

A STUDY ON COST OF EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMERCIALIZATION

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Abstract

Education today is a paid service which has serious and negative effect on our society. The unit cost aspect of school education and higher education in Kerala has so far remained a neglected area. The study aims to review the recent changes in the cost of education, to analyze the general awareness about free and compulsory primary education and to suggest measures to reduce the trend of commercialization in education. The respondents also highlighted some of the issues and drawbacks of public and private education systems. There are remarkable differences in the cost of education between the public and private education sectors. Issues like fee control should be attended very carefully both in public and private educational institutions under the strict supervision of the government.

Key words: *Cost of education, commercialization, paid service, market forces, etc*

INTRODUCTION

The remarkable success that the state of Kerala has achieved in social development is reflecting in the high physical quality index, high literacy rate and high life expectancy. Kerala has achieved a literacy rate of 90.92 percent as against the all - India average of 65.38 percent by 2001.

Though Kerala ranks only ninth in the matter of per capita income, people in Kerala strive more than their counterparts anywhere else in India, to impart education to their children. Besides the educational institutions run by the Government, Kerala has educational agencies under private, aided and unaided managements. Since education is considered a catalyzing agent of growth and development of a society, the aspects of its costs, efficiency and management assume vital importance.

The influence of the unaided sector has been increasing steadily since the early 1980s though the number of annual entrants to standard I have been steadily on the decrease during the past three decades. For instance, while enrolments in schools (lower primary, primary and high school) declined in government schools from 22.83 lakh to 17.71 lakh and in private aided schools from 34.68 lakh to 30.68 lakh, during 1992 to 2002, in private unaided schools, enrolment increase from 1.55 lakh to 2.63 lakh during the same period.

Schooling in the unaided sector is known to be much costlier than in the government and the aided sectors. Despite this fact, enrolment in the unaided sector is fast increasing, obviously by diversity enrolment away from the other two sectors. It is against this background that a study on the cost of differences among them is taken up. These questions are examined on the basis of information collected from the Kadanad Grama Panchayat of Kottayam educational district.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Education today is an object of business which has serious and negative effect on our society. The more one can pay, higher the education one can get. Every year, the number of students choosing higher professional education is increasing in India and therefore, good opportunity exists for all these colleges to make money offering such courses. In many cases, the quality of education is poor and the infra structural facilities are insufficient and the students feel cheated at the end.

There is a strong need to change the basics of the education system, not its pattern in order to realize the true purpose of education. Education helps in the training of human person and form the character of the person. Education is not so much about enabling a person to make a living, rather helping him live meaningfully in the society, making his/her own contribution to better the larger world. It is a known fact that how the great universities of the world has produced people of great knowledge and wisdom, who have qualitatively influenced the world.

Abdul Salim, in his work *The Cost of higher Education in India with special reference to Kerala* estimated the unit of education with respect to higher education. He has analyzed the cost separately for general and professional education in the government and the private aided sectors. The foregoing review reveals the fact that most of the studies conducted are concentrated on the various aspects associated with the higher education sector in Kerala. Even in this sector, the major attention has gone into educational financing. The estimation of the cost of private education is seen to be one of the areas most neglected in studs on the cost of education.

The unit cost aspect of school education in Kerala has so far remained a neglected area. In addition, efficiency aspects in the private and the public schooling sector has not been the subject of wide research till now.

Kadanad is a Grama Panchayat which is situated to the north of Pala in the Kottayam District. The present study is mainly concentrated at Aimcombu area of the said Panchayat. There are a few schools in the area and the parents are sending their children to other schools that are located in the nearby areas. Most of these parents send their children to the unaided educational institutions because of the notion that these are the institutions which give quality education for their children. They agree that education in the private sector costs them very much. However they seem to work with the idea that quality education is not cheap, and when their children receive expensive education, there is certainty that they are better qualified and equipped for better job opportunities. This shows the impact of commercialization in the education sector. Both in the light of our tradition and from the stand-point of interest and general public, commercialization is positively harmful and it is opposed to the public policy. It's one among the major reasons for holding that imparting education cannot be a trade, business or profession. Now, the question is how to encourage private educational institutions without allowing them to commercialize the education. It is the troublesome question facing the society, the government as well as the courts today.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyze the general information covered under the sample selected for the study.
 - a) About the District and Panchayat
 - b) Age, educational qualification and monthly income
2. To evaluate the current trend in the educational system.
3. To study the attitudes of the people towards different educational sectors.
4. To analyze the recent changes in the cost of education.
5. To analyze the general awareness about free and compulsory primary education.
6. To suggest measures to reduce the trend of commercialization in education.

METHODOLOGY

SAMPLE

In order to conduct the survey on commercialization and cost of education the investigator selected Kottayam District as the study area. Thirty families from this place were selected for the sample study which constitutes 132 members comprising a variety of people from different age groups, including children, young adults, Adults and Older people. Among 132 members 68 are female and 64 are men. Most of the families were middle class or lower income groups.

THE TOOL USED

For this survey the investigator used a questionnaire as the main tool which consists of four sections.

- A. General Information
- B. Personal Information
- C. Related Question
- D. Declaration

Besides these books, articles, journals, internet etc. were used for this study.

PROCEEDURE

The investigator visited 30 families of the study area in person and collected the required information from respondents. This survey was conducted on 25th and 26th of August 2015.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Objective: 1

To analyze the general information covered under the sample selected for the study.

a) About the district and Panchayat

Kottayam is one of the 14 districts in the Kerala state. According to the 1991 census, it is the first district to achieve 100% literacy rate in the whole of India. On September 27th 2000, Kottayam district also became the first tobacco free districts in India. Bordered by the Western Ghats on the East and paddy fields of Kuttanad and Vembanad Lake on the West, Kottayam has many peculiar characteristics. Panoramic backwater stretches, lush paddy fields, high lands hills and hill rocks, rubber plantations and places associated with many legends given Kottayam district the enviable title: The land of letter, legends latex and lakes. The investigator selected 30 families for the sample of the study which consists of 132 people.

b) Age, education qualification and monthly income.

Table: 1 *Age wise classification of respondents*

SL .NO	Age Group	No.of respondents	Percentage
1	1 - 5	7	5.3
2	5 - 15	11	8.3
3	15 - 35	38	28.7
4	35 - 55	39	29.5
5	55- 75	32	24.2
6	75+	5	3.7
TOTAL		132	100

The above table shows the age wise classification of the respondents. The data are collected from 30 families, which had a population of 132 members. Most of the respondents (29.5% of total respondents) belong to the age group of 35 to 55.28.7% of total respondents are included in the age group of 15to35 and 8.3% of respondents included in 5to 15.only 5.3% and 3.7% are included in 1to 5 and above 75 respectively.

Table2:Distribution of the respondents' monthly income of the family

SL.NO	MONTHLY INCOME	NO. OF FAMILY	PERCENTAGE
1	< 2000	2	6.6
2	2000-5000	9	30
3	5000-10000	7	23.3
4	10000-25000	8	26.6
5	25000-40000	1	3.3
6	40000-60000	3	10
7	60000+	0	-
	TOTAL	30	100

The above table reveals the information regarding the income wise classification of the respondents. 30% of respondents have monthly family income in between Rs 2000 to 5000. 23.3% of respondents have monthly family income in between 5000-10000. 26.6% of respondents have monthly family income between Rs 25000 to 40000.

Table: 3 Distributions of the respondent's educational qualifications

Sl.NO	Educational qualification	No .of respondents	percentage
1	Illiterate	0	-
2	Primary	22	16.6
3	High school	32	24.2
4	Higher secondary	26	19.6
5	U G	17	12.8
6	P G	9	6.8
7	Professional	22	16.6
8	Any other	4	3
Total		132	100

The above table reveals the information regarding the educational qualification of the respondents. Most of the respondents have the education of high school (24.2% of respondents) and 19.6% of the respondents have higher secondary education. 16.6% of respondents have primary education. 16.6% are professional and primary educators. 12.8 % of the respondents have UG and 6.8% of respondents are postgraduate and 3% belongs to other category .There is no illiterates in this 30 samples

Table: 4 Gender wise distribution of the respondents

SL.NO	CATEGORY	NO.OF PEOPLE	PERCENTAGE
1	MALE	68	52
2	FEMALE	64	48
TOTAL		132	100

Concerning the gender wise distribution majority of the respondents i.e., 51.5% are female and rest of the sample population constitutes male category.

2. To evaluate the current trend in the educational systems.

All the respondents are aware about the government policies on education especially the policy on free and compulsory education. About 47% of respondents prefer unaided sector, 35% for aided and the rest only 18% prefer the government institutions.

The trend on education depends mainly on unaided sector though there is cost variations .Because the people seeks for quality education. According to the respondents, both unaided and aided sector almost successes in this aim. But government institutions are not come this level.

3. To study the attitudes of people towards different educational system.

Table: 5 Best provider of education

SL.NO	TYPE OF INSTITUTION	NO.OF STUENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Government	6	18
2	Aided	12	35
3	Unaided	16	47
Total		34	100

Above table shows the attitudes of respondent's different education systems. Total number of students in this area is 34, i.e., 25.75% of the total population of this study area. Among 34 students about 53% are school going and 47% are college students. Dependents of unaided institutions are higher in percentage comparing with govt. and aided institutions. ie. The inference drawn from the above table clearly indicates that the preference of people for education purpose is high in unaided sector.

4. To analyse the recent changes in the cost of education

Table: 6 Monthly expenses on education

SL.NO	CATEGORY	EXPENSE ON EDUCATION
1	Government	500 – 2000
2	Aided	850 – 3000
3	Unaided	850 - 3300

The above table clearly indicates the differences in the expenses in govt., aided and unaided institutions. It is high in unaided institutions comparing with others.

5. To evaluate the general awareness about free and compulsory primary education.

All the respondents are aware about free and compulsory primary education. But only 17.6% of 30 families are willing to send their children to Government schools.

6. To suggest measures to reduce the trend of commercialization in education.

According to the dictionary meaning the word commercialization means to render commercial, make a matter of trade or the subject to commercialism. To apply commercialization to business method, to make use of or exploit mainly for profit, especially at the expense of quality, or to imbue with commercialism. Thus the word commercialization shows the profit as the main motive behind any activity.

The term education has been defined as the process of developing and training the powers and capabilities of human being. Thus if there is sale of services or profit motive behind imparting of education or funds come mainly from the receivers of education, we can easily say that there is commercialization of education.

The researcher could see differences in the attitude of people towards public and private education sectors. Even though they all are aware of free and compulsory primary education, they prefer the private sector more. The respondents opined that the standard of teaching is different in both sectors though education in the private sector is more expensive and therefore they opt for the private sector. According to the parents, the present education system has some merits.

- Many extra-curricular activities help the overall development of the learners.
- More courses in educational sector leads to more job opportunities.
- Practical oriented classes help to develop the thinking capacity of learners.
- Technical education helps the students to familiarize themselves with new technological inventions.
- More knowledge acquisition is possible.
- Learning of today makes children more socially active
- Children become more proficient in English Language
- Effectiveness of private schools in teaching

The respondents also highlighted some of the issues and drawbacks of public and private education systems. There are remarkable differences in the cost of education between the public and private education sectors. They were of the opinion that many schools run by the government have insufficient number of teachers, there is also lack of commitment, and the facilities at the school also were not up to the expectation.

Suggestions and implications of the study

- Improving the infrastructure and learning materials in the schools
- Provision of books and 'extra' teachers and in service training of teachers
- Improving teacher accountability via de-centralizing measures such as bringing schools under management of village/local administrative structures.
- Increasing parental and community involvement in schools by setting up parent - teacher associations, village education committees, village women's group etc.
- Teachers need to be properly trained in the context of the demands of the RTE Act.
- Children should be involved in Panchayat meetings so that their concerns may be heard and addressed by the local administration.
- The need for financing of education for students, especially those coming from low income groups needs special attention.
- Subsidization for the interest rate of education loan should be based on the family income.

- The state is primarily responsible for ensuring quality education at all levels and in all regions. For improving the quality of teaching and research in the State run Universities and technical institutes, there must be ample financial provisions.
- Issues like fee control should be attended very carefully both in public and private educational institutions by a committee appointed by the government.
- A suitable framework in respect of specific issues may be imposed by legislation for the benefit of the economically and socially weaker sections.
- To chart a vision of education that is able to meet the challenges of modern times, there must be a committee of educational and technical experts, scientists, judges and scholars from all fields of knowledge, and committed social workers.
- Facilities for higher education and technical education too are available to students in the rural areas.

CONCLUSION

The term education has been defined as the process of developing and training the powers and capabilities of human beings. Thus there is a sale of service or profit motive behind imparting of education or funds comes mainly from the receivers of education, we can easily say that there is commercialization of education. Now the commercialization occurs in education sector. The cost variations are also there. So the government, local administrative units, and the public has great role in this regard for making an equality both in public and private sector of education.

According to Dr .A.P.J Abdul Kalam Education is an endless journey through knowledge and enlightenment. A real education is one that enhances the dignity of a human being and increases his self-respect. the most important part of education is to inculcate in the students the spirit of “we can do it”.

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