and universities when compared to those prevailing in the advanced countries is poor mainly because our system is secretive and closed in contrast to the open system of the West. Negative attitude among teachers towards quality improvement programmes, poor motivation and politically-oriented trade unionism and other vested interests among them are also considered important factors contributing to the poor quality in teaching.

Next to the quality of teaching, the quality of the academic programmes and courses in the universities is an important factor which decides the quality of higher learning in a state. As far as Kerala is concerned, there is a general feeling that the courses offered in the colleges are more or less of the traditional pattern at the undergraduate, graduate and the postgraduate levels.

Though a few of the teaching departments of the universities in the State have some professional as well as specialised courses, it is seen that greater emphasis has been given to courses of a general nature. There is great shortage of varied courses which are useful and relevant to the present conditions of the State. This has resulted in the expansion of higher education quantitatively, leading to massive qualitative deterioration. The universities at present do not have mechanisms for revision and regular updating of the syllabi and content of courses which is very much essential for the upkeep of quality in higher education. Periodical evaluation of the courses offered in the universities is also not carried out. Though experts in the field of higher education are of the opinion that such measures are essential for the improvement of the quality of higher education, these have not been given much importance either by the government or the universities in the State.

Eminent educationists agree that the poor examination and evaluation system of our State is one of the many reasons for the fall in academic standards. Our examination system is complex, complicated and unscientific as compared to the system prevailing in advanced countries.



In our State, the examination system has become a totally corrupt and discredited one. In the words of Dr.Pylee, "it is a gigantic racket in which students, parents, teachers, college principals, non-teaching employees, university officials at various levels, members of the university authorities such as the Syndicate, Boards of Studies and several others including different types of politicians are involved".<sup>22</sup> The academic community and the public have become accustomed to the phenomenon of "irregularities" in the examination system prevailing in the State.<sup>23</sup> The major reforms in the examination systems recommended by the U.G.C. such as internal assessment and the semester system have not been successfully introduced in the affiliated colleges of the State, though the universities have adopted them in the teaching departments.

Excessive politicisation is an accursed evil that pervades the system of higher education in Kerala. The universities which form the apex of the higher education system and which are meant to be centres of academic excellence have become major spheres of political patronage. Selection and nomination of members to the university bodies are made not on merit or academic excellence, but mostly on the basis of political clout.

Appointments of the top functionaries of the universities such as the Vice-Chancellor, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor and the Registrar are made by the State government on the basis of their political affiliations.

It is a well-known truth that there is practically no area in the higher educational system in Kerala, where the influence of the government is not seen. Governmental interference in the autonomy of the universities has become the order of the day. The Gnanam Committee of the U.G.C. describes the term autonomy of the universities as that "which broadly emphasises the freedom to function, to achieve academic excellence and to administer the institution through its own rules and regulations".<sup>24</sup> It has been observed that in the recent years there has been a massive erosion of the autonomous status of the universities in the State.

The academic scene in Kerala today is in great turmoil and a number of repeated attempts of the government to interfere in the affairs of the universities in the State have aroused great concern in all walks of society. Two of the four affiliating universities in the State have been functioning without the elected supreme bodies - the

Senates - for several months and are being run by the Syndicates which have predominance for 'pro-government' nominees. It has been alleged that the State government had been unofficially preventing elections to the Senates of the universities on the plea that a new common legislation for all the universities in the State was about to be introduced. The government was unable to make into law the Kerala Universities Bill, introduced in the Assembly, owing to great protests from all the strata of the university community against its provisions to enhance the government's powers in the affairs of the university.

The latest example of State governmental interference in the affairs of the university, which has caused a major controversy in the State, is the government's attempts to force the three universities in the State and the Chancellor to grant affiliation to a list of 71 colleges; 54 of these colleges were to be unaided institutions to be run entirely on the sale of payment seats of admission and teacher posts. The government is pressurising the universities to grant affiliation to the colleges which have not followed the rules and procedures while applying for affiliation. The matter was taken to the Kerala High Court which passed an interim order

directing the Government and the universities not to sanction or grant affiliation to any new college which had not strictly followed the prescribed procedure in the matter.

The private colleges in Kerala are associated with the four major communities which make up the social spectrum of the State, viz., the Christians, the Muslims, the Nairs and the Ezhavas. Over the years, the communal character of the managements of a large number of private colleges had created for them an important role in the politics of the State, because of their ability to mobilise political resources and support.<sup>25</sup> It is no wonder the government stoops to any level to cater to the interests of these communities. It is in this context that the government's attempt to order the universities to grant affiliation to a long list of colleges, associated with these different communities of the State, has to be seen.

A new concept in the field of higher education which is assuming great importance in the present times in Kerala is that of self-financed education. A large number of private colleges in the State have recently started self-financing courses and even State-financed universities

have begun to introduce new, specialised as well as general, courses styled self-financing courses. For these courses, exorbitant admission and tuition fees under various heads such as donations, capitation fees, paid seats and the like are charged. The State government has moved in the direction of giving sanction to a large number of colleges which are self-financing institutions. "A self-financing institution can be defined as an institution or college which meets its promotion and maintenance costs by itself by raising the required finance through donations and contributions by the promoters, philanthropists and the affluent sections of society. Part of the required finance may also be raised through the fees charged on students. Such institutions are thus promoted and run independently of State assistance".<sup>26</sup>

The system of self-financed education which is spreading fast in the higher education sector of Kerala is the system where the students meet the cost of education through payment of high fees in the form of donations, admission and tuition fees. The policy of the State government to promote this system of higher education has started a controversy in the State. A vast majority of the students, teachers and the general public oppose the policy

for the reason that higher education will become out of reach for the intelligent students who belong to the middle and lower income brackets and the poor classes of the society. Kerala today is witnessing a struggle between those within and outside the university system to control its education policy and resources.

#### THE PROBLEM

The discussion in the previous pages about the system of higher education in Kerala reveals to some extent the various issues and problems in the present day situation. An in-depth study of this complex system and its problems in their totality is difficult and time-consuming. The Kothari Commission in its report expressed the hope that in future, academicians, administrators and interested persons would come forward to study seriously the problems of academic management and suggest ways and means to bring about a radical improvement in the chaotic situation.<sup>27</sup> Now "institutions that can be brought within the purview of higher education are degree and diploma awarding universities, institutions of national importance, deemed universities and colleges of general and professional nature".<sup>28</sup> By and large, higher education is imparted mainly through institutions of higher learning,

namely the universities. Therefore a study of the structure and functions of the universities will bring to light a realistic picture of the complex problems in the system of higher education as also ways and means to solve them.

For the present study, therefore, it is the functioning of the universities in the State, especially that of their important authorities that has been chosen for analysis mainly and of the influences that are brought to bear on them. In the following pages an attempt has been made to explain how these objectives have been fulfilled.

Social changes take place in the society so rapidly that the university system is always exposed to new processes of change. The universities should be sensitive to the changing conditions of society and shifting patterns of thought and behaviour and must be ready to meet new demands and challenges. Therefore administrators, educationists and research students connected with higher education have to examine the problems of the governance of the universities and the content of university education from time to time. The pattern of governance of the

universities should not remain static. With the rapid advance in knowledge, the governance of universities as well as the content of education has to be dynamic. In this context, it is essential that the dynamism of higher educational system requires suitable changes in the existing administrative and academic machinery in the universities. For this purpose, the pattern of university organisation needs continual review and adjustment. The system has to be so framed and evolved as to enable the academics as well as the administrators to introduce appropriate changes, from time to time, in the organisational set-up of the universities as well as in the content of education. This involves improvements in the structure and functions of the governing bodies of the universities and also a radical change in the content, syllabi and structure of the courses. It also involves the responsibility of introducing diversified courses to cater to the changing needs of the society in tune with the explosion of knowledge.

Universities have manifold functions to discharge. Pursuit of excellence in knowledge, advancement and dissemination of knowledge are considered the main functions of universities. Carrying out these functions



involves governance of the academic functions and policies of the universities. The academic governance of the universities is discharged through three of the authorities of the universities - the Academic Council, the Faculties and the Boards of Studies. It is the responsibility of these academic bodies to take decisions and implement the academic activities of the university which truly reflect the ethos of the institution.

An equally important aspect of the academic governance is the designing and implementation of academic programmes of the universities. The term 'academic programme' means a course designed, implemented and run by a university at any level - the undergraduate, graduate or postgraduate stage, as the case may be. There has been a veritable explosion of knowledge in diverse fields and the courses in our universities cannot afford to remain stagnant. They should have relevance to the world in which we live and should keep pace with the progress of knowledge in every field and discipline. There is an urgent need for the re-orientation of traditional subjects to the needs of the community and the introduction of relevant applied disciplines. A university in modern times cannot discharge its responsibilities unless it has an inbuilt mechanism for

revision and updating of courses on a continual basis. "For the improvement of curricula and restructuring of courses, a university merely degenerates itself into what may be called academic book keeping".<sup>29</sup>

In the present day context, a systematic enquiry into the two main aspects of the universities, given in the preceding discussion, viz., the different aspects of the academic bodies and the academic programmes, is most appropriate and relevant. The various education commissions and committees appointed by the University Grants Commission, the central and state governments, at different times have attempted to go into the details of some elements of the subjects mentioned. A few researchers have also made studies on the weaknesses of the higher education system in a general way. No systematic enquiry into these aspects of higher education, mainly dealing with the structure and functions of the academic bodies of the universities and their effectiveness in introducing qualitative changes in the organisational set-up and also in the designing and implementing of varied academic programmes, has been conducted so far in our State. Very little effort has been directed towards understanding the

different dimensions of this particular aspect of the university organisation either on the part of the government or on the part of academicians.

#### BROAD OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study attempts to analyse the multifarious aspects of the academic bodies of the universities with regard to their structure, powers and functions in bringing about qualitative improvement in the university governance and to suggest methods and approaches for their efficient functioning. This study also aims at the scientific analysis of the different aspects of academic programmes in terms of their designing and implementation. An in-depth study of the problems involved in the implementation and management of the academic programmes in the universities would enable the researcher to suggest ways and means for their improvement in tune with the needs of society.

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## Chapter 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

An attempt has been made in this chapter to review the literature related to the subject-matter of the present study. Most of the studies relating to higher education have been undertaken in our country by a host of special Commissions and Committees appointed by competent authorities from time to time, both before and after the attainment of independence in 1947. A few studies have been made also by researchers interested in the field. In the former case, the experts did make an in-depth study of the problems in respect of higher education and offered solutions to them. An analysis of the recommendations put forward in this regard reveals the interesting fact that most of the findings are similar. Literature made available by independent researchers is sparse and scanty, compared to what is available in the reports of the several Commissions and Committees. The present researcher has depended for her work mostly on the studies made by these Commissions and Committees.

In presenting a detailed review of these studies on the following pages, the subject-matter has been divided

into three parts: those relating to (i) observations and recommendations made by the Commissions and Committees referred to earlier, by the U.G.C., by the Central Government and by other agencies and applicable to the field of higher education in the country as a whole, (ii) the ones made by the small number of agencies appointed for the purpose in the State of Kerala and (iii) the observations made by researchers and individuals interested in this topic.

The first part is again sub-divided into two sections: (1) Reports of the Commissions and the Committees relating to the pre-independence period and (2) those relating to the post-independence period.

#### PRE-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

##### Wood's Despatch, July 9, 1854<sup>1</sup>

In view of its importance in the evolution of a good system of education in India, Wood's Despatch was called 'The Magna Carta (Charta) of Indian Education'. This document dealt with the objectives of educational policy, medium of instruction, creation of a department of public instruction, in each of the provinces of the country, establishment of universities, evolving a sound



system of grant-in-aid, encouragement to educated Indians to take up employment in the Government and spreading of education among women. This document of immense historical importance was known as 'Wood's Education Despatch' because it was written at the instance of Charles Wood, the then President of the Board of Control.

The object of education as stated in the document was to extend European knowledge throughout all classes of the people. This had to be effected by means of the English language in the higher branches of institution and by that of vernacular languages of India to the great mass of the people. It proposed that the universities were to provide the highest test and encouragement of liberal education.

Wood's Despatch gave proposals for the establishment of universities in the country in order to encourage a regular and liberal course of education in the different branches of arts and science. The universities proposed to be started were to be modelled like the London University consisting of a Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and Fellows who constituted a Senate. The functions of the Senate were the management of funds, framing of regulations

and conduct of examinations periodically in the different branches of art and science, by examiners selected from their own body or nominated by them. The function of the universities was to confer degrees upon candidates according to the rules fixed in this respect.

The Despatch proposed to establish universities at Calcutta and Bombay upon the general principles and procedures given in the Despatch.

#### **Indian Education Commission 1882-83<sup>2</sup>**

The first Indian Education Commission was appointed by Lord Ripon on February 3, 1882 with Sir William Hunter (Member of Viceroy's Executive Council) as Chairman and twenty one others as members. The report of this Commission made a thorough survey of the entire field of education in India and made certain fundamental recommendations concerning the type of education to be given at various stages.

#### **Terms of Reference of the Commission**

The duty of the Commission was to enquire into the manner in which the principles of the Despatch of 1854 had been effected and to suggest measures to carry out the policies laid down in the Despatch.

The major recommendations of the Commission were on collegiate education. The Commission recommended that the local governments might provide the means of collegiate education in the province of Sindh and at Ahmedabad in Bombay, at Bhagalpur in Bengal and at Jabalpur in the Central Provinces and also to establish an aided college at Delhi under native management.

The Commission also recommended the making of provisions for special grants to aided colleges for the supply and renewal of buildings, furniture, libraries and apparatus of instruction.

Detailed recommendations regarding the levying of fees in the government and aided colleges, establishment of scholarships in colleges for bright as well as poor students etc., were given in the report.

### Indian Universities Commission (1902)<sup>3</sup>

After the Indian Education Commission's report (1882) many universities were established with substantial extension of collegiate education and westernisation of the content of education. It was generally felt that the development of liberal education was lop-sided, leading to

the neglect of professional, industrial and technical education. On January 27, 1902, Lord Curzon appointed the Indian Universities Commission with Thomas Raleigh as its Chairman.

The Commission enquired into the conditions of the universities in British India and made valuable proposals for improving the standard of university teaching and advancement of learning.

The Commission recommended that the universities should make better provisions for advanced courses of study. Teaching of English language was to be regarded as the most important item in the curriculum of high schools and universities. It was recommended that a systematic and scholarly study of vernacular languages should be included in M.A. degree classes.

The Commission expressed the need for university examinations for the award of degrees and for uniformity in the nomenclature of the degrees in Arts and Sciences at the different universities. It was therefore suggested that the three examinations should be called the Matriculation

Examination, the Intermediate Examination and the examination for the award of the B.A or B.Sc. degree.

The Commission also recommended that the number of members in the Senate should be reduced and the number of members in the Syndicate should be between nine and fifteen. It was proposed that there should be proper representation of the teachers of the affiliated colleges in the Senate and the universities should themselves appoint teachers to impart higher education.

#### Indian Universities Act (1904)<sup>4</sup>

The Indian Universities Act passed on March 21, 1904 in the Imperial Legislative Council embodied the main recommendations of the Indian Universities Commission (1902).

By this Act, the scope of the universities was enlarged. The universities were given the right of teaching as well as the right of conducting examinations. The universities were also given the right to conduct research.

According to this Act, the minimum number of members in the Senate was fixed as fifty and the maximum as hundred and their term was fixed as five years.

The Act provided for the election of members to the Senate. The Syndicate was accorded legal status. Also the government secured the right to give approval and to make amendments to the rules framed by the Senate of the university. The government also obtained the right to make laws in this regard.

Again, the Act provided for the fixing of territorial jurisdiction for the universities.

#### Calcutta University Commission or Sadler Commission (1917-1919)<sup>5</sup>

The Sadler Commission under the chairmanship of Dr. Michael Sadler, the Vice-Chancellor of Leeds University submitted its report in 1919. This comprehensive report greatly influenced the subsequent course of secondary and higher education in the country.

Though the Commission was appointed to go into the problems of only the Calcutta University, the problems that

it studied were more or less common to the other Indian universities too.

The Commission offered the following recommendations.

The Government should start a new type of institution called the Intermediate college to provide for instruction in Arts, Science, Engineering, Medicine etc. These colleges should be attached to selected high schools or run as independent institutions. For the administration and control of secondary education, a Board of Secondary Education, should be constituted with representatives of the Government, University, High Schools and Intermediate Colleges.

Honours courses for bright students should be started together with pass courses.

After the intermediate stage, the degree course should have a duration of three years.

Special Committees including external experts should be constituted for making appointments to the posts of professors and readers in the universities.

### Other Recommendations

1. A special Board of Women's Education should be established in the Calcutta University for running special courses of study suited for women.
2. Training of teachers should be encouraged and education should be included as a subject at all the stages of university study.
3. The university should make provision for vocational training of the personnel needed for industries.
4. Serious and systematic study of vernacular languages should be promoted at all stages of study.

### Hartog Committee (1928-29)<sup>6</sup>

An Indian statutory commission for enquiring into the social, political and economic progress of India namely the Simon Commission appointed an auxiliary committee known as the Hartog Committee under the chairmanship of Sir Philip Hartog, Vice-Chancellor of Dacca University. This Committee submitted its report in September 1929.

The Commission stated that the Universities were overcrowded by students who were not fit for university



education and expansion in the field of university education had been gained at the cost of quality. The Committee recommended that universities should consider that the training of bright and self-reliant citizens was their primary function.

Sargent Report or the Report on the Post-war Educational Development in India (1944)<sup>7</sup>

The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) is the oldest and the most important advisory body of the Government of India. It was first established in 1920, dissolved in 1923 and revived in 1935. The Sargent Report, known after the name of John Sargent, Educational Advisor to the Government of India was the first comprehensive educational plan formulated by the CABE.

According to the Report, university education in India did not fully satisfy the requirements of a national system of education. In order to raise the standard of higher education, the conditions of admission should be revised. Reorganisation of the university system should include the abolition of the two-year intermediate course, with the transfer of the first year to the high schools,

retaining the second year in the universities. The minimum length of a university course should be three years. The Report emphasised the importance of establishing a high standard in postgraduate studies and research in pure and applied aspects of subjects.

The Report recommended the establishment of technical schools and technological departments in universities for the training of chief executives and research workers of the future. Admission to these courses would be controlled by a very strict process of selection.

#### Post-independence Period

#### Committee on Secondary Education in India (1948)<sup>8</sup>

This Committee appointed by the Government of India, headed by Dr. Tara Chand, Joint Educational Adviser in its report put forward some valuable recommendations on higher education.

- 1) Admission to the degree courses should be preceded by a course of primary and secondary education for a period of 12 years.
- 2) The public examination should be at the end of the secondary stage.

- 3) The pay-scales of the teachers should be revised.
- 4) Education should be one of the subjects in the university course.
- 5) There should be refresher courses for teachers after every five years.

#### University Education Commission (1948-49)<sup>9</sup>

The Commission headed by Dr.S.Radhakrishnan, the distinguished scholar and educationist who became the second President of India, was to make recommendations with regard to:

- 1) aims and objectives of university education and research in India
- 2) reforms to be brought about in the constitution, control and jurisdiction of universities and their relations with government
- 3) maintenance of highest standards in teaching and evaluation
- 4) courses of study in the universities and their various aspects

- 5) finance
- 6) procedures of admission to university courses
- 7) medium of instruction in the universities
- 8) organisation of research in all branches of knowledge in the universities and research institutions in a co-ordinated fashion
- 9) religious instruction in the universities
- 10) special problems of some institutions of an all-India character
- 11) privileges, duties, functions, service conditions and salaries of university teachers and
- 12) discipline and welfare of students.

The comprehensive report spread out in eighteen chapters described in detail the aims of university education and put forward valuable recommendations on all aspects of university education in India.

The Commission recommended that

- 1) a large number of well-equipped and well-staffed intermediate colleges be established together with a

good number of vocational institutes for students who do not go to the universities,

- 2) the maximum number in the Arts and Science Faculties of a university be fixed at 3000 and 1500 in an affiliated college, to avoid overcrowding in universities and colleges,
- 3) the lectures in university classes be supplemented by library work and tutorials which should stimulate the mental development of students,
- 4) the quality of teaching should be substantially improved, and
- 5) the libraries and laboratories should be improved in all respects.

With regard to the courses of study, the Commission gave equal importance to general education and special education for the students. The Commission recommended that the students be admitted to the universities after 12 years of schooling and the master's

degree be given to honours students, after one year of study beyond bachelor's degree. Admission to post-graduate and Ph.D degree courses have to be on an all-India basis. It was recommended that the universities should develop post-graduate and research departments in as many branches of knowledge as they could. The universities should make special efforts to train scientific manpower with generous capital and maintenance grants sanctioned to them. It was suggested that agricultural education and research be recognised as a major national issue. Special emphasis was to be given to subjects like commerce, education, engineering and technology, law and medicine.

The Commission gave importance to religious education, student welfare activities, and student discipline.

The Commission made valuable recommendations regarding the examination system of the universities.

- 1) A university degree should not be required for government administrative services. Special examinations for recruitment should be conducted by the States.

- 2) The system of credit for class work should be adopted for degree and post-graduate degree courses of the universities.
- 3) Periodical assessment and examinations should be conducted for degree students instead of terminal examination at the end of three years.
- 4) The standards for success at the examination which should be raised should be uniform in the various universities.

The three-language formula for higher secondary and university stages was recommended by the Commission. It was also proposed that English be replaced by regional languages as the medium of instruction.

A good number of recommendations were given also on general matters regarding women's education and co-education.

The Commission recommended that the university education should be placed on the "concurrent list" and

financing of higher education should be the responsibility of the State government concerned.

#### Secondary Education Commission (1952-53)<sup>10</sup>

The Government of India appointed the Secondary Education Commission with Dr.A.Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Vice-Chancellor of Madras University as its Chairman. The Commission made certain important recommendations on higher education.

It was the recommendation of this Commission that the two-year intermediate stage in the college be replaced by a one-year Pre-University course with the other year being shifted to the higher secondary stage, making it of 4 years of duration. The degree course in colleges was to continue as a three-year course.

#### Committee on Model Act for Universities<sup>11</sup>

In order to make an evaluation of the organisational structure of the universities in India and to prepare an outline of a model act for the universities, the Ministry of Education appointed a committee in December 1961, under the chairmanship of Dr.D.S.Kothari. The main recommendations of the Committee are summarised as follows:



(1) For the right development of universities, autonomy of universities from external control and internally democratic administration and effective participation of the academic communities in the implementation of university programmes should be ensured.

(2) The President of India in the case of central universities and the Governor of the State in the case of state universities should be the Visitor of the universities. He should not be included in the list of officers of the university, but should have an independent position with well-defined powers. There should be a Chancellor elected by the Court. The Vice-Chancellor should be elected by the Court from among three persons recommended by a majority of the members of the Executive Council. There should also be a Pro-Vice-Chancellor chosen by the Vice-Chancellor.

The Court should be the policy-making body of the university, consisting of representatives of alumni donors, learned professions, industry and nominees of the Executive Council, and the Visitor.

The Academic Council should be the sole authority for determining the courses of study and their decisions should not need the approval of any other authority in the university.

For meeting the increasing demand for admission, evening and correspondence courses and types of courses other than arts and science courses should be started in the universities.

The universities should have the power of appointing teachers and other employees of the university on the recommendations of selection committees.

Every university should have a Dean of Students to devote special attention to students' welfare.

Education Commission (1964-66)<sup>12</sup>

For the overall survey of the entire field of educational development in the country and for advising the Government on the national pattern of education and on the general policies for the development of education at all stages, the Government of India appointed an education

commission in October 1964, again with Dr.D.S.Kothari, Chairman, University Grants Commission as its Chairman. The report of the Commission submitted on June 29, 1966 guided the policies, programmes and development of education for many decades.

#### Summary of Recommendations on Higher Education

The functions of the universities in the modern world are to seek and cultivate new knowledge, to engage vigorously and fearlessly in the pursuit of truth and to interpret old knowledge and beliefs in the light of new needs and discoveries, to provide the right kind of leadership in all walks of life and to identify gifted youth and help them develop their potential to the full by cultivating physical fitness, developing the powers of the mind and cultivating right interests, attitudes and moral and intellectual values.<sup>13</sup>

For the realisation of these objectives, a comprehensive plan, spread over a period of twenty years and including the following three programmes was recommended.

- 1) A radical improvement in the quality and standard of higher education and research.

- 2) Expansion of higher education to meet the manpower needs of national development.
- 3) Improvement of university organisation and administration.

An important reform in higher education is the development of about six universities into 'major universities' where outstanding post-graduate work and research comparable to the best such institutions of the world, would be possible. The major universities should establish centres or clusters of centres of advanced study for promoting inter-disciplinary research. The centres of advanced study should help other university departments and affiliated colleges to develop into centres of excellence. Affiliated colleges which show the capacity to improve remarkably should be granted autonomous status under the general supervision of universities.

A variety of suggestions and recommendations were made by the Commission for the improvement of teaching and evaluation, including internal assessment, system of internal and continuous assessment, improved techniques of evaluation through seminars, discussions and workshops.

It was recommended that the expansion of facilities in higher education should be planned broadly in relation to manpower needs and therefore a system of selective admission was to be adopted.

The Commission recommended the starting of new universities for many states as a major measure for spearheading social and economic development.

With regard to reorganisation of courses, the Commission recommended general, special and honours courses at the undergraduate level and flexible and innovative organisation of courses at the post-graduate level.

Promotion of inter-disciplinary studies, area studies, strengthening of the study of social science and humanities etc., were also important recommendations of the Commission.

With regard to the governance of universities, the Commission recommended autonomy for the university for the departments within the university, as well as for selected colleges.

Many valuable recommendations were made by the Commission on the role and appointment of Vice-Chancellor, university legislation, affiliated colleges, private and government colleges, and the Inter-University Board for developing advisory, research and service functions of all the universities of the state.

#### Committee on Governance of Universities<sup>14</sup>

The above Committee was appointed by the University Grants Commission in June 1969 under the chairmanship of Dr.P.B.Gajendragadkar.

The Committee made recommendations on the structure of universities, functions and powers of the statutory bodies, service conditions of the staff of the universities and similar connected matters.

The Committee stressed the importance of social commitment on the part of universities, for which there should be greater participation of academicians, administrators and students in the affairs of the university. Its recommendations included the establishment of a joint consultative machinery at the faculty and

departmental levels in the universities and in colleges. The Committee gave greater importance to the U.G.C. which, in its opinion, should assist and advise the universities in all matters.

It was proposed that at least one university in a state should be a "city university" set up by the Union Government with the concurrence of the State Government for making the process of modernisation of courses and upgrading of research much easier.<sup>15</sup>

The Committee suggested that post-graduate education should be limited to university departments and if extended to colleges, should be on a carefully planned and selective basis.

The Committee recommended that the three principal authorities of the university already in existence in most universities, the Senate, the Syndicate and the Academic Council be continued. It also recommended the introduction of two new authorities, viz., the Faculties and the Student Council. The Committee was of the opinion that the Academic Council should be the principal academic body of the university with power to coordinate and exercise

general supervision over the academic policies of the university. The Committee recommended that the powers of the university should be shared equally among the various authorities.

### Challenge of Education: A Policy Perspective (1985)<sup>16</sup>

This document was prepared by the Government of India in order to review the educational situations in India and to frame new policies for the further development of education in the country. The four main chapters included in the document are: (1) Education, society and development; (2) An overview of education; (3) Development, a critical appraisal and (4) An approach to educational reorientation. This document became the basis of the National Policy of Education (NPE) of 1986.

The document brought to light the problem of wastage of resources in producing a very large number of educated unemployed in the country. It recommended that degrees be de-linked from jobs for minimising heavy enrolment in the field of higher education, especially at the undergraduate level. The document emphasised the need for encouraging only those students who have the right academic aptitude for taking up studies at the post-graduate level.



National Policy of Education (NPE), 1986<sup>17</sup>

The National Policy of Education contains 12 parts and 157 paragraphs dealing with different facets of education.

The major recommendations in the field of higher education, contained in the document are given below:

In order to make higher education more dynamic, the existing higher educational institutions--the universities and colleges of the country--will be provided with more facilities for their all-round improvement.

The system of affiliated colleges will be gradually replaced by a more creative system of association between the universities and the colleges and autonomous colleges will be helped to develop in great numbers. Similarly the system of autonomous departments within universities will also be encouraged.

Academic programmes and courses will be redesigned to meet the demands of specialisation. Flexibility in the combination of courses will be encouraged. Linguistic competence will be given greater emphasis in future programmes.

State councils of higher education will be established for state level planning and coordination of programmes and projects in the field of higher education. These councils will function in a coordinative manner with the U.G.C.

Emphasis will be laid on selective admission to higher education. The areas which will receive greater attention will be transformation of teaching methods like using audio-visual aids and electronic equipments, development of science and technology, curriculum development and teacher's training and orientation programmes.

High quality research in the universities will be given enhanced financial support. Setting up of national research centres within the university systems will be encouraged. Support will be provided for the development of facilities for the intensive study of Sanskrit and other classical languages and for research in indology, humanities and social sciences.

For greater coordination in policies, sharing of facilities and developing inter-disciplinary research, a

national apex body covering higher education in general, agricultural, medical, technical, legal and other professional fields will be set up.

The document recommended that a beginning be made in de-linking degrees from jobs in selected areas. It was suggested that de-linking can be applied to services for which university degrees need not be a necessary qualification. This will encourage the development of a series of job-oriented courses. It was also suggested that a National Testing Service to conduct tests--voluntary tests for determining the suitability of candidates for specified jobs--should be established.

The document also proposed the establishment of rural universities in the pattern envisaged by Mahatma Gandhi for the development of rural areas.

#### Programme of Action on NPE (1986)<sup>18</sup>

The Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education, Government of India prepared a programme of action for implementing the NPE. The recommendations on the policies to be undertaken in the

field of higher education given in chapter 5 of the document are as follows:

In order to improve the facilities in the universities and colleges a great number of effective steps will be taken such as providing adequate funds for courses and research, establishing institutions having close ties with national laboratories and agencies, within the universities, reviewing the management patterns of universities and their statutory bodies, regulating admissions on the basis of facilities and merit and also setting up of State councils of higher education in each state for the consolidation and coordination of programmes in the area of higher education.

It was been envisaged that about 500 colleges should be developed as autonomous colleges in the seventh plan period, gradually replacing the existing affiliating system.

The area of designing and re-designing of courses has received an important position in this document. The objectives of designing of courses as envisaged in the document are to meet the growing demands of specialisation,

to provide flexibility in the combination of courses, to facilitate mobility among courses, programmes and institutions, to update and modernise curricula, to integrate work experience with learning process and to facilitate reforms in the evaluation procedures. In order to achieve these objectives, it is proposed (a) to secure full involvement of the universities in designing the courses in higher learning (b) to incorporate new concepts in designing content and structure of courses (c) to design foundation course as proposed by the U.G.C., as important elements of the general undergraduate programmes (d) to re-organise the Boards of Studies in the universities to facilitate re-designing of courses and to promote interdisciplinary programmes (e) to reorient the work of the curriculum development centres, set up by U.G.C. during the Seventh Plan period towards re-designing of courses (f) to coordinate and develop curricula in the field of science and technology by utilising the international centres of science and technology education (g) to promote autonomous university departments and autonomous colleges to function as instruments for re-designing of courses and (h) to set up College Development Councils to encourage designing of courses especially application-oriented ones pertaining to the needs of the region and locality.

Together with the development of State Councils of higher education, the policy envisages the establishment of a national apex body covering higher education in general, agriculture, technical, medical, legal and other professional areas for greater coordination of policy, sharing of facilities and developing inter-disciplinary research. This body is to deal with policy aspects of higher education, planning and implementation of programmes of post-graduate education and inter-disciplinary research.

The policy also envisages the setting up of an autonomous body named Accreditation and Assessment Council under the auspices of the U.G.C. for maintaining and raising the quality of institutions of higher education.

#### **New Education Policy**

#### **AIU's Recommendations on Higher Education, 1986<sup>19</sup>**

The document on "New Educational Policy" was prepared in April 1985 and at a special meeting of the Association of Indian Universities on January 8 and 9, 1986, attended by over 50 Vice-Chancellors of various universities, the important issues were discussed in detail. Based on the consensus that emerged at the meeting, the document "AIU's Recommendations on Higher Education"

was prepared by a committee consisting of Prof.S.V.Chitti Babu, Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University, Prof.G.Ram Reddy, Vice-Chancellor, Indira Gandhi National Open University and Prof.Shah Manzoor Alam, Vice-Chancellor, University of Kashmir.

The AIU's document on higher education reiterates the importance of fresh thinking on the part of Government and the universities in preparing agenda for action in the field of higher education incorporating strategy for planning and management, autonomy and accountability, quality and content and course structure.

It is proposed that education upto the first degree level should be the responsibility of the State while post-graduate and professional education should be entrusted to the Centre. The U.G.C. has to be more powerful in its functions so as to be able to exercise its authority to review and assess periodically the functioning of the universities and their programmes.

Autonomous colleges should be established systematically and extensively as a network of educational centres of excellence at district level. Depoliticisation

of education in colleges and universities is imperative so as to create a healthy climate for learning. In order to safeguard university autonomy in all respects, particularly from political interference, University Acts need to be reviewed and amended.

Paragraph 6 of the document gives in detail the recommendations on content and structure of courses. The structure of courses should be so designed as to help in realising the societal needs. Undergraduate courses should be restructured in response to the manpower needs of the nation. Suitable guidelines for core curricula (foundation courses, professional orientation courses, work-based training) should be laid down by the U.G.C. in consultation with teachers and experts in various fields and professions. The re-designing and re-structuring of courses should be done in such a way as to incorporate flexibility in the combination of courses.

De-linking of degrees from jobs is not recommended. Instead it is proposed that the courses should be so designed as to strengthen the nexus between degrees and jobs.



The recommendations include the setting up of a manpower forecasting cell in the Ministry of Human Resource Development to forecast manpower requirements in the various sectors of development.

#### University Level Seminars on Educational Policy, 1986<sup>20</sup>

The National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration has brought out an analysis of the summary of proceedings of seminars on the new educational policy of the Government of India held in eleven universities of the country.

The analysis is divided into six parts. The first part deals with the general aspect covering all stages of education; the other parts deal with each of the stages of education, viz., elementary, secondary, higher, technical and adult education. Several aspects of higher education have been discussed at the seminars.

Autonomy for the functioning of universities is advocated by all the seminars. De-linking of degrees from jobs is not generally favoured though there is conditional support from a few. Most of the seminars agree that

delinking of degrees from jobs can help in reducing the pressure on higher education. Most are of opinion that delinking is possible only in the case of general types of jobs. It will not be desirable to de-link degrees from jobs in the technical and professional manpower markets.

Regarding access to higher education, restriction of admission on the basis of merit has been widely acclaimed.

With regard to content and curriculum, most of the universities suggest that in the development of new curriculum, problems of rural development and modernisation should receive importance. Post-graduate studies and research must be linked with various sectors of productivity and employment. Most of them express the view that the courses run by the universities should be relevant to the developmental needs of the society.

Vocationalisation has been strongly advocated by all the seminars. It has been proposed that vocational education should be linked with employment. Academic education should be restricted and a variety of vocational studies should be implemented. It has been proposed at

some seminars that before starting any course in vocational stream, the requirements of manpower at different levels should be identified and a continuous relationship between skilled manpower and job opportunities should be established. A proper survey of the job markets is advocated so that projections of manpower planning can be made more realistic.

Another aspect of higher education which has found wide support at the seminars relates to the strengthening of adult education programmes. Employing trained teachers at all stages of education and improving their service conditions are other important issues dealt with at the seminars.

Four Decades of Development (Review Conference) 1989:  
U.G.C. - Higher Education - An Overview<sup>21</sup>

The Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India and the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi jointly organised a conference from April 15 to 17, 1989 for reviewing the developmental programmes in the field of education in India implemented by U.G.C. over a period of forty years. A report on the conference published by the

U.G.C. explains in detail the plan programmes, and developments brought out by the intensive efforts of the Commission during four decades of development.

The Commission has stressed the importance of restructuring of courses by bringing about a scheme based on the following lines:

- 1) Academic components of courses at the first degree level should be combined with applied components suited to local/regional needs;
- 2) New courses to be developed and introduced should involve development of appropriate skills and competencies;
- 3) Re-structured courses are to promote skills and values.

The three essential components of a re-structured course are:

- 1) Foundation courses
- 2) Core courses
- 3) Courses of an applied nature.

The report reviews the various programmes the Commission had been embarking upon during the review period pertaining to research development, faculty improvement, distance education, women's education, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, minority communities etc.

**Gnanam Committee: Towards New Educational Management  
(1987-90)<sup>22</sup>**

A committee, popularly known as Gnanam Committee, after its Chairman, Prof.A.Gnanam, Vice-Chancellor, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirapalli, was appointed in January 1987 and its report was submitted in January 1990. It made an in-depth study of the various issues relating to university management.

**Broad Terms of Reference**

- 1) To review the management patterns including the structure, roles and responsibilities of various university bodies in the light of the new demands on the university system to develop effective alternate models and
- 2) To set criteria for assessment of performance of educational institutions.

In the report the main emphasis is to provide a sound scientific framework for governance of universities which will make them efficient, result-oriented and averse to politicisation.

### Recommendations

The students, teachers and the society's representatives must be involved in the management of universities in achieving their goals and objectives. The management of universities is different from that of other organisations and hence should be based on the principles of participation, decentralisation, autonomy and accountability. The managerial patterns of a university system should adapt themselves to the changing needs of the society and the region it serves. Therefore, the government, both central and state, the U.G.C., the universities and the colleges have to set in motion strategies to be implemented by the university system for playing its role for academic pursuit and augmenting knowledge.

#### 1. Central Government

- A. (1) The parliament may enact a law (model act) formulating the basic structure of the university

governance and ensuring that all related legislations by the state governments conform to the provisions of this law,

(2) To review the Acts of central universities to effect changes in the size and composition of their governing bodies and in their modes of appointment of members,

(3) To make a statutory stipulation in the Acts of universities that the universities have to follow the regulations issued by the U.G.C. from time to time,

(4) To require that new legislations in respect of state universities be referred to the U.G.C. before their enactment; and

(5) To provide for a council of central universities.

B. (1) U.G.C. Act be revised (a) to make prior concurrence of the Commission obligatory for opening new universities and (b) to give more powers to the U.G.C. for promoting the overall development of

higher education.

- (2) The University Grants Commission is required to start regional centres for reviewing the Commission's programmes and for monitoring its funding to universities and colleges.
- (3) The State Government is to start a State council for higher education for co-ordinating the functioning of universities and to have effective liaison with the government and the U.G.C. and to review and recommend amendments to Acts of the universities, if necessary, with regard to the size and composition of various university bodies in accordance with the recommendations made by the U.G.C.
- (4) Universities are to review periodically the functioning of the various university bodies, namely, the Executive Council renamed as the Board of Management, the Senate or the Societal Consultative Committee (S.C.C) and the Academic Council and to recommend to the State Council for Higher Education or the state government changes that are considered useful for the better management and governance of the universities as visualised by the U.G.C.



- (5) The colleges are to constitute a Planning and Evaluation Committee to formulate the specific objectives of the institutions, to periodically review its various functions and to suggest changes and developments for improvement to qualify for autonomous status.

The report was brought out in the hope that the recommendations made therein would improve the efficiency of university management.

#### Decentralisation of Higher Education System (1991)<sup>23</sup>

A national seminar on "Decentralisation of Higher Education System" was organised on October 8, 1991 at the 66th annual meeting of the Association of Indian Universities, at the University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram. The seminar attended by Vice-Chancellors of universities and Heads of other institutions of higher education made many recommendations on decentralisation at different levels--within the university system, in the University Grants Commission, and in the relationship of universities with colleges.

Of the various types of decentralisation suggested at the national level, academic decentralisation assumes

great importance. In order to minimise the pressure of enrolment on the higher education system, vocational streams have to be developed. To this end, manpower planning should be initiated, keeping in view the requirements at the various areas at the regional and national levels.

The Seminar put forward various measures to be adopted in the university system to achieve academic decentralisation within it. It included the establishment of a faculty council for each faculty with the representation of all the concerned departments for functioning as a coordinating and supervisory body for formulating policies for teaching and research.

Each academic department should have a departmental council for framing the syllabi for the courses of study formulated by it, examination schemes, research and extension work under the broad guidelines of the Faculty Council and the Academic Council. This will help the departments to maintain academic programmes free from bureaucratic controls.

The seminar had made the above recommendations anticipating that a decentralised system of higher

education will be able to better address the specific requirements of the society for promoting a balanced development.

### Kerala

The Government of Kerala at different times have constituted various Commissions and Committees to study the problems in the field of higher education. A brief review of the reports of these Commissions and Committees is given in the following pages.

The Padmakumar Commission<sup>24</sup> was appointed by the Government in the year 1970 in order to study the feasibility of introducing "direct payment system" in the State. By this system, the State Government was to meet the expenditure towards the salary of teaching and non-teaching staff of the private colleges in the State. The following defects of the system of higher education were pointed out by the Commission:

(1) In Kerala, there had been an increasing demand for higher education. Trying to cope with this demand, the State had to ignore its resource constraints. (2) The expenditure on education had not been linked to manpower

growth. (3) Enrolment had not been restricted to availability of resources which led to the lowering of standards in the field of higher education.

#### High Level Committees<sup>25</sup>

Five high level committees were constituted by the Government on different subjects in the year 1982 in order to help the State Planning Board to study the different aspects of the State's economy and development. A report on higher education was presented by a sub-committee on education and employment. The observations of the committee on higher education are the following:

- 1) Without the required physical infrastructure, laboratories or library facilities, a large number of new colleges have been started in the state.
- 2) For the selection of staff to the higher educational institutions, criteria other than merit have been resorted to which led to the lowering of standards in this field.
- 3) The system of capitation fee is prevailing in the State.
- 4) In many colleges, the standard of teaching is very poor and there are frequent strikes for various causes including the tendency to support political parties.

- 5) Private managements accept huge amounts as donations for appointment to teaching posts as well as for students' admissions.
- 6) No control is exercised by the Director of Collegiate Education.
- 7) Service seniority is the only criterion for promotion of teaching staff.

#### Commission for University of Kerala<sup>26</sup>

To fulfil the requirement of Sub-section (1) of Section 71 of the Kerala University Act, 1974, which provides that "the Government may at any time and shall at the expiration of ten years from the commencement of the Act and thereafter at the expiration of every ten years, constitute a commission to enquire into the working of the university", a commission was constituted in March 1984 to enquire into the working of the University of Kerala from 19-8-1974 (the date of coming into force of the Act) and to make recommendations to Government.

The Commission constituted under the Chairmanship of Dr. Malcolm S. Adiseshiah, was to enquire into and report

on: (i) working of the university during the period to which the enquiry relates; (ii) the financial position of the university including the financial position of its colleges and departments; (iii) any changes to be made in the provisions of the Act or Statutes, Ordinances, Rules and Bye-laws with a view to bringing about improvements for the better performance of the University and (iv) such other matters as may be referred to the Commission by the Government.

The Commission sent copies of a questionnaire to 1975 respondents selected from four groups--(1) Ministers/M.Ps/M.L.As; (2) University authorities/Members of University bodies; (3) Teachers of University departments and of affiliated colleges and (4) others. The Commission received only 244 replies. The Commission also visited the University departments and a number of colleges under the University. Self-assessment and peer-assessment reports of the teaching departments of the University were considered by the Commission.

The recommendations of the study were as follows:

(1) For better performance of the departments, efforts should be made by all of them to establish and maintain

live contacts with national research-funding agencies, nationally recognised institutes and research centres for making full use of their facilities and resources.

(2) University departments with necessary facilities and competent staff should be given the freedom to design and vary the courses and examination procedures in the interest of academic progress.

(3) There should be only one Board of Studies for one discipline, for co-ordination and development of courses at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels, with the head of the department as ex-officio Chairman of the concerned Board and two or three eminent experts from outside the University. The term of the Board was to be 3 years with rotation of one-third of the members who would retire every year. The Board of studies be appointed by the Syndicate on the basis of proposals made by the Vice-Chancellor as per rules.

(4) The office of the Dean might be invested with greater responsibilities. The Dean was to be the executive officer of the faculty and he could be delegated some of

the responsibilities of the Vice-Chancellor and the Registrar for the administration of routine matters.

(5) The headships of departments might be rotated on the basis of seniority for a three-year period among the professors in the department.

The Commission visited 4 government colleges and eight private colleges affiliated to the University of Kerala and gave in detail the problems prevalent in the functioning of these colleges.

The peculiar system of affiliation prevailing in this State forces the universities to do a vast array of functions which no human system can from one central point do satisfactorily. The communal rotation and reservation quota system for the recruitment of staff in the affiliated colleges is one of the causes for the deterioration of standards.

Ascertaining a few criteria for a viable college like adequate finance, dedicated staff, limited enrolment, effective leadership of the Principal, adequate facilities and excellent management, the Commission observed that a



good number of colleges under the University of Kerala were not viable and were to be closed.

The Commission observed that there was political interference in the affairs of the university to such an extent that it had lost its autonomy and sunk to the level of a government department.

#### Commission for University of Calicut<sup>27</sup>

The Commission enquired into the working of the University of Calicut under a similar provision in the Calicut University Act, 1975. The same tools were used for collection of data and the Commission visited 2 government colleges and 6 private colleges selected at random.

The major recommendations were common to those given in the report on the University of Kerala. However, more emphasis had been given on some issues in the report on the University of Calicut.

The Commission observed that there was more political interference in the affairs of this University. As an immediate step in the direction of depoliticisation of academic life and activities, the Commission recommended

that election to the governing bodies of the University should be replaced to a large extent by rotation on the basis of seniority or on the basis of nomination by the Chancellor.

It was recommended that the University departments should conduct their own specialised post-graduate courses adopting the semester system, internal assessment and the modern methods of evaluation like internal examination and the system of cumulative records.

To prevent overcrowding in the pre-degree classes, the pre-degree course could be shifted to the secondary school system or to junior colleges and an inter-university board could be entrusted with the job of holding pre-degree examination in the state.

The office of the Pro-Chancellor should be abolished and the Vice-Chancellor and the Deans should be vested with more powers and functions.

A centre for research on higher education in Kerala should be started under the auspices of the universities in the State but academically independent of them to study the problems of higher education.

### Report of the Expert Committee for Autonomous Colleges<sup>28</sup>

The Government of Kerala set up an expert committee under the Chairmanship of Dr.K.Gopalan, Vice-Chancellor, Cochin University of Science and Technology, to study the various aspects of the proposal to have autonomous colleges in the State. The report was submitted in April 1985. The respondents were university employees, teachers, students, educational administrators, representatives of private managements and the public.

The respondents expressed the following apprehensions on the introduction of the system of autonomous colleges.

- 1) Autonomous colleges will be considered elitist, enjoying special privileges, with ordinary colleges classified as second rate.
- 2) The teachers and the private managements may misuse the powers they get in the system, leading to corruption and victimisation of staff and students.
- 3) In conferring autonomous status, politicians and communal leaders will exercise an unholy influence.

The Expert Committee recommended to the government to establish autonomous colleges in the State on the following grounds.

The teachers will become more responsible. The colleges will not enjoy any special privilege. The regulations regarding the admission, appointments etc., will be applicable to these colleges also. A properly functioning control mechanism will check the misuse of power. As a first step, the Committee recommended that pre-degree courses be de-linked from colleges.

#### Research Studies

Victor Baldridge and others<sup>29</sup> undertook a project study of the governance of institutions of higher education in the United States. The study was conducted on a sample of colleges and universities in U.S.A.

#### Findings of the study:

There are major organisational differences among colleges and universities and governance varies greatly in different types of institutions. More autonomy and control over curriculum is given to their departments by larger institutions. Faculty unionisation adds strong interest

groups in campus politics further complicating the decision-making process. Increasing centralisation of administrative decisions and the role of the Court (Senate) on the governance shows a rather pervasive decline in faculty influence.

Victor Baldrige<sup>30</sup> in his study of the Universities in New York observed that although universities possessed many features of bureaucratic model, the model itself had limitations. Universities possessed characteristics which differentiated them from other complex bureaucracies.

Gordon H. Bell and Winnie Wade<sup>31</sup> in their study on "Modular Course design in Britain" gave in detail the factors which influenced the development of a new wave of thinking in course design. According to them, the ruling principle in the 1980's and 90's became that of the market place. Students acting as consumers and controlling producers became the dominant feature. In 1989, public sector higher educational institutions were restructured as independent corporations and organised as businesses. This system became client-centred rather than provider-centred as in traditional British educational system. In the

present system, the process of customising courses to suit the projected needs of students as clients was most prevalent. The key characteristic of the modular debate was flexibility in organisational structure. The need for flexible learning was based on the following rationale:

1. providing the skills and competence needed to cope with rapid change
2. preparing students for the world in which they live and work
3. increasing motivation amongst students.

The major criticism against modular course design was that it ignored the broader educational values of intrinsically worthwhile teaching and learning activities.

D.P.Sinha<sup>32</sup> in his study identified four major areas of educational management. (1) Management of financial resources; (2) Academic management; (3) Development of organisational structure and (4) Management of human resources. He considered the management of human resources as the most important area.

A.H.Hommadi<sup>33</sup> in his research study on university administration gave an account of the many drawbacks of university administration in developing countries.

The five major objectives of the study were: (1) to give a better picture of educational administration in third world countries; (2) to study and analyse the nature of university administration; (3) to study the role of administrators, professors, students, government, society and community in educational administration; (4) to frame effective rules for better administration of universities and (5) to set novel educational practices in universities.

The study revealed the following facts: (1) In developing countries, universities were institutionalised to such an extent as to lead to the introduction of important reforms deviating from tradition; (2) their faculty position was low compared to international standards and their salary was also much less; (3) Evaluation of the work of teachers was not done systematically; (4) There was a high degree of correlation between the political and social attitudes of students and socio-economic variables and their political ideology.

The findings of the study regarding administrative practices and the structure of organisation were:

- 1) The universities in developing countries had grown in an unplanned manner so that the lines of authority and responsibility were not clearly demarked.
- 2) Administrative effectiveness in the areas of finance, budget, purchase etc., was low owing to the lack of effective rules and policies.
- 3) The various governing bodies and committees of the universities functioned less effectively owing to a variety of reasons such as their size and the scope of their functions.
- 4) Ineffective communication among the various organisational strata of the university was one of the many reasons for these problems.

The major recommendation among the many put forward by Dr.Hommadi for the improvement of the system of higher education was that the organisational set-up at the top level should be completely overhauled.



G.D.Sharma<sup>34</sup> studied the cost and efficiency in the university system in India. Cost was analysed in terms of teaching inputs, student services, administrative services of the universities and some colleges, selected for the study. The study revealed that the expenditure on administrative and supporting services accounted for more than the expenditure on teaching input.

Y.S.Kiranmayi<sup>35</sup> in an article "Need for scientific management of universities in India" pointed out many drawbacks of the present system of university management.

(1) Lack of farsighted planning in our universities, (2) The head of the university being burdened with routine administrative matters to the neglect of academic affairs, (3) The authorities at the top level being autocratic and ignoring the contributions of the lower levels, (4) Power being concentrated at the very top level of the organisation and therefore delegation of decentralisation not being seen in the universities, (5) Lack of effective control mechanism.

Moonis Raza, Y.P.Aggarwal and Mabud Hasan<sup>36</sup> have made an in-depth study of the area of higher education in

India since independence. The following attributes of the higher education sector were examined with the help of data collected through surveys.

- 1) phases of expansion of enrolment
- 2) share of science and technology in enrolment
- 3) share of postgraduation and research in enrolment
- 4) inequities in higher education
  - a) scheduled caste--non-scheduled caste differentials
  - b) male-female differentials
  - c) regional disparities.
- 5) some aspects of financing of higher education
- 6) some aspects of education-manpower mismatches.

Some crucial problems facing higher education in India were also studied and the possible approaches towards their resolution suggested. The problems studied were grouped into three broad sets as follows:

- 1) problems of orientation
- 2) problems of content, and
- 3) problems of management.

The study revealed that while there had been a massive expansion in enrolment in higher education in the sixties and during the seventies and eighties, the emphasis shifted from rapid expansion to consolidation and quality improvement. But the process of transformation was too slow and too weak to bring about a decisive change in the character of higher educational development in the country. The study pointed to the fact that there has been a steady increase in enrolment in the arts and commerce faculties at the cost of science, engineering and medicine faculties.

Regarding inequities in higher education, it was revealed that inequities between scheduled castes and others and also between males and females continued to be of a high order.

The study revealed the fact that in our country, there was lack of perspective planning of education based on manpower requirements in almost all the sectors of development.

The authors put forward valuable suggestions for the betterment of the higher education system in India. It was proposed that the higher education system had to be

utilitarian as well as value-oriented. The country had to give emphasis to both generation of new knowledge and its transmission. The education system in our country according to the authors should have elements of specialisation as well as general streams.

Dr.M.V.Pylee<sup>37</sup>, an eminent educationist in his paper on "Governance of Universities" has stated that the universities in our country are going through a crisis today. Instead of becoming centres of excellence, they are becoming centres of mediocrity, partisan politics and conflict. In order to reform and revitalise the universities, Dr.Pylee puts forward a series of suggestions for the reorganisation of the present system of governance. The first suggestion is that instead of the Governor of the state assuming the Chancellorship by virtue of his office, an eminent educationist or a well-known professional or public servant should be appointed as the Chancellor/Visitor. In his opinion, there is no need for a minister Pro-Chancellor in the university system. Dr.Pylee puts forth a novel idea of a National Education Commission to be constituted by the Central Government. This Commission should prepare a panel of well-qualified persons from all over the country suitable for appointment as

Vice-Chancellors. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, according to Dr. Pylee, should be a well-known educational administrator, who should be appointed in consultation with the Vice-Chancellor.

As regards the constitution of the governing bodies of the universities, in Dr. Pylee's opinion, the Senate should be abolished and the Syndicate should be a compact, homogeneous body with representatives from different segments of the university, the Government and the public. No elected members, politicians or political representatives, should be included in the Syndicate. Deans, Professors and Principals of colleges should be chosen by rotation. Outside experts from professional bodies, research institutions and industries and student representatives should be included. The Faculties and the Boards of Studies also should be constituted as in the case of the Academic Council. Dr. Pylee advocates the abolition of the affiliating system and the introduction of the system of autonomous colleges.

R. Gangadharan Nair<sup>38</sup> studied the management of higher educational institutions in Kerala. The objectives of his study were

- 1) to study the cultural and social environment of higher educational institutions in Kerala and assess the impact of such environmental factors in the total management process of these institutions,
- 2) to examine the rate of growth in enrolment and expenditure of arts and science colleges in Kerala and the role of government and private agencies in running them,
- 3) to ascertain how far these institutions were successful in exploring and utilising finances and to compare their effectiveness in government and private colleges in Kerala,
- 4) to identify the peculiarities in the organisational structure of higher educational institutions,
- 5) to measure the leadership style of the Principals of the Arts and Science colleges and to ascertain the level of academic participation in decision-making,
- 6) to examine whether there was motivation of any kind among teachers to acquire higher skills and

7) to develop a functional model for the effective management of higher educational institutions.

#### Findings of the Study

The problem of numbers was the most crucial problem faced by the system of higher education in the State. This had been due to the adherence to the 'social demand approach' to educational planning which provided for education to as many as possible.

More than half of the financial resources placed at the disposal of the colleges in the State remained unutilised during the period of study. Private colleges were better than government colleges in utilising financial resources.

The practice of setting up of objectives in the management of the institutions was totally absent.

Principals of colleges functioned in a benevolent autocratic style. No effective delegation of power existed in the colleges.

### Suggestions

A functional model for the better management of the higher educational institutions had been suggested in the study. This model included four managerial functions, (1) Planning, (2) Delegation, (3) Participative decision-making and (4) Effective use of information system.

The structural changes in the institutions suggested were as follows:

- 1) Posts of Principals should be made selective.
- 2) Orientation programmes should be conducted for the Principals.
- 3) Pay scales of the Principals should be made equivalent to those of senior professors of universities.
- 4) A separate cell for ensuring interpersonal relationship among students under the guidance of a teacher should be set up in each college.
- 5) Teachers should be properly motivated for acquiring higher qualifications.



The Kerala Educational Research Centre sponsored a commission to carry out a study of the Christian colleges in Kerala under the chairmanship of the well-known educationist Prof. Samuel Mathai in 1980.<sup>39</sup> The main objective of the study was to have an appraisal of the work of Christian colleges in Kerala. The data were collected through questionnaires and discussions with the Principals, members of the managements, staff and students.

### Findings

Private colleges under the control of government and the universities lacked academic and financial freedom. Student indiscipline and violence affected smooth functioning of colleges. Heavy enrolment of students created problems for proper management of the colleges. Library and laboratory facilities were not properly used. Teachers were not dedicated to their work and most of them were antagonistic towards management. They were not involved in decision-making.

A review of the existing literature shows that there is scarcely any detailed work probing into the study of academic matters in the universities and their importance. An attempt has therefore been made in the

present study to fill this gap by utilising the available reports of various Committees and Commissions. This work is an endeavour to examine the problems in as much detail as possible and to offer suitable recommendations.

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## Chapter 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The broad objectives of the present study have already been stated in the introductory chapter. This chapter gives specific objectives, a description of the problem area, the methodology adopted for the study, sample design, tools employed and the limitations of the study.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To make a thorough study of the powers, duties and functions of the academic bodies of the universities in Kerala, viz., the Academic Council, the Faculties and the Boards of Studies and to find out whether they function effectively within the legal frameworks of the universities in Kerala.
2. To find out the role of the academic bodies in designing and implementing academic programmes in the universities and also to understand how far these bodies are effective in this regard.

3. To explore the various aspects of the different academic programmes in the universities in Kerala in terms of their design and implementation.
4. To have a thorough knowledge of the various problems involved in the designing of the courses, their content and curricula.
5. To find out the genuine reasons for the failure as well as non-implementation of certain academic programmes in the universities in Kerala.

#### METHODOLOGY

The study is based on both primary and secondary data collected from four universities in Kerala, viz., the University of Kerala, University of Calicut, Mahatma Gandhi University and the Cochin University of Science and Technology.

#### Secondary Data

The Acts and Statutes of the four universities selected for the study, their annual reports, and calendars is the main source of the secondary data. In addition to these documents, the minutes of the meetings of the



Syndicate, the Academic Councils, Faculties and Boards of Studies have been made use of for the collection of secondary data. Another source of secondary data is the administrative reports and other publications of the State Directorate of Collegiate Education, State Planning Board and the Higher Education Department of the State government. The reports of the various education commissions appointed by the Central and State governments, U.G.C. and the universities also form a reliable source of secondary data.

#### **Primary Data**

The primary data comprise the opinions of two groups of respondents. They are the academicians and the academic administrators of the universities in Kerala. The group of academicians consists of the teachers of the university departments of study who are further classified into two sub-groups, viz., (1) teachers who have/had membership in one academic body or more, who are the academic decision-makers, and (2) teachers who are/were not such members who are mere academicians. The group of academic administrators includes persons like Vice-Chancellors, Pro-Vice-Chancellors, Registrars and Syndicate members who are not teachers by profession.

Groups I and II: Teachers of the Teaching Departments of  
the Universities

Table 3.1 shows University-wise distribution of teachers of the Teaching departments of the four universities under this study as on 1.1.1992.

Table 3.1  
University-wise Distribution of Teachers as on 1-1-1992\*

Sl. No.	Name of the University	Teachers		Total
		Members of academic bodies Group I	Non-Members Group II	
1.	University of Kerala	122	98	220
2.	University of Calicut	97	81	178
3.	Mahatma Gandhi University	28	39	67
4.	Cochin University of Science and Technology	107	89	196
Total		354	307	661

\* Statistics taken by the researcher by visiting the University Departments.

The respondents were selected by the disproportionate stratified sampling method. This is a method of sampling in which equal numbers of cases are taken from each stratum without considering the size of the strata in proportion to the universe. It is also called controlled sampling. Equal samples (more than 20%) were selected from the two strata of the universe, viz., the academic decision-makers and the academicians.

Table 3.2 gives the number of respondents selected for the study from groups I and II.

Table 3.2  
Number of Respondents Selected from Groups I and II

Sl. No.	Name of the University	No. of respondents selected		Total
		Members	Non-members	
		Group I	Group II	
1.	University of Kerala	27	26	53
2.	University of Calicut	22	21	43
3.	Mahatma Gandhi University	8	12	20
4.	Cochin University of Science and Technology	25	23	48
	Total	82	82	164

## Group III: Academic Administrators

The group of academic administrators comprising Vice-Chancellors, Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Registrars of the four Universities also included those members of the Syndicates of these universities who are not teachers. The student members of all the Syndicates were excluded from the list. The total number of persons in this group was 34. As this group was small, it was decided to include all the members in the group for the study.

Table 3.3 shows the university-wise distribution of academic administrators.

Table 3.3

## University-wise Distribution of Academic Administrators

Sl. No.	Name of the University	No. of academic administrators	No. of common members in all the 4 universities	Grand Total
1.	University of Kerala	7		
2.	University of Calicut	10	3	
3.	Mahatma Gandhi University	4		
4.	Cochin University of Science and Technology	10		
		31	3	34

Source: Calendars of the Universities.

Out of the 34 respondents in group III, only 21 persons who responded could be included in the study.

#### **Tools for Collection of Data**

The major tool employed for the collection of the primary data was the questionnaire circulated among the three groups of respondents selected for the study. In the questionnaire, the informants were required to furnish their bio-data and the details of their membership in the academic bodies. The questionnaire comprised questions eliciting responses on different aspects of design and implementation of academic programmes in the universities and the functioning of academic bodies of the universities. The questionnaire is given under Appendix I on page 281.

#### **Administration and Collection of Data**

The researcher visited the teaching departments of the universities and handed over copies of the questionnaire in person to the respondents selected from groups I and II. The questionnaire was distributed with a personal appeal to each of them (in addition to the written appeal attached to the questionnaire) to fill in the questionnaire to the best of their knowledge and thus cooperate in the study. The filled-in questionnaire copies

were collected back.

Copies of the questionnaire were mailed by the researcher to the respondents in group III with an appeal to send them back to the researcher's postal address. Out of the 34 respondents included in the study, only 21 persons responded.

### Case Studies

In order to go into the circumstances under which some specialised courses conducted by the universities got discontinued some time after their implementation, case studies of such courses have been made in the thesis. Relevant data required in this subject had been collected from the records available in the university offices and the concerned departments of study. For making an in-depth study, interviews were conducted by the researcher. Two types of informants were selected for the interviews. They were the heads of the teaching departments where such cases occurred and a senior faculty member of the department concerned, selected at random. These functionaries were interviewed with the help of a schedule. Interview schedule is given under Appendix II on page 292. The opinions and the comments that emerged out of the interviews were used for the final analysis.

The secondary data collected from the minutes of the Academic Councils of the universities were interpreted and analysed by the method of content analysis.

#### Statistical Method

In order to find out whether there was a consensus of view or differences of opinion among the three groups of respondents in their average perception, the statistical method of Friedman's test was used in this study (Neave and Worthington, 1988).

In this test, the null hypothesis  $H_0$  is that there is no difference in the average perception among the three groups. The alternative hypothesis  $H_1$  is that the given sample provides evidence to suspect differences in the average perception of these groups. The observations within each row are ranked from 1 to  $K$  (where  $K = 3$  in the present case). If  $H_0$  is true, we would expect the ranks 1, 2 and 3 to be fairly evenly distributed among the three groups. On the other hand if there are substantial differences, then we would expect to find at least one group getting consistently high or low ranks. The criterion for the similarity of views is thus judged by the ranks assigned to the three groups so that if  $H_0$  ( $H_1$ ) is

true, we would expect small (large) differences among these average ranks. The overall mean  $\bar{R}$  of the ranks is  $\frac{1}{2}(K+1)$ , where  $K$  is the number of groups.

$$S = \sum_{j=1}^K (\bar{R}_j - \bar{R})^2$$

Friedman's statistic  $M$  is  $\frac{12n}{K(K+1)}S$ , where  $K$  = number of groups and  $n$  = number of responses.  $H_0$  will be rejected in favour of  $H_1$  if  $M \geq$  critical value.

In the event of the evidence supporting the alternative hypothesis  $H_1$ , it becomes necessary to identify which of the groups exhibits such differences in perception. Towards this objective, further analysis can be carried out using multiple comparison test. The test is designed to evaluate the significance in the differences between the  $i^{\text{th}}$  and  $j^{\text{th}}$  groups. Thus the null hypothesis  $H_0$  for the comparison test is that there is no difference in perception between the  $i^{\text{th}}$  and  $j^{\text{th}}$  groups. The multiple comparison test is based on the absolute differences  $|D_{ij}| = |R_i - R_j|$  where  $R_i$  and  $R_j$  are the rank sums of  $i^{\text{th}}$  and  $j^{\text{th}}$  columns, to examine a possible difference between the  $i^{\text{th}}$  and  $j^{\text{th}}$  populations. If there is no real difference between the two populations,  $|D_{ij}|$  is likely to



be small. A substantial difference between the  $i^{\text{th}}$  and  $j^{\text{th}}$  populations will tend to produce a large value of  $|D_{ij}|$ ,

$$\text{The test statistic } T_{ij} = \frac{D_{ij}}{\sqrt{\frac{nK(K+1)}{6}}} \text{ is}$$

distributed normally with 0 mean and unit standard deviation.

The  $i^{\text{th}}$  and  $j^{\text{th}}$  populations differ if  $|D_{ij}| = |R_i - R_j|$  is large and consequently if  $|T_{ij}|$  is large, the critical regions will take the form  $|T_{ij}| \geq Z$ , where  $Z$  is the standard normal value corresponding to a single-tail probability of  $\frac{\alpha}{K(K+1)}$

In the present study, the Friedman's test alone was employed. As there was no great difference in the average perception of all the three groups of respondents, the need for making use of the multiple comparison test did not arise.

#### LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study has been restricted to the conditions obtaining in the four universities in Kerala, in respect of the functioning of their academic bodies with special

reference to the design and implementation of academic programmes. These four universities are (1) the University of Kerala, (2) the University of Calicut, (3) the Mahatma Gandhi University and (4) the Cochin University of Science and Technology. The first three universities are of the teaching-affiliating type having colleges affiliated to them, and having several departments of study attached to them. The fourth University, the Cochin University of Science and Technology has no affiliated colleges, but has many teaching departments. The laws of these universities are patterned in a similar model, which provide for almost the same authorities in the universities. The fifth university in the State, the Kerala Agricultural University, is of the federal type and is a purely professional university. The laws of this university as well as its authorities are different from those obtaining in the other four universities. In the Agricultural University, only specialised courses in a particular field of specialisation are run, whereas in the other four universities, specialised as well as general courses are conducted. For these reasons, the Kerala Agricultural University has been excluded from the scope of the present study.

In selecting the respondents for the study, samples were taken only from the university teaching departments. Teachers working in affiliated colleges were not considered. This was because by and large the affiliated colleges generally run only traditional courses without the uniqueness obtaining in the university departments. Also because the selection procedures and the qualifications prescribed for recruitment of staff are rigorous in universities as compared to those for selection of staff in affiliated colleges, the teaching staff in the universities will be better-qualified than their counterparts in colleges. Again, while many colleges do not have good facilities for research work, all university departments invariably have handsome facilities for pure and applied research, especially in the matter of equipment in the laboratories and reference books and journals in the libraries. The obvious result is that teachers in the university departments will be fully conversant with the advanced developments in the subjects of their study and will be automatic choices for nomination as chairmen of boards of studies and as deans of faculties, with the responsibility to design courses, draft syllabi and update them when required. Also the courses with the same

subjects of study in colleges and university departments have different syllabi with the latter being more rigorous and upto-date. It was therefore considered desirable to depend on the responses of such staff to the questionnaire eliciting information on the different aspects of the present study.

In making an in-depth study of the functioning of the academic bodies of the universities, content analysis of the minutes of the Academic Councils of the three universities, viz., the University of Kerala, the University of Calicut and the Cochin University of Science and Technology was carried out. In the Mahatma Gandhi University, the Academic Council has not been constituted to date, though the laws of the university provide for such a body. Therefore this study could not include the content analysis of the minutes of the Academic Council of the Mahatma Gandhi University.

As the present study is concerned with the role of academic bodies of the universities, the role of the governing bodies such as the Senate and the Syndicate has not been studied in detail, though a review of their duties, responsibilities and functions has been made in general.

**CHAPTERISATION: PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY**

The present study is arranged in six chapters. The first chapter gives a general introduction to the study. The second chapter gives a detailed review of literature related to the study. The third chapter deals with the objectives of the study, the methodology adopted and the limitations of the study. The fourth chapter surveys the powers, duties and functions of the academic bodies in the universities in Kerala and their effectiveness in terms of carrying out their functions. The fifth chapter presents a detailed analysis of the various facets of academic programmes in universities. The last chapter provides a summary of the study, its conclusions and recommendations.

## Chapter 4

### ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF ACADEMIC BODIES OF UNIVERSITIES

The system of higher education in India comprises universities and other institutions of higher learning. Universities are statutory bodies established by Acts of Parliament, or of state legislatures. The Gnanam Committee has given the following scheme of classification of universities in general.<sup>1</sup>

1. From the sponsoring government angle, universities can be classified into two types - central universities and state universities. Central universities are established under Acts of Parliament while state universities are established under Acts of the state legislatures concerned.

2. From the structural point of view, universities are divided into different categories as given below.

(a) Teaching, residential and affiliating type in which a number of separate colleges are affiliated to the university and the university itself runs its own teaching and research departments.

(b) Federal type university which is usually limited to a city with a number of colleges or departments of teaching and research closely associated with its working.

(c) Unitary type university which has all teaching and research carried out at a single campus, and

(d) Purely affiliating type of university which has a number of colleges affiliated to it.

3. From the status point of view, universities are classified into universities proper and deemed universities.

4. From the scope/role point of view, there are general universities and specialised/technical universities. The second category includes National Institutes such as the Indian Institutes of Technology, the Indian Institute of Science, Medical universities, Women's universities and Language universities.

The universities and the institutes of higher learning are authorised by the state or central

legislatures to award degrees. While universities are established by Acts of Parliament or of state legislatures, institutions of national importance like the Indian Institutes of Technology/Science are declared as such by the Government of India by an Act of Parliament. Institutions deemed to be universities are given university status on the recommendation of the University Grants Commission in terms of section 3 of its Act.

Institutions like Indian Institutes of Management which award diplomas are not established by legislation nor are they deemed to be universities.

The scheme of classification given above is not mutually exclusive. By such classifications, the types, structure and roles of different categories of universities and other institutions of higher learning can be identified from their own perspectives which enable us to understand the relevance of these classes of higher educational institutions and also the various categories of governance in them.

The Act under which a university is established provides for the definitions, objectives of the university,



its jurisdiction, officers, authorities of the university, their members and their powers.<sup>2</sup> The basic outline and the general demarcation of university authorities are pronounced in the Act. Any change in the roles and powers of the university authorities can be brought about only by appropriate amendments of the Acts. The Statutes are usually elaboration of Acts which are framed under the authority of the legislature. Changes in the statutes can be made only with the approval of a government level body or authority like the Chancellor.

Acts and Statutes of the different universities are strikingly similar, though not identical, in most of the major respects. "The format and content of the various university Acts in the country shows differences only in degree and not in kind".<sup>3</sup> The objectives, the sections, the phrases, terminologies etc., are almost the same. There are only slight variations in length, in detail and in nomenclature corresponding to the authorities or officers of the university, their powers and functions.

The University Grants Commission has accepted the recommendation of the Gnanam Committee regarding a Model Act for the Universities of the country for removing the deficiencies in the existing Acts of the Universities

and for providing for changes necessary for improving the quality of education as well as for effective governance of the university system.<sup>4</sup>

The Model Act provides a model for the objectives of universities, the officers, the authorities and their constitution and powers. As the present study deals with the authorities of the university, especially the academic bodies, the following discussion provides in detail a comparison between the constitution and functions of these bodies as given in the Model Act and as actually obtaining in the universities in Kerala.

Under the Model Act, there are only two authorities, the Executive Council (restyled as the Board of Management) and the Academic Council. In all the universities in Kerala, the Acts provide for five major authorities, viz., the Senate, the Syndicate, the Academic Council, the Faculties and the Boards of Studies.<sup>5</sup> The Finance Committee and the Planning Committee are the other two authorities. In all the universities except in the Cochin University of Science and Technology, the Students' Council is also included in the list of the authorities.

**THE SENATE**

Under the Model Act, the Senate is only a deliberative and consultative body and not an authority and it is renamed as the Societal Consultative Council (S.C.C.). The Senate in the Universities of Kerala and Calicut enjoys the position as the supreme authority of the University. The Acts provide that "the Senate shall be the supreme authority of the University with the power to review any action of the Syndicate or the Academic Council that is not in accordance with the powers conferred on it".<sup>6</sup> The major powers of the Senate in the four universities under study include determining the degrees, diplomas and other academic distinctions to be granted by the universities, making amending or repealing statutes, cancelling or amending ordinances passed by the Syndicate and regulations passed by the Academic Council.<sup>7</sup> Reviewing from time to time broad policies and programmes of the universities and considering and passing resolutions on the Annual Reports and Annual Accounts and rendering advice on matters referred to them by the Vice-Chancellor or other authorities of the universities are the three main functions of the S.C.C. as provided for in the Model Act. These are also included in the powers of the Senate of the four universities in Kerala.

The Senate in all the four universities is a large body representing diverse academic, social and political groups. The number of members in the Senate is large in these universities, with the members being ex-officio, elected or nominated. A wide cross-section of the society finds representation in the Senate, either by election or by nomination. The total number of members in the Senates of both the Kerala and Calicut universities is 117. In the Cochin University of Science and Technology, the number is 75 and in the Mahatma Gandhi University it is 124.<sup>8</sup> Elected members in these universities include college and university teachers, members of the Legislative Assembly, members of trade unions, members of university non-teaching staff and students. Nominated members include representatives from research institutions, cultural institutions, chambers of commerce, industries, authors, journalists, lawyers, sports and linguistic minorities. Ex-officio members include top officers of the university, officers of the government and members of the Legislative Council who are nominated by the Government.

In the Model Act, however, there is no provision for election of members to the S.C.C. The members whose number is limited between 75 and 100 are to be selected by

rotation on the basis of seniority or by nomination. The members are to be representatives of teachers, industry, commerce, legislature, voluntary agencies, agriculture and so on. Representatives of non-teaching staff and students who show excellence in curricular and extra-curricular activities are also given due representation in the S.C.C. The provision in the Model Act for the non-inclusion of elected members in the Senate is contrary to the actual situation in the universities in Kerala where the number of elected members is large. In the Kerala/Calicut universities, out of the total 117 members, 78 are elected. In the Mahatma Gandhi University, 91 out of 124 are elected and in the Cochin University, out of the total 75, 38 are elected members.

The Senate in the universities in Kerala, acts as a forum where the performance of the university is reviewed and appraised and it puts restraint on the powers of the Syndicate and the Academic Council. It ensures proper accountability and audit of the role of the Syndicate. The Gnanam Committee refers to the Senate as "a unique open house wherein we can get the social feed-back about the university from wider cross-sections of the community."<sup>9</sup> The S.C.C. in the place of Senate in the Model Act is only

a consultative body which does not possess the powers to override decisions of the Syndicate or the Academic Council.

#### THE SYNDICATE

The Syndicate in the four universities in Kerala is a small body consisting of less than twenty members.<sup>10</sup> The members are ex-officio, elected or nominated. The Model Act provides for the Executive Council, renamed as the Board of Management, which is one of the two authorities consisting of not more than 15 members. All the members are to be nominated on the basis of seniority and rotation. The Board of Management under this Act is the chief executive body as in the case of the four universities in Kerala. The members are to be representative of the Government, Principals of affiliated colleges, university faculties and distinguished educationists. The members of the Syndicates of the universities in the State represent teachers from university departments and affiliated colleges and representatives of the Senate, the Academic Council and the Government.

A common criticism levelled against the membership of the Syndicates of the majority of universities in Kerala is that the Syndicates are dominated by elected members. In the University of Kerala, out of the 20 Syndicate members, 15 are elected.<sup>11</sup> The pattern of membership in the Syndicate of the University of Calicut is also the same as that of the University of Kerala, whereas in the Cochin University, only 5 out of 15 members of the Syndicate are elected.<sup>12</sup> In the Mahatma Gandhi University, there are no elected members at all. All the members other than the ex-officio members are nominated, their number being 10 out of 15.<sup>13</sup> In this University, the provision for membership in the Syndicate is seen to be in tune with that of the Model Act.

The major powers of the Syndicate as provided in the Acts of the universities in Kerala include affiliation of institutions, making ordinances, proposing statutes, establishing, maintaining and managing colleges and institutions of research and other institutions of higher learning, conducting university examination, approving and publishing results, appointing members to the Boards of Studies etc.<sup>14</sup>

In addition to the powers and duties conferred and imposed on it by the Act, the Syndicate has a myriad of powers and functions provided by the Statutes. A major academic function provided by the Statute is the management and control of departments of study and research in the university, university laboratories, institutes of research and other institutions established by the university.<sup>15</sup>

In the Model Act, though the Board of Management is the principal executive body of the university, the academic functions do not come in its purview. All the academic activities of the university are controlled and managed by the Academic Council which is the sole authority responsible for academic functions. This provision in the Model Act is in sharp contrast with the existing provisions of the Acts of the universities in Kerala. A general criticism against the functions of the Syndicate in these universities is that the heavy concentration of powers in this authority often leads to the erosion of the independence of the academic bodies. The Boards of Studies of the universities and their chairmen are appointed by the Syndicate. The academic regulations as passed by the Academic Council on the recommendations of the faculties or



Boards of Studies cannot be implemented without the approval of the Syndicate. These functions of the Syndicate clearly indicate that the academic bodies of the universities in Kerala do not have the sole authority over the management of academic activities.

#### THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL

In the four universities in Kerala, under this study "the Academic Council shall be the principal academic body of the University and shall, subject to the provisions of the Act and the Statutes, have the control and general regulation, and be responsible for the maintenance of standards of instruction, education and examinations within the university and shall exercise such other powers and perform such other duties as may be conferred or imposed upon it by the Statutes".<sup>16</sup> The Academic Council consists mostly of representatives of faculties, Principals of affiliated colleges, Heads of University teaching departments, Deans of faculties, members of the Senate, students etc. The pattern of membership of this body is seen to be in accordance with the recommendations in the Model Act in this regard. However, the Model Act provides that there shall be no election to this authority also, as in the case of the Senate and the Syndicate. In the

Academic Councils of the universities in Kerala, the members are ex-officio, elected or nominated. In the Model Act, the number of members in this University has been fixed to be from 50 to 75. The Academic Councils in all the four universities is relatively a smaller body than the Senate, the number being below 75.

The major function of the Academic Council as provided in the Acts is "to make regulations, amend or repeal them".<sup>17</sup> The Academic Council which is the supreme authority with regard to academic matters has a variety of duties and functions as provided in the Acts and the Statutes. These include matters regarding introduction of new courses, prescription of syllabi and text books, institution of teaching posts and teaching departments, admission of students, appointment of examiners, advancement of research and knowledge, award of prizes and scholarships etc. The Model Act also provides for all these functions of the Academic Council. "By virtue of its constitution, according to which it is a body consisting of representatives of the Faculties, Boards of Studies, University Departments and constituent and affiliated colleges, it provides a rich fund of varied experience of the different academic disciplines with the help of which

the university can lay down sound general academic principles for the guidance of bodies like Boards of Studies and Faculties".<sup>18</sup>

Though the Academic Council is considered to be the supreme authority in the sphere of academic activity, in practice, in the universities in Kerala, it is seen that this body does not have the requisite powers for implementing its decisions. Its decisions are passed on to the Syndicate or the Senate for final approval. Therefore the Academic Council has only recommendatory powers even in matters of purely academic nature.<sup>19</sup> The provisions in the Model Act with regard to the functioning of the Academic Council differ from those in the Acts of the universities in Kerala in that the Academic Council in the Model Act is the final authority as far as academic matters are concerned. The decisions on all academic matters, framing of statutes, ordinances and regulations relating to academic issues, taken by the Academic Council are final, not needing the approval of any other authority.

#### THE FACULTIES

Section 26 of the Acts of all the four universities provides that "the university may have such

Faculties as may be prescribed by the Statutes from time to time". Sub-section (2) provides that each Faculty shall, subject to the control of the Academic Council, have charge of the teaching and the courses of study and research in such subjects as may be assigned to such Faculty by the Ordinances or Regulations. Sub-section (4) provides that each Faculty shall comprise such departments of teaching as may be prescribed by the Ordinances.<sup>20</sup> As far as the Faculties are concerned, the provisions in the Model Act and those in the Acts of the Universities in Kerala are more or less similar. The details as given in the Statutes are enumerated below.

The different disciplines being taught at the university are grouped into different faculty divisions. Each Faculty consists of a number of departments of the same or related disciplines. The Faculty has a council known as the "Faculty" chaired by its Dean. The Deans of Faculties are nominated by the Chancellor in consultation with the Vice-Chancellor, usually from among the Heads or Professors of the university departments.<sup>21</sup>

Each Faculty consists of the Chairmen of the various Boards of Studies and representatives elected from

the Boards of Studies or nominated by the Syndicate. The powers that are to be exercised and the duties that are to be performed by each Faculty are prescribed by the relevant Statutes of each university. The Faculty has powers to make recommendations to the Academic Council in all matters relating to the organisation of university teaching, courses of study, examination and research in the subjects of study comprised in the Faculty and also to propose additions or amendments to the Ordinances and/or Regulations relating to these matters to the Syndicate or the Academic Council. The Faculty calls for proposals from the Boards of Studies in the subjects comprised in the Faculty regarding syllabi and textbooks for the courses of studies and makes recommendations on them to the Academic Council.

Though the Faculty is responsible for all academic affairs of the university regarding teaching, research and examinations, it does not have the final authority in these matters. The Faculty like the Academic Council has only recommendatory powers.

#### THE BOARDS OF STUDIES

As per Section 28 sub-section (1) of the Acts of all the four universities, there shall be a Board of

Studies attached to each department of study in the university. Sub-section (2) of the Acts provides that the constitution and powers of the Boards of Studies shall be prescribed by the relevant statutes. The Boards of Studies are constituted by the Syndicate and the members are appointed by the Syndicate in the University of Kerala, University of Calicut and the Cochin University of Science and Technology, whereas in the Mahatma Gandhi University, the members of the Boards are nominated by the Chancellor. The Boards consist of Heads of university departments, representatives of the senior teaching staff from the departments as well as affiliated college departments and other experts. One of the members is appointed by the Vice-Chancellor as the Chairman. In the Model Act, which also provides for the Board of Studies, whose members are all nominated, there is an essential requirement that such nominees should include representatives from related industries and other user-agencies.

The Boards of Studies have powers to make recommendations with regard to courses of study and examinations in the subjects with which they deal, to propose improvements and revisions in the courses of study and syllabi, design and innovate new courses of study

periodically, recommend persons suitable for appointment as questionpaper setters and examiners and so on.

The Boards of Studies in the universities in Kerala do not have final authority in their functions. They have the powers only to make proposals or recommendations to the Faculty and the Academic Council.

#### ROLE-EFFECTIVENESS OF ACADEMIC BODIES

The main function of a university as envisaged in many educational reports and as envisioned by educational experts is to make provision for learning, research and for advancement and dissemination of knowledge. This function is clearly stated in the Acts of all the universities which detail the powers of the universities. The three authorities which carry out this function of the university are the Academic Council, the Faculty and the Board of Studies. These academic authorities or bodies are responsible for the implementation and coordination of academic activities in a university which truly reflect the ethos of that university. A university is judged by the quality of its academic programmes whose standard is determined by the academic bodies of that university. In short, a university can be assessed to have fulfilled its

most important objective only if its academic authorities function effectively and satisfactorily. In this context, a study of the functioning of the academic bodies of universities becomes useful and meaningful.

The foregoing discussion on the functioning of academic bodies in the universities in Kerala is intended to focus attention on the true state of affairs with regard to these bodies in the system of higher education and to find out how far they are effective in carrying out their duties and functions.

In order to get a clear understanding of the functioning of the academic bodies in the universities in Kerala, the minutes of the meetings of the Academic Councils of the three universities, the University of Kerala, the University of Calicut and the Cochin University of Science and Technology for a period of ten years (1976-1985) were examined in detail. The Mahatma Gandhi University was established in 1985 but its Academic Council was never constituted. Hence that university was not included in the present analysis.



Table 4.1 shows the data received from the minutes of the Academic Councils of the three universities listed above, and leads to the following findings:

In the case of the University of Kerala, out of the total number of 1241 items placed before the various meetings during the ten year period, 332 items were regarding the requests of students for relaxation of rules for admission to courses as well as those for admission to examinations. 21.4% of the items, 266 out of 1241, were concerning various matters related to examinations. Items related to examinations included reforms regarding number of chances for the examinations, matters regarding registration of students for the examinations, cancellation of examinations and improvement of marks in the university examinations. 16.4% were concerned with the teachers of the university which included upgradation of posts, norms-promotions of teachers, prescribing qualifications for the teachers etc. Course-oriented items included institution of new courses, revision of syllabi of courses, shifting of subjects between semesters or years etc. The table shows that only 14.4% of items presented were course-oriented. Formulation and amendments to regulations formed 5.5% and items regarding recognition of degrees of other

Table 4.1  
Items considered at the meetings of the Academic Councils  
of the Universities in Kerala (1976 to 1985)\*

Sl. No.	Names of Universities	Course oriented		Admission matters		Students' requests for relaxation of rules		Teacher oriented		Examination matters		Matters on Regulations		Recognition of degrees of other universities		Miscellaneous		Total
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
1.	University of Kerala	142	11.4	169	13.6	332	26.9	204	16.4	266	21.4	68	5.5	56	4.5	4	0.3	1241
2.	University of Calicut	234	23.5	172	17.3	122	12.2	82	8.2	324	32.5	41	4.1	14	1.4	0	0.8	997
3.	Cochin University of Science and Technology	588	67.9	46	5.3	15	1.7	128	14.8	52	6.0	24	2.8	7	0.8	6	0.7	866

\* Data collected by the researcher by content analysis of the minutes of Academic Councils of the Universities in Kerala (See Chapter 3 on the Methodology of data collection).

universities formed 4.5% of the total items considered.

In the case of the University of Calicut, 32.5%, i.e., 324 out of 997 items considered by the Academic Council from 1976 to 1985, were related to examination matters. Course-oriented items came next to the items on examinations. These formed 23.5%. Matters related to admission of students were 17.3%. 122 out of 997 items concerned with special requests from students for relaxation of admission and examination rules and procedures. Teacher-oriented items were only 82. Regulation amendments and formulation formed only 4.1%.

A good majority of the decisions of the Academic Council of the Cochin University of Science and Technology were 'course-oriented'. Under the main heading course-oriented, course-syllabus revisions were the major items. 67.9% of the total items were course-oriented items, out of which more than 70% were course-syllabus revision. Items related to teachers of the university came next to the course-oriented items. These were 14.8% of the total. All other items were below 10%.

The difference between the Cochin University of Science and Technology and the other two universities in the nature of their functioning is seen reflected in the items placed before the Academic Councils. Cochin University is a full-fledged University of Science and Technology which was founded "for the promotion of graduate and post-graduate studies and advanced research in applied sciences, technology, industry, commerce, management and social science".<sup>22</sup> This study reveals that this university gave importance to matters regarding implementation of new courses, course-syllabus revisions and updating of syllabi of courses. This university which has no arts and sciences colleges affiliated to it has therefore fewer number of students and also fewer examinations than the affiliating universities. Hence decisions relating to students and examinations are numerically less than those in the other two universities. The Universities of Kerala and Calicut have a large number of affiliated colleges and have a very large number of students and examinations. Therefore items relating to these headings form the major part of the agenda for the meetings of the Academic Council. It is seen that the Academic Councils of these universities are forced to allot a major portion of the time of their meetings for taking decisions on comparatively less

important matters like students' requests for relaxation of rules and also examination matters. It can be inferred that introduction of new courses, or updating of syllabi of courses gets less importance at the meetings of the Academic Councils of these affiliating universities.

It can therefore be inferred that it is the universities which have fewer students and only a small number of affiliated colleges or none at all that can do better justice to their primary duties and functions as enunciated in the laws of the university. The study further reveals the fact that items relating to the service matters of the university teachers form a major part of the total items in all the three universities.

The minutes of the Academic Councils of the universities include the minutes of the Boards of Studies and the Faculties. A detailed perusal of the minutes of these bodies makes it clear that most of their recommendations are approved by the Academic Council without any modifications. Ninetyone percent of the recommendations of the Boards of Studies which had the approval of the Faculties of the University of Kerala, were approved also by the Academic Council. In the University

of Calicut 93% and in the Cochin University 98% of such recommendations were approved by the Academic Council. The above analysis brings to light the fact that the Academic Councils of universities which have a large number of affiliated colleges are unable to do justice to their academic functions as envisaged in the Acts. They are forced to deal with routine matters like students requests, recognition of degrees of other universities and the service matters of teachers. This analysis also points to a common characteristic in the functioning of the academic bodies of all the universities irrespective of their size or nature. That is, the academic bodies, especially the Academic Councils which are defined as the supreme academic authority in universities, do just routine type of activities.

The academic bodies of a university are responsible for maintaining standards in teaching and they are expected to look after the academic interests of the university. The most important function of the academic bodies of a university as provided in the Acts is to make recommendations in regard to courses of study which includes designing and implementing new academic programmes in the university. Generally recommendations for designing

new courses and for modification of existing courses are made by the Boards of Studies to the Faculty concerned and then to the Academic Council which takes the final decision in the matter.

Question No.1 in the questionnaire prepared for the study deals with the subject of designing new courses in universities. The three groups of respondents selected for the study, the university teachers who are/were members of any academic body, university teachers who are/were not members of any of the academic bodies and some administrators of the universities were requested to mark their preferences regarding the authority taking initiative in designing a new course in a university. Table 4.2 gives an analysis of the views of these three groups.

The scores attributed by the three groups of respondents show that the preference of the groups A and C are almost identical. Groups A and C consider the 'Board of Studies' as the most important authority in a university which is responsible for designing a new course in a university. Group B chooses the 'teachers' as its first preference, whereas groups A and C perceive that teachers

Table 4.2

Perception of the three groups of respondents regarding the authority taking initiative in designing a new course in a university

Sl. No.	Description of authority	Classes of respondents and scores of responses										F.S.M.	Inference	
		A n = 82		B n = 82		C n = 21		n = 185		Rank order	Weighted average			Rank order
		Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order					
1.	Board of Studies	19.9	1	15.4	2	23.0	1	18.3	1					
2.	Faculty	10.5	3	10.0	4	10.5	3	11.7	3					
3.	Academic Council	7.0	4	10.9	3	6.0	5	8.6	4					
4.	Syndicate	6.5	5	5.2	6	5.1	6	5.8	5					
5.	Senate	0.4	9	0.2	9	3.1	7	0.6	9	0.84			H <sub>0</sub> is accepted	
6.	Government	4.0	7	0.3	8	0.8	9	2.0	6					
7.	Local community	1.5	8	0.2	9	0	10	0.8	8					
8.	Organised effort of students	0.1	10	0.4	7	2.3	8	0.5	10					
9.	Professionals	5.1	6	9.0	5	8.6	4	1.2	7					
10.	Teachers	14.4	2	19.1	1	18.4	2	16.9	2					

Class A - University Teachers who are/were members of any of the academic bodies (Academic decision makers);

Class B - University Teachers who are/were not members of the academic bodies (Academicicians);

Class C - Administrators of the University (Academic administrators).

n - Number of respondents;

Score - for each response, the numbers of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th preferences marked by the respondents multiplied by weights of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively and the resultant sums divided by the total weight of 10. Scores are standardised for the purpose of comparison;

F.S.M. - Friedman's statistic - M. M is an index for making an inference on the acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis H<sub>0</sub>;

H<sub>0</sub> - The null hypothesis is that there is no difference in the average perception of the three groups.

Tabled value of M = 7.68/



are the next important agent for designing and introducing new courses in universities. The groups A and C give the third preference to the Faculty while group B gives the third preference to the Academic Council.

The calculated value of M is only 0.84 which is very much less than the tabled value which is 7.68. Therefore the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) that there is no significant difference in perception among the three groups is accepted. The three groups consider the 'Boards of Studies' and the teachers as the important agents responsible for designing and introducing new courses in universities. The Faculty and the Academic Council come next in importance as per the average perception. Professionals in the field are also given importance by the three groups. They feel that the efforts of students, the Government and the local community do not play any important role in the matter.

The most important function of the Board of Studies as provided in the Acts of universities is the designing and implementation of new courses. The average perception of the three groups agrees with the statutory provision regarding the major function of the Board of

Studies. It can therefore be inferred that the Boards of Studies of Universities function effectively in fulfilling their role in designing new courses.

Though, in general, the Board of Studies takes the initiative in designing and implementing new academic programmes in universities, many instances can be pointed out of other agencies taking the initiative in the matter. The State Government is often the most powerful agency that takes the initiative in implementing new courses in universities. At times the Central Government also takes an initiative in the matter. A clear instance of the Central Government taking the initiative to start a course is the starting of a highly specialised course in the Cochin University of Science and Technology, the M.Sc. degree in Computer Software in the year 1986, with the sponsorship of the Defence Research and Development Organisation.

The Government of Kerala has decided to implement the U.G.C. sponsored programme of vocationalisation of the existing three-year degree programmes in the colleges affiliated to the three universities from this year.<sup>23</sup>

This scheme involves the introduction of 35 vocational subjects for the first degree course under four disciplines, (1) Science, (2) Engineering and Technology, (3) Commerce, Economics and Management, and (4) Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Without changing the basic structure of the present three year degree course, a student should be required to offer one vocational subject along with the other two or three already prescribed in the university regulations. This scheme is being started in the colleges purely on the initiative of the State Government.

In the Cochin University of Science and Technology, a specialised postgraduate degree course entitled Master of Bank Management was started in the School of Management Studies in the year 1978. The course was started on the initiative of some of the private sector banks in Kerala and the interest evinced by the then Director of the School.

Another example is the starting of the M.Com degree course in the Cochin University itself on the initiative of the teachers and the then Director of the School of Management Studies of the University. Though the

initiatives have come from external agencies, the formality of applying the scheme is invariably with the academic bodies.

Thus it is seen that, though the designing and implementation of new academic programmes in the universities are functions of academic bodies, the initiative for starting them can come from other sources as well. It can be the teachers of the universities, the heads of departments, the governments and even interested persons or groups in the society, as seen in many cases.

The academic bodies of universities are often criticised by the public on various grounds. A major criticism levelled against them in many committee reports as well as by educationists is that they are constituted with persons who do not have much interest in bringing about positive and qualitative changes in the academic field, as the election or nomination to these bodies is based primarily on political considerations. It is often criticised that the academic excellence of the persons elected or nominated to be the members of such bodies is never considered. The various commissions and committees which have looked into the problems of the higher education

system in our country have unanimously pointed out that politicisation of university authorities is one of the major afflictions of the system. They have recommended in their reports for politics-free university bodies, especially academic bodies, for their effective functioning.

The opinions of the three groups of respondents were sought about the limitations in the functioning of academic bodies of the universities, by question No.21 of the questionnaire. The respondents were requested to mark the limitations in the order of importance as perceived by them. An analysis of their views is given in Table 4.3.

The calculated value of F.S.M. is 2.71 which is less than the table value 7.800. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference in the perception of the three groups of respondents.

All the groups of respondents identify the most important limitation of the academic bodies as the fact that many of their members are not true academicians because their election or nomination is based mainly on political considerations rather than on academic

Table 4.3

Limitations of the Academic Bodies of the universities as perceived  
by the three groups of functionaries

Sl. No.	Limitations	Classes of respondents and scores of responses						F.S.M	Inference		
		A n = 82		B n = 82		C n = 21				n = 185	
		Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order				Weighted Rank average order
1.	Academic bodies do not represent true academicians because of political considerations	20.5	1	25.2	1	22.3	1	22.8	1		
2.	They do not take initiative in the formulation of academic reforms	12.4	4	14.4	3	20.3	2	14.2	3	2.71	Ho is accepted
3.	They do routine type of activities	15.2	2	17.1	2	16.4	3	16.2	2		
4.	They are not given due recognition by University authorities	12.8	3	7.5	4	5.5	4	9.6	4		

Descriptions same as for Table 4.2

Tabled value of M = 7.800.

excellence. Dr.Malcolm S.Adishesiah, Chairman of the two commissions for the Universities of Kerala and Calicut has dealt with the problem of politicisation of academic bodies in the universities in detail. He has expressed great concern at the politicisation of the two universities in the constitution of academic bodies, especially the Boards of Studies.<sup>24</sup> A recent news item in a leading Malayalam daily is a crowning example of the influence of politics in the constitution of an academic body like the Board of Studies. It has been reported that in the University of Kerala, the constitution of the Board of Studies in Malayalam by the Syndicate with comparatively junior and less competent persons has started a controversy in the university leading to the resignation of the Chairman from the Board. He and many others have alleged that the persons nominated as members are not fit to be the members of the Board and they have been nominated only on the basis of their political affiliation to the ruling party.<sup>25</sup> The Gnanam Committee which looked into the problems of university governance has also stressed this sorry state of affairs relating to the academic bodies of universities. The report states that the unacademic members who dominate academic bodies have a tendency to politicise the atmosphere of universities.<sup>26</sup> The perception of the

respondents endorses the common view that the academic bodies are not represented by true academicians because of political considerations.

The groups A and C of the respondents identify an important limitation of the academic bodies next to politicisation, that these bodies do routine types of activities, with group C members giving importance to the lack of initiative on the part of academic bodies in the formulation of academic reforms. The overall analysis of the perceptions of the three groups reveals that over-politicisation, lack of initiative and a maintenance-oriented approach by the members are identified as the major drawbacks of the academic bodies.

The three groups of respondents were requested to give their rating of the functioning of the academic bodies of the universities. They were required in question No.20 of the questionnaire to say whether they thought the academic bodies function "completely satisfactorily", "satisfactorily", "somewhat satisfactorily", "neither satisfactorily nor unsatisfactorily", "somewhat unsatisfactorily" and "completely unsatisfactorily".



The analysis of the response of the three groups is given in Table 4.4.

49%, 47% and 62% of the respondents in the groups A, B and C respectively give their rating as 'somewhat satisfactory'. Only 16 out of 82, of group A, 15 out of 82 of group B and 5 out of 21 of group C respondents considered that the academic bodies function satisfactorily. No one in group B and group C considered the functioning of academic bodies 'completely satisfactory'. This rating was given by just one person in group A. 12%, 13% and 9.5% of groups A, B and C respondents rated the functioning of academic bodies 'somewhat unsatisfactory'. The percentage of respondents giving the rating as 'completely unsatisfactory' was 7.3 in group A, 15.9 in group B and 4.8 in group C. 7.3% and 1.2% of respondents in groups A and B respectively thought that the functioning of academic bodies was 'neither satisfactory nor unsatisfactory'. Three respondents each of groups A and B did not respond to the question. An analysis of the response of the three groups shows that the majority of them do not have a high opinion about the effective functioning of academic bodies in the

Table 4.4

Ratings of the respondents on the functioning of Academic Bodies in the universities

Groups	Completely satisfactory		Satisfactory		Somewhat satisfactory		Neither satisfactory nor unsatisfactory		Somewhat unsatisfactory		Completely unsatisfactory		No response		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
A	1	0.1	16	19.5	40	49.0	6	7.3	10	12.0	6	7.3	3	3.7	82
B	0	-	15	18.3	39	47.0	1	1.2	11	13.0	13	15.9	3	3.7	82
C	0	-	5	24.0	13	62.0	0	-	2	9.5	1	4.8	0	-	21

Group A - University Teachers who are/were members of any of the academic bodies (Academic decision makers);  
 Group B - University Teachers who are/were not members of the academic bodies (Academicians);  
 Group C - Administrators of the University (Academic administrators).

universities. The ratings given by the functionaries point to the fact that the present functioning of the academic bodies needs to be improved.

By question No.22 of the questionnaire all three groups of respondents were requested to offer suggestions for improving the functioning of the academic authorities of universities. The responses of the three groups are given in Table 4.5.

The calculated value of F.S.M. is 3.1 whereas the table value is 7.800. Hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the average perception of the three groups is accepted. All the three groups of respondents unanimously suggested that membership to these bodies should be based only on academic excellence. It is an accepted fact that election as well as nomination to the various academic bodies is based considerably on political affiliations. Therefore such authorities of the universities are manned mostly by less competent and less suitable persons. Most of the commissions which have enquired into the problems of the higher education system in the country, have proposed that academic excellence should be the sole criterion for gaining membership in

Table 4.5

Proposals put forward by the three groups of respondents for improving the functioning of Academic Bodies of universities

Sl. No.	Proposals	Classes of respondents and scores of responses										F.S.M	Inference	
		A		B		C		n = 185		Rank order	Weighted average			Rank order
		Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order					
1.	Academic bodies should meet periodically and review their functioning	13.0	4	14.6	3	12.5	4	14.0	3					
2.	Membership should be based on academic excellence	25.4	1	27.3	1	22.3	1	25.9	1					
3.	Academic bodies should have freedom to discharge their functions effectively	18.8	2	21.4	2	15.6	2	19.6	2			3.1	H <sub>0</sub> is accepted	
4.	Decisions of academic bodies should not be vetoed by other university bodies except on the basis of administrative or resource consideration	13.5	3	10.1	4	14.1	3	12.1	4					

Description same as for Table 4.2.

Tabled value of M = 7.800.

academic bodies. It is observed that this recommendation has not been put into actual practice in most of the universities. In the words of Dr.M.V.Pylee, it has become "a normal pattern or practice in many state universities to nominate political party representatives on the Syndicates, the Senates and even on the Academic Councils and Boards of Studies".<sup>27</sup> He has suggested that the academic bodies should not have any elective elements. The reports on the Universities of Kerala and Calicut suggest that the principle of election to the academic bodies should be replaced by the principle of rotation on the basis of seniority or on the basis of nomination by the Chancellor on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor.<sup>28</sup> The Gnanam Committee also recommends that "election to university authorities should be dispensed with or reduced to the barest minimum; nomination or representation on the basis of merit/seniority/any other objective consideration should be the process of constituting the authorities."<sup>29</sup> Only then will persons with merit and the right academic background gain membership in the academic bodies.

The second preference marked by the three groups of respondents is for the proposal that the academic bodies should have freedom to discharge their functions

effectively. All the respondents are unanimous in suggesting that interference in the functioning of the academic bodies would lessen their efficiency. It is in this context that the concept of university autonomy has to be seen. The Gajendragadkar Committee observes that autonomy is a condition precedent, if the universities are to discharge their duties and obligations effectively and efficiently. As per the report of the Committee there are two aspects of university autonomy - (1) autonomy within a university and (2) autonomy in relation to agencies and authorities external to it, the most important of which is the State.<sup>30</sup> The positive aspect of university autonomy relates to the functioning of statutory and other bodies of a university. The committee proposes that "academics must enjoy full freedom to express their views on all matters with which they are concerned, independently of any consideration. The various committees and commissions on higher education have endorsed the views of the Gajendragadkar Committee in suggesting that the initiative in academic matters should remain with the academics. In real practice, the academic bodies are not autonomous. Interferences and pressures from various quarters pose difficulties in the implementation of many of the decisions of academic bodies. Many such instances can be cited in

the affairs of the universities in Kerala. Political parties, social and religious groups and students often interfere with the functioning of academic bodies of our universities.

The B.Sc. (Special) degree course was started in the University of Kerala in the year 1966. It was discontinued by a decision of the Syndicate in the year 1969.<sup>31</sup> This decision of the Syndicate was against the unanimous recommendation of the Faculty of Science to continue the course despite the fact that this faculty was the most competent body to judge the merit or otherwise of the course.

The Cochin University originally being a federal type university had the power to have constituent colleges. In 1978, the Academic Council of the university took a decision to federate all the eligible colleges in Ernakulam. The managements of the private colleges of Ernakulam did not agree to the proposal pointing out that several provisions of the University Act offended the rights of the minorities, guaranteed by the Constitution.<sup>32</sup> As no college was federated, the federal nature of the university as envisaged in the Act was not given effect to.

A controversy started in the University of Calicut in 1986 when an essay "Christuvinte Avasanathe Pralobhanangal" written by Sri P.A.Warrier was included in the course syllabus of Malayalam at the degree level. Pressure from religious and social groups prompted the Board of Studies and the Faculty to recommend the withdrawal of the essay from the syllabus. The Academic Council rejected the recommendation of both the Board of Studies and the Faculty.<sup>33</sup> The then Vice-Chancellor acting on a resolution of the Senate of the University issued orders to withdraw the essay. The Academic Council rejected the motion to ratify the action of the Vice-Chancellor.<sup>34</sup>

The Board of Studies of the University of Calicut which had recommended the text-book "Manushyan Unarumbol" written by Smt.Godavari Parulekar had later to recommend withdrawal of the text book owing to external pressures. The Faculty recommended that the controversial text be continued and the recommendations of the Faculty were accepted by the Academic Council.<sup>35</sup>

Pressure from student groups also at many times poses difficulties in implementing many decisions of the



academic bodies. The Academic Council of the University of Calicut took a decision to start M.A.-M.Phil and M.Sc.-M.Phil. courses in its teaching departments in various disciplines. The courses were never started in the university owing to the resistance of student groups.

For the improvement of the functioning of academic bodies in universities, the three groups of respondents suggest that the academic bodies should meet periodically and review their functioning. Periodical review will enhance the quality of the functioning of academic bodies.

To sum up,

Of the university authorities, it is the Academic Council that is the principal academic body, assisted by the different Faculties and Boards of Studies. The academic bodies have only recommendatory powers. The recommendations of the academic bodies even in matters of purely academic nature have to be approved by the Syndicate for being implemented.

The main function of a University is to provide for learning, research and advancement of knowledge. It is the academic bodies of the University which have to carry

out this function. This study of the functioning of the academic bodies of the universities in Kerala reveals that they are not efficient or fully effective in exercising their powers and discharging their duties as envisaged in the laws of the University. Politicisation of these bodies makes their functioning less effective. Interference and pressures from various quarters such as political parties, students, social and religious groups pose difficulties in the implementation of many of the decisions of the academic bodies. And when academic bodies which have only deliberative powers, also fail to take initiative in the formulation of academic reforms, because of political considerations, the ineffectiveness of their role becomes abundantly evident. Improvement is called for with regard to the constitution of academic bodies, appointment of their members, and their mode of functioning.

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## Chapter 5

### ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES OF THE UNIVERSITIES - A STUDY

Education has been aptly described as a vital input which brightens human power. Human development in any given country is an indication of its prosperity which drives it towards economic buoyancy. Naturally human resources development is indeed an arduous and challenging task, especially in view of India's enormous and growing population. The role of universities in this field is in preparing professional, managerial and skilled manpower for the different employment sectors as well as industries. In this stupendous endeavour, it is very important to devise and undertake such educational programmes at all levels as would mould and train the youth to be a vital force in the development of the country.

The quality of education depends on the structure, content and processes of education. The pattern of the academic programmes of the universities, their curricula and syllabi should be well-designed. They should cater to the needs of the society. At the same time, they should keep pace with the progress of knowledge in every

discipline. It is an accepted fact that the students of institutions of higher education must have access to the new frontiers of knowledge in all fields. It is the duty of the universities to design new disciplinary and interdisciplinary courses in tune with the twin aspects of expansion of knowledge and the demands of the employment market.

A random survey of the reports of the various education commissions and committees constituted in our country since independence makes it clear that all of them have stressed the importance of developing relevant educational curricula and reorganisation of courses at all levels of higher education. The Kothari Commission emphasised the need for the introduction of flexibility and innovation in the reorganisation of courses at the undergraduate, as well as the Master's degree stage. A major recommendation in this area was for the provision of "borderline and interdisciplinary" subjects at the different levels of study.<sup>1</sup> The new education policy of the Government of India attaches great importance to the redesigning of the structure and content of courses in response to and in conformity with the manpower needs and aspirations of the nation.<sup>2</sup> A coordinated attempt to



reorganise courses in various subjects of study at the university level is being made by the University Grants Commission. The U.G.C. had sought to redesign courses by issuing guidelines for restructuring of courses at first degree level in the faculties of Arts, Social Sciences and Sciences in universities and colleges during the fifth and sixth Plans. Twentyseven Curriculum Development Centres (CDS) were established to prepare model curricula in Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences during the Seventh Plan.<sup>3</sup>

Generally speaking, the academic programmes run by the universities in Kerala, either in the affiliated colleges or in the teaching departments of the universities, are more or less of a traditional nature. Though the universities in our state have started realising the need to modify their courses in tune with the expansion in knowledge and specialisations, attempts in this direction have been few and far between. Speaking generally on the academic programmes of our universities, some courses run by the teaching departments of these universities are worth mentioning. This study is based on the academic programmes designed and run by the teaching departments of the universities in Kerala excluding the

Kerala Agricultural University. The different aspects of the academic programmes consisting of their designing, implementing and running constitute the subject matter of this chapter. The present analysis is divided into four parts as given below.

1. Designing of different types of courses
2. Structure of courses
3. Implementation and running of courses
4. Failure of courses.

The information elicited through the various questions in the questionnaire distributed among the three groups of respondents is analysed in this chapter under the four main sections mentioned above.

#### 1. Designing of different types of courses

Designing of different courses, keeping in mind the needs of the students and of society in general, is one of the major functions of a university. This task which is left to each individual university's own perception and devices, clearly reflects the true nature of that institution. A recent restructuring of courses undertaken

by the University of Goa was based on the following basic principles.<sup>4</sup>

- 1) The courses have to be up to date and in tune with the latest developments in the subjects,
- 2) the courses must be relevant; the applicability aspect of the subject must be borne in mind,
- 3) they must reflect value for life, concern for environment and promotion of national and international understanding.

The various courses designed by universities are meant to serve different purposes. The three groups of respondents were asked to give their order of preference, as regards the purpose of designing a new course, from five structured purposes given in question No.2 of the questionnaire. The responses are tabulated in Table 5.1.

The most important purpose of a course of study as perceived by the respondents in groups A and C is that it should train students for employment in specialised areas. According to them, the next important purpose is for

Table 5.1

Opinion of the three groups of respondents regarding the purpose of designing a new course in a university

Sl. No.	Purpose of designing a new course	Classes of respondents and scores of responses						F.S.M. Inference		
		A		B		C				
		Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order			
		n=82	n=82	n=21	n=185					
		Weighted average	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Weighted average	Rank order			
1.	For updating information in a specialised area	18.2	2	21.5	1	18.0	2	19.7	2	
2.	For personal development of students	7.2	4	9.4	3	7.8	5	8.2	4	
3.	For training students for employment in specialised areas	23.0	1	20.9	2	25.4	1	22.3	1	2.04 $H_0$ is accepted
4.	For making students competent for any job	8.7	3	8.6	4	10.9	3	8.9	3	
5.	For training students for self-employment	6.6	5	6.4	5	9.0	4	6.8	5	

Class A - University Teachers who are/were members of any of the academic bodies (Academic decision makers);

Class B - University Teachers who are/were not members of the academic bodies (Academicians);

Class C - Administrators of the University (Academic administrators);

n - Number of respondents;

Score - for each response, the numbers of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th preferences marked by the respondents multiplied by weights of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively and the resultant sums divided by the total weight of 10. Scores are standardised for the purpose of comparison;

F.S.M. - Friedman's statistic - M. M is an index for making an inference on the acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis  $H_0$ ;

$H_0$  - The null hypothesis is that there is no difference in the average perception of the three groups.

Tabled value of M = 6.40.

updating information in a specialised area. In the opinion of those in group B, updating information in a specialised area is the most important purpose of a course. According to this group, the next important purpose is training of students for employment in specialised areas. Making students competent to accept any job is considered the third important purpose of designing a course by the groups A and C whereas for group B, the third choice is the personal development of students. Groups A and C give less importance to personal development of students. All the three groups are unanimous in their opinion that designing courses for training students for self-employment should have only a low priority.

The responses of the three groups show that groups A and C have a greater consensus whereas group B slightly differs from them. In an overall analysis, however, it can be inferred that the viewpoints of the three groups of respondents do not differ much. The calculated value of M at 5 per cent level of significance is 2.04 which is less than the tabled value, 6.40, which confirms that the perception of the three groups is more or less homogeneous. The final analysis shows that all the three groups stress

the need for specialisation in training of students whereas they do not give much emphasis to training of students for self-employment.

The opinion of the respondents that courses should be designed in such a way as to enable students to get training in specialised areas is in close conformity with the recent guidelines formulated by the University Grants Commission. A Task Force of the Commission has recommended in its report that "higher education programmes have to be redesigned to meet the growing demands of specialisation, to provide flexibility in the combination of courses, to facilitate mobility among courses, programmes and institutions, to update and modernise curricula and to integrate work/practical experience and participation in creative activities with the learning processes".<sup>5</sup> The University Grants Commission has been making attempts to reorganise courses with the help of panels of experts in various subjects of specialisation. The Commission has prepared guidelines for modifying the first degree courses with three basic components, viz., foundation courses, core courses and courses of an applied nature.<sup>6</sup> The foundation courses serve the purpose of creating greater awareness of self and of the social, academic and natural environment;

the purpose of core courses is to give the student an opportunity to acquire a broad familiarity with the disciplines of his choice. The courses of applied nature will cater to the needs of the locality, region and the industries for trained manpower. Recent developments in the field of higher education in many countries like China, Japan, Indonesia, Singapore, Korea and the USSR, show that reorganisation of courses has been brought about giving much emphasis on areas of specialisation.<sup>7</sup> In the USSR, the course-curricula have been developed to provide for combination of studies with work in science and production which is popularly known as "industrialising education". In Korea, the courses have been reorganised to ensure greater adaptability to the needs of the society and to enable the students to secure training for their career along with the academic orientation. In Vietnam, universities and colleges are linked to production units and scientific and technological research institutions.

#### 1) Different types of courses

The courses are classified into three types on the basis of their orientation, viz., (1) personal development-oriented courses, (2) knowledge-oriented general courses and (3) knowledge-oriented specialised courses. The three

groups of respondents were requested to choose the most suitable course from among the above three different types. Their opinions are tabulated in Table 5.2.

The preferences marked by the respondents for each response show that there is a high degree of consensus among them. The value of 'M' calculated as 1.03 which is much less than the tabled value (17.400) at 5 per cent significance also confirms that the perception of the groups is one and the same.

Knowledge-oriented specialised courses receive the first priority among the three types of courses whereas personal development-oriented courses get the least priority. Knowledge-oriented general courses have an intermediate priority. As in the previous case, here also all the groups of respondents emphasise the need for specialised training for students.

## 2) Environmental reasons for designing different types of courses as perceived by the three groups of respondents

Different types of courses can be designed for various environmental reasons. In order to find out the important reasons for designing a personal development-



Table 5.2

Different types of courses chosen by the three groups of respondents

Sl. No.	Types of courses	Classes of respondents and scores of responses						F.S.M. Inference		
		A		B		C				
		Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order			
		n=82	n=82	n=82	n=21	n=185				
		Weighted average	Rank order	Weighted average	Rank order	Weighted average	Rank order			
1.	Personal development-oriented courses	17.3	3	20.3	2	20.2	3	18.9	3	
2.	Knowledge-oriented general courses	20.8	2	20.3	2	21.5	2	20.7	2	1.03
3.	Knowledge-oriented specialised courses	30.3	1	32.6	1	33.6	1	31.7	1	$H_0$ is accepted

Description as in Table 5.1.

Tabulated value of M = 7.400.

oriented course, the three groups of respondents were requested to choose from the four structured reasons given in question No.4 of the questionnaire. Table 5.3 shows the response of the three groups in this regard.

The tabled value of 'M' at 5 per cent level of significance is 7.800 and the calculated value of M is 1.2. This shows that there is no significant difference in the perception of the three groups. The table shows that the preferences marked by the groups in choosing the reasons for designing a personal development-oriented course are the same. All the groups strongly feel that the most important reason is the modification of a course to suit the requirements of time. This seems to point out that new personal development-oriented courses should be designed and implemented and existing ones modified considering the market value of the courses. Secondly, all the groups feel that new courses should be designed in such a way as would develop competence and skills in students. Personal-development-oriented courses help in developing technical and behavioural skills. The courses which help to inculcate new social values are assigned the third place whereas instilling traditional values in students is not

Table 5.3

Perception of the three groups regarding the reasons for designing personal development-oriented courses

Sl. No.	Reasons for designing personal development-oriented courses	Classes of respondents and scores of responses						F.S.M. Inference		
		A n=82		B n=82		C n=21			n=185	
		Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order			weighted average
1.	Development of different kinds of skills in students	21.2	2	19.6	2	22.3	2	20.6	2	
2.	Modification of courses to suit the requirement of time	24.6	1	24.5	1	27.3	1	24.9	1	1.2 $H_0$ is accepted
3.	Inculcation of new social values with changing time	13.9	3	12.4	3	9.8	3	12.8	3	
4.	Instilling traditional values in students	5.7	4	6.1	4	3.1	4	5.6	4	

Description as in Table 5.1

Table value of M = 7.800.

considered by the respondents as an important reason for designing a new course.

A good example of the personal-development-oriented courses can be seen in the postgraduate diploma programmes of the University of Science and Technology in Kumasi, Ghana. These programmes are meant to impart to the students additional knowledge and skills which are immediately needed in specific sectors of the economy. An example is the postgraduate diploma in Industrial Management which gives the students training in industrial management techniques so that they can take up management positions in industry. There are many more postgraduate diploma programmes in architecture, agriculture, pharmacy and so on.<sup>8</sup>

### 3) Reasons for designing knowledge-oriented general courses

Four structured reasons for designing knowledge-oriented general courses were put forward for the three groups of respondents to choose from. Their preferences are tabulated in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4

Perception of the three groups regarding the reasons for designing  
knowledge-oriented general courses

Sl. Reasons for designing No. knowledge-oriented general courses	Classes of respondents and scores of responses						F.S.M. Inference	
	A n=82		B n=82		C n=21			n = 185
	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Weighted average	Rank order
1. Students can choose their career as teachers	9.6	3	10.0	4	12.1	3	10.1	4
2. Students can further their knowledge by doing research	19.2	1	21.6	2	14.8	2	19.8	2
3. Students can start self- employment	9.6	3	11.9	3	9.7	4	10.6	3
4. Students can accept any job according to their qualifications	18.6	2	23.7	1	27.3	1	21.9	1

Description same as in Table 5.1

Tabled value of M = 7.800.

5.4  $H_0$  is  
accepted

There is a consensus among the groups B and C in choosing the reasons for designing knowledge-oriented general courses in a university. The most important reason for designing such a course as perceived by these groups is that the students after getting trained in general courses would be competent to accept any job according to their qualification. The next important reason as perceived by them is that the students can opt for research to further their knowledge. Group A gives first preference to the reason that the students trained in general courses can further their knowledge by doing research and they give second preference to the reason that students after completing the course can opt for any job according to their qualification. A comparatively low priority is given by all the three groups for the reason that students can start self-employment after completing the courses. Similarly, choosing the career as teachers by students is also considered less important by the three groups in designing a general course. The final analysis shows that the perception of the three groups of respondents does not differ with regard to their viewpoints on the reasons for designing knowledge-oriented general courses. The analysis also shows that the opinions of the respondents reflect the general conditions in our State, where most of the students

are trained in general courses without specialisations to become mere job-seekers hankering after white-collar jobs.

#### 4) Reasons for designing knowledge-oriented specialised courses

The three groups of respondents were requested to identify the important reasons for designing knowledge-oriented specialised courses from three structured reasons given in question No.6 of the questionnaire. Table 5.5 shows the analysis of the responses of the three groups.

The rank order of the responses in the table as well as the value of 'M' (2.12 smaller than tabled value at 5 per cent level of significance, 7.400) confirms that the three groups are homogeneous in their perception. All the groups are unanimous in their opinion that the most important reason for designing knowledge-oriented specialised courses is that the students gain competence to make use of their specialised and updated knowledge in their respective fields. Starting new specialised courses can help to a great extent in obtaining trained personnel in those fields where there is shortage. Demand from specialised areas for trained manpower is also considered an important reason for designing specialised courses. The

Table 5.5  
 Perception of the respondents regarding the reasons for designing  
 knowledge-oriented specialised courses

Sl. Reasons for designing No. knowledge-oriented specialised courses	Classes of respondents and scores of responses						F.S.M. Inference	
	A n=82		B n=82		C n=21			n=185 Weighted average
	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order		
1. Students can choose a career in which they can make use of their updated and specialised knowledge	26.3	1	31.0	1	26.9	1	28.4	1
2. Students can start self-employment/ professional practice	15.1	3	15.3	3	10.5	3	13.1	3
3. Specialised areas demand- ing trained manpower	26.2	2	23.8	2	25.0	2	25.0	2

Description as in Table 5.1

Tabled value of M = 7.400.

$H_0$  is  
accepted



table shows that the respondents give less importance to training students for self-employment.

## 2. Structure of Courses

Educationists and educational administrators in our country have been reiterating the need for restructuring and re-designing of courses to suit the requirements of time. The various education commissions appointed in the country have stressed the importance of designing courses in relation to the needs of the society. The latest document on education, "the National Policy of Education, 1986" considers 'designing of courses to meet the growing demands of specialisation, updating and modernising curricula, as an urgent need of the time'.<sup>9</sup> The University Grants Commission has made some attempts to issue guidelines for restructuring of courses, as a first step at the first degree level, to colleges and universities. Upto the end of the Seventh Plan, only nine universities and 290 colleges in the country had restructured undergraduate courses in accordance with the U.G.C.'s guidelines.<sup>10</sup> The Indira Gandhi National Open University has introduced a variety of modular degree programmes which have been designed on the lines suggested by the U.G.C.<sup>11</sup>

It is generally said that the universities in Kerala have not made much progress in the area of restructuring of courses. The common view is that the courses run by the teaching departments of the affiliating universities and their affiliated colleges are more or less of a traditional nature. Some of the postgraduate courses offered by the Cochin University of Science and Technology are exceptions to the general courses run by other universities. Recently the Mahatma Gandhi University has been making some attempts in redesigning the degree programmes in a few of its affiliated colleges. The effort of the University is aimed at restructuring the existing conventional first degree course in 22 of its affiliated colleges by recommending them for the U.G.C.-sponsored vocationalisation.<sup>12</sup>

Designing of courses assumes great importance in the context of implementation of new and relevant courses suitable to the changing facets of our society. Full involvement of academicians within and outside the universities is of great necessity in order to achieve the objectives of redesigning and reorienting of courses in our universities. In addition to the guidelines and directives issued by the U.G.C. and other such agencies, many factors

contribute to the evolution of an efficient method for designing courses. Question No.7 of the questionnaire provided three alternative sources from which a method of designing of courses in the universities could be evolved. The three groups of respondents were asked to mark their preferences. Table 5.6 shows the answers given by the three groups of respondents.

The scores in the table show that there is a high degree of consensus in the views of the three groups of respondents. All the groups are unanimous in their view that discussions and expert opinions of competent persons in the field are the most important factors in designing a new course. In their opinion, the results of market surveys for finding out the relevance or otherwise of courses in relation to employment opportunities is the next important factor. The respondents give the least priority to the directives of external agencies like the U.G.C., C.S.I.R., etc. for designing new courses.

"Education is concerned with the development of the human mind, its critical faculty, objective approach, scientific temper and analytical reasoning".<sup>13</sup> A good curricular system is a prerequisite for a dynamic and

Table 5.6  
 Opinions of the respondents regarding the sources from which  
 a method of designing courses can be evolved

Sl. No.	Sources from which a method of designing courses can be evolved	Classes of respondents and scores of responses						F.S.M. Inference	
		A		B		C			
		Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order		
		n=82	n=82	n=82	n=21	n=185			
		Weighted average	Weighted average	Weighted average	Rank order	Rank order			
1.	Discussions and expert opinions of competent persons in the field	30.2	1	33.1	1	30.5	1	31.5	1
2.	Directive of external agencies like U.G.C., C.S.I.R. etc.	16.1	3	18.6	3	17.2	3	17.3	3
3.	Results of market surveys for assessing the relevance of courses in relation to employment opportunities	22.7	2	21.3	2	24.6	2	22.2	2

Description as in Table 5.1.

Tabled value of M = 7.400.

$H_0$  is accepted

evolving educational system which responds adequately to the changing needs of the society and its general ethos. In the personality and professional development of students, a good curricular system plays a pivotal role. In addition to the knowledge input, a wide variety of skills can be included in the curriculum for the professional development of individuals. Five structured skills were given in a question in the questionnaire for the three groups of respondents to identify the major ones, to be included in the curriculum. An analysis of their responses is shown in Table 5.7.

The tabulated scores of the responses of the three groups show that there is consensus among the groups. The calculated value of  $M$  at 5 per cent level of significance is 3.48 which is less than the tabled value 7.800. This also points to the fact that there is no difference in the average perception of the groups. The three groups are unanimous in their opinion that in addition to the knowledge input through teaching, development of technical skills is the most important item to be included in the curriculum. The next important aspect to be included in the curriculum as suggested by the respondents is the one involving skills relating to decision making. Behavioural

Table 5.7

Different aspects of knowledge to be included in the curriculum for the general professional development of the individual as per the opinions of the respondents

Sl. No. Different aspects of knowledge to be included in the curriculum	Classes of respondents and scores of responses										F.S.M. Inference	
	A			B			C			Weighted average		Rank order
	Score	Rank order	n=82	Score	Rank order	n=82	Score	Rank order	n=21			
	19.7	1	19.5	1	23.0	1	20.0	1	20.0	1		
1. Technical skills	15.7	2	13.8	3	14.1	3	14.7	3	14.7	3		
2. Behavioural (social relations) skills	12.0	4	11.9	4	13.7	4	12.1	4	12.1	4	3.48	
3. Skills relating to planning	15.4	3	14.5	2	16.0	2	15.1	2	15.1	2	$H_0$ is accepted	
4. Skills relating to decision making	6.8	5	10.3	5	3.5	5	7.9	5	7.9	5		
5. Extra-curricular activities like N.C.C., N.S.S., Planning Forum, Youth Festivals, Students Unions etc.												

Description as in Table 5.1

Tabled value of M = 7.800.

or social relations skill is given the next priority. From the table it is seen that the respondents are of the opinion that activities like National Cadet Corps (N.C.C.), National Service Scheme (N.S.S.), Planning Forums etc., should be retained as extra-curricular, which need not be included in the curriculum, for the professional development of the students.

Many educators have started thinking in terms of making extra-curricular activities especially N.S.S. programmes an integral part of the curriculum. In their opinion, "the goal of the N.S.S. is to create a new social consciousness and to re-dedicate student energies and talents to problems in national development, thereby making education meaningful".<sup>14</sup> It is proposed that the syllabi of the various courses of study may be restructured so that the entire educational effort becomes a vehicle for identifying social problems and for fostering the requisite skills for their solution. This process would be a unique experiment in making education meaningful and relevant to the felt needs of the community. Though many educationists have accepted this proposal in principle, the universities are yet to initiate action in this regard.

### 3. Implementation and Running of Courses in Universities

Varied forms of academic programmes are designed and implemented by the teaching departments of the universities in our State. It must be emphasised that curriculum planning and course development to cater to the needs of the students are done before implementing such programmes. Many factors are involved in the implementation and running of courses in the university departments. It is a sorry state of affairs that many new courses that are designed with great care do not get implemented owing to a variety of reasons. Many problems are said to be faced by the authorities concerned while implementing and also running such courses in the universities. The following discussion is an analysis of the various factors involved in the matter, derived from the considered opinions of the three groups of respondents.

In the Kerala State where the system of higher education is still dominated by models and values adopted during the British colonial regime, courses are introduced and run on a continuing basis. Surveys for ascertaining the demand of courses or for manpower requirement are seldom conducted in the State. The question whether a course should be started in a university only after



ascertaining its market demand was posed to the three groups of respondents. The analysis of the responses of the three groups is given in Table 5.8.

The table shows that 42 out of 82 (51.2 per cent) of respondents in group A answered in the affirmative while 46.3 per cent answered in the negative. In group B, 47 out of 82 (57.3 per cent) favoured the suggestion while 42.7 per cent did not. In group C, a sharp difference in the percentage of persons agreeing or disagreeing with the statement is noted. 71.4 per cent, i.e., 15 out of 21 persons agreed while only 6 disagreed. The percentage of persons agreeing with the suggestion is slightly higher than the percentage of people disagreeing in group A, whereas in group B, the difference in the percentages of those agreeing and disagreeing is more than that in group A. On the whole, it can safely be concluded that the proposal that a course should be started only after ascertaining the market demand is accepted by all the three groups of respondents.

Analysing the market demand of courses is not considered an easy task by the educationists or the educational administrators. In order to evolve an

Table 5.8  
Opinions of respondents regarding market demand and starting of courses

Question content	Group A n =82				Group B n=82				Group C n =21									
	Agree		Disagree		Agree		Disagree		Agree		Disagree		No response					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%				
Starting of a course after ascertaining its market demand	42	51.2	38	46.3	2	2.4	47	57.3	35	42.7	0	-	15	71.4	6	28.6	0	-

Group A - University Teachers who are/were members of any of the academic bodies (Academic decision makers);  
 Group B - University Teachers who are/were not members of the academic bodies (Academicians);  
 Group C - Administrators of the University (Academic administrators);

effective method of analysing the demand of courses, the opinions of the three groups of respondents were sought by giving five structured answers. The respondents were asked to select them in the order of their preference. Table 5.9 shows the responses tabulated.

The scores in the table show that all the three groups unanimously agree that the environmental demand of a course can be analysed most effectively by assessing the significance of that course in the present situation of the country. Secondly, in their opinion, the demand of a course can be ascertained by assessing the present employment opportunities for trained persons in the field. Groups A and B agree that projection for 5 to 10 years for proper utilisation of manpower developed through academic programmes is important for analysing their demand. Group C gives less importance to this proposal. The table shows that groups B and C feel that the attitude of potential employers is important in analysing the demand of a course. Group A does not give much importance to the attitude of the employers. According to the functionaries, the attitude of the students, present or past, is the least important criterion in this issue.

Table 5.9

Method of analysing the environmental demand of a course as perceived by the functionaries

Sl. No.	Method of analysing the environmental demand of a course	Classes of respondents and scores of responses					F.S.M. Inference			
		A n=82		B n=82		C n=21		n =185		
		Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Weighted average	Rank order	
1.	Assessing the significance of a course in the present situation of the country	23.8	1	24.6	1	22.6	1	24.0	1	
2.	Assessing the present employment opportunities for trained persons	22.1	2	21.1	2	21.5	2	21.6	2	
3.	Assessing the attitude of potential employers	7.1	5	9.7	3	11.3	3	8.7	4	1.8 $H_0$ is accepted
4.	Projection for 5 to 10 years for proper utilization of manpower developed	12.1	3	9.7	3	10.5	4	10.9	3	
5.	Assessing the attitude of present or past students of the course	4.3	4	6.4	5	2.7	5	5.1	5	

Description as in Table 5.1  
 Tabled value of M = 7.800.

The value of 'M' at 5 per cent level of significance is 1.8 (table value is 7.800) and hence it is inferred that the perception of the three groups in this matter does not vary. Assessing the significance of the courses in relation to the situations of the society as also to the employment opportunities are the two most effective methods of analysing the demand of courses. The attitude of students in this matter is considered least important by the functionaries. But examples can be cited of situations where students' attitude had assumed importance in the matter. One of the reasons for the diminution of demand for the former Master of Bank Management (MBM) degree course of the Cochin University of Science and Technology was the attitude of students. An important reason for the decrease in popularity of the courses of the American Land-Grant University of the 19th Century is attributed to the pressure of students for diversification and liberalisation in purpose and curricula of courses.<sup>15</sup>

A popular criticism levelled against universities is that new and varied types of courses are introduced without analysing the requirement of manpower in the areas of specialisations. It is a well-known fact that

economically advanced countries have evolved their own devices of manpower analysis. It is generally felt that the mismatch between the skills and expertise of trained personnel and the country's actual requirements of skilled manpower has resulted in unemployment and wastage of human resources in our country.

The three groups of respondents were asked to say whether or not they agreed with the statement that 'analysis of manpower requirement in a specialised area for 5 to 10 years is a prerequisite for introducing a new specialised course in a university'. Table 5.10 shows the responses of the groups.

More than 50 per cent of the respondents in each group agreed with the proposal. In group A, 53 out of 82 (64.6 per cent) were in agreement, whereas 34.1 per cent were not; 1.2 per cent did not respond to the question. In group B, 45 persons out of 82, i.e., 54.9 per cent accepted the suggestion, while 43.1 per cent answered in the negative. In group C, the reaction of 66.7 per cent (14 out of 21) was positive while that of 33.3 per cent (7 out of 21) was negative.

Table 5.10

Reactions of the respondents to the statement that analysis of manpower requirement is a pre-requisite for introducing a new course

Question content	Group A n=82		Group B n =82		Group C n =21	
	Agree	No response	Disagree	No response	Disagree	No response
	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %
Analysis of manpower requirement in a specialised area for 5 to 10 years to be a pre-requisite for introducing a new course	53 64.6	1 1.2	28 34.1	45 54.9	37 45.1	0 -
					14 66.7	7 33.3
						0 -

Group A - University Teachers who are/were members of any of the academic bodies (Academic decision makers);  
 Group B - University Teachers who are/were not members of the academic bodies (Academicians);  
 Group C - Administrators of the University (Academic administrators).

Thus it is inferred that it is high time our universities also started thinking in terms of implementing methods of manpower analysis. In this context the "informal marketing departments" of the community colleges and universities of U.S.A., which are said to keep their eyes and ears open always seeking to find needs that they could fulfil, are worth-mentioning.<sup>16</sup>

The respondents who were in agreement with the proposal that manpower analysis is a prerequisite for starting a new course were again asked to say whether such an analysis could be considered feasible or not. In group A, 91 per cent of the respondents who agreed with the proposal considered that such an analysis is feasible. In group B, 98 per cent and in group C, 94 per cent of the respondents agreeing with the proposal endorsed the view of the group A respondents.

The proposal that universities should offer specialised courses only when there is environmental demand was put to the three groups of respondents and their reaction to it was considered. The responses of the respondents are recorded in Table 5.11.



Table 5.11

Reactions of the respondents to the proposal that universities should start specialised courses only when there is demand

Groups	Fully agree		Somewhat agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree		Fully disagree		No response	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
A N=82	43	52.4	15	18.3	5	6.1	11	13.4	6	7.3	2	2.4
B N=82	42	51.2	25	30.5	4	4.9	9	11	2	2.4	0	-
C N=21	16	76.2	2	9.5	0	0	1	4.8	2	9.5	0	-

Group A - University Teachers who are/were members of any of the academic bodies (Academic decision makers);  
 Group B - University Teachers who are/were not members of the academic bodies (Academicians);  
 Group C - Administrators of the University (Academic administrators).

More than 50 per cent of the respondents in all the three groups were in full agreement with this proposal. 43 out of 82 respondents (52.4 per cent) and 42 out of 82 (51.2 per cent) in groups A and B respectively fully agreed. In group C, 16 out of 21 (76.2 per cent) fully agreed with the proposal. The number of respondents agreeing somewhat with the proposal was 15 (18.3 per cent), 25 (30.5 per cent) and 2 (9.5 per cent) in groups A, B and C respectively. 6.1 per cent in group A and 4.9 per cent in group B did neither agree nor disagree with the proposal. In the three groups the number of respondents disagreeing was 11, 9 and 1 respectively. In each group the percentage of respondents totally disagreeing with the proposal was below 10.

The analysis shows that the concept of utilitarian nature of universities is gaining ground in the State. Training in applied sciences more than in pure sciences is being advocated by educational administrators. The academic programmes in the community colleges of the United States are excellent examples of this system. The courses in these colleges are designed to meet the needs of local business and industry which often work in cooperation with

these colleges and ensure the relevance of the curricula to actual job performance. Trained manpower is supplied by these colleges as per the market demand. "If there is a market for beauticians, practical nurses, secretaries, or whatever, the college will meet that need".<sup>17</sup>

Most of the education commissions have recommended that the courses of a university at all levels should be reviewed for their relevance and, if found irrelevant, should be substituted by socially relevant programmes. The New Educational Policy of 1986 has given great importance to the re-designing of courses in response to and in conformity with the manpower needs and societal objectives.<sup>18</sup>

The three groups of respondents were requested vide question No.17 of the questionnaire to say whether they agreed with the opinion that every five years, all existing courses of a university at the undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate levels should be reviewed and that, if found irrelevant, they should be substituted by socially and economically relevant programmes. Table 5.12 shows their responses.

Table 5.12

Reactions of the respondents to the proposal that all existing courses should be reviewed every five years

Question content	Group A n =82		Group B n =82		Group C n =21		
	Agree	No. % Disagree	Agree	No. % Disagree	Agree	No. % Disagree	
Every five years all existing courses of a university should be reviewed for their relevance and, if found irrelevant, they should be substituted by socially relevant programmes	65	79.2 14 17.1 3 3.7	57	69.5 25 30.5	17	81 4 19	0 -

Group A - University Teachers who are/were members of any of the academic bodies (Academic decision makers);  
 Group B - University Teachers who are/were not members of the academic bodies (Academicians);  
 Group C - Administrators of the University (Academic administrators).

The majority of the respondents, 79.2 per cent of those in group A, 69.5 per cent in group B and 81 per cent in group C, agreed with this suggestion. 3 out of 82 respondents in group A did not respond. 17.1 per cent, 30.5 per cent and 19 per cent from groups A, B and C did not agree with the suggestion.

Those who did not accept the above proposal were again asked to give their reason therefor. 11 out of the 14 persons in group A, 20 out of the 25 in group B and 3 out of 4 in group C who did not agree with the proposal were of the opinion that courses in a university should not be viewed on the basis of their relevance or irrelevance. 3 persons out of 14 in group A and 4 out of 25 in group B were of the opinion that higher education was everyone's right. Hence they did not support the concept of reviewing of courses periodically.

In the opinion of a majority of educationists, an effective partnership between the employment sector and the academia provides an environment which encourages creativity and innovation. Such partnership in most of the economically advanced countries has been responsible for their multiphased development. However, in our country the

linkage between these two fields has not been properly developed so far which has been responsible for the lack of proper assessment of expertise of trained personnel and the country's actual requirement of skilled manpower. This has resulted in the aggravation of the problem of unemployment and also wastage of human resources.<sup>19</sup> It is an accepted fact that proper interaction between the world of learning and the world of work is imperative for the fuller utilisation of facilities available within the country and for its economic, commercial and social advancement. In such a context, the involvement of potential employers in the matter of course and curriculum planning assumes great importance.

Five structured proposals as regards the involvement of potential employers in designing and implementing a course in a university were put forward in question No.9 of the questionnaire. The three groups of respondents were requested to mark their order of preference for the proposals. The data received are shown in Table 5.13.

The values in the table show that the three groups are unanimous in their opinions regarding the involvement

Table 5.13

Involvement of potential employer in designing and implementing a course in a university  
as per the opinions of the three groups

Sl. No. of potential employers	Classes of respondents and scores of responses									F.S.M. Inference			
	A			B			C						
	Score	Rank order	n=82	Score	Rank order	n=82	Score	Rank order	n=21		Score	Rank order	n=185
1. Should be invited to give their suggestions in designing the course structure	26.7	1	25.6	1	31.2	1	26.7	1	26.7	1	1.32	H <sub>0</sub> is accepted	
2. Should be involved in the selection of students and the faculty	3.4	5	4.1	5	3.1	5	3.7	5	3.7	5	1.32	H <sub>0</sub> is accepted	
3. Should sponsor students	17.6	3	12.3	3	10.9	3	14.6	3	14.6	3			
4. Should provide physical facilities like scholarships	17.7	2	16.8	2	13.3	2	16.7	2	16.7	2			
5. Should be included in the Board of Studies of the universities	6.6	4	5.8	4	11.7	4	6.8	4	6.8	4			

Description as in Table 5.1  
Tabled value of M at 5% level of significance = 7.800.

of potential employers in the designing and implementation of courses in universities.

Assessing the opinions of the groups, all of them agree with the suggestion that the most important involvement of the employers should be in their giving suggestions and expert opinions in the designing of the course structure. The respondents give second priority to the suggestion that the employers should provide physical facilities like scholarships. Sponsoring of students for the courses by the employers is also considered favourably by all the groups. A low priority is given to the suggestion that the employers should be included in the Boards of Studies of universities. All the respondents seem to favour the suggestion that the employers should not be involved in the selection of students or the faculty.

An overall analysis of the opinions of the respondents shows that they are not favourable to the idea of the employers taking an active part in the designing of courses or in the selection of students and the faculty. Though the suggestions of the employers are welcomed, their membership in the authorities of the university responsible for course design is not favoured by all groups of



respondents. Active interaction between business and industrial organisations with the universities is the hallmark of the modern universities in advanced countries like Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States. A remarkable feature of many modern universities in the United Kingdom is the close linkage between them and the industry-business enterprises. In the Coventry University, the Ph.D. programmes require an industry and sponsor and the industrialists are involved in course development. In the Thomas Valley University located in London, the majority of the 25 members in the Board of Governors are industrialists and persons from business.<sup>20</sup> In the community colleges and the universities in the United States also, persons from the industries and business organisations often serve on curriculum advisory boards.<sup>21</sup>

The opinions of all the three groups reflect the actual situation in Kerala, where the university-industry collaboration is very rare. The conservative attitude of all the groups, the academic administrators, the teachers who are members of academic bodies and also the non-members, accounts for the continuance of the traditional nature of our university system.

A great many factors contribute to the successful implementation of courses and their running in a university. These include physical facilities, library facilities, competent teachers, financial support and so on. Lack of any of these factors may pose difficulties in the effective implementation and running of academic programmes in the universities. In order to get a clear picture of the various problems faced by the universities in implementing new courses, the three groups of respondents were asked to record their opinions on the subject. The responses of the three groups are recorded in Table 5.14.

The value of 'M' being lower than the tabled value shows that there is no significant difference in the perception of the three groups.

Considering the various problems in implementing a new course in a university, all the respondents unanimously identify lack of physical facilities as the most crucial problem. The respondents in groups A and C give second priority to the problem of unavailability of faculty members who are trained in the area of study defined for the courses, whereas bottlenecks caused by bureaucracy are

Table 5.14

Problems in implementing a new course in a university  
as per the opinions of the respondents

Sl. No.	Problem	Classes of respondents and scores of responses						F.S.M. Inference		
		A		B		C				
		Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order			
		n=82	n=82	n=21	n=185	Weighted average	Rank order			
1.	Lack of physical facilities	20.3	1	21.8	1	20.7	1	21.0	1	
2.	Unavailability of faculty members	14.4	2	12.2	3	18.4	2	13.9	3	
3.	Non-cooperation of existing faculty	4.2	6	3.8	6	2.0	6	3.8	6	4.07
4.	Lack of library facilities	10.5	4	7.6	4	7.0	4	8.6	4	$H_0$ is accepted
5.	Lack of or meagre support from external agencies	8.4	5	7.6	4	7.0	4	7.9	5	
6.	Unavailability of students with right academic background	2.1	7	2.1	7	1.6	7	2.0	7	
7.	Bottlenecks caused by the bureaucracy	13.4	3	20.4	2	12.9	3	16.4	2	

Description as in Table 5.1

Tabled value of M at 5% level of significance = 7.800.

considered the second important problem by group B. Groups A and C give third preference to the problems caused by bureaucracy. In the opinion of the respondents, lack of library facilities is also considered a bottleneck in the implementation of new courses. The academic background of students is not considered important by any of the groups. The respondents also do not give much importance to the availability of financial support from other external agencies for the implementation of courses. Another factor considered not very important is the attitude of the existing faculty members. On the whole it can be concluded that lack of physical facilities and library facilities, unavailability of trained faculty and bottlenecks caused by bureaucracy are considered the major obstacles to be overcome in the implementation of new academic programmes.

It is often said that the university authorities experience some constraints while running the courses in their teaching departments. In order to identify the major problems in this field, the three groups of respondents were requested by question No.18 in the questionnaire to mark their priority for the seven problems listed. Table 5.15 shows the response of the three groups.

Table 5.15

Major problems experienced while running a course in a university  
as per the opinions of the three groups of respondents

Sl. No.	Problems	Classes of respondents and scores of responses						F.S.M. Inference	
		A n=82		B n=82		C n=21			n=185
		Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Weighted average	Rank order
1.	Lack of physical facilities	23.1	1	25.0	1	22.6	1	23.9	1
2.	Unavailability of competent faculty	13.5	3	8.9	3	20.7	2	12.3	3
3.	Non-cooperation of teachers	2.8	7	2.4	7	3.9	5	2.7	7
4.	Discrimination felt by students	3.0	6	2.9	6	2.0	7	2.8	6
5.	Problems created by administrative procedures	14.2	2	16.2	2	9.8	3	14.5	2
6.	Standard of the course diminishing due to poor calibre of students	6.1	4	5.9	4	3.9	5	5.8	4
7.	Standard diminishing due to poor calibre of teachers	5.0	5	5.8	5	4.7	4	5.3	5

Description as in Table 5.1

Tabled value of M at 5% level of significance = 7.800.

$H_0$  is accepted

The unanimous response of the three groups of respondents was that the problem of lack of physical facilities was the most serious one experienced while running a course in a university. The scores for various responses show that the opinions of the three groups do not vary much. The next two important problems faced by the authorities while running a course, as identified by the three groups, are unavailability of competent teachers and difficulties caused by the elaborate procedures of administration. The respondents feel that the bureaucratic set-up in the universities often give rise to obstacles in the smooth running of academic programmes. Academicians generally are of the view that administrative procedures usually pose problems and cause avoidable delay in getting things done. As the majority of the respondents, especially in groups A and B, are academicians, it is not amazing that lengthy procedures of administration have been identified as a major problem. From the table it is seen that the diminution of the standard of a course owing to the poor calibre of teachers and of students is not to be considered a very important handicap in the running of courses. The scores in the table also show that internal problems in the departments created by the students or by

the non-cooperation of teachers do not pose any serious problem in running a course. An overall analysis shows that the major problems experienced while running a course in a university are (1) lack of physical facilities, (2) problems created by administrative procedures and (3) unavailability of competent teachers.

#### **4. Failure of Courses in the Universities**

The teaching departments of the universities in Kerala conduct courses at the undergraduate as well as postgraduate level. Many of these courses are of a very general nature with very limited scope for specialisation, whereas others are 'specialised' with specific orientation towards modern developments. It is sometimes noted that some courses of study are discontinued a few years after their introduction. It is the so-called specialised courses which are thus affected much more than courses of a general nature. Many factors within the system and outside contribute to this state of affairs. Another phenomenon often noticed in the universities is that some courses designed and approved by the academic bodies are often not started or sometimes their introduction gets delayed considerably. The reasons attributed to such occurrences make an interesting study.

The perception of the respondents on the reasons for the failure of general as well as specialised courses was considered by two questions in the questionnaire. The opinions of the groups on the reasons for the failure of general courses are tabulated in Table 5.16.

The opinions of the functionaries show that general courses fail mostly owing to lack of specialisation which result in limited scope for employment. Students who study the general courses get no specialised training and hence they fail to get suitably employed. This creates more and more unemployment and for this reason the demand for such courses becomes less and less. Another important reason pointed out by the groups is that of starting courses for unacademic reasons. According to the perception of the functionaries, lack of public demand for general courses and poor performance of students are not very important reasons for the failure of general courses.

The reasons for the failure of specialised courses were ascertained from the perception of the functionaries (See Table 5.17).



Table 5.16

Reasons for the failure of general courses as per the opinions of the functionaries

Sl. No.	Reasons	Classes of respondents and scores of responses					F.S.M. Inference		
		A n=82		B n=82		C n=21		n=185	
		Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Weighted average	Rank order
1.	Limited scope of employment due to lack of specialisation	18.9	1	18.6	1	25.8	1	19.5	1
2.	Lack of public demand due to the general nature of the course	12.9	3	12.1	4	11.3	4	12.4	4
3.	Poor performance of students	5.1	5	3.9	5	7.4	5	4.8	5
4.	Creating educated unemployed youths who have no specialised training	15.7	2	19.7	2	11.7	2	17.0	2
5.	Starting of the course for non-academic reasons	11.1	4	17.2	3	11.7	2	13.9	3

Description as in Table 5.1.

Tabled value of M at 5% level of significance = 7.800.

$H_0$  is accepted

Table 5.17

Reasons for discontinuing a specialised course in a university as per the perception of the functionaries

Sl. No.	Reasons	Classes of respondents and scores of responses						F.S.M. Inference		
		A		B		C				
		Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order			
		n=82	n=82	n=21	n=185	Weighted average	Rank order			
1.	Inadequate physical facilities	12.7	2	11.1	3	8.6	3	11.5	2	
2.	Non-availability of competent teachers	8.0	4	4.5	7	7.0	4	6.3	5	
3.	Limited scope of employment due to specialised training	19.0	1	20.5	1	23.4	1	20.2	1	
4.	Not catering to the needs of youngsters	4.9	7	5.7	5	5.7	5	4.8	7	4.46 $H_0$ is accepted
5.	Not relevant to the present period	11.7	3	12.0	2	9.0	2	11.5	2	
6.	Lack of assessment of public demand	6.4	5	9.2	4	4.7	6	7.4	4	
7.	Lack of projection to some years for utilisation of trained manpower	5.6	6	5.3	6	2.3	7	5.1	6	
8.	Absence of specific sponsor for support	2.7	8	2.7	8	2.3	7	2.6	8	

Description as in Table 5.1.

Tabled value of M at 5% level of significance = 7.650.

The value of 'M' which is less than the tabled value shows that the perception of all the three groups does not vary in this case also. A study of the opinions of the functionaries about the reasons leading to the discontinuance of specialised courses in universities shows that the most important reason as identified by all the groups is the limited scope of employment due to specialised training. In a country like India where unemployment poses a major problem, placement for all the persons trained in specialised areas is not easy. Hence scope of employment for trained manpower becomes limited and therefore students start opting for general courses rather than specialised ones. The reason secondly identified by groups B and C is that the special courses fail if they are irrelevant to the present period. They are of the opinion that lack of adequate physical facilities is also a good reason for the discontinuance of special courses. Group A identified lack of physical facilities as the second important reason. Unavailability of competent teachers and lack of assessment of public demand are also pointed out by the respondents as important reasons for the failure of specialised courses. As per the perception of the three groups, projection to some years

for utilisation of trained manpower is not very important in analysing the causes for the discontinuance of special courses. According to the perception of the groups, lack of support from specific sponsors is not an important factor in discontinuing a specialised course.

The reasons for the non-implementation of courses in the universities were ascertained from the opinions of the respondents. Table 5.18 shows the data received from the respondents.

The respondents were asked to choose from the nine possible reasons for non-implementation of courses, the most important ones in their order of preference. The value of 'M' indicates a uniform perception on the part of all the three groups, though the individual scores show slight variations. Lack of necessary physical facilities is identified as the most important reason by groups A and B. These functionaries perceive that non-approval of government, U.G.C. or other external funding agencies for provision of funds is an important reason for the non-implementation of courses. Group C identified lack of trained faculty as the most crucial factor which hinders implementation of new courses. Lack of physical facilities

Table 5.18

Reasons for non-implementation of courses as per the opinion of the three groups

Sl. No.	Reasons	Classes of respondents and scores of responses						F.S.M. Inference	
		A n=82		B n=82		C n=21			n=185
		Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Score	Rank order	Weighted average	Rank order
1.	Lack of physical facilities	19.5	1	17.5	1	15.6	2	18.2	1
2.	Lack of trained faculty	10.5	3	8.0	5	17.2	1	10.2	4
3.	Resistance from teachers	3.2	6	3.4	7	7.0	5	3.7	6
4.	Departmental politics	10.2	4	11.4	3	8.2	4	10.5	3
5.	Non-approval of Govt./ UGC for funds	15.4	2	16.4	2	15.2	3	15.8	2
6.	Insufficient response for the course from potential students	2.6	7	4.1	6	2.0	7	3.2	7
7.	Lack of public demand due to narrow specialisation	1.4	8	1.9	8	0	-	1.5	8
8.	Lack of public demand due to lack of specialisation	0.8	9	0.9	9	0	-	0.8	9
9.	Problems posed by bureaucracy	8.7	5	9.9	4	4.7	6	8.8	5

Description as in Table 5.1

Tabled value of M at 5% level of significance = 7.667.

6.48  $H_0$  is accepted

is given the second preference by this group. As per the general perception of the groups, departmental politics also plays an important role in hindering the launching of new academic programmes. The scores in the table show that public demand does not play a major role in the introduction of new courses in universities. In the average assessment of the perception of the three groups, the major factors which hinder the introduction of new courses in universities are lack of physical facilities, lack of funds sanctioned by the funding agencies like the Government, U.G.C. etc., departmental politics and shortage of trained faculty.

In order to go deep into the study of the factors contributing to the failure of courses in universities, a few case studies of courses in the universities in Kerala were undertaken by the researcher. The postgraduate courses in the teaching departments of the Universities of Kerala and Calicut are more or less traditional ones, similar to those offered by the affiliated colleges as well. It is only in exceptional cases that courses of a specialised nature with emphasis on recent advances in the field are introduced and run with success. And so it is only seldom that any postgraduate course in these

universities has to be discontinued for one reason or another. In the Cochin University of Science and Technology, however, most of the courses offered in its teaching departments have a uniqueness of their own. The discontinuance of such courses obviously is greater in this university. This is the reason why the present study contains more instances of cases from this university. The Mahatma Gandhi University which is the youngest university in the State has recently started quite a number of new courses of a specialised nature. It is too early to say whether there will be similar instances in this university also. Given below are instances of the discontinued courses in the universities in Kerala.

B.Sc. (Special) Degree Course (University of Kerala)

This course with immense potential was started in the year 1966 in fourteen colleges affiliated to the University of Kerala with handsome laboratory facilities. It was introduced with a view to enabling top class students with a high record of performance in science subjects at the Pre-degree level to become good scientists in future. It was also expected that the course, which was the brainchild of the eminent educationist and scientist, Prof.A.Abraham, would help to bring about a qualitative

improvement in the standard of science education.<sup>22</sup> Prof. Abraham, besides being a member of various authorities of the university including the Syndicate was the Dean of the Faculty of Science and Vice-Chairman of the Research Council as also the Chairman of the State Committee on Science and Technology in the sixties. The U.G.C. Visiting Committee which visited the university in 1968 recorded its deep appreciation of the content of the course and commended it for adoption in other universities. The Committee also recommended that similar courses should be introduced in humanities and social sciences as well.

But right from its inception, this sound academic course, introduced with the best of intentions, met with opposition from various quarters. There was the allegation that it promoted elitism and created a kind of artificial division among the students offering science subjects at the degree level. The General B.Sc. students feared that the Special B.Sc. students would get preference in the matter of admission to the postgraduate course and also have better employment opportunities. To allay the misgivings of such students, the university was prepared to even agree that irrespective of whether the students were from the general or special stream, all successful students



would be awarded the same B.Sc. degree. The University's offer did not convey conviction with the students or even many members of the Senate. When the agitation for scrapping the course started gaining momentum and became more and more intense, the University was forced in 1969 to take the formal decision to abandon this prestigious course. It is the experience of the universities in Kerala that they are compelled often to take wrong and unwise decisions under pressure from interested quarters which are not concerned basically with the academic merits of the issue in question.

We have two cases of diploma courses run by the University of Calicut which were later discontinued.

#### 1. Diploma in Business Administration

This course was started in 1974 as a full-time postgraduate diploma programme in the department of commerce of the University of Calicut. The faculty of the department and the University authorities had taken the initiative in starting the course. As the University decided to start a full-time degree course in Business Administration (MBA) this diploma course was discontinued in 1980. The MBA course was started in the University in 1982.

## 2. Diploma in Office Management and Secretarial Practice

The course was started in 1973 as a part-time evening course in the department of commerce. In due course the demand for this course slowly decreased. When the full-time MBA course was planned to be started in the department of commerce, this diploma course which was considered a less important one was discontinued.

There are very many similar cases in the Cochin University of Science and Technology as detailed below:

### 1. M.Com Degree Course

There is a close relationship between the subjects 'Management' and 'Commerce'. The then Director of the School of Management Studies, Dr.M.V.Pylee suggested that the facilities of the School of Management Studies be made use of and a Master's programme in commerce be started in the School in the year 1971. No university in Kerala had a department of commerce directly under the University at that time and there was a general demand for such a course being offered by the University. This felt need for a commerce department at the university level was the main factor for starting the course. Though there was no support from any external agency for the programme, it was implemented without any problems relating to facilities, faculty or books.

The location of the University department away from the main city of Cochin was one of the reasons for not attracting bright students for the course. Owing to late admissions in the University, high achievers were not available and therefore the calibre of the students who joined the course was not high enough. Many private colleges in the city offered the same course which was also a reason for bright students not coming to the University. The programme was discontinued in the year 1974. Many reasons can be pointed out for stopping the course in this University.

MBA was the major programme of the School of Management Studies and M.Com suffered by comparison. Because the faculty gave more importance to the MBA degree course, the students of the M.Com degree course felt themselves to be inferior to the MBA students. This attitude of the students led to the development of an unhealthy climate in the School. Also job opportunities of the M.Com degree holders were meagre as a large number of degree holders passed out every year from various colleges in the State. M.Com degree holders of the University had to compete with the degree holders of other universities as

well for getting employment. All these factors led to the discontinuance of the course in 1974.

## 2. Master of Bank Management Degree Course

Master of Bank Management (MBM) degree course of the Cochin University of Science and Technology was started in the year 1978. This course was started on the initiative of some of the private sector banks in Kerala, in particular the Federal Bank Limited, a scheduled bank with headquarters at Alwaye. These banks offered support to the University for running the course. This was a need-based programme for the benefit of these banks. The understanding between the University and the banks was that they would give preference to the MBM degree holders in the appointment of their staff.

The private sector banks and the then Director of the School of Management Studies took the initiative in starting this course in this University. The private sector banks in Kerala which were then in a stage of expansion were in need of personnel well-trained in the field of banking. This was the main environmental factor which necessitated the starting of the MBM degree course.

The University did not face any problems in implementing the course with regard to physical facilities. There were not enough books and journals in all the subjects included in the curriculum. The problems in this regard were negligible. Even though there was no core faculty at any time in adequate numbers during the period of the course, the faculty of the School could manage the course efficiently.

The course was discontinued in 1982. A large number of reasons can be identified for discontinuing the course.

Though MBM degree catered to the needs of the local scheduled banks, the University authorities, especially the Board of Studies and the Faculty could not concur with the idea of giving freedom to the bankers in selecting the candidates. Hence the involvement of the banking industry got reduced. As the MBM manpower supply was very much limited, in comparison with the manpower requirements in banks, the MBM degree was not accepted as an eligible qualification for the recruitment of officers in the banks without the usual selection test meant for

graduates. Hence the nationalised banks did not change their policy of conducting competitive examinations even for the MBM degree holders. The MBM degree holders had to compete in the open market with other graduates for selection in the banks, though they were given preference once they passed the competitive test. This situation became a main cause of dissatisfaction among the students who demanded direct recruitment without the test.

The MBA degree course which was perceived by some of the faculty and students as the main course of the School also posed some problems for the running of the MBM course. The MBM students also felt that their course was secondary in comparison with the more prestigious MBA degree course. So they agitated for the conversion of the course to MBA (Banking & Finance). This request was accepted by the University later and the MBM degree holders were permitted to convert their degree to MBA (Banking & Finance) after passing a further suitably-designed examination.

The reasons for the failure of the course as identified by the different faculty members are listed below.

- 1) As this was an extremely specialised course, the environment was not ready to accept it.
- 2) Absence of a specific agency or sponsor to support the course was another reason.
- 3) A positive attitude on the part of the faculty in accepting the two courses without any bias was lacking.
- 4) This course was perceived by most of the faculty and a section of the students only as an appendage to the main stream of activities of the School.

A highly specialised course like MBM could be successful only if the above attitude of the faculty and students changed. The students also should have perceived the relevance and significance of the course in relation to employment opportunities and they should not have had unhealthy competition with the students of other courses run in the same institute.

### 3. M.Sc. in Computer Software

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (D.R.D.O.) of the Government of India perceived the need for developing a team of software engineers to manage the development of computer software, needed by their various laboratories. As part of this programme, the D.R.D.O.

sponsored the course at seven universities in India. Cochin University was one of them and the course was started in 1986.

Even though the laboratories of D.R.D.O. were manned by competent electronic engineers, there was a definite lack of competence in the area of computer software needed for making the operations of the various digital equipments on board the missiles and other vehicles used by the Defence department. This was the main reason for starting this course.

As this course was sponsored by the Government of India, no problems were experienced while implementing it with regard to physical facilities, books and journals or financial support. But there was a serious dearth of qualified faculty in computer science, which caused some problems.

The level of professional competence of the science graduates specified by the D.R.D.O. and the course curriculum designed by the Board of Studies/Academic Council could not be met by the available graduates produced by the universities in Kerala. As a consequence



all the available seats could not be filled at the time of admission.

The course was originally intended for training five batches of students over a period of six years. After all the five batches had been trained, the course was discontinued in 1992. Altogether 72 students were trained, of whom 69 passed the examination and 65 joined D.R.D.O.

The faculty members were not favourably inclined for reintroducing the course. In their opinion, in the absence of high motivation and culture for hard work and academic excellence on the part of the students graduating out of universities with a B.Sc. degree, it was not considered desirable to continue such a specialised programme.

The top few percentage of the students in the Kerala State who successfully complete the Pre-degree course go in for Engineering/Medicine/Architecture/Agriculture degree courses. Those who proceed to take the general graduate course belong to those passing the Pre-degree examination with an average academic performance. The faculty members are of the opinion that alternative courses/programmes may be designed by the department for

meeting the evolving needs of the computer software industry.

#### 4. M.Sc. in Operations Research and Computer Applications

As the computer is a tool to solve our large scale problems in all walks of life, operations research is a highly applied subject in industries, production process, construction activities, projects etc. The course was started as a postgraduate diploma course in 1979 and changed to a degree course in 1985. Only one or two universities in the whole country offer such a course. The course was started in response to the high demand for trained persons in this field.

While implementing the course, the main problems experienced by the University were with regard to the physical facilities and also qualified faculty. Computer facility which was highly essential was limited. Not even a single additional teacher was appointed for the programme. Enough books and journals in the subject were also lacking. Support from external agencies was also not forthcoming.

The unavailability of adequate teaching staff was the main factor which stood in the way of continuing the programme. Admission for the year 1992 was stopped mainly for this reason.

5. School of Continuing Education - Courses by Correspondence

The School of Continuing Education started functioning in the year 1978-79. It was established with the intention of giving emphasis to non-formal education. It was proposed to offer four correspondence courses, viz., (1) Bachelor of Banking and Commerce (B.B.C.), (2) Bachelor of General Laws (B.G.L.), (3) Diploma in Banking (D.I.B.) and (4) M.Sc. in Mathematics.

The academic programmes of the School were organised jointly by the Director of the School and the Course Coordinators, specially appointed from among the regular teachers in the University.

There was a public demand for the courses B.B.C., B.G.L. and D.I.B., which were considered job-oriented. The University had the facilities and infrastructure for running all the above courses. The M.Sc. Mathematics degree

course was intended to give facilities to teachers in high schools to acquire a postgraduate degree.

Gradually, however, there was a decline in the activities of the School. The number of students applying for the courses steadily decreased. Students registered for the courses either did not register for the examinations or absented themselves from appearing for the examinations. The last year in which students were admitted was 1984. With an intention to reorganise the School with more relevant programmes and suitable organisational structure, the matter was considered by the Standing Committee of the Syndicate on Academic Matters. The Committee after having discussions with the Director of the School placed its recommendations before the Syndicate on 8th April 1988. The Syndicate considered the recommendations of the Committee and resolved to authorise the Vice-Chancellor to take appropriate decisions in consultation with the Director. Though the Vice-Chancellor permitted the Director to start all the four courses offered earlier, the courses were not started even in 1990. The meeting of the Syndicate held on 17th January 1992 decided to wind up the School and it was wound up in March 1992.

Though the three courses, B.B.C., B.G.L., and D.I.B. were considered to be job-oriented, they were not so in practice. The degree holders did not get any preference in selection for the jobs for which they were trained. They had to compete with other graduates for employment. Another drawback of these three courses was that the scope of employment for the degree holders became limited. The B.B.C. degree holders could not be considered for jobs outside the field of banking which limited their employment opportunities. The banks were not ready to consider D.I.B. as an extra qualification for a career in banking. The B.G.L. degree also was not considered equivalent to the LL.B. degree. All these factors led to the decrease in demand for these courses. Courses which are more relevant to the present period and also catering to the needs of youngsters were not designed by the School. This was the primary cause for the winding up of the School. Almost all the universities in India run many courses successfully under their schools of continuing education. No move has been made by this University to revitalise the School of Continuing Education by restructuring the courses or by better management of the School.

To sum up,

The overall analysis of the responses of the three groups of respondents reveals that they more or less concur in their perception of the different aspects of academic programmes in the Universities such as designing of new courses, structuring, implementation and running as also discontinuance of courses. All the three groups of respondents stress the need for offering knowledge-oriented specialised courses to students, relevant to the present time, in response to the demands of the employment market. Importance has also to be given to a moderate involvement of potential employers in course-design and implementation. They are of the view that factors like lack of physical facilities and library facilities, unavailability of trained faculty and bottlenecks caused by the bureaucratic set-up in the universities create hurdles in the smooth implementation and running of their academic programmes.

Lack of financial support from funding agencies and politics in the University departments are also considered important factors in causing hindrance in implementation of new courses.

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## Chapter 6

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The system of higher education in the State of Kerala, which is not very much different from that in the whole country is complex with a variety of issues and problems. In the opinion of academicians and educational administrators in general, the system has been afflicted by many evils like excessive quantitative expansion followed by qualitative deterioration, indiscipline among students as well as among teachers, excessive politicisation in the affairs of the higher educational institutions and their poor governance, absence of socially and economically relevant courses of studies designed in accordance with the advance in the frontiers of knowledge etc. A study of all these issues and problems is extremely difficult. Higher education is imparted through institutions of higher learning, namely the universities, which have the main functions of the pursuit of the advance and dissemination of knowledge. Carrying out these functions efficiently involves the proper academic governance of universities. Academic policy decisions are taken by the three main academic bodies of a university, viz., the Boards of

Studies, the Faculties and the Academic Council. The academic bodies of the universities thus indirectly coordinate and control their academic activities.

Another important aspect of academic governance of universities is the planning, designing and implementing of academic programmes. Education is a powerful instrument of human resource development. The rapid growth of knowledge in diverse fields makes it essential that the courses in our universities should be so designed as to have relevance to the world in which we live. Frequent revision and updating of the courses, and reorientation of the courses to the present needs and constant review and continuous renewal of the content and syllabi of courses are therefore essential for making the educational process respond to the future challenges in the country.

In the present situation a systematic study of the two main aspects of the academic governance of universities, viz., the study of the academic bodies as well as the study of the academic programmes in universities will bring to light the problems of the system and the ways and means to solve them. The present study has dealt with the structure and functions of the academic

bodies of the universities and also a scientific analysis of the different aspects of academic programmes designed and implemented in the universities in Kerala.

The system of higher education in Kerala comprises the universities and other institutions of higher studies. These are established by Acts of Parliament or state legislatures. The objectives of the universities, their jurisdiction, the authorities and officers of the universities, their functions and powers etc., are laid down in the Acts under which these universities are established. The Statutes which are the elaboration of Acts, are framed under the authority of the legislatures. The Acts and Statutes of different universities in the State are similar in most of their major provisions, with only slight variations in relation to the powers and the functions of the authorities or the officers of the university. The present study has dealt with the constitution, powers and functions of the authorities of the universities in Kerala, especially the academic bodies which have well-defined powers and functions. Chapter 4 of this thesis gives in detail the role and functions of the academic bodies in the four universities in Kerala, under study, and examines the role-effectiveness of these bodies.

The University Grants Commission has suggested a Model Act for the universities of the country, providing a model for the objectives, the officers and the authorities of the universities, their constitution and functions. In Chapter 4, the various aspects of the authorities of the universities in Kerala have been examined in comparison with the provisions, in this regard, in the Model Act. In the four universities in Kerala, viz., the University of Kerala, the University of Calicut, the Mahatma Gandhi University and the Cochin University of Science and Technology, there are five major authorities as provided in the Acts. They are the Senate, the Syndicate, the Academic Council, the Faculties and the Boards of Studies, whereas under the Model Act there need be only two authorities in a university, the Executive Council named as the Board of Management and the Academic Council.

Under the Model Act, the Senate is not an authority, but a consultative and deliberative body which is renamed as the Societal Consultative Council (S.C.C.). Contrary to this provision, the Senate in the universities in Kerala is considered as the supreme authority with powers for determining the degrees and diplomas and other

academic distinctions, making, amending or repealing statutes, cancelling or amending ordinances and regulations passed by the Syndicate and the Academic Council respectively. Other functions of the Senate like reviewing of broad policies and programmes of the university, passing resolutions on Annual Reports and Accounts and rendering advice to the authorities of the university are the only three functions of the S.C.C. under the Model Act.

The Senate is a large body in all the four universities with the members being ex-officio, elected or nominated. The number of elected members is large in all the universities. A wide cross-section of the society, like the university teachers, members of the Legislative Assembly, representatives from research institutions, industries, Chambers of Commerce, authors, journalists, officers of the Government, university non-teaching staff and students gets representation in the Senate. Under the Model Act, there is no provision for election of members to the S.C.C. The representation of the members of the S.C.C. is more or less similar to that of the Senate. The only difference is in the mode of selection of the members of the S.C.C., who are selected by rotation on the basis of seniority or by nomination. The S.C.C. in the Model Act is

a consultative body whereas the Senate in the universities in Kerala is an authority which possesses the powers to overrule decisions of the Syndicate and the Academic Council.

The Syndicate in the universities in Kerala is a small body with the members being ex-officio, elected or nominated. In the Model Act, the Executive Council, renamed as the Board of Management is also a small body and is one of the two authorities, with the members nominated on the basis of seniority and rotation. As in the case of the Syndicate, the Board of Management is the chief executive body consisting of representatives of the Government, teachers of the university and affiliated colleges and distinguished educationists. The Syndicate also includes representatives of the Senate, and the Academic Council. The Syndicates in most of the universities in Kerala are dominated by elected members. The Mahatma Gandhi University is the only exception, where all the members, except the ex-officio members, are nominated. The powers and functions of the Syndicate and the Board of Management are somewhat similar in all respects except in the management of academic functions of the university. Under the Model Act, the Academic Council

and not the Board of Management is the sole authority responsible for the university's academic functions. The Syndicates of the universities in Kerala have a heavy concentration of powers including the management and control of academic activities.

The Academic Council in the four universities under this study is the principal academic body consisting of representatives of Faculties, teachers of the university departments, principals of affiliated colleges, members of the Senate, students etc. The members are ex-officio elected or nominated, with their number being less than 75. Under the Model Act, there are no elected members in the Academic Council. Though the Academic Council in the universities in Kerala is considered the supreme authority with regard to academic management, in practice it is not so because it has only recommendatory powers. On the other hand, the Academic Council under the Model Act is the final authority as far as academic functions are concerned.

The Acts of the universities in Kerala provide for Faculties as prescribed by the Statutes. Each Faculty consists of a number of departments of the same or related disciplines. The council of the Faculty chaired by the

Dean, consists of the Chairmen of the Boards of Studies and representatives from the Boards of Studies, elected or nominated. The Faculty whose constitution and powers are more or less similar to the provisions in the Model Act has only recommendatory powers with regard to teaching, courses of study, research and examination matters.

The Acts of the universities in Kerala provide for Boards of Studies attached to the different departments of study in the universities. The Boards of Studies are constituted by the Syndicate and the members are appointed by the Syndicate in the universities except in the Mahatma Gandhi University where the Boards are nominated by the Chancellor. The Boards of Studies consist of Heads of teaching departments and teaching staff from the departments and the colleges as also other experts. With regard to the Board of Studies, the only difference in the provisions of the Model Act and the Acts of the universities in Kerala is that the members should include representatives from the industries and other user-agencies.

The Boards of Studies also like the Faculties have only powers to make proposals or recommendations with



regard to courses of study and examinations to the Faculties concerned and the Academic Council.

The academic functions of the universities are carried out mainly by the three authorities, the Academic Council, the Faculties and the Boards of Studies. This study has focused its attention on the general functioning of these authorities in order to find out how far these bodies are effective in their functioning. A detailed study of the minutes of the meetings of the Academic Councils of the three universities, the University of Kerala, the University of Calicut and the Cochin University of Science and Technology lead the researcher to arrive at the following conclusions.

The academic bodies, especially the Academic Council is not fully effective in exercising their powers and discharging their duties. In the Universities of Kerala and Calicut, which have a large number of affiliated colleges, the Academic Councils are unable to do full justice to the academic activities as provided in their Acts. A major proportion of the items presented before the Academic Councils of these universities pertains to routine matters like students' requests for relaxation of rules for

admission to courses and examinations, recognition of degrees of other universities, service matters of teachers and so on. Major academic functions of a university like courses design, revision and updating of syllabi etc., get less importance at the meetings of the Academic Councils of these affiliating universities.

It is seen that the Cochin University of Science and Technology which has no affiliated colleges and therefore fewer students, is able to do better justice to its primary functions as provided in the Act. The Academic Council of this university gives more importance to matters relating to implementation of new courses, course-syllabi revisions and the like. Other comparatively unimportant items regarding students and examinations are less in number among the items placed before the Academic Council. It is therefore inferred that universities with fewer affiliated colleges and smaller number of students are likely to do better justice to the major functions of the university as enunciated in the Acts.

This study further leads to the observation that academic bodies of the universities in Kerala, irrespective of their size or nature, generally do routine type of activities.

A brief summary of the analysis of the data collected with the help of questionnaire administered to the three groups of respondents selected for the study is given below. It was an interesting revelation that the perception of the three groups, on all the issues dealt with in the questionnaire was more or less similar.

The most important function of the academic bodies in a university as provided in the Acts is to make recommendations with regard to courses of study which includes designing new courses. As per the provisions of the Acts, the Boards of Studies make recommendations for course design to the Faculties and then to the Academic Council whose decision is final. The perception of the three groups of respondents selected for the study agrees with the statutory provision regarding the major function of the Board of Studies, viz., designing of courses. The teachers of the universities are also considered important agents for designing new courses. The professions in the field are also chosen by the respondents as important functionaries in this regard.

Though, in general, it is the Boards of Studies which take initiative in implementing new courses in the

universities, there are many instances in the universities in Kerala, where the initiative comes from other agencies like the State and Central Governments, user-agencies like industries and banks, teachers, heads of departments and even interested persons.

The perceptions of the three groups of respondents endorses the common view of educationists and the general public that the academic bodies of the universities are not represented by true academicians because election or nomination to these bodies is based on political considerations rather than on academic excellence. A general analysis of the opinions of the respondents leads to the conclusion that over-politicisation of the academic bodies, lack of initiative and a maintenance-oriented approach by the members are the main drawbacks of the academic bodies of the universities in Kerala.

None of the three groups of respondents has a high opinion about the efficient functioning of the academic bodies in the universities in Kerala. The highest rating given is "somewhat satisfactory" by all the groups which points to the fact that the functioning of these bodies needs improvement.

For improving the functioning of the academic bodies, the three groups of respondents have put forward the following suggestions.

Academic excellence should be the only criterion for granting membership in all the academic bodies. Political or other considerations should not come in the way of selecting members to these bodies. Academic bodies should be autonomous and they should have freedom to carry out their functions effectively and efficiently.

In actual practice, interference from political parties, social and religious groups and students often poses difficulties in the effective implementation of the decisions of the academic bodies in our universities. The respondents have suggested that the academic bodies should have freedom and full authority over the academic activities of the university.

Another suggestion for enhancing the quality of functioning of academic bodies in universities, put forward by the respondents is that these bodies should meet periodically and review their own functioning.

To sum up, it can be concluded that the academic bodies in the universities in Kerala do not function as effectively as envisaged in the laws of the universities. They have a maintenance-oriented approach rather than a dynamic one, without thinking in terms of introducing innovations. They need improvement in the various aspects of their constitution, selection of members and their mode of functioning.

Designing courses to cater to the needs of the society as well as to keep pace with the expansion of knowledge in varied fields is a challenging task. The universities in the country have to play a major role in this field. The various educational commissions constituted in the country have stressed the need for developing relevant educational programmes and the reorganisation of courses at all levels of higher education. In Chapter 5, the various aspects of the academic programmes run in the four universities selected for study, consisting of their designing, implementing and running, are dealt with in detail. The information elicited through the questionnaire from the three groups of respondents constitutes the subject matter of this chapter. The analysis of the information elicited through the

questionnaire is carried out under the following four sections.

1. Designing of different types of courses
2. Structure of courses
3. Implementation and running of courses
4. Failure of courses.

#### **Designing of Different Types of Courses**

The two major purposes of a course of study as identified by the three groups of respondents are training of students for employment in specialised areas and updating information in specialised areas. All the groups are unanimous in giving a low priority to the designing of courses for training of students for self-employment. The opinion of the respondents giving the highest preference for specialised training is in close conformity with the recent trends in India as well as in many developing countries.

With regard to the types of courses on the basis of their orientation, the three groups of respondents are unanimous in choosing knowledge-oriented specialised courses as the most suitable ones for the students of our

universities. Personal development-oriented courses get the least priority whereas knowledge-oriented general courses get the second preference.

In analysing the perceptions of the three groups of respondents regarding the reasons for designing a personal development-oriented course, it is observed that the most important reason chosen by them is the modification of a course to suit the requirements of time. Development of different kinds of skills in students is another important reason perceived by the respondents.

As per the opinion of the respondents, knowledge-oriented general courses are designed for the reason that the students after getting trained can accept any job according to their qualification. The next reason identified for designing such courses is that the students can further their knowledge by doing research. Opportunities for self-employment and chances of choosing career as teachers are given comparatively lower priorities.

In the opinion of the respondents in general, the students after getting trained in knowledge-oriented



specialised courses can choose a career in which they can make use of their specialised knowledge. In their opinion, specialised areas requiring trained manpower is the next important reason for designing specialised courses. In this case also, the respondents do not give much importance to the training to start self-employment or professional practice. An important observation to be noted is that the three groups of respondents representing three different sectors of universities, do not in general stress the importance for training of students for self-employment. This may be one of the reasons why such courses are seldom started in the universities in Kerala.

#### **Structure of Courses**

Restructuring of courses to suit the changing needs of our society is assuming great importance in recent times. It is generally said that the courses offered in the universities in Kerala are more or less of a traditional nature. To arrive at a method as to how the structure of a course can be designed, the three groups of respondents were requested to mark their preferences for the contributing factors. The respondents were of the view that the structure of a course can be designed most effectively with the help of discussions and expert

opinions of competent persons. Market surveys for knowing the relevance of courses in relation to job requirements and opportunities are also perceived as an important method for designing the structure of courses.

A good curricular system plays an important role in the personal and professional development of students. For developing a dynamic curricular system, a variety of skills are to be included in it in addition to the knowledge input. Development of technical skills has been identified as the most important aspect to be included in the curriculum, by the respondents. The next important one as perceived by them is that involving skill related to decision-making. The respondents do not give any importance to the inclusion of extra-curricular activities as part of the curriculum, which is contrary to the recent trends observed in the opinions of some educationists.

#### **Implementation and Running of Courses**

In the State of Kerala, generally courses are run on a continuing basis. Demand or relevance of courses is usually not ascertained unlike as is done in many developed countries. However, the majority of the respondents belonging to the three groups agree with the proposal that

a course should be started only after ascertaining its market demand.

In order to evolve an effective method of analysing the demand of courses, the opinions of the three groups of respondents were sought. The unanimous opinion was that the demand of a course can be ascertained effectively by assessing its significance in the present situation of the country. Assessing the employment opportunities for trained manpower is the next important method, perceived by the three groups. Projection for 5 to 10 years for proper utilisation of manpower developed is also considered as important factor in analysing the environmental demand of a course. Attitude of potential employers is also identified as a decisive factor in this regard.

The majority of the respondents of the three groups were in agreement with the proposal that manpower requirements in specialised areas for 5 to 10 years is to be a pre-requisite for starting courses. A vast majority of them were also of the opinion that such analyses are feasible.

More than 50 per cent of the respondents belonging to the three groups agreed fully with the proposal that universities should start specialised courses only when there is environmental demand. The concept of encouraging training in applied sciences more than in pure sciences, advocated by advanced countries, is also being accepted by the academicians of Kerala.

A good majority (more than 65 per cent) of the respondents in all the three groups agreed with the suggestion that every five years, all existing courses of a university, at all levels, should be reviewed and that if found irrelevant should be discontinued and substituted with relevant programmes.

An effective partnership between the employment sector and the educational sector, which has been responsible for the multiphased developments in the advanced countries, has not been properly developed in India. In the context of a proper interaction between these two fields, the importance of the involvement of potential employers in the matter of course and curriculum development gains ground. The three groups of respondents were unanimous in their opinion that the potential

employers should be involved and their suggestions and expert opinions in the designing of course structure obtained. The second priority was given to the suggestion that the employers should provide physical facilities also. The respondents were not favourable to the idea that the employers should be included in the university bodies which design courses nor should they be involved in the selection of students or faculty. This response is in sharp contrast with the actual situation obtaining in the modern universities in advanced countries, where the employers are involved in course design and development. The conventional attitude in this respect of the three groups who are responsible for taking initiative for bringing about changes in the university system, can be considered a good reason for the continuance of the traditional university system in the State.

Many factors contribute to the successful implementation and running of academic programmes in the universities. Lack of these essential factors causes constraints in the effective launching and running of the courses. The three groups of respondents identify lack of physical facilities as the most crucial problem in the implementation as well as the running of courses in the

universities. Other problems considered important by them in these areas are the bottlenecks caused by the bureaucracy and unavailability of trained faculty. The problems identified by the respondents for the implementation as well as for the running of courses are more or less the same. The opinion of the respondents that lengthy procedures of administration pose difficulties in the smooth running of academic programmes in the universities clearly reflects the general opinion of the academicians.

#### **Failure of Courses in the Universities**

A detailed study was made of the reasons for the phenomenon of discontinuance of courses, both general and specialised, in the departments of the universities in Kerala. As per the general view of the respondents, the most important reason for the failure of a general course was the limited scope of employment due to lack of specialisation. Fewer employment opportunities for youths who get no specialised training is identified as the second major reason for the failure of general courses. Vested interests of persons or groups in the universities play their role in starting courses for unacademic reasons.

This has also been pointed out as one of the reasons for the discontinuance of courses.

For the failure of specialised courses also, the most important reason identified is the limited scope of employment, because of specialised training. In the opinion of the respondents, specialised courses are liable to be discontinued when they become irrelevant to the present period. An equally important reason for the failure of courses as per the perception of the respondents is inadequate physical facilities. Lack of assessment of public demand for the course has also been identified as one of the reasons for the failure of courses.

Analysing the various reasons for the non-implementation of courses in the teaching departments of the universities, the responses of the three groups of respondents identify the following important ones. They are lack of physical facilities, lack of funds sanctioned by external funding agencies like Governments, U.G.C. etc., shortage of trained faculty and also departmental politics.

A few case studies of courses discontinued in the Universities of Kerala and Calicut and the Cochin

University of Science and Technology were undertaken by the researcher for analysing the various reasons for the discontinuance of specialised courses.

The B.Sc (Special) degree course of the University of Kerala which was started in 1966 as a prestigious course had to be discontinued after only three years because of agitation by a section of students and adverse reaction on the part of a few members of the Senate. The University had to succumb to pressure from outside the university system.

The postgraduate diploma courses in Business Administration and in Office Management and Secretarial Practice started by the University of Calicut in the early seventies were discontinued in 1980, just prior to the introduction of the specialised Master of Business Administration degree course.

In the Cochin University, only three batches of students were admitted to the M.Com. degree course during 1971-74 before its discontinuance, citing the availability of the same course in very many affiliated colleges of the sister universities as the reason. And the Master of Bank



Management (MBM) degree course was discontinued after a four-year life, as the course not only did not serve fully the purpose for which it was started, namely getting preference for its products in employment in banks but also suffered in prestige in comparison with the Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree course run in the same university concurrently.

Again only five batches of students were admitted to the highly specialised M.Sc. degree course in Computer Software before it was abandoned, mainly because of the unavailability of sufficiently motivated students.

It was lack of physical facilities and unavailability of trained faculty that led to the discontinuance in 1992 of the M.Sc. degree course in Operations Research and Computer Applications (OR&CA) started in the Cochin University in 1985.

The School of Continuing Education of the Cochin University had started a few job-oriented correspondence courses leading to the Bachelor's or Master's degree or a diploma. The courses were in Banking, Law and Mathematics. As the degrees awarded by the university were not accepted

as equivalent to corresponding degrees of the other universities in Kerala, the courses had a natural death after a few years of life.

A study of the various aspects of the academic programmes, conducted in the universities in Kerala has been made mainly on the basis of the opinions of three groups of respondents who are supposed to be associated in one way or the other in the implementation and management of the academic programmes in universities. The study reveals that the perception of these three groups regarding the various issues presented to them, was more or less on similar lines, with only slight variations in certain cases.

The three groups of respondents generally give high preference for specialisation in their selection of courses as well as for their content and curriculum. Their opinions reveal that the courses should have a utilitarian bias. Low priority has been given to courses designed for personal development and self-employment. The conventional approach of the three groups of respondents is reflected in their responses regarding course design and curriculum development. This approach is again revealed in their

opinions regarding the composition of the academic bodies responsible for designing and implementation of courses. This has the effect of retarding the introduction of changes in the general set-up of the university system.

An analysis of the perception of the three groups shows that they give importance to the relevance of courses with regard to the developments in the frontier areas of knowledge and the present times. Their considered opinion is that the market demand of courses has to be assessed at regular intervals in relation to developments in knowledge as well as to the employment opportunities with the help of surveys and projection techniques. Irrelevant courses should be discontinued and substituted by more relevant and useful courses. The many problems identified in the implementation of academic programmes are lack of facilities and of trained faculty and the bottlenecks caused by bureaucracy. Lack of specialisation and over-specialisation of courses which limit the job opportunities, lack of assessment of environmental demand and irrelevance of courses are thus seen to be the major reasons for the failure of courses. Pressure from vested interests and political and other groups, lack of facilities and of faculty members are also reasons for the failure of courses.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study, the following recommendations are made by the researcher for improving the system of higher education in Kerala. As the nature and the functioning of the different universities in the State tend to be different owing to various environmental reasons, a Model Act on the lines suggested by the U.G.C. binding all the functions of the universities is not put forward. However, the researcher is of the view that common laws for the academic functions of all the universities would be desirable.

The major authorities of the universities should be the Senate, the Syndicate, the Academic Council, the Faculty and the Board of Studies, as already provided in the existing Acts of the universities in Kerala. No major changes are suggested in the powers or functions of the Syndicate or the Senate except in the case of academic functions, as provided in the existing Acts and Statutes.

As for the constitution of the authorities of the universities, however, the selection of their members should be based on merit and academic excellence only of the

incumbents. More educational administrators and academicians should be included in these bodies. To avoid excessive politicisation of the university system, election to the authorities should be dispensed with. The members are to be selected by nomination on the basis of merit or by rotation on the basis of seniority. The Gnanam Committee appointed by the U.G.C. and the reports on the universities of Kerala and Calicut by Dr. Malcolm Adiseshiah have also recommended that there should not be any elected members on the authorities of the universities.

In the existing Acts of the Universities in Kerala, the academic bodies, the Academic Council, the Faculty and the Board of Studies, are not final authorities as far as the academic functions of the universities are concerned. The majority of their powers as provided in the Acts are only recommendatory. It is suggested that the Academic Council should be made the final authority responsible for all academic policies and activities of the university. However, the Syndicate will be the sanctioning authority for the administrative as well as financial aspects of the academic activities.

The Faculties of the universities are to be retained as per the provisions in the existing Acts and Statutes.

The major academic activities of the university are the designing of courses and other matters connected with it. As these activities are the responsibility of the Boards of Studies, they are to be provided with more powers than at present so that they can have a greater say in their functions. The Boards of Studies should include, together with the representatives of teachers, experts from connected industries, branches of agriculture, commercial institutions and other user-agencies. The Boards of Studies should have the sole authority to design the content of the courses, to formulate the syllabi of courses to prescribe text books and to make changes and improvements in the syllabi and the scheme of studies of courses. The preparation of the panels of question paper setters and of examiners for the subjects should be the responsibility only of the Board of Studies concerned. The decisions of the Boards of Studies in all the above matters should be final. This would then mean that interference of political, social and other comparatively incompetent agencies in such decisions on the academic matters, will be less.

Periodical review of the academic activities of the university is likely to enhance their quality. As per the Acts of the universities the Boards of Studies and the Faculties are to meet only once in an year. It is, however, suggested that these bodies should meet like the Academic Council, three or four times in a year and more often if required.

The universities should design new and varied academic programmes in accordance with the demands of the environment. They should be able to keep pace with the explosion of knowledge and also with the needs of the employment market. In this age of rapid developments in the varied fields of knowledge, specialised courses are the need of the hour. Therefore universities should design and implement more knowledge-oriented specialised courses. General as well as personal-development oriented courses, needed for catering to the employment needs of students should also be introduced.

The universities should have constant interaction with the employers and user-agencies, whose representatives may also be involved in the process of the designing of the courses, so that courses catering to their needs can also

be introduced. There should be symbiosis between the universities and the user-agencies and the universities should depend on them to a large extent for physical and other facilities, funds, endowments, scholarships etc.

New courses should be started by the universities only on the basis of demand. Surveys and analyses of projection for 5 to 10 years for assessing the requirements of trained personnel in the different fields should be prerequisites for starting the courses.

The course content and the syllabi of courses should be reviewed at regular intervals so that they can both be updated and improved as and when found necessary.

Courses once started and run on a routine basis should be discontinued if found irrelevant to the needs of the market on a review. Such courses can be revived and reintroduced, if necessary, on demand from the employment market.

An analysis of the academic activities of the universities in Kerala leads to the conclusion that universities with no colleges affiliated to them and



therefore with comparatively smaller number of students and faculty members, perform better than larger affiliating universities. On the basis of this observation the researcher is prompted to suggest that the present system of affiliation of colleges to universities should be discontinued in due course. The system of accreditation of the institutions and the courses offered therein, as obtaining in the universities in advanced countries, may be introduced. On the strength of the findings of the process of accreditation, it may be decided whether poor courses should be discontinued and even poor institutions wound up. At the same time, institutions that are seen to perform creditably may be granted a certain degree of autonomy in its functioning in the matter of selection of courses or even of conducting examinations. The University Grants Commission has recently made a beginning in this direction.

For an ideal relationship between the State and the university, the researcher should like to make the following recommendation. The responsibilities of universities are many among which fostering of original minds and extension of our knowledge base are the most important. One major reason for the advanced countries becoming economically and technologically strong is the

sound knowledge base they have as a result of a vibrant higher education system. Countries in which universities are prevented from doing their job productively and imaginatively will lag behind in the race towards economic advancement and technological progress. Instead of devising structures that could provide a large degree of autonomy to the institutions of higher learning what often happens is that the State as the paymaster shows an unhealthy interest in the internal activities of universities. It is true that the State is answerable to the citizens how the public monies are spent. It certainly has a right to keep a watchful eye and take action when wrongs are done. Otherwise, universities should be left to pursue the objectives of expanding knowledge in peace without any sort of interference. What is therefore desirable is to have a system of initially appointing sound persons, with the head of the university being most carefully chosen, providing universities with ample resources and not interfering in their internal workings. Universities should have the full freedom and autonomy to utilise the resources, time and abilities they have at their disposal in any manner they deem fit.

APPENDIX - I

Cochin University of  
Science and Technology  
Cochin 682022

November 15, 1993

Sir/Madam,

I may introduce myself as a part-time research student of the School of Management Studies, Cochin University of Science and Technology, working for the Ph.D. degree of the University under the guidance of Prof.P.Ramachandra Poduval. My study is on the "role of academic bodies with special reference to the academic programmes in the universities in Kerala".

I am sure that your considered opinions/remarks on the subject in the form of responses to the questions in the enclosed questionnaire will immensely help me in making an in-depth study of the subject. I shall feel obliged if you will kindly indicate your answers and send the questionnaire back to the address given below, preferably within a week.

I assure you that all the information provided by you shall be treated as confidential.

Thanking you in anticipation,

Yours truly,

Sd/-

(R. Sushama)  
Research student  
School of Management Studies

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name :
2. Designation :
3. Address for correspondence:
4. Are/were you a member of :  
any of the academic bodies  
of any of the Universities  
in Kerala?
5. If yes, specify the body/ :  
bodies and your position

Name of the academic bodyPosition

1. Board of Studies
2. Faculty
3. Academic Council

Please give your order of preference by marking 1,2,3 etc., in the box provided against each response.

1. Generally who takes the initiative in designing a new course in a University?

- Board of Studies
- Faculty
- Academic Council
- Syndicate

- Senate
- Government
- Local Community
- Organised effort of students
- Professionals in the field
- Teachers

2. What in your opinion is the purpose of designing a new course in a University?

- For updating information in a specialised field
- For the personal development of students
- For training students for employment in specialised areas
- For making students competent to accept any job
- For training students for starting self employment/professional practice

3. What is your priority for the courses of the following types?

- Personal development-oriented courses
- Knowledge-oriented general courses
- Knowledge-oriented specialised courses

4. What are the environmental reasons for designing a personal development-oriented course?

- To supply manpower needed for certain types of jobs, not currently available
- To modify a course to suit the requirement of the time.
- To inculcate new social values with the changing times
- To instil traditional values among students

5. What are the environmental reasons for designing knowledge-oriented general courses?

- To enable students to choose their career as teachers
- To enable students to further their knowledge by doing research
- To enable students to start self-employment
- To enable students to accept any job according to their qualification

6. What are the environmental reasons for designing knowledge-oriented specialised courses?

- To enable students to choose a career in which they can make use of their updated and specialised knowledge
- To enable students to start self-employment/professional practices
- To supply trained manpower to specialised areas where there is demand

7. From which sources, the method for designing the structure of a course be evolved?

- From discussions and expert opinions of competent persons in the field
- From the directives of external agencies like UGC, CSIR, DRDO etc.
- From the results of market surveys conducted for assessing the relevance of the course in relation to employment opportunities

8. What shall be the method for analysing the environmental demand of a course?

- By assessing the significance of the course in the present situation of the country
- By assessing the present employment opportunities for trained persons
- By assessing the attitude of potential employers
- By projection for 5 to 10 years for proper utilisation of manpower developed through course
- By assessing the attitude of the present or past students of the course

9. What, according to you, should be the involvement of the potential employers in designing and implementing a course?

- They should be invited to give their suggestions in designing the course structure
- They should be involved in the selection of students and faculty
- They should sponsor students

- They should provide physical facilities, endowments, scholarships etc.
- They should be included in the Board of Studies

10. In addition to the knowledge input through teaching, what other aspects are to be included in the curriculum for the general professional development of the individual?

- Development of technical skills
- Development of behavioural (social relations) skills
- Development of skills relating to planning
- Development of skills relating to decision-making
- Total development of the person through extra-curricular activities such as NCC, NSS, planning forum, Students Union etc.

11. Do you feel that a course should be started only after ascertaining the market demand?

Yes/No.

12. a. Do you agree with the statement that proper analysis of manpower requirement in a specialised area for about 5 to 10 years is a pre-requisite for introducing a new specialised course?

Yes/No.

b. If yes, do you think that such an assessment is feasible?

Yes/No.



13. In your opinion what are the problems in implementing a new course?

- Lack of physical facilities
- Unavailability of trained faculty members
- Non-cooperation of existing faculty members
- Lack of literature/library facilities
- Lack of, or meagre support from external agencies
- Unavailability of students with right academic background
- Bottlenecks caused by bureaucracy

14. What according to you are the reasons or factors which lead to discontinuing a specialised course?

- Inadequate physical facilities
- Unavailability of competent teachers
- Limited scope of employment due to specialised training
- Not catering to the needs of youngsters
- Not relevant to the present period
- Lack of assessment of public demand
- Lack of projection for some years for the utilisation of trained manpower
- Absence of a specific sponsor to support the course

15. What in your opinion are the reasons for the failure of a general course?

- Limited scope of employment due to lack of specialisation

- Lack of public demand due to the general nature of the course
- Poor performance of students
- Creating more educated unemployed youths who have no specialised training
- Starting of the course for non-academic reasons

16. What is your reaction to the proposal that universities should offer specialised courses only when there is environmental demand? (Tick the appropriate box)

- Fully agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Fully disagree

17. a. Some people consider that every five years, all existing courses at the undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate levels should be reviewed for their relevance and if found irrelevant, they should be substituted by socially and economically relevant programmes. Do you agree with this opinion?

Yes/No

b. If you do not agree with the above opinion, is it because of any of the following reasons?

- Pursuing higher education is everyone's right
- Courses should not be viewed from the point of relevance/irrelevance

18. What are the major problems experienced while running a course?

- Lack of physical facilities

- Unavailability of competent faculty
- Non-cooperation of teachers
- Feeling of discrimination by students in one course from the students of a similar course in the same institute
- Problems created by administrative procedures
- Standard of the course diminishing gradually due to the poor calibre of students
- Standard of the course diminishing due to the poor calibre of teachers

19. Some courses designed and approved by the academic bodies of universities are often not started. What, according to you, could be the reasons for non-implementation of such courses ?

- Lack of physical facilities
- Lack of trained faculty
- Resistance from existing faculty
- Departmental politics
- Non approval of Government/UGC for funds
- Insufficient response for the course from potential students
- Lack of public demand for the course due to narrow specialisation
- Lack of public demand due to non-specialisation
- Problems posed by administrative procedures of bureaucracy

20. Do you think that the different academic bodies of the universities discharge their functions satisfactorily?  
(Kindly tick the appropriate box)

- Completely satisfactorily
- Satisfactorily
- Somewhat satisfactorily
- Neither satisfactorily nor unsatisfactorily
- Somewhat unsatisfactorily
- Completely unsatisfactorily

Please give your order of preference by marking 1, 2, 3 etc., in the box provided against each of the responses.

21. According to you, what are the limitations of the academic bodies of a university?

- They do not represent true academicians as the membership is determined by political considerations
- They do not take any initiative in formulating academic reforms
- They do routine types of activities
- They are not given due recognition by the university authorities

22. To improve the functioning of the academic bodies, which of the following proposals do you agree with?

- They should meet periodically and review their functioning
- Membership to the bodies should be based only on academic excellence

- They should have freedom to discharge their functions efficiently
- Their decisions should not be vetoed by other university bodies except on the basis of administrative or resource considerations.

Date:

Signature

APPENDIX - IIInterview Schedule

1. Name :
2. Designation :
3. Address :
  - 1) Name of the course which has been discontinued after a few years of its implementation in the University
  - 2) Please list out the environmental factors which necessitated the starting of the Course
  - 3) Who took the initiative in starting the Course?
    - (a) Government
    - (b) University authorities
    - (c) Faculty members
    - (d) Public
    - (e) Others
4. 1) Did you experience any problems in implementing the course in terms of the following factors?
  - (a) Physical facilities : Yes/No
  - (b) Library facilities : Yes/No
  - (c) Trained faculty : Yes/No
  - (d) Support from external agencies : Yes/No
  - (e) Students : Yes/No

2) If yes, kindly elaborate

5. Can you identify the reasons  
for discontinuing the course?  
Kindly elaborate

6. Would you like to reintroduce  
the Course? : Yes/No

7. If yes, what are the changed  
conditions for reintroducing  
the Course?

8. If no, what are your reasons?

Place:

Date :

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