Introduction
INTRODUCTION

The extent of development and progress in education and learning is a prerequisite for understanding the spirit of the age. The concept of history does not rotate and revolve round the pomp and splendour of the court alone but it seeks to study man in relation to his environment, irrespective of any social distinction. All men are more or less a product of their environment and their literary and cultural efforts can be understood only with reference to that milieu.

Education and learning in India has a long historical tradition. The British system of education introduced by the Wood’s Despatch of 1854 brought to us new and modern types of secondary schools and other institutions of learning. Till that time, the indigenous system of education in India, both Hindu and Muslim, continued to prevail in different regions. Any student of history or layman would be interested in knowing what this indigenous system of education was, what were its various aspects and in what historical periods they existed and functioned in India. The Sultanate period left behind a rich legacy in the fields of administration, art and architecture etc. Their system of education and learning also created a profound influence and impact on the contemporary society. Infact, the system of education and the traditions
of learning set by the period under review are intrinsic to Muslim education. Hence the study of Muslim education and learning under the Delhi Sultan’s especially from the period of Qutbuddin Aibek 1206 A.D. to Timur’s invasion 1398 A.D. assumes immense importance.

The activities of the Sultans were not merely confined to conquests, battles and wars but they took great interest in the promotion of learning. The Sultanate covered a wide range of activities but this dissertation is confined only to the description and discussion to the aspect of Muslim education and learning only and attempts to present detailed account and analysis of the same.

The Sultans were highly cultured and some of the rulers and members of the aristocracy possessed great literary skill and abilities. They took keen interest in educational and cultural activities. Learned scholars and students were patronized and given every possible assistance when required, institutions of higher learning and centres of learning were established. But there was also a gamut of scholars whose deep love for learning and personal efforts and hard work brought about tremendous progress and development in the field of Muslim education and learning.

Upto the 11th century Arabic was the language of all historical works and usually the Arab method of writing history was followed. The Arab historian does not confine history to the camp and court alone. So
instead of arrangement of historical events according to the successive reigns of various kings, he classified them year by year. The spirit of Persian Renaissance brought about a great change in Muslim historiography. The Arabic language was given up and with it also the Arab method of writing history.

Towards the beginning of the thirteenth century, historical works were written in Persian in all countries from India to Asia Minor under the influence of Persian culture. Almost all histories relating to our period have been planned on the Persian model and study the social scenario from the foot of the royal throne.

All the Ghaznavides histories reflect the spirit of Persian renaissance. When the Sultanate of Delhi was established, Persian tradition was a dominant factor in political life. Persianization was the prevailing trend. Hasan Nizami, Fakhr-i-Mudabbir and Minhaj all the three historians of early medieval India, followed the Iranian traditions of historiography. No doubt these works ignore all references to scholars, saints, poets, artists, etc. but they provide some details of the personal education of the early Sultans i.e. Qutubuddin Aibek, Iltutmish, infact the rulers of the slave dynasty and their personal education and contribution, in have been dealt in this thesis. A review of the source material related to the theme has been discussed in detail at the end of this introduction.
OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

This dissertation proposes to study the following aspects and questions:

a. After the establishment of the Muslim rule in India in the 12\textsuperscript{th} century, was the indigenous system of education accepted or did the rulers introduce their own educational system in India?

b. The aims and objectives of Muslim education, whether education was restricted and related only to religion and religious themes, and if so why? 

c. Despite the absence of a separate and specific administrative department of education, was the considerable patronage given for this purpose?

d. Did only the elite class acquire education, whether education was open and accessible to all the people?

e. This dissertation also proposes to study the institutions through which education was imparted, to know what was the position of the teacher, the subjects of study, the curriculum and the methods adopted for teaching and learning.

f. One of the aims is also to examine whether teaching was commercialized and were examinations conducted in a structured manner.
Another purpose is to understand whether education and learning during the period under review had a positive impact on the socio-cultural status of the Indian sub-continent.

Thus an attempt has been made in the following pages to present a brief account of some aspects of Muslim education and learning from the time of Sultan Qutb-u’d-din Aibek (1206 A.D.) to Timur’s invasion (1398 A.D.). The period thus covers almost two centuries of the Sultanate rule in this country.

A special emphasis has been laid in the work, on the salient features of educational changes and adjustments which took place in Medieval India chiefly as a result of the Islamic impact on Indian life and thought. The repetition of well known facts has as far as possible been avoided, but when for the sake of continuity of the narrative it seemed essential to refer to them, this has been done with great brevity.

Due caution however, has been taken not to leave out anything of real importance, in the present thesis, care has been taken to utilize all the original source material and published works within our reach.

In selecting and discussing the various topics in this work, their relative importance has been taken into full consideration. Some of the important aspects of contemporary education and learning have been treated very briefly owing to the paucity of relevant data, Moreover, the
female segment of society have not been totally ignored but due to the scarcity of the relevant material it has been discussed in brief. The progress in education in provincial dynasty has also not been neglected. This dissertation has been divided into six chapters:

CHAPTER-I

EVOLUTION OF MUSLIM EDUCATION

This chapter traces the evolution of Muslim education and the concept of education in Islam. Muslim education has been discussed in detail, its definition, its teaching method, the four schools of thought i.e. the Hanafi and Sha‘fai, Maliki and Hanbali and their approach towards education. The development of Muslim education during the period of the Prophet (PBUH) the period of pious caliphate (the Khulafa-i-Rashidin), the Ommayads and Abbasids has been analysed to show that the traditions of Muslim education as they had developed under the Abbasids of Baghdad were the nucleus of the Muslim educational system in India. They were transplanted in India by the literati and scholars of Muslim lands after the Mongols had overrun them. Within a century of its foundation, the Sultanate of Delhi came to occupy an unrivalled place in the sphere of Muslim education.
CHAPTER – II

AGENCIES OF MUSLIM EDUCATION

This chapter will deal with the types of Muslim educational institutions, the aim and objects of Muslim education. The institutions through which Muslim education was provided such as the maktab which functioned as a primary school, the khānqāh which was a centre of education of the Muslim mystics, the madrasa which functioned as a college or an institution for the provision of higher learning has been discussed. Other than the madrasahs there were also various other agencies through which higher learning was imparted such as the individual centres of education, academic assemblies, the sufi majlis have been explained in detail. Other than the religious sciences there was also provision for the study of rational sciences such astronomy, medicine and mechanical and technical education. The personal study and research of scholars also played a pivotal role, some of them had their libraries. In the absence of a printing press, there was also a network of nassakh and warrāq copyists and calligraphists people who played a crucial role in compiling books for the purpose of study.
CHAPTER-III

SYLLABUS OF MUSLIM EDUCATION AND LEARNING

The topic of syllabus or curriculum has always occupied an important position in the arrangement of teaching of maktabs and madrasahs and other agencies of learning. The stages of education have been described, a review of subjects taught in the madrasahs individual and private centres of education, instruction in the rational sciences, forms of teaching, selection of books for study have been elucidated.

CHAPTER-IV

EDUCATION OF PRINCES: ROYAL EDUCATION

The personal education of the Sultans has been discussed in this chapter so as to show that special care was taken to provide excellent education to the princes. Other than the theoretical subjects of study including religious as well as secular subjects they were also trained in the military tactics and art of administration. It can be conjectured that the motive behind such a good arrangement for the provision of education to the princes was to imbibe in them such qualities of head and heart suitable to the future heirs to the throne of Delhi.
CHAPTER-V

ESTABLISHMENT OF MADRASAHS AND ROYAL PATRONAGE OF SCHOLARS

In this chapter an attempt has been made to discuss the establishment of new madrasahs and repair and renovation of old ones such as during Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq's time. The establishments of the Muizzi Madrasah, the Madrasa-i-Nāsiriyah, have been discussed. More details are provided in the case of madrasahs during Firozi period especially the Firozi madrasah has been discussed in detail because there is lot of information available in our sources on this madrasah. This is the only madrasah of which we also known the syllabus of study. Through the discussion of these madrasahs we get an idea of the personal efforts of the Sultans towards promotion of Muslim education and learning. We have also studied the efforts of the Sultans towards promotion of learning. The Sultans patronized scholars, poets, intellectuals etc. and their courts proved to be asylums for the intellectuals where they got an opportunity to discuss intellectual issues. Effort has been made in this chapter not only to discuss the personal predilections and learning of the Sultans but also the resulting development of scholarship, compilations of books especially related to history and religion. Thus the Sultans due to their personal interest provided a congenial atmosphere for the growth and development of education.
CHAPTER-VI

SCHOLARS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

A review of scholars and their subject of study, the books they studied has been made in this chapter so as to present an idea of the prevalent trend in Muslim education and learning. As already mentioned above the basic education provided was on the religious sciences, thus all scholars started their studies with the study of the Qurān in the maktabs, many of them were Hāfiz-i-Qurān, but there was no restriction on the study of rational sciences and many of these scholars later took to the study of rational sciences also.

In the conclusion an attempt has been made to assess the Muslim educational system and to analyse its merits and demerits. An attempt has also been made to trace the links with modern trends in Muslim education in contemporary India and explored the scope of the present study for future research.