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PARALLEL COLLEGES IN KERALA: a case study of
their structure in terms of enrolment costs
and employment

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In the educational sector of India, it is the stage of higher education that has registered the highest rates of growth in recent decades. ^{1/} Factors on the sides of supply and demand have both contributed to the process. On the demand side, the major factors would seem to have been the increase in social and economic mobility of the population, the opening up of opportunities for highly remunerated jobs requiring persons with advanced educational qualifications, and the relative decline in opportunities and lengthening of the waiting periods for jobs for the less educated. In fact, the capacity of the economy to create facilities for higher education for all the eligible aspirants has remained limited, with the result that unsatisfied demand has been growing increasingly over the past few decades. This has been the case particularly in Kerala where a much stronger base of education at the elementary and secondary stages has been in existence than in the rest of the country.

The question whether access to higher education has to be offered to all those who are eligible and aspire for it or should be restricted by considerations of manpower requirements of the economy, has been a subject of debate both in the advanced and the developing countries for quite some time. Even though the Education Commission of India, 1964-66, also discussed the question in detail their conclusion were not unambiguous. ^{2/} On the one hand, the Commission concluded that

^{1/} During the 1960's, the enrolment in University education grew by 128 percent and school enrolment by 60 percent. In Kerala, the growth ratio has been still higher at the university stage, namely 268 percent. School enrolment in Kerala increased only by 44 percent. Sec, Govt. of Kerala, Manpower Studies, Vol. II (Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Trivandrum, 1979), P.I

^{2/} Govt. of India, Report of the Education Commission, 1964-66 (NCERT, N: 1970)

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there is no escape but to link broadly the total enrolments in higher education to manpower needs and to bridge the gap between these enrolments and the demand for higher education by adopting a policy of selective admission. ^{3/} (emphasis added)

On the other hand, the Commission also suggested the creation of " a paralled system of education for those who can attend educational institutions only during a few hours they can spare in the evenings or at other convenient times in order to enable them to qualify for the same certificates, diplomas and degrees . . . " ^{4/}

For this latter purpose the Commission recommended the introduction of Correspondence Courses, Evening Colleges and Private registration for University examinations. Even though Correspondence courses began in India only during the sixties, enrolment in them expanded quite rapidly and rose to nearly 2.1 percent of the total enrolment in higher education by 1975-76. ^{5/} There are at present 22 universities offering Correspondence courses in India.

Another system introduced in recent years for higher education is private registration of candidates for appearance at University examinations. At present 71 universities in India provide this facility.

^{3/} ibid. p. 557 The Commission envisaged a policy of raising the entry standards in higher education for implementing selective admission. Blaug (1969) on the other hand, favoured a policy of raising the price of admission namely, the fee component of the cost of education. See BLAUG, Metal (1969) The Causes of Graduate Unemployment in India (Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, London p. 247).

^{4/} ibid. p. 794

^{5/} DUTT, R (1977) Higher Education and Future Educational Policy (New Delhi: Ministry of Education vol 3, No 2 Autumn, p. 200)

As a result, numerous private unregistered institutions, euphemistically called 'Parallel Colleges' coaching private registrants have emerged in India almost without governmental or other public support. ^{6/} In Kerala the growth of such institutions in recent years has been phenomenal and they have come to a stage where they play a significant role in the field of higher education in the State. Problems arising from the mushroom growth of parallel educational institutions in Kerala have already attracted some attention of administrators, educationist and economists. While a few writers have labelled these institutions as mere 'teaching shops', others have considered them the 'balancing factors' in the present inequities educational set up.

Objective: The total number of parallel colleges in existence in this state is not known. ^{7/} Systematic and detailed studies on the magnitude, the dimensions of the operations and the educational and economic implications of the parallel colleges in this State have, however, not yet been undertaken by public agencies or private researchers. The present exercise is intended to take a modest step in this direction. We do not attempt, however, to examine the efficiency of these institutions in terms of examination results for more than one reason. For instance, these institutions make highly exaggerated claims, obviously for attracting prospective students. Second, there exists no meaningful standard against which to judge the results, even

^{6/} Lately, the government has decided to sanction parallel colleges on a co-operative basis in all the taluks of Kerala

^{7/} However, some 'guesstimates' made in recent years have placed their number between 5,000 and 10,000;

Sec: (i) (1975) 'Our Tutorials: A Survey' (Malayala Manorama, dated October 8, 9 and 10, Kottayam), and

(ii) (1980) Marmadhan, Prema, 'The Dens of Academic Step-children', (Indian Express, October 30, Cochin)

assuming the claims made by the institutions to be reliable. It is well known that the results in terms of pass percentage of regular college students have been falling steadily over the years due to a variety of reasons summed up in respectable parlance as 'student-teacher unrest'. Our general impression is that the parallel colleges do not compare unfavourably with regular colleges in the matter of pass percentages. This impression has, however, to be verified by detailed enquiry, which we propose to take up separately. Our major objective here is to examine the dimensions of the parallel college system in terms of enrolment, costs and employment.

Data: Since the present exercise is on a rather unexplored topic, secondary sources of data are almost non-existent. Basic information for the study had, therefore, to be collected through field surveys. Since the total number of parallel colleges and the number of students enrolled in them in the State as a whole are not known, it has not been possible for us to select samples on the basis of any standard statistical criterion. The sample we selected was decided upon taking into account the question of regional variations and our constraints of time and finance. We collected during January-March, 1980 data from 35 parallel colleges selected purposively from the three main educational centres of Kerala: Trivandrum (15 colleges), Ernakulam (10 colleges) and Calicut (10 colleges). The total student population selected for interview from these 35 colleges was 300 out of a total 14.2 thousand - one hundred from each centre, Thirty were those undergoing postgraduate courses, and thirty five each pre-degree and degree courses in Arts and Commerce. Information from the students was collected through personal interviews and structured schedules which were then cross-checked with records maintained by the respective

parallel colleges in which they were enrolled.

The study is presented in the following order: against the background of a brief overview of the growth of higher education in Kerala after its formation in 1956, a discussion of the structure of enrolment is made in section two; institutional costs (incurred by the parallel colleges for the acquisition of assets and on recurring expenditure) as well as students' costs are examined in section three. The fourth section contains a critical assessment of the conditions of employment in the parallel colleges. This is followed, in the last section, by a brief summary and the broad conclusions of the study.

a. Growth of Higher Education in Kerala since 1956

At the formation of the Kerala State in 1956, there existed in the region 28 Arts and Science Colleges with an enrolment of 0.25 lakh students. ^{8/} The enrolment in higher education increased to 1.53 lakh in the late seventies and to 2.12 lakh in 1979-80. ^{2/}

The rapid growth in the number of colleges and enrolment of students has created problems for administration and the maintenance of academic efficiency. Consequently, a separate university the Calicut University was established in 1968 with the institutions in the northern districts of Trichur to Cannanore under its jurisdiction. The formation of the University of Cochin in 1972 as a non-affiliating, technological university is another noteworthy development in the state.

During the seventies, three major developments took place in field of higher education in Kerala. The first was the granting of permission

^{8/} Govt. of Kerala (1979) 'Manpower Studies', Vol. II, Op. Cit. p.1.

^{2/} Directorate of Collegiate Education.

for private registration of candidates for university examination in the Kerala University in 1971 and in the Calicut University in 1976, as a result of which a mushroom growth of private coaching institutions called 'Parallel Colleges' ensued. The other two significant developments of the decade were the expansion of 'Evening Colleges' started in 1965-66. ^{10/} and the opening of an Institute for Correspondence courses by the University of Kerala in 1976. ^{11/} Thus the doors of higher education were thrown open to persons who could not avail the facilities of regular colleges.

As mentioned already, the emergence of Parallel Colleges in Kerala has been the result of the excess of demand for entry into university education over supply of facilities for it in regular colleges ^{12/} and the permission granted by universities and the government to private registrants for appearance in university examinations.

Although, Parallel Colleges are relatively a recent phenomenon, tutorial colleges had existed in Kerala from a much earlier period. Tutorial colleges mainly engaged themselves in giving part-time tuition to regular school, or college-going students and fulltime tuition for those appearing for university examinations as private candidates after failure in earlier examinations. Tuition is given in all the subjects: Arts, Commerce and Science.

Parallel colleges offer, on the other hand, regular courses as in the regular colleges in subjects for which private registration is allowed. Usually private registration is allowed for Arts and

^{10/} Mathew E.T. and Nair, P.R.G. (1979) 'Demand for Higher Education: A Socio-economic profile of Evening College Students in Kerala' (Journal of Kerala Studies, vol.VI March-June)

^{11/} Recently the Calicut and the Cochin Universities have also started Correspondence Courses. But the Cochin University offers mainly diplomas and certificate courses.

^{12/} The increase in demand for higher education was mainly the result of the increase in S.S.L.C. pass outs, which increased from 58,575 in 1961-62 to 1,24,730 in 1978-79.

Commerce subjects only. ^{13/}

During the period 1971-1978, the increase in the number of privately registered candidates has been the highest for the pre-degree examination in Arts and Commerce (1027 per cent), the B.Com. (1840 percent and the B.A. degree (Arts and Commerce) examination (334 percent). In fact, the proportion of private candidates presented for examination to total enrolment in regular colleges has been as high as 34 percent in Pre-degree, 40 percent in B.Com and 46 percent in M.A. ^{14/}

(b) Structure of Enrolment in Parallel-cum-Tutorial Colleges:

(1) Distribution by Region and Size of Enrolment

We shall now turn to a discussion of the results of the sample survey. The total enrolment in the thirtyfive institutions included in our sample was 27,870. On an average each institution had, thus, 796 students. But the strength of students varied from institution to institution and from region to region. ^{15/} Table 1 gives the region-wise percentage distribution of colleges by size group in terms of enrolment.

^{13/} The Calicut University permits private registration for B.Sc. and M.Sc. (Maths) examinations also.

^{14/} The proportions relate to the year 1975-76. Since then there has been rapid increase in private candidates and the proportions are likely to have increased considerably.

^{15/} The average number of students per college in Trivandrum, Ernakulam and Calicut work out to 1,078; 672; and 498 respectively.

Table 1
Percentage Distribution of Institutions by Region
and size of Enrolment

Percentage distribution of sample colleges by region and size group of enrolment.				Percentage distribution of sample colleges in each region by size group of enrolment			
Size group by enrolment	T	E	C	Total	T	E	C
0-250	17.1	8.6	8.6	34.3	40.0	30.0	30.0
250-500	8.6	8.6	14.3	31.4	20.0	30.0	30.0
500-750	5.7	5.7	2.9	14.3	13.3	20.0	10.0
750-1000	2.9	2.9	2.0	8.6	6.7	20.0	10.0
More than 1000	8.6	2.9	—	11.4	20.0	—	—
Total	42.8	28.6	28.6	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note:

T = Trivandrum

E = Ernakulam

C = Calicut

Of the total thirtyfive institutions in the sample, nearly 66 percent had a strength of less than 500 students. Only 11 percent had more than 1000 students on their rolls; of this nearly 75 percent were in the Trivandrum region. The distribution of the institutions within the Trivandrum region presents a picture of co-existence (in terms of enrolment) of big with small. For instance, while 40 percent of the institutions had enrolment of less than 250, about 11 percent had enrolment above 1000. On the other hand, nearly 60 to 80 percent of the institutions in the Ernakulam and the Calicut regions were relatively small, with strength of less than 500 student and no institutions had enrolment beyond 1000. Thus, judged interms

of the number of students, institutions in the Trivandrum region were, on the average, larger than those in the other two regions. ^{16/}

ii. Distribution of Enrolment by Sex and Courses of Study

The details of the distribution of students by sex and type of courses are given in Table 2. It is seen that most of the institutions conducted parallel and tutorial courses simultaneously and were, therefore, Tutorial-cum-Parallel Colleges. Of the total enrolment,

Table 2

Sex-wise Distribution of Enrolment in Parallel
and Tutorial Courses

Sex	Parallel		Tutorial		Total	
	No.	percent	No.	percent	No.	percent
1. Boys	5,816	40.8	5,564	40.8	11,380	40.8
2. Girls	8,426	59.2	8,064	59.2	16,490	59.2
Total	14,242	100.0	13,628	100.0	27,870	100.0

59 percent were girls (in Trivandrum 59 percent, in Ernakulam 66 percent and in Calicut 52 percent). The number of girls far exceeded that of boys both in parallel and tutorial courses. Obviously, this was not due to any demographic factors, but the result of the deliberate policy of preferring girls to boys for enrolment, followed by most managements of these institutions. Management preferred girls since they are reportedly more disciplined and more prompt in the payment of fees than boys.

Tutorial courses accounted for a larger proportion of total enrolment in the institutions in Trivandrum and the Calicut regions

^{16/} This conclusion is reinforced by the information on the period of their enrolment.

than in the Ernakulam region as is shown in Table 3

Table 3

Distribution of Enrolment for Parallel and
Tutorial Courses according to Region

Region	Parallel courses		Tutorial courses		Total	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
1. Trivandrum	7577	46.8	8593	53.2	16170	100.0
2. Ernakulam	4376	65.1	2342	34.9	6718	100.0
3. Calicut	2289	45.9	2693	54.1	4982	100.0
Total	14242	51.1	13628	48.9	27870	100.0

For the three centres taken together, the percentage of enrolment in tutorial courses was as high as 49 per cent; the proportion was the lowest in Ernakulam, namely 35 percent.

Among the parallel courses, the subject for which the proportion of enrolment was the highest was Commerce (57 per cent); see Table 4.

Table 4

Regionwise Distribution of Enrolment in Parallel
Courses by subject and level of study

	Trivandrum		Ernakulam		Calicut		combined	
	No.	percent	No.	percent	No.	percent	No.	percent
1. S.S.L.C.	360	4.9	160	4.1	--	--	548	3.8
2. Pre-Degree								
(i) IIIrd Group	964	11.4	772	17.6	661	28.9	2297	16.1
(ii) IVth Group	1851	24.4	1225	28.0	677	29.6	3756	26.4
Total	3086	40.7	2177	49.7	1338	58.4	6601	46.3
3. B.A.	443	5.8	425	9.7	496	21.7	1364	9.6
4. B.A. (Correspondence)	250	3.3	--	--	--	--	250	1.8
5. B.Ed.	435	5.7	--	--	--	--	435	3.0
6. B.Com.	2248	29.7	1364	31.2	433	18.9	4045	28.4
Total	3376	44.6	1789	40.9	929	40.6	6094	42.8
7. M.A.	840	11.1	264	6.0	22	1.0	1126	7.9
8. M.A. Correspondence	100	1.3	--	--	--	--	100	0.7
9. M.Com.	175	2.3	147	3.3	--	--	321	2.3
Total	1115	14.7	410	9.4	22	1.0	1547	10.9
Grand total	7577	100.0	4376	100.0	2289	100.0	14242	100.0

In the Ernakulam region, the percentage of students enrolled for Commerce at the predegree, B.Com and M.Com courses taken together was as high as 63 percent, compared to 49 percent and 56 percent in the Calicut and the Trivandrum regions respectively. In the Trivandrum region, there were some institutions which conducted parallel courses not only for the Kerala and the Calicut Universities, but also for outside universities such as the universities of Annamalai, Rhopal, Madurai, Tirupati (Sri Venkateswaram) and Meerut. They also conducted correspondence

courses for private students of all these universities.

Tutorial courses were, on the other hand, prominent for all subjects (see Table 5) and were of the use of by the students who had failed in university examinations earlier and were appearing again for them, as well as by regular college-going students. In fact, a significant (16 percent) proportion of those taking tuition was enrolled only for practicals in science subjects.

Table 5

Enrolment for Tutorial Courses by Type and Level of Education

Type and level of Education	Trivandrum		Malappuram		Calicut		Combined	
1	No.	c/o	No.	c/o	No.	c/o	No.	c/o
	2		3		4		5	
1. Below standard VIII	—		—		52		52	
2. Standard VIII to IX	1095		200		488		1783	
3. S.S.L.C Examination	2399		670		1282		4351	
a. Sub-total	3494	46.0	870	37.1	1822	67.4	6186	49.0
4.1 Pre-degree (I group)	540		170		145		855	
ii. IInd group	604		150		127		951	
iii. Practical only	100		300		—		400	
iv. IIIrd group	401		330		15		796	
v. IVth group	226		220		310		756	
b. Sub-total	1871	24.6	1220	52.1	667	24.8	3758	29.8
5. B.A.	206		—		175		581	
6. B.Com.	202		110		29		351	
c. Sub total	508	8.0	120	5.1	204	7.6	932	7.4
7. B.Sc.	365		102		—		967	
8. B.Sc. (Practicals)	735		30		—		765	
d. Sub total	1600	21.0	132	5.6	—		1732	13.7
9. M.Com.	20	0.3	—		—		100.0	20 0.2
Grand Total	7593	100.0	2342	100.0	2693	100.0	12628	100.0

But the bulk of the students enrolled in tutorial courses were not students of higher or university education, but of high school classes. In the Calicut region, their proportion was as high as 62 percent. Arts and Commerce groups together accounted for a significant proportion

of total enrolment of students at the level of higher education in the tutorial courses. But post-graduate students rarely enrolled themselves for such courses.

The preceding analysis throws light on the structure of parallel-cum-tutorial colleges in terms of enrolment. The institutions in the Trivandrum region were bigger in size reckoned in terms of enrolment than their counterparts in the other two regions. For the state as a whole, students attending parallel courses outnumbered those attending tutorials; however, tutorial courses accounted for the majority of students in such institutions in the Trivandrum and Calicut regions. The most-demanded parallel course was the Commerce group which accounted for nearly 57 per cent of the total enrolment in courses offered in these institutions. In the case of enrolment in tutorial courses, nearly 50 per cent were school-going students including those preparing for the S.S.L.C examinations.

Figures of enrolment of students give only a partial picture of the structure of parallel colleges. In order to get a comprehensive picture, we must look into the structure of costs and pattern of employment as well.

COSTS

Cost is an important factor in higher education, both from the point of the institutions and the students.^{17/} Under the former, we include all expenditure incurred by parallel colleges both on the acquisition of fixed assets and recurring items. Costs incurred by students include expenses incurred by the students themselves and/or their parents/guardians for the prosecution of their education. First we discuss the magnitude and various components of institutional costs.

8. Institutional Costs:

Institutional costs may be broadly divided into two: fixed costs and variable costs.^{18/} The main components of fixed costs are those incurred on acquisition of land and buildings, library, furniture and laboratory equipment. Variable (recurring) costs include items like salary of teachers, maintenance costs, advertisement expenditures and costs of chemicals. We have valued all the items at their current prices.

The costs incurred (both fixed and variable) varied from

^{17/} For theoretical discussions on the costs of education, see

- (i) BLAUG, M. et al (1969), Op cit, pp.190-210
- (ii) PANDIT, H.N. (ed) (1969), Measurement of Costs, Productivity and Efficiency of Education (NCEET, New Delhi)
- (iii) HALLACK, J. The Analysis of Educational Costs and Expenditures, (II EF, Paris)

^{18/} One of the major considerations when recommending 'part time' and 'own time' courses was cost. Thus according to the Education Commission (1964-66) these institutions ". . . will help to reduce capital costs of expanding higher education and cut down even the recurring costs to a substantial extent, especially as enrolments grow . . ." (Report of the Education Commission, 1964-66, op.cit. p.562)

institution to institution and from region to region depending on the type and magnitude of operations. Table 6 gives the percentage distribution of parallel colleges by region and according to costs incurred.

Table 6

Percentage distribution of Parallel Colleges by Region and size of Investment (fixed + recurring)

Size of Investment (Rs. thousand)	Trivandrum (percent)	Ernakulam (Percent)	Calicut (percent)	Combined (percent)
0 - 50	20.0	10.0	20.0	17.1
50 - 100	26.6	10.0	40.0	25.7
100 - 250	6.7	60.0	20.0	25.7
250 - 500	26.6	-	20.0	17.1
greater than 500	20.0	20.0	-	14.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

About 69 per cent of the parallel colleges had an investment below Rs.215 lakhs. Only 14 per cent had more than Rs.5 lakhs worth of investment. The proportion of colleges belonging to this latter category was the highest in the Trivandrum and the Ernakulam regions. In the Calicut region nearly 80 per cent of the parallel colleges had, on an average, investment below 2.5 lakhs.

The total average investment per institution worked out to Rs.311.8 thousand (see Table 7) of which nearly 54 per cent was constituted by fixed component. Variable expenditure formed, however, the major part of the total expenditure of parallel colleges in the Ernakulam and Calicut regions.

Table 7: Region-wise Distribution of Average Cost per Parallel College

Region	Average Fixed cost		Average Variable cost		Average Total cost	
	Rs. thousand	percent	Rs. thousand	percent	Rs. thousand	percent
	2		3		4	
Trivandrum	345.3	64.9	187.1	35.1	532.4	100.0
Ernakulam	98.3	37.5	163.5	62.5	261.8	100.0
Calicut	60.3	42.7	80.8	57.3	141.1	100.0
Average	168.0	53.8	143.8	46.2	311.8	100.0

Only in the Trivandrum region did the proportion of fixed investment account for nearly two-thirds of total investment. The average cost per parallel college in Trivandrum worked out to nearly four times that in the Calicut region. The high level of investment (both fixed and variable) per institution in the Trivandrum region indicated their larger average size.

The differences in the average cost structure among regions may be broken down to the components of fixed and variable costs. As Table 8 shows, the component of fixed costs was land and buildings which accounted for about 58 percent of the total fixed expenditure.

Table 8

Components	Trivandrum		Ernakulam		Calicut		Combined	
	Rs.thou- sand	Per- cent	thou- sand	Per- cent	Rs.thou- sand	per- cent	Rs.thou- sand	per- cent
Building	202.7	58.7	40.0	40.7	47.5	78.8	96.7	57.6
Laboratory	83.9	24.3	22.0	22.4	3.5	5.8	36.5	21.7
Library	8.5	2.5	1.0	1.0	1.5	2.4	3.7	2.2
Furniture	34.1	9.9	22.5	22.9	6.1	10.1	20.9	12.4
Others	16.1	4.6	12.8	13.0	1.8	2.9	10.2	6.1
Total	345.3	100.0	98.3	100.0	60.3	100.0	168.0	100.0

On the average, the amount invested on buildings came to Rs.96.7 thousand. In the Calicut region, investment in buildings constituted as high as 79 percent of the total fixed expenditure. But the magnitude of fixed investment in buildings per college was undoubtedly the highest in the Trivandrum Region. The amount spent on buildings in the Trivandrum region was about three times that in the Calicut and the Ernakulam regions.

The other major items of fixed cost were laboratory (22 percent) and furniture (12 percent). On the average, the amount invested on laboratory = and + furniture for college worked out to be Rs.36.5 thousand and Rs.21 thousand respectively.

The per college expenditure on library was as low as Rs.3.7 thousand (2.2 per cent) since most of the titles kept in the college libraries were the personal collections of teachers.^{19/}The amount

^{19/} It is interesting to note that almost all the books in the libraries of parallel colleges were guides and not text or reference books.

spent on laboratory per college in the Trivandrum region is about twentyfour times that in the Calicut region.

In the case of variable costs, about 67 percent was absorbed by salary of teachers as may be seen from Table 9.

Table 9

Distribution of Average Variable Costs Per College by Region

Components	Trivandrum		Ernakulam		Calicut		Combined	
	Rs. thou- sand	per- cent	Rs. thou- sand	per- cent	Rs. thou- sand	per- cent	Rs. thou- sand	per- cent
a. Salary of teachers	109.8	58.7	92.6	56.7	72.1	88.9	91.5	63.1
b. Maintenance of buildings	1.8	1.0	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.9	0.4
c. Rent	3.9	2.1	31.4	19.2	3.6	4.4	12.9	9.0
d. Maintenance of Lab. including cost of chemical	8.5	4.5	8.5	5.2	0.2	0.2	5.7	4.0
e. Repair of Furniture	0.4	0.2	1.5	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.9	0.4
f. Purchase of chalks	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1
g. Advertisements	47.7	25.5	25.1	15.3	2.5	3.1	25.1	17.4
h. Printing and stationery	3.9	2.1	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.6	1.6	1.1
i. Postage	3.1	1.6	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	1.2	0.8
j. Travelling expenses	5.6	3.0	1.0	0.6	-	-	2.2	1.5
k. Other	2.3	1.2	2.1	1.2	0.8	1.0	1.7	1.2
Total	187.1	100.0	163.5	100.0	80.8	100.0	143.8	100.0

In Calicut, this proportion was as high as 89 per cent eventhough, in absolute terms, the average salary bill per college in the Trivandrum

region worked out to more than one-and-a-half times that in the Calicut region. Another major component of variable costs is the amount spent on advertising which constituted 17 per cent of the total variable costs.

Next to salary of teachers, advertisement charges account for the highest single item of variable costs of parallel colleges in the Trivandrum and Calicut Centres. High levels of expenditure on advertisement is one of the unique features of parallel colleges. It is through advertisement media that these colleges 'canvass' students. The advertisement media include pamphlets, display boards, newspaper, cinema slides and even paid agents (who conduct door-to-door canvassing). The amount spent on advertising per college in Trivandrum area was as high as Rs.472 thousand which was higher than the amount spent on this item in the Ernakulam (Rs.25.1 thousand) and the Calicut (Rs.2.5 thousand) regions. Rent also absorbed a sizeable proportion (9 per cent) of total variable costs. The rent component was the highest in the Ernakulam Region. The per college expenditure on rent in the Ernakulam region was as high as Rs.31.4 thousand which was nearly nine times that in the Trivandrum and the Calicut regions. The high level of expenditure on rent in the Ernakulam region is due mainly to two factors: (i) a higher proportion of parallel colleges in Ernakulam is housed in rented buildings; (ii) rates of rent are higher in Ernakulam than in the other two centres. Maintenance (of buildings, furniture and laboratory) costs constituted only 5 per cent of the total expenditure. Expenses on printing, stationery, postage and travelling came to a little more than three per cent. Travelling expense was a major item of expenditure in the Trivandrum region. The per college expenditure on this item in Trivandrum came to Rs.5.6 thousand, which was nearly six times higher

than the expense on this item in the parallel colleges in the Ernakulam area. These were mainly expenses incurred by teachers for travelling from one branch of the institution to its other branches for conducting classes. In our sample, there were a few institutions which sent their teaching staff to their various branches situated in different parts of Kerala. Travelling expenses also included amounts spent by the institution in connection with making arrangements for registration of candidates with outside universities. It must be noted that nearly 25 per cent of the colleges in the sample in the Trivandrum region conducted courses mainly of universities other than the Universities of Kerala and Calicut.

b. Students costs:

Having discussed the magnitude and the components of institutional costs in some detail, we may now turn to an analysis of costs incurred by students (or their parents). Such costs are sometimes termed as private costs and include both tuition costs and non-tuition costs such as expenditure on transport, books and stationery. Table 10 summarises the average annual private costs of education per student in the parallel colleges at the different stages of education.

Table 10

Component-wise Distribution of the Average Annual Cost per Student
by Stage of Education

Components	Stage							
	Pre-degree		Degree		Post-graduate		All Stages (average)	
	Rs.	percent	Rs.	Per- cent	Rs.	Percent	Rs.	percent
a. Transport costs	213.6	18.8	190.3	15.5	175.3	10.5	193.1	14.3
b. Books & Stationery	238.7	21.0	255.7	20.8	308.7	18.5	267.7	19.9
c. Tuition	345.0	30.3	376.7	30.6	500.2	29.9	407.3	30.3
d. Hostel expenses	262.9	23.1	316.7	25.8	588.3	35.2	389.3	28.9
e. Others	76.7	6.7	90.3	7.3	99.7	5.9	88.9	6.6
Total	1136.9	100.0	1229.7	100.0	1672.2	100.0	1346.3	100.0

The average annual private costs of education in parallel colleges worked out to Rs.1346; Rs.1672 for the post-graduate courses and Rs.1230 for the degree courses and Rs.1137 for the pre-degree courses. At all the stages, the average cost per student was the highest in the Trivandrum region and the lowest in the Calicut region. See Table 11.

Table 11
Components of Average Annual Cost per Student by
Stage and Region

Components	Region					
	Trivandrum		Ernakulam		Calicut	
	Rs.	Percent	Rs.	percent	Rs.	percent
<u>I Pre-degree</u>						
1) Transport	287	22.8	246	20.1	108	11.7
2) Books and Stationery	265	21.0	250	20.4	201	21.7
3) Tuition	360	28.6	360	29.4	315	34.0
4) Hostel expenses	257	20.4	285	23.2	247	26.7
5) Others	90	7.2	85	6.9	55	5.9
Total	1259	100.0	1226	100.0	926	100.0
<u>II Degree</u>						
1) Transport	195	13.9	254	19.8	122	12.2
2) Books and Stationery	294	20.9	268	21.0	205	20.5
3) Tuition	420	29.8	385	30.0	325	32.4
4) Hostel expenses	410	29.1	275	21.5	265	26.4
5) Others	88	6.3	98	7.7	85	8.5
Total	1407	100.0	1280	100.0	1002	100.0
<u>III Post-graduate</u>						
1) Transport	113	5.1	291	17.4	122	10.9
2) Books and Stationery	325	14.6	355	21.2	246	22.0
3) Tuition	600	27.0	525	31.4	376	33.5
4) Hostel expenses	1080	48.5	400	23.9	285	25.5
5) Others	107	4.8	102	6.1	90	8.1
Total	2225	100.0	1673	100.0	1119	100.0

The major component of annual average cost per student was the tuition fee (Rs.407) which constituted about 30 per cent of the total cost. The average tuition fee for post-graduate courses works out to Rs.500, which is nearly one and a half times that for the pre-degree stage. At all the stages, the tuition fee component was the highest in the Trivandrum region and the lowest in the Calicut region. The difference in tuition fee among regions was higher at the higher stages of education.

The second major component was the expenses on hostels,^{20/} which came, on an average, to Rs.389, the highest again being in the Trivandrum region and among post-graduate students. Hostel expenses among post-graduates were found to be high since a higher proportion among them were residents of hostels than among degree and pre-degree students. Although the per head hostel expenses among students was the highest in the Trivandrum region, the hostel expenses per hostler was high in Ernakulam region. The hostel expenses per hostler in Ernakulam region worked out to Rs.210 per month compared to Rs.190 and Rs.165 in the Trivandrum and the Calicut regions respectively.

The other two major items of cost were transport (14 per cent) and expenses on books and stationery (20 per cent). Transport costs in the Trivandrum region were nearly two-and-a-half times that in the Calicut region due mainly to the fact that a higher proportion of day scholars in the Trivandrum region belonged to areas as far as Quilon and Nagarcoil. The average annual expenditure on books and stationery

^{20/} Most parallel colleges did not possess (except some leading parallel colleges) hostel facilities; but they arranged accommodation for girls at various private hostels. In our survey, only 5 per cent the total students stayed in hostels. In the Trivandrum region, proportion went up to 10 per cent among post-graduate students.

came to Rs.268; the expenditure was the highest among post-graduate students (Rs.309) and in the Trivandrum region.

The above analysis gives a broad picture of the structure of private costs of education in parallel college. Private costs were higher at higher stages of education and among students in the Trivandrum region. The main contributing factor for these differences was the tuition fee component, which showed wide regional and inter-stage differences. To examine whether the level of private costs of education had any influence on the enrolment of students in these colleges, we should have information relating to the structure of private cost of education in regular college also, which is not available except the data relating to the tuition fee component. However, it is unlikely that there would be significant differences in the other elements of private costs as between parallel college and regular college students. So here we are confining our analysis to a comparison of the tuition fee component in the regular and the parallel colleges at the different stages of education, as shown in Table 12.

Table 12

Tuition Cost in Regular and Parallel Colleges by Stage

Stage	Regular College	Parallel college
a. Pre-degree	156.0	345.0
b. Degree	176.0	356.7
c. Post-graduation	192.0	500.2

Source: Directorate of Collegiate Education, Trivandrum

Note: (1) Tuition fee component for arts and commerce courses

(2) Figures for parallel colleges are based on our sample survey

It is clear from the above table that expenditure per student on tuition fee was higher in parallel colleges than in regular colleges. At the pre-degree stage, the annual tuition fee in regular college was only Rs.156 compared to Rs.345 in parallel colleges. In the Ernakulam and the Trivandrum regions, the corresponding figures went up to Rs.360. At the degree and the post-graduation stages, the tuition fee component in parallel colleges was more than twice that in regular colleges. Region-wise, the tuition cost was high in the Trivandrum region compared to the Ernakulam and the Calicut regions. The fee structure in regular college (both private and government) is uniform and is regulated by the government. But there was no such uniformity in parallel colleges. It differed from region to region and even from institution to institution. In general, institutions that commanded higher degree of confidence among students/parents in respect of efficiency of coaching and maintenance of discipline succeeded in charging higher rates of tuition fees. Some of the other components of total private cost such as transport costs were also bound to be higher for parallel college students, who were not entitled to many of the travel concessions and benefits which regular college students enjoyed.

Employment:

Parallel colleges in Kerala employ large numbers of the educated as teachers. Kerala being a state where there is high degree of unemployment,^{21/} particularly among the educated, parallel colleges provide some relief to the problem. Taking into consideration this

^{21/} In Kerala in 1972, for every 100 new graduate and post-graduate entrants into the labour market, there were already 210 similarly educated persons waiting for job. See CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES (1975) Poverty, Unemployment and Development Policy: A Case study of selected issues with reference to Kerala (Orient Longman, Madras, Ch. IX, p.127)

aspect, the government has decided recently to sanction parallel colleges in each taluk in the co-operative sector. On an average, a parallel college gave employment to 22 teachers; see Table 13. If we assume that the total number of parallel colleges in the state was 5,000,^{22/} the total employment in them would come to about 1.25 lakh persons, 1.1 lakh teachers and the rest, other employees.

Table 13

Region-wise Distribution of Teachers and Non-teaching Staff
per College (Numbers)

Region	Full time	Part time	Teaching staff		Non-teaching staff	
			Total	Total		
Trivandrum	21.5	6.3	27.7	4.0	31.7	
Ernakulam	15.0	4.3	19.3	3.3	22.6	
Calicut	10.6	5.1	15.7	2.4	18.1	
Combined	16.5	5.4	21.9	3.3	25.2	

The number of teachers employed per college was higher in the Trivandrum region (28) than in the Ernakulam (19) and the Calicut (16) regions. Out of the twentytwo teachers employed per college on the average, 17 were full-time and the rest part-time. Most of the part-time teachers were those in regular employment in government, quasi-government or private institutions.^{23/} In fact, nearly 80 percent of the part-time teachers belonged to this category. The non-teaching

^{22/}MATHEW, E.T. & NAIR, P.R.G. (1979) op.cit, p.244

^{23/} An interesting report in one of the leading local dailies threw light on the relationship between part-time teaching in parallel colleges and govt. employment. This report showed how the part-time teaching in parallel colleges by conductors of the government owned Kerala State Transport Corporation affected the regular operation of buses, (see: Malayala Manorama, Bus Conductors playing a Double Role; Passengers Misconcerned on Roads (1981, April 21, P.7))

staff included clerks, peons, sweepers and laboratory attendant.

(i) Sex Composition: Of the total teaching, 78 per cent were men (see Table 14). The proportion of women was still lower (4 percent) among part-time teachers. One of the reasons for the preference for male teachers might be the fact that they are better enforcers of discipline. Another reason could be the inconvenience experienced by women teachers when they are put to work during very early and very late hours of the day.

Table 14

Sex Composition of Teaching and the Non-teaching staff

Sex	<u>Teaching staff</u>			<u>Non-teaching staff</u>	Total
	Full time	Part time	Total		
i. Men	57.8	20.5	78.3	76.1	73.0
ii. Women	17.6	4.1	21.7	23.9	22.0
Total	75.4	24.6	100.0	100.0	100.0

(ii) Age-Composition:

From Table 15, it may be seen that most of the teachers working in parallel colleges came from the relatively young age group of 20-30 years: Only 7 per cent of the teachers belonged to the age-group above 60 years. This group consisted mainly of retired professors and lecturers appointed usually as heads of institutions or departments. Parallel colleges constituted a source of additional income for a small section of the needy but talented professors and teachers retired on superannuation from regular employment.

Table 15
Age-Composition of Teachers by Region

Age group (years)	Per cent			
	Trivandrum	Ernakulam	Calicut	Combined
Less than 20	3.6	2.1	0.6	2.6
20 - 30	51.9	71.5	72.0	61.0
30 - 40	19.5	9.8	5.1	14.1
40 - 50	7.9	4.1	5.1	6.4
50 - 60	10.1	7.3	7.0	8.7
60 or above	7.0	5.2	10.1	7.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Teachers were appointed mainly at the discretion of the management. In some cases they were appointed on the basis of their performance in pre-employment, test classes. It is interesting to note that in making appointment of teachers the opinions of the students have a big say. In most cases, we found that the students had some influence on the selection and even retrenchment of teachers. Thus in parallel colleges a system was in operation in which students got teachers of their choice, rather than teachers being thrust on them irrespective of their acceptability to students as happens in regular colleges. In such a set up, the educational qualifications of teachers would not be the sole and the decisive criterion in the appointment of teachers. This fact is evident from the distribution of teachers according to educational qualifications.

(iii) Educational Qualifications:

The educational qualifications of the teacher are usually expected to have a profound impact on the quality of instruction. In our sample,

only 60 per cent of the teachers had post-graduate qualifications, among whom nearly 55 per cent were third class holders; see Table 16. Around 31 per cent of the teachers were either undergraduates or graduates. Diploma and certificate holders formed about 9 per cent. The proportion of post-graduates was high in the Ernakulam (68 per cent) and the Trivandrum (62 per cent) regions and low in the Calicut region (45 per cent).

Table 16

Region wise distribution of Teachers by Educational qualifications

Level of Education	Per cent			
	Trivandrum	Ernakulam	Calicut	Combined
Undergraduates	11.1	2.6	10.8	8.9
Graduates	21.1	14.5	35.7	22.4
Post-graduates	61.5	68.4	44.6	59.8
Others*	6.3	14.5	8.9	8.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

* This group consists mainly of diploma and certificate holders

(iv) Experience: Apart from qualifications the experience of teachers is also one of the factors affecting the quality of instruction. It was certainly one of the major factors that had influence on the determination of salary by the managements of parallel colleges. In regarding the experience of teachers, we have taken into consideration their experience both in the institution in which they were working at the time of our investigation and their previous experience, if any.

Table 17 gives the distribution of teachers according to experience.

Table 17

Experience (Years)	Percentage of teachers in each experience group			
	Trivandrum	Ernakulam	Calicut	Combined
0 - 1	27.6	42.0	35.7	32.9
1 - 2	26.0	32.6	31.8	28.9
2 - 5	16.3	7.3	11.5	13.1
5 - 10	8.4	3.6	4.5	6.4
10 - 20	9.1	5.2	3.8	7.0
20 - 30	5.8	5.7	7.0	6.0
Greater than 30 years	6.7	3.6	5.7	5.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

About 62 per cent of the teachers were relatively fresh hands (with less than two years of experience). In the Ernakulam and the Calicut regions, the proportions were as high as 75 per cent and 68 per cent respectively. The significant high proportion of fresh hands might have been due to a process by which large numbers of teachers got themselves absorbed, after some period of service in parallel colleges, in other types of employment. For them, teaching in parallel colleges was but a stop-gap avenue of employment till they got a suitable and secure job. Teachers with more than twenty years of experience formed nearly 12 per cent of the total number of teachers. They were mainly retired college professors and teachers who received, in general, higher than the average salary of teachers in parallel colleges.

(v) Conditions of work: The teacher-student ratio in parallel colleges was much higher than in regular colleges.^{24/} In parallel colleges

^{24/} For a discussion on the productivity and efficiency of education and their relation to student-teacher ratio, see BLAUG, M. (Ed) (1969) Economics of Education 2 (Part IV, Readings 13, 14 & 15 p.p. 305-339, Penguin Books, London)

this ratio worked out to 36^{25/31} compared to 22 in regular colleges.^{26/}

In some parallel colleges, it was as high as 56. Such a situation was mainly the result of the attempt of these institutions to minimise their running costs by crowding the classes with as many students as was possible.

The workload per teacher in parallel colleges was far higher than in regular colleges as may be seen from Table 18. Nearly 61 percent of the teachers had on an average more than 20 hours.

Table 18

Distribution of Teachers by Experience and Workload

Experience (years)	Total No. of teachers	Percentage of teachers with weekly workload of				Total
		Less than 10 hours	10 - 20 hours	20-30 hours	More than 30 hours	
Less than 2	472	5.0	35.2	46.8	15.0	100.0
2 - 5	100	5.0	21.0	55.0	15.0	100.0
5 - 10	49	8.2	36.7	38.8	16.3	100.0
10 - 20	54	2.2	33.3	46.3	11.1	100.0
20 - 30	47	6.4	40.4	44.7	8.5	100.0
More than 30	44	11.3	34.1	47.8	6.8	100.0
Total	766	4.7	34.3	47.3	13.7	100.0

The percentage distribution of workload does not differ widely among teachers with varying lengths of experience. Nearly 47 per cent of the teachers had on an average 20 to 30 hours and 34 percent of the teachers 10 to 20 hours of work per week. However, the proportion of teachers with more than 30 hours of work per week was lower among teachers with more than 20 years of experience. Contrariwise the

^{25/} In the sample, 27,870 students had 766 teachers.

^{26/} GOVT. OF KERALA (1979), Manpower Studies, op.cit p.33

proportion of such experienced teachers having only less than 10 hours of work per week was higher. Teachers with less than 5 years of service were the most exploited group among parallel college teachers. It may also be noted that the average work load of a parallel college teacher is higher than that of his counterpart in the regular colleges.

As already mentioned, in the fixation of salaries, qualification and experience constituted the two major factors. But in some cases, the availability of teachers which acted as the major determinant in the fixation of salary. For example, postgraduates in Commerce were paid more because they were not available in adequate numbers. However, other factors remaining equal, it was the workload which was the most important determinant in the fixation of salaries: see Table 19.

Table 19

Distribution of Teachers by Salary and Workload

Workload (No. of hours per week)	Total No. (of teachers per week)	Salary per month								
		Rs. 0-200	Rs. 200-400	Rs. 400-600	Rs. 600-800	Rs. 800-1000	Rs. 1000 & above	Rs. & 400 and more		
Less than 10	36	69.4	30.6	100.0						
10 - 20	263	10.3	55.1	65.4	31.2	3.4	-	-	34.6	
20 - 30	362	0.5	41.4	42.0	40.0	11.9	3.3	2.8	58.0	
More than 30	105	-	33.3	33.3	14.3	25.7	2.9	23.8	66.7	
Total	766	7.0	44.5	51.6	31.3	10.3	2.0	4.8	48.4	

It is evident from the above table that the proportion of teachers with higher workload were higher in the higher salary groups. Thus, 58 percent of the teachers with 20-30 hours of work per week were paid more than Rs. 400. Similarly nearly 67 percent of the teachers with more than 30 hours of work per week were paid more than Rs. 400. On the other hand, 70 percent of the teachers with less than 10 hours of work received only salaries below Rs. 200.

The mode of payment of salaries varied from institution to institution and from region to region. In some institutions and regions (Calicut region, for example), payment was based mainly on piece wage system. In the Calicut region, nearly 80 percent of the parallel colleges followed the piece-wage system, compared to 10-15 percent in the Trivandrum and the Ernakulam regions. In cases in which salaries were paid on a piece wage system, we have made suitable adjustments to get an average figure for the month. Table 20 gives the distribution of teachers according to salary groups.

Table 20

Region-wise distribution of Teachers According to Salary per Month
(per cent)

Rs. per month	Trivandrum	Ernakulam	Calicut	Combined
0 - 100	1.4			0.8
100 - 200	6.2	5.2	7.6	6.3
200 - 300	12.3	18.7	50.3	21.7
300 - 400	15.1	34.7	28.7	22.8
(i) Sub total	35.0	58.6	86.6	51.6
400 - 500	3.3	23.8	6.4	20.2
500 - 600	15.1	6.7	7.3	11.3
600 - 700	11.1	3.6	---	6.9
700 - 800	4.8	3.1	---	3.4
800 - 900	1.7	2.1	---	1.4
900 - 1000	---	2.1	---	0.5
greater than	8.4	---	---	4.6
(ii) sub total	65.0	41.4	13.4	43.4
Total (i + ii)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of teachers (nos)	416	193	157	766

Nearly 52 per cent of the teachers had salaries below Rs.400 a month: only 28 per cent were paid salaries above Rs.500; those whose salaries were above Rs.1000 accounted only for less than 5 per cent. In the Trivandrum region, the proportion of teachers with salaries above Rs.400 came to 65 per cent as against 41 per cent in Ernakulam and 13 per cent in Calicut. The level of salaries was the lowest in the Calicut region, where none of the teachers earned more than Rs.600. About 50 per cent of the teachers in the Calicut region earned on an average Rs.200 - Rs.300 a month. In most of the institutions in the Calicut region, remunerations were paid on a piece-wage system. The level of salaries was, on the other hand, much higher in the Trivandrum and the Ernakulam regions. The majority of teachers in these regions earned, on an average, Rs.300 - Rs.500 a month. In Trivandrum, about 8 per cent of the teachers earned even more than Rs.1000 a month. Our enquiry has shown, however, that such highly paid teachers were themselves partners in the institutions concerned.

The salaries of the teachers fluctuated widely over the months in the year. In such cases, salaries were dependent on variables such as workload, enrolment, profits and financial position of the institution. In some parallel colleges vacation salaries were paid to those who completed a specific period of service.

(vi) Tenure: In parallel colleges there was no security of service for teachers. The management could, and did, terminate, at will, the services of teachers at any time of the year. Interestingly, in some areas in the Calicut region, there also existed a certain form of 'bonded labour' among teachers. Such bondage was in the form of a certain amount of money collected from teachers as security at the time of their appointment as a precaution against their leaving the institution.

before they completed a specified period of service (usually till the end of the academic year). The amount collected as security ranged from Rs.1000 to Rs.3000. This practice was in clear contrast with the usual bonded labour system (of agricultural labour) where the employer advances the sum to the worker in return for which he is bound to work under the employer till the amount is repaid in full along with the interest.^{27/}

The system followed in the parallel colleges gave the management assured services of the teacher for a specified period and conferred on it the power to retrench him as and when found expedient to do so. In the Calicut region, nearly 60 per cent of the teachers were appointed by executing this type of agreement. In several other cases the certificates of the teachers were taken and kept by the management as security. This latter type of bondage was prevalent also in parallel colleges in the Trivandrum and the Ernakulam regions, where this was a necessary condition for the teachers to get their vacation salaries. The practice of advancing amounts of money to the teachers on the basis of bonds executed or on the security of their degree certificates entrusted with the management, was also not uncommon in these regions.

The above analysis brings to light the conditions of employment in parallel colleges. They provided employment to more than one lakh educated persons as teachers. The working conditions of these teachers were, however, miserable. With a high student-teacher ratio of 36, the teachers were forced to work on an average 25 to 30 hours per week.

^{27/} For a discussion of the various types of bondage, see RUDRA, ASHOK (1978) 'Class Relations in Indian Agriculture: I, II & III, 'Economic and Political Weekly, June 3, 10 and 17

Their remunerations were deplorably low. They were the most exploited group in the 'whole business of education'. Further, in some areas, they were subjected to several types of bondage.

- (viii) Nature of Accommodation: Most of the parallel colleges were housed either in thatched or tiled buildings. About 60 per cent of the institutions in the sample, were housed in thatched buildings, while nearly 35 per cent had both thatched and tiled buildings. Only 5 per cent of the buildings had concrete roofings. The walls of nearly 60 to 70 per cent of the colleges were thatched, except in areas like Ernakulam where most of the buildings had plastered brick walls. The flooring was mostly of rammed earth in many colleges; in respect of flooring also, the parallel colleges in Ernakulam were better.

Separate rooms for staff and principal were not available in most of the institutions. The majority of the parallel colleges did not possess separate waiting rooms and urinals for boys and girls. In none of the colleges, there existed facilities for recreation or any extra-circular activities.

The nature of accommodation provided to the teachers and the students in the parallel colleges showed that they did not, in general, provide any comfort much above the level of 'cow-sheds'.

Conclusion:

To sum up: the post-Independence period in Kerala has witnessed more rapid and widespread increase in demand for education both at the level of school education and higher education, than in the rest of the country. The existing facilities in regular institutions being inadequate to absorb in full such burgeoning demand for education, new forms and types of institutions have emerged particularly at the stage of higher education. One such major institution which appeared in recent years is

the 'parallel colleges', which came into being as a result of the permission given by the universities of Kerala and Calicut for private registration of candidates for appearance in their pre-degree, degree and post-graduate examinations. Parallel colleges have already, within a short period, become a major institution to reckon with in the field of higher education in Kerala. The pertinent question to ask in this context is, however, whether it has served any useful purpose to the cause of higher education or in the solution of problems of employment in the state economy. Operating in a 'free' market, unaided by any form of Government direction and unfettered by any governmental control, the parallel colleges have grown largely as a result of the prospects of making 'quick profits' they offer in an environment of rising, unsatisfied private demand for higher education. We have analysed in the foregoing sections the nature of such demand in terms of the structure of enrolment in parallel colleges on the basis of a limited case study of parallel colleges and their students. For the state as a whole, students attending parallel courses accounted for nearly half the student population enrolled in regular colleges; further, they outnumbered those attending tutorial courses. However, some regional variations are observed in the latter proportion. For instance, the majority of students enrolled in these private institutions in the Trivandrum and the Calicut regions were those attending tutorial courses.

Among the different groups for which students were enrolled in parallel colleges, Commerce accounted for the highest number. Judged in terms of total enrolment, parallel colleges in Trivandrum were, on the average, larger in size than their counterparts in the other two regions.

The structure of institutional costs, that is, investments in fixed assets and other recurring items, also showed that parallel colleges in Trivandrum were larger in size than those in the other two centres. Bulk of the fixed investment had gone into land and buildings although significant differences did exist among the regions. On the other hand, nearly two-third of the variable costs were incurred on pay bills of teachers. Another distinguishing feature of the parallel colleges was the huge amounts spent on advertising, which is the medium through which they canvassed prospective students.

Parallel colleges have also become important from the point of view of employment. They provided employment to more than one lakh of educated persons. The salaries and working conditions of these teachers were, however, deplorable. The parallel college teachers were perhaps the most exploited group in this 'business of education'. With a highly unfavourable student-teacher ratio, they were burdened with heavy workload and paid only very low salaries. Further, they had no security of employment and were forced into many kinds of bondage. By this process of the ill-equipped educated persons producing in increasing numbers, worse-equipped educated persons and adding them to the reserve army of the unemployed (unemployables), the socio-economic problems of the State are taking new, and in most instances, undesirable forms.

In short, the study clearly indicates that eventhough parallel colleges serve in some sense, the purpose of satisfying the rising private demand for higher education, they do so by exploiting the massive problem of unemployment among the educated, by imparting education in extremely unsatisfactory conditions (like building, laboratory and library facilities) through a set of ill-equipped, poorly paid and disgruntled teachers. It is high time that the government and the universities in Kerala make an objective assessment of the implications of the present trends in the field of higher education and formulate meaningful policies.