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Karnataka is a state located to the south of Goa and Maharashtra, to the west of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, to the north west of Tamil Nadu, and to the north of Kerala. The present geographical structure of Karnataka came into being as a result of State reorganizations on 1st November 1973 by combining nine districts of old Mysore State, two districts of Madras Presidency, four districts from Bombay Presidency, three districts from Nizam’s Hyderabad State and the whole of Koorg. The former name of the state was Mysore and was renamed Karnataka in 1973. As per the Census report of 2011, the state constitutes 30 districts, 176 Sub-districts (Taluks), 29,340 Villages (including 1943 Un-habilited villages), 347 Towns (including 127 Census Towns and 220 Statutory Towns) and the total population of it has reached to 6,10,95,297, out of which 3,09,66,657, are males and 3,01,28,640 are females. In population size among all the States and Union Territories, 5.05 percent of the total population of India lives in Karnataka. According to the population ratio, Karnataka stands at 9th position. Among the districts within the State, Bangalore is the most populated district with 96,21,551 persons and accounts for 15.75 percent of the State’s total population while Kodagu with a population share of 0.09 percent is the least populated district. Except, Bangalore Rural (9,90,923), and Kodagu (5,54,519), all the remaining 28 districts have population higher than one million.

Today, Muslims constitute 12.2 per cent or nearly 7 million in the state. They are concentrated in urban areas – as much as 59% as against 34% of the state urban population. Nearly 59 percent of the Muslim population is urban and is quite noticeable in cities such as Bangalore, Mysore, Mangalore, Hubli, Dharwar, Chikmagalur, Raichur, Gulbarga, Bidar, Bijapur, Shimoga, Kolar, Bhatkal, Tumkur etc. 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, Beary, Nayayati, 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.

Majority of Muslims who live in the urban centres of Karnataka came here during the Muslim rule. However, the rural Muslims seem to be converts from local OBC (Other Backward Class) castes and are engaged in peasantry and allied professions. Majority of Muslims have traditional occupations such as silk reeling and twisting, cotton carding (Nadaf), tailoring (Darzi), flower selling (Phulera,
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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 are also engaged in supporting the peasantry and dealing with agricultural produce and livestock.

While Muslims can be found in all districts of Karnataka but they have a stronger presence in:

a. Northern Karnataka (especially in the area formerly ruled by the Princely State of Hyderabad) such as Bidar, Gulbarga, Bijapur, Raichur and Dharwad.

b. The coastal areas of Karnataka and the districts bordering Kerala such as Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Uttara Kannada and Kodagu where Beary, Mappila and Nawayati Muslim presence is strong.

c. The cities like Bangalore, Mysore and Mangalore.

Muslims of Karnataka have a significant position and are also characterized as a unique and historical society whose culture, literature, tradition, social ethos and politics etc. have been moulded through the passage of time. Though several studies have appeared up to date focusing on their historical, socio-cultural and political aspects and pertaining to some limited parameters and related issues like Beary Muslims, Nawayati Muslims, Muslim Dynasties, arts, architecture etc. yet, there is hardly any painstaking effort unfolding the educational development of Muslims in the region yet.

Literature Review

Over the past century several efforts have been made at an academic level to highlight the development of education in the different parts of India. Some of the works include:

Traditional Education among Muslims by Mohammad Akhlaq Ahmad, (Delhi: B R Publishing Corporation, 1985), attempts to understand the development of Muslim education in India in its historical perspective, the changes through which it has passed, first during the British period and then in independent India.
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System of Islamic Education: Tradition and Modernisation by Abdul Qadir, (New Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House, 2012), tries to synthesize the limited knowledge that exists on this subject. It does not claim to present a complete and comprehensive understanding of Islamic education and various types of institutions, which operate in certain contexts in different countries.

Fountains of Religious Education in Ancient India by Dr. Rahi Fidai, (Bangalore: Iqra Publications, 2009), attempts to explain the history of Madrasah education in India as well as in Karnataka.

Bangalore Muslims' War on Illiteracy (Socio - Historical Perspective) by Samiulla Abbasi (Bangalore: Bookware, 2012). This book put forth before us an exhaustive history of Bangalore Muslims and their war on illiteracy.

Karnataka Muslims and Electoral Politics by Quazi Arshad Ali (Bangalore: Bookware, 2012), is an attempt to explain the role of Karnataka Muslims and their participation in electoral politics.

The Bearys of Tulu Nadu by B. M. Ichlangod, (Mangalore: Karnataka Beary Sahithya Academy, 2011), gives an exhaustive history of Beary community of Karnataka.

Muslims in Dakshina Kannada by Abdul Wahab Doddamane, (Green Words Publications, 1993), is an attempt to understand the role of Muslims in the cultural evolution of Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka.

Some research articles also address the issue like, the educational condition of Muslim in post-Independence era in Karnataka. These include, Maqbool Ahmad Siraj, “Muslim Education in Karnataka: Access, Equity, and Inclusion”, in: Abdul Waheed (Ed.), Minority Education in India: Issues of Access, Equity and Inclusion (New Delhi: Serials Publications, 2010) and Mohammed Ali Shariff, “Strengthening the base: An analysis of school education of Muslims in Karnataka”.

Over the past decades a number of scholars have produced different research works on Karnataka Muslims and discussed their struggle for social justice and educational development some of which being notable are mentioned above. 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
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still a deficient area. The present work seeks to investigate and study the educational development of Muslims in Karnataka.

Importance of Study

Despite being a historic, vibrant and dynamic community, academic attentions on Muslims of the coastal Karnataka are very minimal. Several studies, as mentioned above, 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 Beary Muslims, Nawangati Muslims, Muslim Dynasties, arts, architecture etc. There is hardly any painstaking effort unfolding the educational development of Muslims in the region yet. No serious attempt has been made so far to discuss the development traditional and modern education in Karnataka. Therefore, this work as an academic endeavour tries to fill this gap. 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. 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.

In this context, the present study Educational Development of Muslims in Karnataka is a humble attempt to fill this gap. It may be pointed out that this research work mainly gives focus on the development of education (religious as well as modern) among Muslims of medieval and modern period. To the best of my knowledge there has been no systematic and comprehensive study on this important topic carried out so far. Therefore, the scope of the present study is very much clear and wide enough. It would help to upgrade and update the development of education in modern times as a debut effort.

Sources

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
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collected through interviews of 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 been used.

Methodology

Regarding the methodology applied in the study, in the first four chapters, the method of Historical and Theoretical survey is used imparting introductory information. The remaining chapters or second part of the research work, deal with the main subject under study. This part carries a field study on the development of traditional and modern education, analyzing its different aspects from past to present times. Thus, a historical, analytical and experimental methodology has been employed while dealing with the research problem.

Design of the Study

The thesis 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
5. Development of Traditional Education in Modern Karnataka
6. The Muslims of Karnataka and Development of Modern Education

The first chapter gives the historical survey of the advent and spread of Islam in South India, particularly Karnataka and proceeds to the pivotal instances and circumstances which led to the formation of the Muslim society. This chapter discusses in detail the Indo-Arab relations during pre-Islamic period that continued until 16th century. It provides a proper context for understanding the educational developments that took place in Karnataka over its long chequered history.

The second chapter gives the critical account of 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 is the
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main the focus here. This chapter also examines the influence of the local and non-Muslim cultures and customs on the Muslim population besides examining the impact of colonial encroachment upon the Muslims and their reaction towards the same.

The third chapter contains study of the evolutionary process of education during the Muslim rule in Indian sub-continent. It also discusses the visionary role of Muslim rulers, nobles and scholars to institutionalize the religious and academic sectors.

The fourth chapter aims to elucidate some of the hitherto less known aspects of the development of educational system in medieval Karnataka. The study is mainly related to the period from the establishment of Bahmani Kingdom in Karnataka in the middle of the 14th century C.E. up to the downfall of Tipu Sultan in 1799 C. E. (before the British rule).

The fifth chapter contains historical overview of traditional education among Muslims of Karnataka and examines the development of traditional education (Maktab and Madrasah system). The discussion primarily focuses on the curriculum, method of teaching and medium of instruction, and also traces the role of different agencies in the promotion Islamic Studies in Karnataka. Bringing to home the visionary role of Muslim organizations and scholars in the establishment of major traditional educational institutions, this part highlights the different stages of development of traditional education as parallel to the progress of modern education in Indian sub-continent. The overall information validates a comprehensive account of the nature and development of traditional education during the last century. Moreover, it highlights the circumstances that led to the installation of religious and academic institutions like Dars system, Maktab, and Madaris in the coastal area of Karnataka.

The sixth chapter is an attempt is made to discuss and evaluate the development of modern education among Muslims in Karnataka. British educational policies and its impact upon Muslims and the steps by the Government of Karnataka (20th century) in time to time in the development of modern education have also been examined in this regard. It also shows the significant role of Muslim educational organizations and scholars in the establishment of major institutions of modern education. The study gives a comprehensive account of the nature, characteristics,
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trends, milestones, dimensions, genesis and development of modern education during the last century.

The concluding part of the research work includes the overall findings of the study, besides some research oriented suggestions regarding the diverse aspects of Karnataka Muslim communities. Finally, the bibliography gives the necessary information about the sources used directly or indirectly in the preparation of this thesis.