CHAPTER 1

1.1: INTRODUCTION

The title of the thesis is ‘Socio-Economic Deprivation of Muslims in Lock and Lac Industries: A Comparative Study of Aligarh and Hyderabad’. The focus of the study is to examine dispossesssion and loss of downtrodden Muslim workers of Aligarh lock industry and Hyderabad lac industry respectively. Deprivation of Muslim workers have been examined in terms of (a) material deprivation, (b) Social deprivation, (c) multiple deprivation viz. low income, poor housing and unemployment. These concepts will be elaborated later in this chapter in the section 1.8 conceptual framework. The present study is primarily based on field work carried out during April 2009 to March 2010 in Aligarh (U.P.) and Hyderabad (A.P.). The areas under study are located in Shahjamal (Aligarh) and Charminar (Hyderabad) as shown in the Maps 1.2 and 1.4.
Map 1.1
*Map of Uttar Pradesh Showing the Location of Aligarh*

Source: Census of India, 2001

Map 1.2
*Map of Aligarh City Showing the Location of Study Areas*

Source: Aligarh Nagar Nigam (n.d.)
Map 1.3

Map of Andhra Pradesh Showing the Location of Hyderabad

Source: http://www.mapsofindia.com/maps/andhrapradesh/andhrapradesh-districth.htm

Map 1.4

Map of Hyderabad Old City Showing the Location of Study Areas

India encompasses a multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-ethnic society within a democratic frame of policy-making. People belonging to many religions live in this country since times immemorial. There also appear substantial differences in socio-economic and demographic profiles of major religious communities in India, mainly resulting from socio-cultural and historical reasons (Shariff & Azam 2004: 7).

Muslims form the largest minority in India and they are over 138 million according to 2001 Census. It is a common knowledge that Muslims, with 14% population of India are not only the largest minority community, but also highly noticeable in the entire length and breadth of the country. They are, indeed, a National Community. The Muslim in India resides across the country, and yet their concentration varies substantially from one state to another (GoI 2006: 29).

Muslims of India have contributed tremendously in the evolution, development and transformation of society, culture and civilization of India. Their role in the freedom struggle of the country is unparallel. This significant minority community has been reduced to the lowest socio-economic stratum in post-independent India. They have lagged behind the scheduled castes in many walks of life and are continuously lagging behind day by day. They are educationally most backward, economically poor and politically a powerless community of the country. More often than not communal violence is organised against them in which innumerable Muslims are maimed and killed; their women are raped and their hard earned property is demolished and looted. They are forced to live in dingy lanes and slum. Constitutional guarantees are dream for them. Governmental agencies appear to be indifferent and discriminatory towards them. No political party seems to be sincere for ameliorating their condition and ensuring the safety and security. Indeed, they have become a ‘Colonized Community’ (Waheed 2007: 1).
Since Independence, India has achieved significant growth and development. It has also been successful in reducing poverty and improving crucial human development indicators such as levels of literacy, education and health. There are indications, however, that not all religious community and social groups (henceforth will be referred as socio-religious communities – SRCs) have shared equally the benefits of the growth process. Among these, the Muslims, the largest minority community in the country, constituting 13.4% of the population, is seriously lagging behind in terms of most of the human development indicators. India cannot be called a mammoth and developed country if its largest minority (i.e. Muslims) remains socio-economically and educationally backward and excluded (GoI 2006: 29).

Census data would be the best source of information for ascertaining this socio-economic backwardness of Muslims but, unfortunately, Indian census authorities do not publish this type of data. Yet data available from different sample surveys conducted in different parts of the country reveal that the Muslims have been left out of the developmental process (Mistry 2005: 409). Marginalized status of Indian Muslims is not merely confirmed by individual researchers and surveys of voluntary organizations but also by committees of Government. Socio-economic and educational backwardness of Muslims are self speaking facts mentioned by the Gopal Singh committee in 1983, justice Sachar committee, 2006, justice Ranganath Mishra commission in 2007 and the Andhra Pradesh backward class commission (quoted in HT, 2010c: 2).

The High Power Panel under the chairmanship of late Dr. Gopal Singh, set up by the Ministry of Home Affairs in the early 1980 to enquire into the conditions of religious minorities, Schedule Castes (SCs) and schedule Tribes (STs) found that “Muslims and Neo-Buddhists are the most educationally backward communities at
the national level”. The panel also found that the economic condition of Indian Muslims was worse than that of Scheduled Castes (Zakaria 1995: 163). Muslims have also not been able to take advantage of various government schemes, offering benefits to small farmers, marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, landless labourers, training schemes under the Integral Rural Development (IRDP), rural artisans’ programmes, trysems, under which children are trained for self-employment such as forestry, horticulture, nurseries, pest control, veterinary services, tractor and pump services, etc. Figures were difficult to obtain but on the spot enquiries showed that even 50% did not receive the benefit to which their population entitled them, except in schemes meant for artisans, where they benefited (Zakaria 1995: 165).

Moreover, they were deprived of benefits of developmental schemes which government launched for ameliorating conditions of poor and marginalized sections of society. They were under represented in governmental services, and decision-making bodies.

In 1983, N. C. Saxena, Secretary of the Minorities Commission, stated:

Over 70% of Muslims in India live in the rural areas and are marginal and small farmers or self-employed artisans. Of the remaining 30% who live in the towns, roughly 80 to 85% are skilled workers, tailors, retailers, petty businessmen, small manufacturers or are engaged in traditional industries like bidi making, perfumery, and block making (Saxena 1983: 120).

A recent government report shows that Muslims in India are even more disadvantaged than low-caste Hindus. It says a high rate of unemployment and lack of education has led to a decline in their socio-economic standards. India and Pakistan have the largest Muslim populations in the world, after Indonesia. A new confidential report prepared by the Planning Commission, based on data from the census
department, says a majority of Muslims live in towns and cities of India (Raman 2007).

However, it has been contested by Matin (2009). According to him majority of the Muslims live in rural areas. In rural India more than 90% of Indian Muslims are small and marginal farmers, artisans and workers. Being engaged in such occupations makes them poor, while their educational backwardness and lack of skills do not allow them to enter high-income occupations. In modern industry and trade, Muslims rarely own big businesses or have positions in large-scale industry or business and generally lack strong entrepreneurial skills. There is not a single Muslim industrial house among the 50 that exist in India, and at the lower end of the scale most Muslims are poor and backward (Mistry 2005: 409). Thus Muslims in India have a poor human and economic development status. Widespread illiteracy, low income and irregular employment are characteristics of the Indian Muslims, implying thereby a high incidence of poverty relative to other social groups of India (Shariff & Azam 2004: 8).

In 1978 Rashiduddin Khan in his article ‘Minority segments in Indian polity: Muslim situation and plight of Urdu’ states:

There is no denying that Muslims have been at the lowest rung of the ladder in terms of basic categories of socio-economic indicators of development (Khan 1978: 1515).

The socio-economic profile of the Muslims by the Sachar Committee has been depicted as a depressing one. In all major socio-economic indicators, the members of India’s biggest religious minority are, on the average, worse off than members of the majority community. First, they spend less on items of daily consumption because they apparently earn less. The incidence of poverty is therefore likely to be higher among Muslims than Hindus. Second, literacy rates are substantially higher among
the Hindus and a Hindu boy or girl who goes to school is more likely to go on to college than a Muslim. Third, working Muslims are to be found more in casual labour and seasonal occupations than Hindus. Fourth, among those with access to land a Hindu household is more likely to be cultivating larger plots. Fifth, unemployment rates are higher among Muslims than Hindus. This overall profile is true of both men and women, in rural and urban India and in all States. Moreover, the disparity between the majority and minority religious groups in most cases widened during the 1990s. The only positive feature is that the sex ratio among Muslims is better than among the Hindus.

The story then is that in a poor society, the members of this minority religion are more likely to be at the bottom of the heap. Their economic conditions are as remote as possible from living off the fruits of state “appeasement”. It is necessary to recognise that for the vast majority of the discriminated groups. State intervention is crucial and necessary. Similarly, the use of economic and social planning as an instrument of planned development is equally necessary. Economic discrimination, in general and market discrimination in particular, is a serious market failure. Thus, planned State intervention to ensure fair access and participation in social and economic development in the country is necessary (Das 2008).

1.2: **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study are to explore the socio-economic deprivation of Muslims in Aligarh Lock Industry (Uttar Pradesh) and Hyderabad Lac Industry (Andhra Pradesh) within the framework of relative deprivation. Important issues that will be highlighted in this study are as follows:
1. Selected socio-economic indicators viz., family background, education, income, housing status, health and hygiene and political dimension of the respondents are to be assessed in Aligarh and Hyderabad.

2. To explore the causes and consequences of socio-economic deprivation of Muslims in the lock and Lac industries.

3. To examine, whether the Muslim children supplement to their family income?

4. To assess how and why the Muslims in lock and lac industry are socially and economically deprived.

This study would fill up a gap in the literature on Muslim workers of Aligarh lock industry and Hyderabad lac industry and contribute in exploring their socio-economic conditions through sociological study. It could be useful to those who will take of research work on Muslim workers in future.

1.3: **Research Design**

Research design is generally meant for setting up the research in such a way as to derive systematic and logically sound conclusion. Among its various aims, one of the important is to decide the data to be collected and the manner in which the collected data to be organised. Each method has various advantages as well as limitations.

Researcher planned to collect data using schedule, case study and participant observation. The reason for choosing schedule is obvious. It ensures reliability of data unlike questionnaire. Besides, many respondents being illiterate, schedule is the right choice. As for as case studies is concerned researcher has chosen case study as a technique because it can help in gathering qualitative data to supplement quantitative
data related to the problem under investigation. Participant observation as a technique of data collection has been a method of enhancing understanding. It has been of great help in getting insights into the problem under investigation.

By using participant observation and schedule, researcher had a preliminary visit to Shahjamal (a slum in Aligarh) during April-May 2009 for a period of two months. This visit helped the researcher in establishing rapport with the respondents of the Shahjamal area under investigation. After that the researcher had started her preliminary visit in Hyderabad (Charminar locality) during June-July 2009 for a period of over one month. During preliminary visit to Charminar surroundings, she contacted with her potential respondents for the purpose of case study as well as those respondents from whom she had collected data by using schedule. Researcher’s intensive fieldwork had been started in Aligarh in the month of August 2009 which ended in October 2009. In November-December 2009 she had gone through all her work very deeply and discussed it with her supervisor. After that, researcher had started her rigorous field work in Hyderabad from January 2010 onwards which continued till March 2010. Thus, the total duration of her field work in Aligarh and Hyderabad was twelve months.

Case study method has been used to analyse the data qualitatively. The method of exploring and analyzing the life of a social unit: be it a person, a family, an institution or a community is known as case study method (Young 2004: 247). While being fruitful in capturing the qualities of social unit, case study method is often blamed to be “a kind of intuitive approach, without adequate sampling design or checks on bias or distortions resulting from personal views of social reality” (Goode & Hatt 1981: 314). There are fifteen case studies from Aligarh lock industry and fifteen case studies from Hyderabad lac bangle industry. Data have been
supplemented with structured interviews and participant observation. Observation is an integral part of any scientific inquiry. Every researcher does observe the unit being studied in one way or other. Participant observation helps researcher to gather sufficient information before starting to investigate according to specific problems formulated. In course of observation, the researcher takes notes of each and every aspects of life. This exercise helps in identifying major aspects related with deprivation. In present study, schedule is the main method of data collection and case studies have been supplemented. After completing the investigation and recording the interviews, the processing of the data was initiated. For the quantitative analysis of 300 respondents, the data was codified and then fed to the computer. Percentages of the responses were calculated. Inferences have been drawn from the tabulated data.

Inductive methodology has been used in this study. This study is qualitative and descriptive in nature. Descriptive studies aim at portraying the characteristics of a particular situation or group or individual (with or without specific initial hypotheses about the nature of these studies). An exploratory study would always be descriptive while descriptive study may not necessarily be exploratory. The inductive research strategy starts with the collection of data and then proceeds to derive generalizations using so-called inductive logic. The aim is to determine the nature of the regularities or networks of regularities, in social life. Researcher has made use of inductive logic of inquiry in this study.

1.4: **Castes among Muslims in India**

A consideration of caste among the Muslims at once raises the question whether the term caste can be applied to the system of social stratification of a community which professes a faith other than Hinduism. There are again two broad
views on this issue, viz. culturalists and structuralists. Culturalists consider caste to be absent among Muslims while structuralists stress presence of caste among Muslims (Ahmad 1978: 2). Imtiaz Ahmad, following the latter approach argues on the basis of empirical findings that caste among Muslims exists in terms of the following features: Hierarchy, endogamy, occupational specialization and restrictions on social intercourse and commensality (Ahmad 1978: 4). Researcher finds structural approach to caste among the Indian Muslims most appropriate, adequate and relevant for this study (Matin 1996: 30). However, Ahmad rightly recognizes the differences between caste among Hindus and caste among Muslims. He points out firstly the acceptance of the caste principle among the Muslims is considerably weak and does not enjoy any sanction or justification in their great traditional religious ideology. Secondly, while both the Hindu and Muslim systems of social stratification resemble each other in the patterns of endogamy, a keen sense of pride in birth and descent and a notion of hierarchy, caste among the Muslim have not attained the degree of elaborateness characteristics of the Hindu model. Thirdly, caste status among the Muslims does not rest on an ideology of pure and impure so that Muslim castes observe social distance on the basis of deference, privileges and descent. This allows for a greater interplay of wealth and other secular factors in status determination. Lastly, among the Muslims there is no ritually pure caste like the Brahmins with dispensations and obligations which may be peculiar to them. The Sayyads, who enjoy a prominent place among the Muslims on account of their descent, lack the charisma which has given Brahmins their unique place in the Hindu social system (Ahmad 1978: 12).

Caste had been the organizing principle of Hindu social organization, though its rigidity and contours changed greatly through the different historical periods. Perhaps, as has been asserted often, caste was not quite as rigid and fixed during the
Vedic times as it became during the period following the articulation of Manusmriti. Nonetheless, caste clearly became the defining basis of status, economic resources and political power. It was almost natural that converts to Islam who had earlier operated within the caste system brought their pre-conversion conceptions of the social system, and retained their earlier caste identities. It is also almost natural that conversion to Islam, a sudden turning to a new light, would have automatically introduced some changes in their social organization as a result of interaction with the principles of the Islamic faith (Ahmad 2007: 6).

Many Indian Muslims are descendants of ‘untouchable’, ‘low’ caste converts and of indigenous people whose ancestors were not considered part of the Hindu four-fold social order, with only a small minority tracing their origins to Arab, Iranian and Central Asian settlers. Although the Qur’an is fiercely egalitarian in its social ethics, insisting on a radical equality of all believers, Indian Muslim society is characterized by numerous caste-like features, consisting of several caste-like groups (jatis, bradaris) (Sikand 2004: 49).

The Muslim immigrants, mostly Arabs, Turks, Afghans and Mughals, made the sub-continent their own homeland. Scattered in different cities, towns and villages, they became indistinguishable from the original inhabitants of India. The Muslim scholars and religious leaders propagated Islam among the original inhabitants and a large number of them converted to Islam. The vast majority of the present-day Indian Muslims are the descendants of these converts. It is therefore not correct to say that Indian Muslims are not Indian but outsiders as it is wrong to say that they are all descendants of the converted Muslims. As far as the question of Indian origin is concerned, there is no difference between the descendants of the Aryan invaders (Brahmins, Kshatryas, Vaishyas) and the offspring’s of the Muslim
immigrants. In fact, the Muslim community of India, with its major segment having indigenous Indian origin, is more Indian than the descendants of the Aryan immigrants who had their origin somewhere in the Central Asia (Billah & Fazlie 1995).

Muslims of India live in a society that is highly stratified in a dual system of hierarchy. On the one hand it is ranked according to class—where each is classified according, to his position in the organization of production, and where and upward mobility is an important criterion of such ranking. On the other hand there is a hierarchy of status, which is further sub-divided into a status category (zat) and a status group (bradari) (Mann 1992: 38).

As ranked status group, bradaries from a hierarchy based initially on descent and occupation. Those engaged in manual labour are ranked lower than those in service occupations. Ranking on the basis of ancestry, Muslims in India is comprised of two major ethnic sections, (i) those who claim to be the descendants of early Muslim immigrants, either, Sayyad, Shaikh, Mughal or Pathan, and (ii) those of indigenous origin whose ancestors were converted to Islam. The former section is often collectively called Ashraf or shurafa (noble born) (both terms are plural forms of the Arabic word Sharif, which means honourable) (Ansari 1960: 35). While the latter section are called Ajlaf (mean and lowly) and Arzal (excluded) (Hasnain 2007: 34). The Muslims converts the Indian origins are generally called by their caste names; they are subdivided into three distinct groups, namely, (i) converts from Hindu high castes (Rajput), (ii) converts from clean occupational castes, and (iii) converts from unclean occupational castes (Bhangi-sweeper, Chamar-tanner) (Ansari 1960: 35).
Ashraf means ‘noble’ and includes all undoubted descendants of foreigners, either Sayyad, Shaikh, Mughal or Pathan, as well as descendants of higher Hindu castes such as Muslim Rajputs (Hasnain 2007: 34). Among the Ashrafs, Sayyads (Prince) is regarded to be descended from the Prophet through the line of the Prophet’s daughter, Fatima, who was married to the fourth Caliph, Ali. Sayyad, thus, commands respect from all Muslims and occupies the apex of the social ranks. Next is the Shaikhs (Chief) has been in frequent use in other Muslim countries to denote pious spiritual guides and religious teachers. Although the term was used in this sense during the early days of Muslim conquest, today in India it denotes a distinct group of people who are said to be descended from early Muslims of Mecca and Medina. Mughals and Pathans constituted the third and fourth ranks respectively, the term Mughal (a perversion of the word Mongol) was commonly used in the early days to denote those people who came to settle in this province with the Mughal armies. Mughals traces their origin to the Mughal Dynasty of India. Pathans are generally considered to have come either from Afghanistan or from the Pashto-speaking tribes of the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan. Pathan reckons his descent from Afghan ruling families of the past (Ansari 1960: 36-37).

All other Muslims including the occupational groups and all converts of lower ranks, are known by the contemptuous terms, ‘ajlaf,’ ‘wretches’ or ‘mean people’: they are also called kamina or itar (Lelyveld 1978: 21). Clean occupational castes, such as Julaha (weavers), Darzi (tailors), Qassab (butchers), Hajjam (barbers), Kunjra (green grocer), Mirasi (bards, singers and musicians), Manihar (bangle makers), Dhunia (cotton carders), Gaddi (graziers, milkmen), etc. were included in the category of Ajlaf (Hasnain 2007: 34). Despite their conversion to Islam, the social and economic conditions of the mass of the ajlaf Muslims hardly changed, and they
remained largely tied down to their traditional occupations as artisans, peasants and labourers (Sikand 2004: 49). The third category of Arzal (literally very mean) includes the unclean or ritually polluting castes such as Bhangi and Mehtar (sweepers and scavengers) (Hasnain 2007: 34).

1.5: **Meaning of Bradari, Zat, Jat or Jati**

The terms ‘zat’ or ‘jat’ is variant of the word ‘jati’. Zat or jat is common terms among the Muslims. Zat or jat indicates endogamous distinctly defined status unit of the people identified on the basis of their ethnic or social history, genealogical or social connections with the prophet / caliphs / rulers and socio-economic status of the individuals in the social system (Mondal & Begum 1999: 234). The Muslims, however, prefer to use the term bradari to denote both the ethnic component of their society and the local units of larger ethnic groups embracing a wider region. Among the Muslims another term, i.e. ‘qaum’, is also used to denote the entire Muslim community within and beyond the village.

Though the term bradari in its entire connotation is not exactly identical to what is meant by the term caste, yet in its inner structure it exhibits the fundamental characteristics of caste-membership is determined only by birth, the group councils and occupational specialization are present. However, violations of the rules of endogamy are not dealt with in an identical manner; they range from mere censorship to ostracism. The inter-bradari, inter commensally distance maintained by the high bradari groups, who consider themselves socially superior in relation to certain other bradari groups, is significant enough to be taken into account. Distinct styles of life can also be seen to operate among high and low bradari groups (Ali 1978: 24).
If we consider the different strata of the Muslim society in terms of ‘status groups’ in Weberian sense, even then, there are distinctions between the status groups of the Hindu and Muslim communities.

According to Weber, the ‘classes’ are stratified according to their relation to the production and acquisition of goods, whereas ‘status groups’ are stratified according to the principles of their consumption of goods as presented by special ‘styles of life’ (Weber 1968: 193).

The status groups of Muslim society, viz., *Ashraf, Ajlaf* and *Arzal* cannot be equated with the Hindu status groups. The boundaries of Hindu status groups are quite fixed and permanent and depend on caste status. But, in Muslim community, the rank of the status groups set above is not determined by their traditional *jat* or so-called ethnic characteristics.

The people of each of the Hindu status groups maintain their social relations with the people of similar status group of their own caste, but not with the other castes. But, in the case of Muslims, the people of a particular status group not only extend their social relations with the people of similar status category of their own group but also with the other categories (groups) of similar status.

All the above facts suggest that the status group distinction amongst the Muslims is more or less open in character and thus it facilitates the smooth mobility in social ladder. Therefore, it is different from the status distinction of the Hindu caste society which is close and rigid in many respects (Mondal & Rokiya 1999: 232-233).

1.6: Deprivation of Muslims in India: Plausible Explanation

There is a debate in the country about the backwardness of Muslims in India. Mostly it is theorized that it is their religion which is primarily responsible for this
state of affairs. Such theorization, to say the least, is utterly faulty and reflects either
the anti-Islamic bias of the theorist or his / her lack of understanding of social roots of
a problem. No religion can be held responsible for backwardness of its followers. This
amounts to mixing up religious category with that of social one. Also, such a
theorization seeks simplistic explanation. Weber’s Sociology of religion has been
criticized and it is beyond the scope in the present study. Suffice it to say that any
social phenomenon is a pretty complex one and a social theorist has to look into
various factors-social, economic, cultural as well as religious. Also, no religious
community can be treated, by a sophisticated social theorist, as a homogenous one.
All religious communities are invariably divided in various groups, sects and classes
and these groups, sects and classes have specificities of their own. No community can
be either entirely backward or forward. If a section is backward, another section will
be forward and yet another section in between. It hardly makes any sense to say that
all Muslims in India are backward. A section, howsoever small, will be construed as
forward. Thus, when we say Indian Muslims are backward, we mean a larger section
of them, compared to the Hindus, the majority community, is backward. And when
we say Muslims are backward, it should not imply that all Hindus are better off and
have made it economically. There are millions of Hindus, even from upper castes,
who are illiterate and poor in addition to those belonging to the Scheduled Castes i.e.
dalits (harijans). It is necessary to point these things out in order to fight the
stereotypes widely prevalent both among the Muslims and the Hindus.

First of all, it must be stressed that all Indian Muslims are not backward. In
contemporary India also, there are quite a number of Muslims who are quite wealthy,
educated and well placed in society. They are quite influential in regional or central
political power structure. Secondly, it must be understood that the main cause of
Muslim backwardness is in their social origin. All Muslims in the medieval period did not belong to the ruling classes which were feudal in origin. Comparatively very few Muslims in India belonged to the upper classes. The vast majority of Muslims were converts from amongst the *Shudras* of the Hindu society. Here we do not want to go into the controversy about coercive conversion. Suffice it to say that such a stereotype is totally inadequate explanation of the complex process of conversion. It is more proper to say that conversions were, by and large, specially from amongst the *dalits* (harijans), of a voluntary, and not of coercive nature.

As pointed out before, bulk conversions to Islam from amongst the *Shudras* by and large accounts for general Muslim backwardness. These conversions took place because to these oppressed people Islam appeared to be much more democratic and egalitarian than the caste-ridden Hinduism. Among these *Shudras* there were numerous *jatis* (castes) based on profession. Thus there were *Julahas*, *Khatiks* (those slaughtering animals), *Dhobis* (washermen), *Rangrez* (dyers), *Pinjaras* (carders), *Malis* (gardeners or those who grew and sold fruits and vegetables), *Gorkans* (grave-diggers), *Tambolis* (those selling betel leaves and nuts), *Hajjams*, *Lohars* (iron-smith), *Suther* (carpenter) and so on. When converted to Islam, these professions were not given up by them. Thus what changed for them was their religion but not their social status. No wonder than that these converted Muslims were generally looked down upon by the Muslims belonging to the ruling classes. As is well-known the upper class Muslims were known as *Ashraf* and those belonging to the lower castes as *Ajlaf*. The latter were also known as *Kamins* a contemptuous term for these Muslims. Zia-ud-din Barni, a chronicler of the Sultanet period refers to these converted Muslims in the most contemptuous terms and opines that they do not deserve higher education. It is enough if they are taught how to recite the Qu’ran and say prayers which are
obligatory for them as Muslims. Thus it will be seen that a large majority of Muslims was utterly backward on account of the very nature of their social origin and it is these Muslims to constitute the vast majority in India.

It will be seen that in religions like East Bengal where vast numbers converted to Islam from earliest days, poverty and illiteracy ruled the roost. It is well known through various anthropological studies that in Bengal it is low caste Hindus who had, by and large, embraced Islam.

Muslims account for approximately 15% of India’s population, and Dalits (Harijans) number roughly the same. The vast majority of Indian Muslims are of indigenous origin, for the most part being descendants of converts, particularly from ‘low’ and ‘middle’ castes. In contemporary India, Dalits (Harijans) and Muslims share many things in common. Most of them live below the poverty line, are victims of pervasive discrimination and are often the target of violent attacks by ‘upper’ caste groups. Like Hindus, Muslims too, are divided on the basis of caste, sectarian, linguistics, ethics and other differences (Sikand 2004: 11).

After India’s independence in 1947 most Muslims decided to stay in the country despite large-scale killing and violence. In the heat of what are known as the partition riots, not to migrate to Pakistan was a conscious yet difficult decision for most individuals and families. Those who remained in India boldly faced the onslaught of communal violence or the threat of it. Yet, by and large, Muslims chose to ally with secular forces. Gradually, discrimination, social stagnation and educational dispossession put together resulted in economic backwardness of the Muslims in large parts of the country.

Discrimination in various walks of life and police repression during communal riots demoralised Muslims and caused loss of confidence in secular forces and
resulted in withdrawal symptoms and a blockade mentality. However, ironically when the Hindu right reactionary forces managed to grab political power they also found radical communal elements among Hindus as their natural allies.

Since the dawn of independence, the Government of India dominated by the Aryan Brahmins, adopted discriminatory measures against the Muslims. The Constitution of India, drafted by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, guarantees fundamental rights to all communities of India. Article 15(1) says, "The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them." The records of the Central and State Governments during the last half a century of independence aptly prove that the constitutional provisions have been honoured more by their violation than by their observance. That the Hindu leaders were not sincere in giving fundamental rights to the non-Hindus was evident from the fact that no sooner had these and other rights been given than checks and obstacles were created through the Directive Principle added to the Constitution. The Directive Principle says that Government will strive for 'National Integration' and for which a common Civil Code will be adopted. This Civil Code meant only Hindu Code as it became evident from various acts of the Government. In other word, to the non-Hindu communities, the Common Civil Code meant only a measure for Hinduaisation of all the citizens of the country.

It is a well-known fact that the Indian Muslims are being systematically and increasingly marginalized in their own homeland. Soon after the independence, various states and territories were reorganised splitting the minority dominated areas in parts and absorbing them in different states with a view to reducing their influence and making it difficult for them to win in any election. In an effort to further reduce their political strength, the names of Muslims are sometime deleted from the electoral
rolls. The names of 138,000 Muslim voters, for example, were deleted from the electoral rolls prepared in Hyderabad and Secunderabad for the election of December, 1994 deliberate and concerted efforts are being made to change the composition of population in areas where non Hindus, especially Muslims, are in majority. As a result of this policy, the Sikhs in the Punjab have been relegated from absolute to a simple majority status only with a slight margin (52% of the total population). In Jammu and Kashmir, the only state where Muslims are in majority, there has been a continuous fall in the Muslim population and simultaneous rise in non-Muslim population. The percentage of Muslims in that state fell from 70 in 1951 to 62 in 1991. If this trend continues for a few decades more, the Muslims of the State of Jammu and Kashmir may be reduced to a minority community (Billah & Fazlie 1995).

Education is an important indicator of human development because education increases a person’s awareness about life around him, empowers him to make better choices, resists oppression and encourages meaningful participation in development. An educated citizen can meaningfully exercise his political rights, discharge social responsibilities satisfactorily and develop a spirit of tolerance and reform (Somvanshi 2006: 191-192).

The high level of poverty and unemployment among Muslims is ascribed to their backwardness in education. For which the community is as much to blame as the government. This has been as true in the past as it is now (Zakaria 1995: 143). Educationally Muslims are much worse off than the rest of population, however, next only to the SCs and the STs (Shariff 1998: 25).

While the census reports remain silent-revealing nothing regarding the status of Muslims vis-à-vis education, a few studies that are available are pointers to the backward position Muslim occupy in the field of education. Based on inferences
drawn on the basis of data collected by selected sample surveys, Massey (1998) concludes that the literacy level among Muslims is on an average 10% less than the National Commission for Minorities (Cited in Shariff & Azam 2004: 53).

Some other studies also give a similar pathetic picture. One of the earliest was conducted by the eminent academicians Prof. Gopal Krishna. It was commissioned by the Union Home Ministry. His report revealed that the educational level of the Muslims was the lowest in India. The report was deliberately shelved and not even published by the government lest its findings prove explosive. The bureaucracy thinks that the best way to tackle a problem is to push ‘unsavory facts under the carpet’.

The survey made by Dr. G. Thimmaiah of the Institute of Economic and Social Change, Bangalore, also confirmed the poor condition of Muslims at various levels of education as compared to other religious groups. In his book *Equality and Poverty: A case Study of Karnataka*, published in 1983, the learned doctor has concluded that the economic and educational level of the Muslims was worse than that of the poorest of the poor in India (Cited in Zakaria 1995: 148).

Table 1.1 shows percentage of Muslim population to the total population of the country in 2001 was 13.43%. Uttar Pradesh constitutes 18.50% of Muslim population which is much higher than the national average of 13.43%. On the other hand, Andhra Pradesh constitutes 9.17% of Muslim population which is lower than all India level. The percentage of Muslims’ enrolment at primary level is reported to be 10.49% (GER 77.34%) against 8.54% at upper primary level. Within these levels, the percentage of girls enrolment as high as 48.67 (GPI, 0.95) and 49.40% (GPI, 0.97) which is higher than the percentage of overall enrolment presented above. Even GPI (Gender Parity Index) of Muslim enrolment is higher than the overall enrolment, which is true for both primary and upper primary levels of education. In Andhra
Pradesh, the percentage of Muslim enrolment in primary classes is more than their share in the total population. While in Uttar Pradesh the proportionate enrolment share is reported to be lower. Enrolment share in upper primary classes is lower than the share in population and below than their share in primary classes.

Table 1.1

*Percentage of Muslim Enrolment to Total Enrolment of U. P. & A. P.: 2007-08*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>% Muslim population Census 2001</th>
<th>% of Muslims</th>
<th>% of Girls</th>
<th>% of Muslims</th>
<th>% of Girls</th>
<th>% of Muslims</th>
<th>% of Girls</th>
<th>% of Muslims</th>
<th>% of Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>18.50</td>
<td>9.34</td>
<td>48.15</td>
<td>7.34</td>
<td>48.54</td>
<td>8.91</td>
<td>48.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>9.17</td>
<td>10.51</td>
<td>50.73</td>
<td>9.45</td>
<td>51.75</td>
<td>10.15</td>
<td>51.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Qamar Hasan and M. N. Khan of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) made a comparative study of the educational and vocational intentions of Hindu and Muslim students on the verge of completing school in Aligarh. They found that not one among the Hindu students left school while 4.5% of Muslim boys and 5.7% of Muslim girls dropped out. Their analysis disclosed that while 57.72% of the Hindu boys and 67.79% of the Hindu girls did not face any economic problem, most Muslim boys and girls had to abandon their studies due to the poverty of their parents.
All these studies show that Muslims were unable to take advantage of the educational facilities provided by private, local and governmental institutions. Unfortunately, the local Muslim leadership did little to induce them to move with the times. Despite the poverty of Muslim parents, these leaders could have persuaded them not to jeopardize their children’s future especially since education at the school level lays the foundation for careers. However, the most important factor, as revealed to the High Power Panel for Minorities, was the attitude of Muslim artisans and labourers, living on daily wages. Even parents who did not have any family business were reluctant to send their children to school because they preferred them to do odd jobs for the family. In the villages, there was hardly any tradition of learning, except in madrasas, where religious instructions was given without any provision for teaching secular subjects which could help the pupils to procure employment or equip them for some gainful occupation (Zakaria 1995: 149).

As free India progressed on the economic front, with successive five-year plans reducing the poverty line of its people and improving agricultural and industrial development, the economic condition of Indian Muslims deteriorated (Zakaria 1995: 162). Indian Muslims are able to manage, by and large, a hand-to-mouth existence either by way of self-employment in petty trade or working in the unorganised sector (Zakaria 1995: 173).

In reality the ordinary Muslim was left to his fate and the development schemes devised for uplifting the community were never made effective. Economic and educational deprivation reduced the community’s ability to seek relief from government development schemes (Das 2008).

Meanwhile the younger generations of Muslims are facing more economic hardship than their counterparts in any other community—they are unwanted and
shunned—with the result that a number of them are taking to crime and are being
exploited by the underworld. Indeed, they become the poorest of the poor, unsure of
their future (Zakaria 1995: 179).

The socio-economic conditions of the Muslim community of India present a
dismal picture. The Muslims are deprived of due representation in public employment
even at the lowest level. The Public Service Commission has fixed 200 marks for the
viva test. The Muslim candidates who qualify the written tests lose badly in viva. In
the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) examination of 1993, for instance, only 20
out of 789 Muslim candidates were successful. This comes to only 2.5% of the total
number of candidates who qualified in the examination. In this way, the
representation of the Muslims in various Ministries is approaching to zero. The
number of Muslims in class I and II jobs in various Ministries of the Central
Government was 677 as against a total of 39,375 on 31 March 1971. This comes to
only 1.7%, although the Muslims constitute 12% of the population of the country. The
representation of the Muslims in the Parliament showed a downward trend. While
their representation in the Parliament was 9.26% (73 among a total of 788) in 1982
election, it came down to 6.20% (49 among a total of 790) in 1991 election.
Moreover, the number of states with zero Muslim representation increased from 10 in

Muslims are also denied equal opportunity in the private sector. Their
representation is indeed very poor in the law and order machinery, whether state
police, armed constabulary or central Para-military and armed forces. Minority
educational institutions, especially those run by the Muslims, are facing various types
of constraints and impediments. Minority concentration areas are neglected by the
government in respect of establishing educational institutions. As a result, the literacy
level of the Muslim community is much below the average level of India (among men 18% against the country's average of 51% and among women less than 8%). The school enrolment level of the Muslim children is also very low. Because of the hurdles at the lower level of education, the share of Muslim students at higher and professional level is also much below the national level of India.

In 'secular' India, schools and other educational institutions are being systematically hinduised. Hindu culture incorporating glorification of idol-worship and stories of Hindu mythological characters form part of the syllabus pursued at various schools. References to Hindu gods and goddesses abound in the text books. Books prescribed by the Education Boards contain lessons giving false stories of Muslim atrocities on Hindu women, kidnapping, forced conversion. Children are taught to worship Hindu gods and idols. Recently, the BJP Government of Delhi has issued instructions to the schools to begin daily activity with collective singing of Vande Matram of Bankim Chaterjee. Singing this song is tantamount to worshipping the motherland, and therefore against the basic tenets of Islam. In the name of promoting common culture, the government is pursuing a policy of instilling Hindu idolatry and paganism among the children irrespective of their religion. The Muslims are discouraged and sometime denied to observe their religious duty. The government has recently decided not to allow the Muslim soldiers an hour's absence for observing Friday prayer.

The Muslims have established some educational institutions in an effort to keep their children away from idolatry and paganism. But a condition is imposed on these institutions that 50% of the total intake in them shall be permitted to be filled by candidates selected by the agencies of the State Government on the basis of a competitive examination. Urdu is the language of about 62% of the Indian Muslims.
and has the richest Islamic literature among Indian languages in all fields of learning. As a part of their efforts to obliterate the cultural entity of the Muslims, both the Central Government and the Governments of the States seem to do whatever is possible to strangle this language and deny it all opportunities of existence and growth. It is virtually banished from all the schools run by the Government.

The decennial censuses or the national sample surveys do not generally address themselves to the living conditions of the Muslims. The socio-economic plight of the Indian Muslims therefore remains clouded in mystery. It is, however, never disputed that the Muslims are not better than the Dalits (Harijans) or the OBC (Other Backward Castes). As V. T. Rajshekar observes, the Muslims of India "are in many ways worse than Untouchables and in recent years they are facing dangers of mass annihilation". The National Sample Survey Report of 1988 presents some data about the socio-economic conditions of the Indian Muslims.

- 52.3% of Muslims live below poverty line with a monthly income of Indian Rupees 150 (US$ 5) or less.
- 50.5% are illiterate.
- Only 4% of Indians who receive education up to high school are Muslims.
- Only 1.6% of Indian college graduates are Muslims.
- Only 4.4% of Indians in government jobs are Muslims.
- Only 3.7% of Indians who receive financial assistance from the government for starting business are Muslims.
- Only 5% of Indians who receive loan from government-owned banks are Muslims.
- Only 2% of Indians who receive institutional loans from the government are Muslims.
Awqaf (endowment) properties worth millions of dollars, dedicated by the Muslim philanthropists for some specific purposes and objectives, are now given to the Waqf Boards which are constituted by the Governments of the States and the Central Government. The members of these boards are nominated on the basis of political consideration. A large portion of these properties is misused by the members and officials of the boards.

Our analysis shows that while there is considerable variation in the conditions of Muslims across states, (and among the Muslims, those who identified themselves as OBCs and others); the Community exhibits deficits and deprivation in practically all dimensions of development. In fact, by and large, Muslims rank somewhat above SCs/STs but below Hindu-OBCs, Other Minorities and Hindu- General (mostly upper castes) in almost all indicators considered. Among the states that have large Muslim populations, the situation is particularly grave in the states of West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Assam (GoI 2006: 237).

The role of education in facilitating social and economic progress is well accepted today. The ability of a nation’s population to learn and perform in an environment where scientific and technological knowledge is changing rapidly is critical for its growth. While the importance of human capital and its augmentation for a nation’s development cannot be over-emphasized, its micro-economic consequences also need to be acknowledged. Improvements in the functional and analytical ability of children and youth through education open up opportunities leading to both individual and group entitlements. Improvements in education are not only expected to enhance efficiency (and therefore earnings) but also augment democratic participation, upgrade health and quality of life.
At the time of adopting the Constitution the Indian state had committed itself to provide elementary education under Article 45 of the Directive Principles of State policy. Article 45 stated that “The State shall endeavor to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years.” In 1993, in a landmark judgment, the Supreme Court ruled that the right to education is a fundamental right flowing from the Right to Life in Article 21 of the Constitution. Subsequently in 2002 education as a fundamental right was endorsed through the 86th amendment to the Constitution. Article 21-A, states that “The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age six to fourteen years in such a way as the State may, by law, determine.” The 86th Amendment also modified Article 45 which now reads as “The state shall endeavor to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of 6 years”. However, despite this commitment the number of children in this age group who have remained out of school is alarmingly large education of Muslims in India. It shows that Muslims are at a double disadvantage with low levels of education combined with low quality education; their deprivation increases manifold as the level of education rises. In some instances the relative share for Muslims is lower than even the SCs who are victims of a long standing caste system. Such relative deprivation calls for a significant policy shift, in the recognition of the problem and in devising corrective measures, as well as in the allocation of resources (GoI 2006: 49-50).

Thus, from an all encompassing category as during the British period, backward classes as a category has gradually emerged to specifically refer to those caste groups that occupy the middle position in the social hierarchy and lag behind in terms of economic, educational and other human development indicators.
Sociological studies on the social structure of Muslims in India have emphasized on the presence of descent based social stratification among them. Features of the Hindu caste system, such as hierarchical ordering of social groups, endogamy and hereditary occupation have been found to be amply present among the Indian Muslims as well. The Census of India, 1901 listed 133 social groups wholly or partially Muslim. The present day Muslim Society in India is divided into four major groups: (i) the *Ashrafs* who trace their origins to foreign lands such as Arabia, Persia, Turkistan or Afghanistan, (ii) the upper caste Hindus who converted to Islam, (iii) the middle caste converts whose occupations are ritually clean, (iv) the converts from the erstwhile untouchable castes, *Bhangi, Mehtar, Chamar, Dom* and so on.

These four groups are usually placed into two broad categories, namely, ‘*ashraf*’ and ‘*ajlaf*’. The former, meaning noble, includes all Muslims of foreign blood and converts from higher castes. ‘*Ajlaf*’ meaning degraded or unholy, embraces the ritually clean occupational groups and low ranking converts. In Bihar, U.P and Bengal, *Sayyads, Shaikhs, Mughals* and *Pathans* constitute the ‘*ashrafs’*. The ‘*ajlaf*’, are carpenters, artisans, painters, graziers, tanners, milkmen etc. According to the Census of 1901, the *ajlaf* category includes ‘the various classes of converts who are known as Nao Muslim in Bihar and Nasya in North Bengal. It also includes various functional groups such as that of the *Jolaha* or weaver, *Dhunia* or cotton-carder, *Kulu* or oil-presser, *Kunjra* or vegetable-seller, *Hajjam, Darzi*, and the like.’ The 1901 Census also recorded the presence of a third category called Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India *Arzal*: ‘It consists of the very lowest castes, such as the *Halalkhor, Lalbegi, Abdal, and Bediya*...’

In Andhra Pradesh, a field study conducted in 1987 found hierarchically arranged endogamous groups among Muslims. At the top of the ladder were those
claiming foreign descent—Sayyad, Shaikh, Pathan and Labbai (descendants of Arab traders who took native wives). At the lowest level were groups with ‘unclean’ occupations—Dudekula (cotton cleaners), Hajjam and Fakir - budbudki (mendicants) (GoI 2006: 12).

Muslim groups currently bracketed under the category ‘OBC’ come essentially from the non-ashraf section of the Muslim population. They are the converts from the middle and lower caste Hindus and are identified with their traditional occupation. A study of a village in Uttar Pradesh could identify eighteen such groups, for example, Julahas, Mirasis, Darzis, Halwais, manihars and so on. The 1911 Census listed some 102 caste groups among Muslims in Uttar Pradesh, at least 97 of them came from the non-ashraf category. Many such groups such as the Rajputs, Kayasthas, Koeris, Koris, Kumhars, Kurmis, Malis, and Mochis were common among both Hindus and Muslims. Since the Constitutional (Scheduled Caste) Order, 1950, popularly known as the Presidential Order (1950), restricts the SC status only to Hindu groups having ‘unclean’ occupations, their non-Hindu equivalents have been bracketed with the middle caste converts and declared OBC. Thus, the OBCs among Muslims constitute two broad categories. The halalkhors, helas, lalbegis or bhangis (scavengers), dhobis, nais or hajjams, chiks, faqirs etc. belonging to the ‘Arzals’ are the ‘untouchable converts’ to Islam that have found their way in the OBC list. The momins or julahas, darzi or idrisi, rayeens or kunjaras are Ajlafs or converts from ‘clean’ occupational castes. Thus, one can discern three groups among Muslims: (1) those without any social disabilities, the ashrafs; (2) those equivalent to Hindu OBCs, the ajlafs, and (3) those equivalent to Hindu SCs, the arzals (GoI 2006: 192-193).
1.7: **Muslim Artisans and Globalization**

Globalization extends to all areas of the earth and all areas of life. It invades our inner world as never before. It defines our time today. It is at the centre of political discourse. It has become a catch word in the media. It hugely attracts the attention of the academicians in the same way as post modernism was fashionable in the 1980s. It has swept across all hitherto existing societies, developing as well as developed, transforming our social and economic relations and institutions in the 21st century. Globalization both as a description of widespread, epoch-defining developments and a prescription for action, has achieved a virtual hegemony and so is presented with an air of inevitability that disarms the imagination and prevents thought of action towards a systematic alternative towards another more just social and economic order (Petras & Veltmeyer 2001: 8).

The Indian economy has made remarkable progress in the last 50 years. Yet, for various reasons, Muslims in India have been unable to enjoy the fruits of development and so they continue to belong to the weaker sections of society. As a result of the ongoing trends of globalization and liberalization, the economic conditions of Muslims are expected to worsen since only highly competitive and skilled individuals and industries are expected to survive in such an economy. Therefore, there is an urgent need for the socio-economic upliftment of Indian Muslims (Mistry 2005: 408).

Growing communalism and globalization are making Muslim artisans and small entrepreneurs more vulnerable and pauperized. This is a well-known fact that wherever and whenever Muslim artisans, traders and entrepreneurs have achieved success in consolidating their economic base and started competing with non-Muslim communities, their economic base is deliberately demolished in frequently occurring
violence. Some of the incidences of violence are so severe that they may appropriately be referred as pogroms against Muslims. During 1960s, 1970s and 1980s this violence did frequently take place in cities like Jamshedpur, Meerut, Aligarh, Bhagalpur, Moradabad, Bhiwandi and Saharanpur, which are known centers of Muslim concentration in handloom industries. “A Parsi Police Commissioner is credited by the organiser, the newspaper of the R.S.S., with the following conclusion. A riot does not occur in a sleepy little village of U.P. where all suffer equally or in a tribal village of Madhya Pradesh where all live safely in their poverty. It occurs in Moradabad, where the metal workers have built a good industry or Aligarh where lock makers have made good or in Bhiwandi where power loom rivalries are poisonous. It occurs in Ahmadabad and Hyderabad and Jamshedpur where there are jobs to get, contract to secure, houses and shops to capture, and it occurs in Agra and Firozabad and in all other towns where economic rivalries are serious and have to be covered up with the cloak of communalism.” To demolish economic the economic base of emerging Muslim traders and entrepreneurs appears to be the cause of many organised violence against Muslims. The case of Gujarat pogrom is the best example. Gujarat pogrom was not organised only for looting property of Muslims, raping their women and killing them in mass but also for their systematic economic boycott. Chelias and ghanchis, which have emerged recently as enterprising Muslim communities, were target of large scale violence. All dhabas of Chelias on National Highway No.8 and their hotels in Ahmadabad were razed to the ground. This was also the case with the lives and property of other enterprising Muslims.

Globalization is another factor which is damaging the economic base of Indian Muslims. It is a process of making the poor, poorer and the rich richer. It increases the socio-economic gap between poor and rich communities. Therefore, as we have seen
earlier, Muslims are becoming poorer and backward compared to Hindus. Many weavers of Banaras and Easters Uttar Pradesh have been forced to leave their occupations and migrate to different parts of the country in search of employment. This has happened because of the declining weaving industry due to globalization (Waheed 2006: 27-29).

Globalization has impacted in almost all conceivable walks of life including the lac industry of Hyderabad where majority of the workers are Muslims. Earlier, *gota* (tiny semi-precious stone) used to import from Australia. In recent past, it is being substituted by Chinese import of *gota* which is cheaper than the Australian *gota*. However, Chinese *gota* is less durable, inferior in its finished product and based on the principle of use and throw. It has impacted in the earnings of lac bangle makers. As a result lac bangle maker’s livelihood has become more vulnerable than ever before. Simultaneously, their health status has been getting adversely affected due to hazardous working conditions. There are some problems areas of Hyderabad lac bangle industry.

1. No technological and research work is being done either by government agencies or by private agencies to bring about any improvement in their conditions.

2. Being illiterate these people do not have marketing skills.

3. Most of the manufacturers have no vision of export market.

4. These people are still making age old patterns and designs while in the consumer oriented culture of today people want fashionable and new looks.

5. Change in the designs and patterns have been very slow.

6. Being poor, they cannot afford innovation and risk.
7. To get loans from banks and other financial institutions is next to impossible for these people.

Poor illiterate Muslims workers are struggling hard to earn their livelihood and at many places they have been displaced of their works due to decline in lac bangle industry because of global conditions. Poor artisans’ health, housing and sanitary conditions are pathetic and they still occupy lowest social status. A detailed discussion will be provided in chapter 4.

Similarly lock industry of Aligarh which is under severe threat from Chinese lock. No artisan and small scale entrepreneur including Muslims are in a position to compete with products of other countries in the market. The famous lock industry of Aligarh, encompassing nearly one and half century of long history, is struggling hard to compete with international players in the era of today’s globalization. Small scale sector of India contributes 33% of India’s export, but Aligarh lock industry cuts a sorry figure in exporting their products range. Even in local market also, 6 to 7% of locks are coming from China, which is a serious concern for Aligarh Lock Industries. There are some problem areas of Aligarh lock industry.

1. **Lack of technological upgradation to produce locks for the global market:** Owing to conservative techniques of lock preparation and the unaffordable rate of higher technology lead the lock industry to cut a sorry figure in the international market. Owing to this technological barrier, the Aligarh lock industry still focuses on lever locks, which is having less global demand.

2. **Poor Infrastructure:** To become a globally competitive manufacturing hub, the lock industry needs steady supply of electricity at an economic rate, which is missing in Aligarh.
3. Corruption: Corruption in the areas of labour, sales tax, electricity and pollution have endangered this industry.

4. Inconsistent Government policy and Unprofessional Implementation: Aligarh was declared once as the Tala Nagri by the Chief Minister to make available plots for industrial purpose at low rates but later the government, from a different ruling party, sold the plots at a very high rate as if it were real estate business. Even the National Small Scale Industries Corporation, which was established with a view to promote the business of locks in Aligarh, did not add too much value toward this industry’s development.

5. Inappropriate market development plan: As a manufacturing hub of 115 years, very less effort was made to increase the awareness of the Aligarh lock industry globally. Neither the government nor the industrialist has generated any systematic brand image development program. Apart from its innovative product development according to the consumer’s needs, efficient distribution management to make the product available to the consumer needs serious attention.

6. Non-availability of cheap Finance: High-end technology for innovative products, market development for global awareness needs money. This small-scale industry does not have adequate money or source of money with less interest rate to meet this need.

Apart from this low level of research and development, poor adaptability in changing situations, non-availability of technologically trained human resource, less concern on production cost, lack of access to technological information are the other reasons for dismal performance of Aligarh Lock Industry (Saha 2006: 217-218).
Aligarh is on the verge of losing its tag of city of locks as several other cities have started manufacturing them. In addition, with several multinational firms entering this field, the lock industry in Aligarh is close to winding up. During the last 10 years this industry faced a sudden downfall and the present turnover is merely Rs 2 crore. The reason is obvious: Lack of facilities and help from the government. The Aligarh lock industries are still lacking modernization in lock technology and are reeling under incorrect policies of the government, heavy power shortage and a complex tax system of the Uttar Pradesh government.

More so the business of locks in Aligarh, which had a turnover of Rs 850 crore and was exporting locks worth Rs 450 crore, is now losing its space in both foreign and Indian markets. From previously capturing 90% of the Indian markets, Aligarh now owns less than 50%. The exports, too, have been reduced to Rs 250 crore.

Vijay Bajaj, President of All India Lock Manufacturers Association and owner of Bajaj Locks, said: “The lock industry in Aligarh has suffered a setback owing to the liberalisation policy of the government and the entry of multinational companies. Moreover, in Aligarh, the lock industry is still lacking in modernization and automation and it is still a labour-oriented industry” (HT Correspondent 2010a: 02).

Akhil Bharatiya Lock Manufacturing organization leader and Nervy Locks manufacturer Zafar Alam holds the government related sectors responsible for the pessimist out look to the irregular water supply and power cuts for long durations leading to the downfall of the industry. Zafar Alam states that the innumerable plans declared by the government have emerged as a googly. In May 1986, National Small Scale Industries Corporation was established with a view to promote the business of locks in Aligarh. Ironically it has proved not only to be a failure but also white elephant for the government (Jain 2003).
According to exporter Dhanjeet Wadra, “The lock industry is facing a down turn due to non-cooperation of the government agencies and the paucity of funds. If the government does not pay any heed to the plight of this business, it will soon become history” (Saxena 2011: 02).

It has been observed that some of the lock factories have been converted into hardware factories. According to the industry department of the Aligarh Muslim University, there are 5,000 lock factories in Aligarh. In these factories, locks are manufactured based on lever technology while in China and Taiwan, locks are manufactured using pin cylinder technology, which is cheaper and stronger.

According to Pramod Agarwal, industrialist and owner of Indian Die-casting, another factor for the setback of the lock industry was that they were running on self-finance basis. Owing to paucity of funds, Aligarh lock units can not adopt modern methods of production (HT Correspondent 2010a: 02).

As a result, its exports are almost nil. The small industrialists associated with the lock industry in Aligarh are finding it hard to make a living. The industry, which has always provided secure guarantee, now finds itself on the edifice of insecurity (Jain 2003). Therefore, future of artisans and small scale industry appear to be bleak. If adequate measures are not taken by the government to protect interest of artisans and handicrafts, rich heritage of Indian crafts would not merely be lost but also millions of skilled workers and small entrepreneurs be reduced to the level of casual workers (Waheed 2006: 29).

During the developing economic and social crisis in the world since the collapse of the Soviet Union and some other socialist countries, the fund-bank duo have been loudly proclaiming that their prescriptions of globalization are a panacea for the world’s economic evils. But the fact is that the experience of globalization in
the last one decade and a half has been in sharp contrast to the rosy picture the fund-
bank had painted. Instead of bringing the third world countries to a level where they
are able to compete in the world market, the system has pushed up unemployment
there, converting them into havens of excessively cheap labour, including child
labour. Moreover, neo-liberalism has truly destroyed civil society in many countries.
It is hardly surprising, then, that the gap between the rich and the poor has widened as
time progressed. In the early 1970s the gap between the incomes earned by the richest
20% and the poorest 20% stood at a factor of approximately 30. By 2001, this factor
had increased to 74. There has of course been a phenomenal economic growth, and
this has increased the number of millionaires and billionaires. But the percentage of
poor people has also risen (Mollah 2008).

But of course the world or more specifically, the global economy is not flat, it
is highly uneven. This anecdote captures in a nutshell the widespread in security that
unevenness creates. On the one hand the new economy has created unprecedented
opportunities for wealth creation, while on the other hand its uneven nature threatens
established livelihood (Webster, Lambert & Bezuidenhout 2008: 01). Overall,
globalization has indeed exacerbated inequality and the social dimension of
globalization having profound effects on economic welfare (Dreher, Gaston &

1.8: Conceptual Framework

1.8.1: Meaning of Deprivation

Deprivation means the state of being deprived; privation; loss; want;
bereavement or taking away. In other words deprivation means the act of depriving,
dispossessing, or bereaving; the act of deposing or divesting of some dignity (http://thinkexist.com/dictionary/meaning/deprivation/).

There is no single generally agreed definition of deprivation. Deprivation is a concept that overlaps, but is not synonymous with poverty. Absolute poverty can be defined as the absence of the minimum resources for physical survival, whereas relative poverty relates this to the standards of living of a particular society at a specific time. The different concepts of deprivation include the following:

Material deprivation, which reflects the access people have to material goods and resources. Access to these goods and resources enables people “to play the roles, participate in relationships and follow the customary behaviour which is expected of them by virtue of their membership in society” (as described by Townsend). Social deprivation has been separately distinguished as relating to people’s roles and relationships, membership and social contacts in society. Multiple deprivations relates to the occurrence of several forms of deprivation concurrently, such as low income, poor housing, and unemployment. This can be particularly stressful for families.

Social exclusion is a related topic which refers to the lack of means to join in social, cultural and political life (http://www.show.scot.nhs.uk/Publications/ISD/Deprivation_and_health/background.HTM). Social deprivation is the reduction or prevention of culturally normal interaction between an individual and the rest of society. This social deprivation is included in a broad network of correlated factors that contribute to social exclusion these factors include low socio-economic status, poor education and poverty.

The term ‘social deprivation’ is slightly ambiguous and lacks a concrete definition. That being said, there are several important aspects that are consistently found within research on the subject. With social deprivation one may have limited
access to the social world due to factors such as low socio-economic status or poor education. The socially deprived may experience “a deprivation of basic capabilities due to a lack of freedom, rather than merely low income.” This lack of freedoms may include reduced opportunity, political voice, or dignity (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/social_deprivation).

1.8.2: Relative Deprivation

Relative deprivation first coined by Sam Stouffer and his associates in their wartime study *The American Soldier* (1949). Relative deprivation was rigorously formulated by W. G. Runciman in 1966. Its use in criminology was not until the 1980s by theorists such as S. Stack, John Braithwaite and particularly the left realists for whom it is a key concept. Its attraction as an explanatory variable in the post-war period is because of the rise of crime in the majority of industrial societies despite the increase in living standards. That is, where material deprivation in an absolute sense declined and the old equation of the more poverty the more crime was clearly falsified.

Relative Deprivation occurs where individuals or groups subjectively perceive themselves as unfairly disadvantaged over others perceived as having similar attributes and deserving similar rewards (their reference groups). It is in contrast with absolute deprivation, where biological health is impaired or where relative levels of wealth are compared based on objective differences although it is often confused with the latter. Subjective experiences of deprivation are essential and, indeed, relative deprivation is more likely when the differences between two group narrows so that comparisons can be easily made than where there are caste-like differences. The discontent arising from relative deprivation has been used to explain radical politics.
(whether of the left or the right), messianic religions, the rise of social movements, industrial disputes and the whole plethora of crime and deviance.

The usual distinction made is that religious fervour or demands for political change are a collective response to relative deprivation whereas crime is an individualistic response. But this is certainly not true of many crimes for example, smuggling, poaching or terrorism which have a collective nature and a communal base and does not even allow for gang delinquency which is clearly a collective response. The connection is, therefore, largely under-theorised a reflection of the separate development of the concept within the seemingly discrete disciplines of sociology of religion, political sociology and criminology.

The use of relative deprivation in criminology is often conflated with Merton’s anomie theory of crime and deviance and its development by Cloward and Ohlin, and there are discernible, although largely unexplored, parallels. Anomie theory involves a disparity between culturally induced aspirations (e.g. success in terms of the American Dream) and the opportunities to realise them. The parallel is clear: this is a subjective process wherein discontent is transmuted into crime. Furthermore, Merton in his classic 1938 article, ‘Social Structure and Anomie’, clearly understands the relative nature of discontent explicitly criticising theories which link absolute deprivation to crime by pointing to poor countries with low crime rates in contrast to the wealthy United States with a comparatively high rate. But there are clear differences in particular Mertonian anomie involves an inability to realize culturally induced notions of success. It does not involve comparisons between groups but individuals measuring themselves against a general goal. The fact that Merton, the major theorist of reference groups, did not fuse this with his theory of anomie is, as Runciman notes, very strange but probably reflects the particular American concern
with ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ and the individualism of that culture. The empirical implications of this difference in emphasis are, however, significant: anomie theory would naturally predict the vast majority of crime to occur at the bottom of society amongst the ‘losers’ but relative deprivation theory does not necessarily have this overwhelming class focus. For discontent can be felt anywhere in the class structure where people perceive their rewards as unfair compared to those with similar attributes. Thus crime would be more widespread although it would be conceded that discontent would be greatest amongst the socially excluded.

The future integration of anomie and relative deprivation theory offers great promise in that relative deprivation offers a much more widespread notion of discontent and its emphasis on subjectivity ensures against the tendency within anomie theory of merely measuring objective differences in equality (so called ‘strain’ theory) whereas anomie theory, on its part, offers a wider structural perspective in terms of the crucial role of differential opportunity structures and firmly locates the dynamic of deprivation within capitalist society as a whole (www.malcolmread.co.uk/JockYoung/relative.htm).

1.8.3: **Poverty, Health, Education and Development**

Poverty is a state of deprivation. In absolute terms it reflects the inability of an individual to satisfy certain basic minimum needs for a sustained healthy and a reasonably productive living. The proportion of population not able to attain the specified level of expenditure is then segregated as poor. Poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not being able to school and not knowing how to read.
The relationship between health and poverty or health and development is complex multifaceted and multidirectional. Poverty in its various dimensions could be a manifestation, as well as a determinant of an individual’s health. In its most basic from as a state of food deprivation and nutritional inadequacy poverty has a direct bearing of the morbidity and longevity of people. How does health relate to development? The first point is that the enhancement of health is a crucial part of development. Second, given other things good health and economic prosperity tend to support each other. Better health, also contributes directly to economic growth as it reduces production losses on account of illness of workers or, potentially, also in terms of higher work productivity for healthy workers.

Improvements in educational attainments have invariably been accompanied by improvement in health and longevity of the population and in their economic well-being. Educated people are likely to be more productive and hence better-off. They are also likely to contribute more to a country’s economic growth. Lack of education robs an individual of a full life. It also robs society of a foundation for sustainable development because education is critical to improving health, nutrition and productivity. Income poverty may pull children from out of the school system, thus denying them the opportunity of participating in school education, even at the basic level, as evidenced in the third world country situations. It is known fact that illiteracy, one of the key factors contributing to poverty is a fall out of the poor participation of children in elementary education.

Some of the main issues of human deprivation are illiteracy, epidemics and the lack of health services or safe water, hunger. Improving health outcomes not only improves well-being but also increases income earning potential. Increasing education not only improves well-being-it also leads to better health outcomes and to higher
incomes. Health, along with education, is seen as one of the key ultimate goals of development and increasingly seen as a dimension of poverty in its own right (Sarvalingam & Sivakumar 2004).

1.8.4: **Theory of Relative Deprivation**

Many social scientists have treated ‘relative deprivation’ as the major factor leading to collective behavior in a social movement. The theory of ‘relative deprivation’ has been developed on the basis of an individual’s or group’s attitude and behavior (feeling of deprivation) to inequality in a system. In the development of this theory there are two lines of inequality that is social mobility and social conflict. The former is developed by Robert K. Merton and Alice Kitt and W. C. Runciman on the basis of social mobility, and the latter is developed by Karl Marx and D. F. Aberle. Although, Samuel A. Stouffer (in his study of, *The American Soldier: Adjustment during Army Life*), first used the notion of ‘relative deprivation’, R. K. Merton and Alice Kitt systematically developed the concept of ‘relative deprivation’ in relation to reference group theory. They applied the concept in order to analyse social mobility. R. K. Merton and Alice Kitt point out that the relative deprivation is a special case of comparison of referent group behavior in a society. It is a more general part of the individual’s social environment in which individual or group set a normative standard of comparison. It is with this normative standard that a group compares their position with other group in a system. Following R. K. Merton and Alice Kitt’s argument W. C. Runciman developed the concept in relation to reference and problems of inequalities and social justice. In this approach, relative deprivation is made the basis of a study of the structural conditions and motivational forces, which give rise to a
movement. Thus, it defines social movement a mobilization effort as occurring through emulation and positive reference group behavior.

As against this approach, Karl Marx and D. F. Aberle developed the concept of relative deprivation emphasizing the element of conflict. Karl Marx and Engels recognized that dissatisfaction with the status quo cannot be determined by absolute conditions but by relative expectations. D. F. Aberle defining relative deprivation as a negative discrepancy between legitimate expectations and actuality treated it as the core of motivational force for initiating a movement by relatively deprived group. He analysed relative deprivations in terms of material possession, status, behaviours and worth.

T. R. Gurr introduced several classifications in the concept of relative deprivation. He considered relative deprivation not only in terms of expectations but in relation to perceived capabilities. He defined relative deprivation as a gap between expectations and perceived capabilities involving three general sets of values that is economic conditions, political powers and social status. The gap according to him (T. R. Gurr) may be caused due to three conditions.

a) Detrimental Deprivation: Expectations remain stable but capabilities decline.

b) Progressive Deprivation: Expectations rise but capabilities decline, and

c) Aspirational Deprivation: Expectations rise while capabilities remain the same.

However, only this condition of relative deprivation does not necessarily provide the adequate condition for raising social movement. The Structural conditions of relative deprivation provide only the necessary conditions. Sufficient conditions are provided by the perception of a situation and by the estimate of capabilities by certain leader that they can do something to cure the situation.
In analyzing the condition of the deprivation one should identify the source of deprivation also. There are various sources of deprivation in all systems resulting to a feeling of ‘relative’ or ‘absolute’ deprivation among a section of people. But according to T. K. Oommen, the most important source of deprivation, which may lead to movement, is the group’s distance (both physical and mental) from the centre of the system. In so far as they occupy peripheral position in the system, they may feel the deprivation in terms of wealth, power or privilege or all of them. In this condition the particular movement is likely to be an effort on the part of the group to lessen their deprivation. Therefore, social movements are perhaps the main instruments through which the deprived categories demonstrate their power. They create organization by uniting with an ideology to challenge the evils and redress grievances. However, the sources of deprivation may not be necessarily the result of their absolute condition and their material condition.

According to M. S. A. Rao, the main problem of the relative deprivation theory is that in considering areas of deprivation these theories hardly include religion. Therefore, in order to understand the cause of the present Sanamahi movement among the Meities it is necessary to note that deprivation in the religious sphere are as important as those in the sphere of economics, education and politics (http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Introduction_to_Sociology/Social_Movements).

Abusaleh Shariff used the concept of relative deprivation in his paper ‘Relative Economic and Social Deprivation of Indian Muslims’ to show the relative position of Muslims as a religious category compared with other exclusive caste and religious categories in India. Muslims are about as marginalized as are the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Some 50% of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population are below the poverty line. The corresponding figure for the Muslims is
43%, while that for Hindus excluding the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is 32%. On an average, the per capita income of Muslims is 11% less than that of the national average. While one-fifth of Hindus living in rural areas own five acres of land or more, the corresponding figure for rural Muslims is one-tenth. The work participation rate among the Muslims is also the least, both for males and females, suggesting a relatively higher unemployment rate as compared to other communities defined by religion. Access to selected basic needs for Muslims as well as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is also below the national average.

The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes are the least literate communities in India, Shariff states, followed by the Muslims. Only about 40% of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and 50% of Muslims are literate, compared to the all-India average of about 54%. The corresponding figure for the Hindus, excluding the SC and the ST is 60%. School enrolment rates among the Muslims, SC and ST are around 62%, as compared with about 72% of India as a whole and 77% for Hindus other than SC and ST (Shariff 1998: 16-34).

In this background, the researcher has used the concept of deprivation in similar way used by Abusaleh Shariff in the present study. This should be understood within the framework of contemporary theories of low socio-economic status of Muslims that religion is an important factor for relative deprivation. Many low caste people have converted into Islam in India due to variety of reasons. However, despite conversion their relative deprivation continues.