Abstract

The present research work entitled *Educational Development of Muslims in Karnataka* mainly focuses on the development of education (religious and modern) among Muslims in Karnataka region during 20th century C.E.

Today, Muslims constitute near about 13 percent or nearly 7 million in the state. Centuries old pre-Islamic Indo-Arab trade networks facilitated the spread of Islam in a peaceful and gradual way throughout the coastal areas of Karnataka. The communities which developed here became known as *Bawars and Nawayas*. Majority of the Muslims who live in the other parts of Karnataka came here when the region was ruled by the Muslims. They are concentrated in urban areas – as much as fifty nine percent as against thirty four percent of the state urban population. Fifty nine percent of the Muslim population, being urban, is quite noticeable in cities such as Bangalore, Mysore, Hubli, Dharwar, Chikamagalur, Raichur, Gulbarga, Bidar, Bijapur, Shimoga, Kolar, Tumkur etc. However, the rural Muslims seem to be converts from local OBC (Other Backward Class) castes. Majority of Muslims follow traditional occupations such as silk reeling and twisting, cotton carding (*Nadaf*), tailoring (*Darzi*), flower selling (*Phuleria, Phoolnali*), chipping of stone tools such as grinding stones (*Takara*), roof-laying (*Chapparband*), meat related business (*Kasai*) etc. and many of them work as merchant of vegetables; flowers, fruits, egg, chicken, fish and meat. A section of the Muslims is also engaged in supporting the peasantry and dealing with agricultural produce and livestock.

Muslims of Karnataka have a significant position in the Indian history and were and are also characterized as a unique and historical society whose culture, literature, tradition, social ethos and politics etc. got moulded with the passage of time. Nine percent of the Muslim population in Karnataka speaks Urdu as their mother tongue. The remaining three percentage Muslims speak variety of languages like Kannada, *Bawar, Nawayar*, Malayalam, Tamil, and Hindi etc. However, the spoken Urdu in Karnataka is of *Dakhini* origin with an accent which is quite distinct from the one spoken in Hyderabad and other parts of the country.

Despite being a historic, vibrant and dynamic community, academic attentions on Muslims of the Karnataka are very minimal. Several studies have appeared till date focusing on the historical, socio-cultural and political aspects of Muslims in Karnataka and pertaining to some limited parameters and related issues like *Bawar Muslims, Nawayar Muslims, Muslim Dynasties*, arts, architecture etc.
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There is hardly any painstaking effort unfolding the educational development of Muslims in the region yet. Traditional education in Karnataka, often ignored and disregarded in discussions about the state of traditional education in India, definitely deserves to be addressed, scrutinized more closely in future by both researchers and scholars. Over the last four decades the Muslim community in Karnataka showed significant progress in the field of modern education but at the same time higher education is an area of high concern. In this context, the present work, therefore, seeks on the one side to investigate and study the educational (religious and modern) development of Muslims in Karnataka and on the other side endeavours to fill the void at the academic level.

The sources for this work are mostly primary in nature. The original sources included manuscripts and published works available in different libraries and academic centers especially of the Aligarh Muslim University and Karnataka. Besides utilizing the published and unpublished works, the relevant material was also collected through interviewing many scholars and personal visit of the institutions of Karnataka. In addition to these Karnataka Muslim Millat Pages, Encyclopedias, Gazetteers, Periodicals, News Papers, Magazines, Latest Census Reports, and Autobiographies have also been used.

In the first four chapters, mentioning the methodology, historical cum theoretical methodology is employed while imparting introductory information. The remaining chapters or second part of the research work, deal with the main subject under study. This part is predominantly a result of the surveys thus carried in the various parts of the region concerned; especially on the development of traditional and modern education vis-à-vis analyzing its different aspects from past to present times.

The scheme of the thesis is such that it includes an introduction and six chapters followed by conclusion and bibliography. The titles of the chapters are as follows:

1. Advent and Spread of Islam in Karnataka
2. Socio-Cultural Conditions of Muslims in Karnataka
3. Development of Education in India during Muslim Rule
4. Development of Education in Karnataka under Muslim Rulers
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5. Development of Traditional Education in Modern Karnataka
6. The Muslims of Karnataka and Development of Modern Education

The first chapter traces the historical roots of the advent and spread of Islam in Karnataka. It also highlights, in a detailed manner, the relations of Arabs with the people of Karnataka in pre-Islamic period. Moreover, the opening chapter deals with a general survey on the advent and spread of Islam in Karnataka and proceeds to the pivotal instances and circumstances which led to the formation of the Muslim society. Thus, it is established that before the arrival of Muslim army into Karnataka, Muslims had established their settlements in the important centres of trade and had entered into relationship with the people of Karnataka. Islam entered and spread within the spans of the coastal areas of India including Karnataka, through the continuous efforts of traders and Muslim proselytizers etc.

The second chapter of the study traces the socio-cultural conditions of Muslims in Karnataka. Socio-cultural condition of a region is generally considered an indicator of measuring the development level of any community. Karnataka is today experiencing unprecedented transformations of its people at socio-economic and cultural levels. Muslims of Karnataka have their own socio-religious and cultural identity in the state.

The traditional culture of Karnataka produced a significant impact and various elements of this culture were incorporated in the cultural life of the Muslims. Hence, this chapter, at large, traces the socio-cultural conditions of Muslims in Karnataka. The collective efforts and struggle of the Karnataka Muslims to safeguard their social status and cultural identity in the 20th century has also been discussed in this chapter. Moreover, the chapter also examines the influence of the local and non-Muslim cultures and customs on the Muslim population besides highlighting the impact of colonial encroachment upon the Muslims and their reaction towards the same.

The aim of the third chapter is to highlight some of the hitherto less known aspects of the development of educational system in medieval India. In this chapter an attempt has been made to discuss the important aspects of the Muslim Educational System during this period. Some of the very important subjects/ issues have been discussed in this chapter. It was attempted, for the convenience, to spot out the
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devolution of the medieval educational curriculum by dividing the concerned issue into three periods. In the first period- that of the Sultanate and its successor states in the provinces until 1500 C.E. - the subject taught were Tafsir (Quranic exegesis) Hadith (traditions of the Prophet SAW), Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence) and its Usul (principles), theology, grammar, rhetoric and logic. The chief emphasis was on the study of the principles of jurisprudence and their application. The second period ranges from the reign of Sikandar Lodhi (1488-1517 C.E.) to the early period of the reign of Akbar (1556-1605 C.E.), from 1500 to 1575 C.E. This is the phase of growing emphasis on the medieval rational sciences, logic, mathematics, medicine and astronomy. The third phase begins with age of Akbar, when there was even greater emphasis on rationalism, though this process was revived to some extent under Aurangzeb (1658-1707 C.E.). Aurangzeb reversed Akbar’s policies of education. But he took some innovative steps in order to make education more effective. He abolished capital punishment, improved curriculum and founded some new Madaris. The famous curriculum Dars-i-Nizami was evolved during his reign and is named after Mulla Nizamuddin of Sibali (d. 1748), a scholar of unique and proficient teaching abilities.

Thus, this chapter throws light on the milestones that were pivotal in the evolutionary process of education during the Muslim rule in Indian sub-continent. Besides, it also brings forth the visionary role of Muslim rulers, ministers and scholars to institute the religious and academic institutions.

The fourth chapter is devoted fully to the educational development under the Muslim rule in Karnataka. The current chapter, therefore, touches some of the hitherto less known aspects (albeit highly significant) of the development of educational system in Muslim Karnataka from the establishment of Bahmani Kingdom in Karnataka in the 14th century C.E. up to the downfall of Tipu Sultan in the last of the 18th century C.E., i.e. before the British rule.

Muslim rulers in Karnataka have remarkably contributed to flourishing of the Islamic learning, arts, crafts, and Urdu language and literature. None of these rulers displayed an inclination towards traditional methods of recording events, such as palm books and stone inscriptions, but they had court historians who recorded important events of the reigns of their respective patrons. Notwithstanding a certain degree of bias and exaggeration, the books of the historians provide some valuable information.
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Travelers' accounts provide additional glimpses into the educational system prevalent among Muslims in Karnataka. With the emergence of Muslims in Karnataka, the language of Karnataka got considerably influenced by Arabic, Persian and Urdu, whose words related to diverse aspects of life started to be used in the day to day affairs and in the literature as well as. Many words used for dress and food entered Kannada through these Languages.

In brief, the Muslim rulers like Bahmani Sultans (1347-1538 C.E.), then, the Adil Shahis of Bijapur (1489-1686 C.E.), the Barid Shahis of Bidar (1487-1619 C.E.), the Mughals (1657-1757 C.E.), and finally, Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan (1761-1799 C.E.) ruled Karnataka and contributed extensively in different fields as per their capacity. Muslim kings of Karnataka established Makatib, Madaris and other institutions including libraries in the various parts of their dominions and sought to supplement their educational work by liberally patronizing learned men.

The fifth chapter, amidst containing historical overview of traditional education among Muslims in Karnataka, examines the development of Madrasah system and its curriculum. Although the history of traditional education system goes back to the early period of spread of Islam in the coastal area of Karnataka (in the last part of 7th century C.E.), but it developed fully in later periods, on the same lines as that of North India. Traditional education at primary level was mainly provided through Makatib which were mostly attached to the Masajid. With the fall of Srirangapatna in 1799 C.E., the Muslims in Karnataka had to face many formidable changes along with general animosity of the British rulers. They had to counter the missionary activities of the Christian missionaries and the Ulama together with the masses rose to the occasion and established a series of Madaris in the state. A large number of Madaris were set up in the later half of the 20th century.

In this context this chapter provides historical overview on traditional education among Muslims and examines the development of Madrasah system and its curriculum. The discussion primarily focuses on the mode of curriculum, style of instruction, and its specific roles played in the promotion of Arabic and Islamic Studies in India as well as in Karnataka. The present chapter also throws light on the mile stones, pivotal instances in the evolutionary process of Madrasah education as parallel to the progress of modern education in Indian sub-continent. It also discusses the visionary role of Muslim organizations and scholars in the establishment of major
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Madaris. The overall information validates a comprehensive account on the nature and development of traditional education during the last century. Moreover, it also highlights the circumstances that led to the installation of religious and academic institutions like Darses, Makatib, and Madaris in the coastal area of Karnataka.

The sixth chapter highlights the development of modern education among Muslims in Karnataka. British educational policies and its impact upon Muslims have been discussed in this chapter. The steps and measures of the Government of Karnataka enacted at different times have also been reviewed in this regard. It also discusses the visionary role of Muslim educational organizations and scholars in the establishment of major institutions of modern education. The study under this chapter gives a comprehensive account of the nature, characteristics, trends, milestones, dimensions and development of modern education during the last century.

In this chapter the findings of the study taking into consideration the contemporary realities, problems and prospects of the Muslim Community in Karnataka have been critically analyzed. Moreover, useful information are furnished about the educational achievements of the Muslim community of Karnataka particularly the role of Educational Conferences, Muslim leaders and Muslim organizations in the promotion of dynamism, academism and creativism.

In the overall findings traditional education system having commenced in Karnataka with the advent of Islam, witnessed gradual stages of development in diverse cultural settings with religious and political sponsorship. The traditional educational institutions mainly included Makatib and Madaris and that flourish even in modern Karnataka. The study reveals that the Madaris could not have a system of education completely devoid of religious courses and the Muslim educational system had never been static or monolithic. Changes in pattern and character always accompanied the developmental stages of the traditional system of education in Karnataka.

Having outlined both the history of traditional education in Karnataka and current state of affairs, it is safe to assess the influence of different traditional educational models on the development of Islamic education in Karnataka. Regarding models derived from north Indian Madaris education, it may be said that their impact has been gradual but thorough. However, there has not been any significant change or
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devlopment during the modern period as still the 400 year old Dars-i-Nizami is sustained as the curriculum of the Madarisi. This arm of the Muslim community offsets the modernization of the community. Modernization of Madarisi syllabus should therefore be a priority if inclusion is on the agenda. Muslims must equip themselves with modern education to keep pace with rapidly changing times, even while pursuing religious studies. Muslim youth need to achieve modern education along with it. In contrast to the gradual process of the introduction of the Dars-i-Nizami, the impact of secular education on Karnataka’s Madarisi has been much more visible. As Madrasah degrees do not offer graduates a wide range of job opportunities, degrees in subjects like engineering, medicine etc. are actually preferred by many Muslims.

Also, though the primary traditional education or Maktab system of coastal Karnataka serves as a role model for whole country, yet there is a grave paucity of a highly standardized higher educational system as compared to other parts of the India. Most of the scholars or graduates of Madarisi have completed their higher courses from the elegant seminars outside Karnataka like Darul Ulum Deoband, Nadwatul Ulama Lucknow, Darul Ulum Nizamiyah Hyderabad etc. There is also a dire need of establishing a State Madrasah Board that could facilitate in developing the traditional education system in the contemporary challenging times. Traditional education in Karnataka, often ignored and disregarded in discussions about the state of traditional education in India, definitely deserves to be addressed, scrutinized more closely in future by both researchers and scholars.

Over last four decades the Muslim community in Karnataka has shown significant progress with respect to different aspects of life. Literacy has improved but higher education is still a deficient area. The state is witnessing constant increase in the Effective Literacy Rate (percentage of total number of literates among the population aged 7 years above) over the past decades. Karnataka holds a better position compared to other states of India in terms of literacy, decadal growth of population, and a few other matters as per the census of 2001-2011.

However, there remain several unattended issues in modern education among Muslims in Karnataka. These may be listed as the following:
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Muslims have undoubtedly progressed in modern education, yet the quality of the education that Muslims receive perceives series lacunae. The professional profile of the Muslims is heavily lopsided. All bright students opt for medicine, engineering and management except for few who choose humanities and other subjects. The community therefore suffers a paucity of thinkers, administrators, economists, scientists, political as well as social scientists, lawyers, journalists, educators etc. The community has not addressed the issue of adequate representation in government jobs which is the key to empowerment. Government Urdu schools have almost seven lakh Muslim students. But the poor quality of education does not serve the cause.

Today there are a lot of Muslims in Karnataka managing hundreds of schools and colleges. Apart from this there are several such institutions run by the state government. Despite the sustained efforts of organizations like CMA (Central Muslim Association), Al-Ameen, Hasnath Education Society, Muslim Education Institutions’ Federation (MEIF), Allama Iqbal Educational Society, Anjuman-e-Hami-Muslimeen, Anjuman-e-Islam, Jamiatul Falah and others the dropout rate in Muslims could not be contained. The country has highest number of child labour and Muslims figure more than others. Sheer poverty compels Muslim children to give up school to supplement the family income. Apart from poverty, lack of vision in parents, poor standard of government schools and expensive private schools also contribute to the drop-out rates. The biggest problem faced by Muslims is the poor progress made in the field of education. The percentage of educated Muslims is not different from what it was a decade before. Moreover quantitatively the number appears to be little more but quality wise they stand far behind others.