Chapter - 2
CHAPTER-II

INSTITUTIONS OF MUSLIM EDUCATION

After the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, all varieties of cultural activities including education received encouragement. A new chapter in Islamic education in the country started with coming of the Sultanate. The Delhi Sultans themselves were lovers of education and learning and the royal court warmly received all who came from abroad in search of patronage.

During the Sultanate period there were separate institutions for imparting primary, secondary and higher education. There was no uniformity and the system differed from place to place. However, to some extent they were identical in their functions. Primary education for young boys and girls was imparted in Maktabs. These were generally attached to mosques and were run by the local people. Higher education was imparted in the Madrasahs. There were Khanqahs which were also run by pious Muslims. In these Khanqahs, students usually received secondary education in accordance with Islamic law and theology. As already discussed in the previous chapter that the faith in Islam is favourable to the pursuit of knowledge and education was held in high
esteem and through these institutions the Muslims, fulfilled their aim of spreading education far and wide which was considered a sacred duty.

AIM AND OBJECTS OF MUSLIM EDUCATION:

Muslim education imparted during the period under review, was not exactly the same as today. In those days, the chief aim of education was the purification of the soul, and it was regarded as “preparation for life and life after death.” Great attention was paid to each and every student in the educational institutions and no attempt was made at standardized mass production. The aim of receiving education was mainly religious and moral training. Shaikh Abdul Haq Muhaddith, in his famous work entitled *Akhbar-ul-Akhyar*, has recorded an interesting conversation among the students which throws ample light on the aims and objects of their studies. ‘Once the students were having a conversation among themselves and were asking each other about the aim and object of their studies. Some of them pretended and insincerely asserted that they were pursuing their studies to get an insight into divine mysteries, while others were truthful and straightforward and said that the object of their pursuing knowledge was to have some worldly gain in future when they asked me about my opinion, I said that my purpose in pursuing knowledge was to acquaint myself with the views of men of

erudition and wisdom of the past, know their intuitive method of resolving intellectual difficulties and realizing the reality.”

SIGNIFICANCE OF ‘ILM’ (KNOWLEDGE):

The significance of ‘Ilm’ is evident from the views of different scholars and Sufis of the Sultanate period. Shaikh Nasiruddin Chiragh’s views about knowledge (Ilm), as found in Khair-ul-Majalis, reveal his emphasis on combining knowledge with action and precept with example, said he,

"مقصود و علم الامنیت، علم است، علم سیست، علم تفریح نیست.

"Purpose of knowledge is action, it is not beauty in itself”,

Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya’s concept of ‘Ilm’ (knowledge) was very high and it transcended all material considerations. He considered it a noble endeavour, an end in itself, which could not be made a means of earning bread. One day a student came to see him and in course of conversation said that he often went around the court so that he could have affluent circumstances in life. The Shaikh did not like his purpose of acquiring knowledge. Similarly the Shaikh did not like poetic talent to be

2 Quoted by Husain Yusuf, Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1957, p.81.
wasted in writing panegyrics. He cited in his assembly a remark of Shaikh Jalal-u’d-din Tabrizi that the ambition of ulama is confined to getting either the job of a teacher, or a Qazi or a Sadr-i-Jahan “They aspire for nothing higher, but the darwesh’s have many stages of development.” The Shaikh once quoted Caliph Umar bin ‘Abdul Aziz that when a man acquires knowledge he becomes respectable in the eyes of the people, but when he acts upon it he becomes a dear one of God. He spoke in his assembly about persons whose salvation was due to their devotion of learning. With the instinct and temperament of a real and dedicated scholar, he used to say that a scholars pleasure in solving an academic problem was greater than that of a king in ruling over a territory. He repeatedly emphasized that one should be an ‘alim’ with the qualities of a darwesh ingrained in him. He referred to three such scholar saints of this type whom he had the privilege to meet, Maulana Shihabuddin, Maulana Ahmad Hafiz and Maulana Ahmad Kaitheli. Again and again he told his audience that ‘ilm’ (learning) without a heart full of cosmic emotion was vain and fruitless.

7 Ibid, pp.534-35.
8 Ibid, p.535
9 Ibid, p.536
10 Ibid, p.539
TYPE OF MUSLIM EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS:

The centres in which the Islamic sciences have been taught over the ages have been an integral aspect of Islamic civilization. From the beginning the mosque was at once the religious and social centre of the Islamic community as well as the centre for learning. To this day Quranic schools where the (fountainhead) of all Islamic sciences the Quran, is taught are connected with the local mosques in various quarters of Muslim cities. Three main institutions which played a key role in imparting knowledge to students were the Maktab, Madrasah, Khanqah.

MAKTAB:

The Maktab is a type of beginners or primary school. It provides a common educational basis for all who attended it. Since basic education (Tarbiyat) was usually imbued with a religious spirit, and it’s professed goal was to produce a true believer, much of it was closely connected with the mosque, whose officials also provided further instruction. The Quran was studied in all the Maktabs, with stress laid on memorizing and absolute accuracy. Some calligraphy and a smattering of arithmetic were taught in some Maktabs in Turkey and Iran where Islamic history and fragments of Persian poetry (of Sadi and Hafiz) were included from the

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thirteenth century. The Maktab’s curriculum laid a basic foundation for further study.\textsuperscript{12}

**MADRASAH:**

A Madrasah, is an Islamic college, literally a “place of instruction in religious law. In Medieval usage the term referred to an institution providing intermediate and advanced instruction in Islamic law and related subjects. As a rule the medieval Madrasah served male students who were past the elementary level and who intended to acquire credentials as ulama, religious scholars. A typical Islamic Madrasah contained rooms for students, a prayer hall, and classrooms for one or more professors, literary and sanitary facilities. It was usually attached to a mosque, and large mosque compliances, but it appeared as a separate institution in about the eleventh century and evolved from the informal schools that operated in mosques or teacher’s home. It was a dominant form of higher learning.

A Madrasah was legally a waqf, a charitable endowment. The founder would donate property, from whose proceeds the Madrasah was built and maintained. The founder’s instruction governed such matters as the legal school to which the professor would belong. The Madrasah

education was intended to teach the students how to deduce religious law from authoritative Islamic text. The students who went through the whole course were qualified to be judges and religious scholars, but some students dropped out earlier, becoming mosque *imams* or pursuing secular careers with the added prestige of religious education. The method of instruction was scholastic and dialectical, intense debate about the interpretation and difficulties of standard text books. Usually students committed *Quran* by rote and a fair amount of Arabic students studied Arabic, logic and the core subjects of Islamic religious sciences- *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence), Quranic interpretation, and the *hadith* (traditions of the Prophet) Better students went on to study *Usul-i-Fiqh* (Principles of jurisprudence) along with theology, philosophy mathematics, astronomy and sometimes medicine.¹³

But the *Madrasahs* were not the only institutions through which higher learning was imparted. During the Islamic period of Indian history the *Madrasahs* were generally considered more popular and important centres of higher learning.

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KHANQAH:

The ‘Khānqāh’ is a composite word of Persian origin meaning a building usually reserved for Muslim mystics belonging to a dervish order. It was a centre of worship as well as of teaching and evangelism. Shaikh AbuSa’id Abul Khair (ob.1048 A.D.) drew up a code of ten rules for the people in the Khanqahs. Since they were institutions meant both for leading the communal life (rooms for prayer corporate sessions) and also for sheltering individual mystics, often in significant numbers, all Khanqahs contained both type of accommodations (and frequently too various annexes and dependent buildings permitting self sufficiency). However there was a great gulf between the sumptuous buildings founded under official patronage and the Khanqahs. Early in the 14th century a traveller informed Shihabuddin-al- Umari in Damascus, “In Delhi and it’s surroundings are Khānqāh and hospices numbering two thousand.

INSTITUTIONS FOR PROVISION OF HIGHER LEARNING:

There is no doubt that the Muslim rulers took interest in the establishment and construction of Madrasahs. This trend initiated and

14 For details see: Nizami K.A., Studies in Medieval Indian History and Culture, Allahabad, Kitab Mahal, 1966, pp.80-96.
blossomed and developed and enlarged with the success of the Sultanate. In this the personal interest and popularity of the Sultans has played a vital role. Despite the examples of the large number of Madrasahs already mentioned above, and government’s interest to improve their standard, the main role in providing specialization in higher learning or attaining knowledge in a particular subject was played either by individual centres of education or personal majlis of the ulama. Moreover, libraries, academic assemblies Khanqahs and observatories also participated for the development of education and the promotion of learning.

**FOLLOWING ARE THE VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS THROUGH WHICH HIGHER LEARNING WAS IMPARTED:**

1. *Infradi Ta’limi Marakiz* (Individual Centres of Education).
3. *Majalis-i-Sufia* (Sufi’s Assemblies)
4. *Tajurbagahan-i-Mutali’ah-i-Ulum* (Observatories for the study of Sciences).
6. *Marakiz-i-Ta’lim-i-Takniki wa Zabani Ulum* (Centres for Technical and Vocational Education).
7. *Zati Mutaliah wa Tahqiq* (Personal Study and Research).
1. **INDIVIDUAL CENTRES OF EDUCATION** (*Infradi Ta’limi Marakiz)*:

The significance of the individual centres of education for higher learning can be realized by glancing at the details of the educational live's of the nobles and ulamas, where we find less information on their study through the Madrasahs but rather we find mention of the teachers through whom, they have acquired learning, studied a particular book under a particular teacher or acquired knowledge of a particular subject from a particular teacher or acquired knowledge of Hadith from one teacher, fiqh from somebody else or being a scholar of the rational sciences. Similarly in the case of those ulama who were busy imparting knowledge and learning we rarely find information on them teaching in any particular Madrasah, but rather there is evidence of, and more stress is laid on the fact that they were experts in teaching a particular book or a particular subject, particular composition or compilation or those places are mentioned where they used to teach, so far as the Madrasahs and educational centres are concerned, teaching of the subjects in vogue was maintained upto a common level which may be supposed to be upto the standard of maulvi.\(^{18}\)

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\(^{18}\) For details of the above discussion we can study the famous tazkiras of the ulama and Sufis such as the *Siyar-ul-Auliya*, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh* and the *Akhbar-ul-Akhyar*.  

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From this we can infer that more than the Madrasahs the teachers of specialized subjects and their individual centres were more popular than the Madrasahs for higher learning.

Further for specialization in any particular subject, an individual had to approach the teacher who had expertise in that subject or to attend his private classes, where sometimes the scholar joined the group which was already taking lessons from a teacher in a particular subject, which was a more popular and famous method which was followed not only in India but also the other Muslim countries of the world during the period under review. For example, Maulana Alauddin Inderpati was a Hafiz-i-Quran and such an excellent teacher of Quranic teaching that many associates of Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya memorized the Quran from him. Mir Khurd and his two uncles were also his students.\textsuperscript{19} The historians and Tazkira writers have narrated that sometimes in order to attain scholarship and knowledge in a particular subject, students had to go to particular specific places and sometimes had to travel to foreign countries also. Specifying this trend of acquiring education Bilgrami writes in his \textit{Ma'asir-u'l-Kiram}.

Seekers of knowledge went in large number, from city to city and everywhere they engaged themselves in receiving learning according to their choice.

One of the alims (ulama) of the Sultanate period Maulana Qasim Dehlavi (Jalaluddin Qasim) studied *Hidaya*, *Bazdawi*, *Kashshaf*, and *Masabih*. That means he acquired the knowledge of *Fiqh*, *Usul-i-Fiqh*, *Tafsir* and *Hadith*. Similarly another alim of this period, Abu Hafs Umr bin Ishaq Ghaznawi, other than the above books he also studied the *‘Awarif-ul-Ma’arif*. Moreover, some of the ulama studied *Lughat*, *Ma’ani*, and some others were interested in the rational sciences. The famous Sufi Shaikh, Nasiruddin Chiragh of Delhi studied *Hidaya* from Maulana Abdul Karim Sherwani and Maulana Fakhruddin Hanswi. He took lessons on *Usul-i-Fiqh* from Maulana Muin-u’d-din Kashani and for other books he studied under the guidance of Shaikh Shamsuddin

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Muhammad bin Yahya Awadhi.\textsuperscript{24} There are more evidences of this pattern of acquiring education, for instance in the case of Nizamuddin Auliya (his mentor Shaikh) who acquired knowledge of Fiqh (Jurisprudence) and Usul-i-Fiqh (Principles of Jurisprudence) from Maulana Alauddin Usuli. He studied Maqamat-i-Hariri (Arabic Adab) from Maulana Shams-ul-Mulk and Mashariq-ul-Anwar (Hadith) from Maulana Kamal-u’d-din Zahid and turned towards Shaikh Fariduddin Awadhi Shafi for the study of Tafsir Kashaf and for the study of Awarif-ul-Ma’arif (Tasawwuf) presented himself to Shaikh Fariduddin Ganj Shakar.\textsuperscript{25} Thus this method of teaching and learning was not limited to any particular subject but in the case of different arts and sciences this same method was followed. For the study of Tafsir, Hadith, Fiqh, Tasawwuf and along with these, in the field of rational sciences also in order to obtain specialization, this method was adopted which is evident from details of the lives of the scholars of rational sciences.

It is important to mention here that the ulama of different parts of Hindustan in order to obtain benefits in different fields of arts and sciences would not only travel within the country but also travelled abroad to derive benefits from the teachers of different subjects from

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different countries. This trend was prevalent during the Sultanate period. Specifically we find many examples of this trend in relation to *Ilm Hadith*. The eminent Muhaddith of Sultanate period Shaikh Hasan bin Saghani Lahori, (ob. 1352 A.D.) after obtaining the customary basic education in vogue in Lahore, travelled to Ghaznin, Iraq, Hejaz, and in these places specially obtained benefit from the *ulama-i-Hadith*. He studied the famous book on *Hadith*, the *Mashariq-ul-Anwar* when he returned several times to Hindustan and stayed for long durations, but in his later stage of life he was in Baghdad and he died there. Another *alim* of the same period Shaikh Muhammad bin Muhammad Saghani (ob.1378 A.D.) who was famous by the title of *Ziauddin Al-Hindi*, obtained his knowledge of *Hadith* in Qahra (Cairo) and Hejaz. In Madina other than benefiting from other *ulama*, he studied the *Muwatta* (*A collection of Hadith* compiled by Imam Malik, the founder of the Maliki school of jurisprudence), from the illustrious *Muhaddith*, Shaikh *Ali* bin Qutub Mukram. After completing his education he started teaching in Madina and then in Mecca and he died at this pious place. There were also such *ulama* and *fuzala* (scholars) who went to other Arab countries to acquire knowledge and learning from the Muhaddith there, but after

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accomplishing their objective returned back to Hindustan and started *tadris* (teaching) and *tasnif* (compiling scholarly works) and became busy in it. For instance Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariya Multani, (ob. 1267 A.D.) stayed nearly for eight years in Baghdad and for five years in Hejaz, and benefitted from several *ulama* of *Hadith* there amongst whom was the famous *Muhaddith* of Madina, Shaikh Kamal-u’d-din Muhammad Yamani.28 Another scholar, Shaikh Muhammad bin Yusuf Ali-ul-Kirani Al-Hindi, the famous Indian *alim* of the fourteenth century, studied *Hadith* from the teachers in Mecca. Amongst the names of his *Hadith* teachers we come across Razi-ul-Tabari, Zain-ul-Tabari, Jamal-ul-Mukri and Shaikh Jalil Maliki.29

Other than *Hadith* in the fields of other arts and sciences too the foreign *Ulama* played a pivotal role. The Indian scholars always took their guidance for acquiring knowledge and learning. For instance in the study of *Tasawwuf*, Shaikh Abu Hafiz Umar bin Ishaq Ghaznavi (ob.1361 A.D.) after completing his study of *Fiqh* and other sciences in Delhi paid a visit to ‘Kabah’ at Mecca and the tomb of the Prophet (PBUH) at Madina and during his stay there he attended the lectures of different *Ulama* and during that period heard the *Awarif-ul-Ma’arif* from Shaikh

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Khizr and Shaikh Rubat Sadda.\textsuperscript{30} Similarly, the famous Suhrawardi Sufi and \textit{alim} Makhdum Jahanian travelled to Hejaz and Egypt to complete his various stages of education while during his stay at Madina he studied the \textit{Awarif-ul Ma’arif} from Afif Alla Mutari.\textsuperscript{31} These are some examples of the scholars of the Sultanate period and from these we can infer that during the period under review, the trend was that for the study of specific subject one had to approach particular teachers or to acquire higher learning or specialization in a particular subject or field of study more than the \textit{Madrasahs}, the individual centres of scholars played a significant role. There are also instances of studying all subjects under one particular teacher, Maulana Qasim bin Umr Dehlavi Musannif, author of \textit{Lataif-ul-Tafsir} studied from one particular teacher, Jalal-ud-din Dehlavi, \textit{Tafsir, Hadith, Fiqh, Usul-i-Fiqh} etc. and completed his education under one teacher itself.\textsuperscript{32} Shaikh Alauddin Al-Alandi (ob.1375 A.D.) studied all the prevalent subjects of the course from Shaikh Muinuddin Imrani but turned towards Nasiruddin Chiragh Dehlavi for the study of mystical sciences.\textsuperscript{33} Similarly, Makhdum-i-Jahanian Syed Jalaluddin Bukhari of Uchch, from his initial to the last stage of

education, studied all the books of the curriculum from Qazi Bahauddin Uchchi. But in the field of mysticism Asifuddin Abdullah Mutri was his teacher. Perhaps one more reason for this kind of private teaching was that teaching was considered as means for the service to religion and popularizing of learning and education. Thus generally in the circles of the ulama there persisted deep interest in the process of teaching and learning. Amongst them those who were well-off and financially stable would willingly and satisfactorily conduct this service to mankind and religion successfully. Secondly there were also such ulama who other than teaching were involved in other occupations but in spite of this they would spare time to fulfill their duty of spreading knowledge. Thirdly there were such ulama who were patronized by the Sultans and nobles and in exchange for their service were paid cash or given land in the form of gifts. We find thousands of ulama mentioned in the contemporary sources who spent almost their whole life to spread knowledge or most of their time was occupied in this activity. Infinite seekers of knowledge gained from them. Moreover several teachers were such, who taught for more than half century.

35 During the medieval period the terms used for cash payments were ‘Vazifa’ or Inam and for the grant of land ‘Madad-i-Ma’ash’ was used. For details see: Abdul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol.1, ed., Sir Syed Khan, Aligarh, Aligarh, Sir Syed Academy, 2005, p.946.
During the Sultanate period the trend of spreading knowledge and teaching was so strong that many scholars possessing love of learning and teaching inspite of their governmental, administrative and other duties and engagements would show keen interest in this work. For instance, Shaikh Farid-u’d-din Shafi Awadhi was the Shaikh ul-Islam during Alaudin Khalji’s reign but along with this huge responsibility he would also regularly teach Tafsir. One of the important officers in the administration of the Balbani era Khwaja Shams-u’l-Mulk also used to teach the students. He was specifically popular for the teaching of Arabic Literature. Either out of their deep love for teaching or as a service to religion the scholars who obtained stipends and gifts, who were busy in the work were not particularly attached to any Madrasah or educational institution but instead according to their convenience or point of view would conduct this service at any place. Sometimes a Masjid or a teacher’s own residence would become a Madrasah, or the royal darbar, or the Haveli of Umra or portico of any house, teaching would be conducted, in some Khanqah or some building adjoining it, the process of teaching would also take place. During the reign of Firoz Shah Tughlaq the distinguished alim and excellent teacher Maulana Najm-u’d-

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din Samarkandi conducted his classes in the royal palace i.e. Balaband Siri and this place in one way became his Madrasah from which numerous people acquired knowledge and benefitted.\(^{39}\)

In brief, we can conclude that the ulama and scholars of the period under review were free from the bondage of teaching in any particular Madrasah or educational institution. Any place they wished to teach and initiated teaching that place itself would start functioning as a Madrasah and all the seekers of knowledge would reach there and would benefit from them. People belonging to different occupations, categories and strata would participate in the lectures. These teachers or experts of subjects were not so famous as being attached to any Madrasah or educational institution but were rather known and recognized for their distinction and expertise in teaching a particular art or science and the students also participated in their lectures having the faith and confidence that the teacher was an expert in the respective subject. From the above discussion it is evident that the teacher’s private or individual centre of education proved to be a stable and strong channel for the imparting of higher learning which can be either called as a individual centre of higher learning or the institution of higher learning.

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2. **ACADEMIC ASSEMBLIES (Majalis-i-Ilmi):**

For the purpose of higher learning other than the Madrasahs and individual centres, the academic gatherings and literary assemblies also played a vital role which cannot be neglected and underestimated. It is a generally known fact that the Delhi Sultans and some nobles of the Sultanate period also possessed a keen interest in the spread of arts and sciences and always sought and favoured the company of the learned. In this way the royal *darbar* served as a centre of the scholars and experts of a particular art or science. The scholars who participated in these assemblies were the experts of Islamic sciences and rational Sciences as well, scholars who enlightened the field of poetry and literature and experts in the rare field of fine arts. Here not only did the scholars get an opportunity to discuss the various issues and problems pertaining to a particular topic but also to present their point of view, separate meetings were held for different arts and sciences. Discussion was held there in a free atmosphere and the participant's academic and artistic efforts regarding the topics under discussion and their results were brought to light. Some of the Sultans would also participate in these academic assemblies. We find evidence that during the Sultanate period several times under the supervision of the royal administration for the discussion of several issues the *ulama* of the period were specially invited. Special
meetings with the jurists and ‘ulama on emergent problems were convened. These special assemblies called ‘Mahzar’ were conducted several times during the Sultanate period to find the collective opinion of the ‘ulama’ on some controversial issues. For instance in the reign of Ilutmish and Tughlaq, the Mahzar was called to discuss the issue of ‘sama’ (mystic songs) in the light of Shariah. When Sidi Maula was accused of rebellion against Jalal-u’d-din Khalji, the Sultan took steps to settle the issue through the Mahzar. During the reign of Firoz Shah Tughlaq of course, no meeting of the ‘ulama’ were called in the form of Mahzar, but they were invited several times to discuss the issues like levying dues on irrigation—(Haq-i Shurb), which was not sanctioned by the Shariat and punishment to the leaders of heretics and apostates. The details of the discussions of these academic assemblies are not available but whatever we know from the scattered material and stray references is very interesting and holds great significance. Other than the discussions and debates that took place under the supervision or in the presence of the Sultans and nobles the ulama themselves also conducted discussions and

debates on *Tafsir, Fiqh, Poetry, Literature, Philosophy, Logic* or any other subject or topic of discussion. It can not be refuted that because of these discussion the trend for deep study and research emerged and for any problem, discussions based on evidences and reasons were sought after and these are the factors that are a prerequisite for attaining mastery and expertise in any field.

3. **SUFI’S MAJLIS (Majalis-i-Sufia):**

The *majlis* of the Sufis also played an important role as an instrument through which education was imparted to people. It can be deduced from the activities in the *Khanqahs* of the famous Sufis and the proceedings of their *majlis*, people could benefit in the field of education.

Firstly in these *Khanqahs* education was imparted by teaching specific books and most of the books were generally related to *Tasawwuf* (mysticism) and *Tafsir* (Exegesis).43 Secondly some Sufis who were amongst the *ulama* class and were interested in teaching, would spare some time to teach in the *Khanqah* or small rooms (*hujras*) attached to it, books of such subjects which they were fond of and the members of the *Khanqah* and the general public took advantage of this. Thirdly, sometimes the Quranic verses and the *hadith* were explained regarding the problem under discussion, sometimes the questions of the participants

were answered with reference to the *Quran* and the *hadith* in the assemblies of great Sufis and *mashaikh*. Sometimes minute problems related to some Quranic verse or *Hadith* were also solved in these *majalis*.44

Moreover, some Sufis would be interested in narrating important *Fiqh* issues in front of their *muridin* (disciples), and there were interrogative sessions and answers were given to the questions put forward by the audience. In this way these *majalis* served the purpose of providing important information about *Quran, Hadith, Fiqh* and proved to be an important medium for diffusion of knowledge. During the period under review the *majalis* of Shaikh Farid-u’d-din Ganj Shakar, Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariya Multani, Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya, Shaikh Nasir-u’d-din Chiragh Dehlavi, Syed Jalal-u’d-din Bukhari Makhdum Jahanian, Khwaja Husain Nagauri were considered very significant and the *malfuzat* of the great Sufi’s and from the *Tazkiras* one comes across important information and facts can be obtained and here it is important to present some example.

Shaikh Nizam-u’d-din Auliya’s *murid*, Fakhruddin Zarradi, a contemporary of Muhammad bin Tughlaq was deeply interested in the teaching of *Fiqh* and after joining the Sufi fraternity he spent most of his

time in the Khanqah of Nizam-u’d-din Auliya. He was continuously involved in the process of teaching. He would daily after the Chasht (prayer performed between sunrise and meridian) prayers teach the ‘Hidayah’ (a famous book of Hanafi Fiqh) in a building adjacent to the Khanqah. According to the author of Siyar-ul-Auliya a lot of people attended his lectures.\(^4\) In the majalis of the Sufis incidentally the problems or queries of the books that were taught were solved and a very good example of this is found in the case of another murid of the same Shaikh. Once Shaikh Nizam-u’d-din asked one of his murids, Shaikh Shamsuddin Yahya Awadhi about the books he had studied and in reply he mentioned the ‘Usul-i-Bazdawi’. The Shaikh asked him several questions and in the end Maulana Shamsuddin put forward the difficulties or problems from this book which he could not comprehend and the Shaikh explained and elucidated in such a manner by which the Maulana was very impressed and his faith in the Shaikh became more firm.\(^5\) Here it is important to mention that the Khilafat-Nama which Shaikh Nizamuddin obtained from his murshid (mentor) Khwaja Fariduddin Ganj Shakar, in it was the Ijazat Nama (permission) to teach the ‘Tamhidat-al-Muhtadi’ (authored by Abu Shakoor Salmi), a book on the principles of religion, that means he got the certificate that Shaikh Farid


had taught him this book and now he could teach this book to others. The

‘Ijazat Nama’ which was included in the Khilafat Nama is as follows:

"فان الشروع في الأصول يوضع دعاء الشهود ويبصر لمن يكرع منها محارق الورد على أن الطريق
مخفون والعقبة كؤود. ونعم الكتاب في هذا الفن تمهد المهندي أبي شكرور بدله مضحجه وقد فرأ
عندئما أود الأجلاد الإمام.Pos نانع النظام المنع والدين محمد بن أحمد زين الائمة والعلماء
تفاخر الأجلاد والانقياء أعانه الله على إتباع مرضاته واناله منتهي رحمةه وإعلان درجات سبقا بعد سبق
من أوله في آخره قراءة تدقير وايقان وتظاف وانتاق مستحم رعاية سمع ودراية جنان وكم حصل
الوقوف على حسن استعداده كذلك وفور تهاء واحرته ان يدرس فيه للمتعلمين."

“In the name of God, the Compassionate and the Merciful... He is the
First and the Last, the Appearance and the Reality. Whomsoever God
elevates, none can degrade and whomsoever god degrades no one can
elevate. None can hide what he wants to reveal ... May God bless
Muhammad and his followers, his Companions and other saintly
persons... After His praise I declare that the study of the knowledge and
principles of the Traditions... gives light to him who pours water on burnt
places through its knowledge. This path is, in fact, perilous and full of
hazards and difficult in view of results. In this branch of knowledge the
best of book is the Tamhid-u’l-Muhtadi of Abu Shakoor Salimi... This
book has been studied under me, lesson after lesson, from the beginning
to the end, minutely, attentively, carefully and thoroughly, by the dutiful
son, pious, the Imam of the age and blessed, Nizam-ul-Millat wa’d Din

Muhammad son of Ahmad, who is an adornment of imams and scholars and the pride of the holy and the virtuous. May god bless him with the desire of submission to Him and be merciful to him and elevate his position... At the time of teaching him, I found him capable, able, meritorious, well-behaved and good mannered. I now permit him to teach this book to students, provided he avoids mistakes in teaching, writing and explaining it and utilizes his energy and knowledge in discussion, correcting the manuscripts and purification of the language. God is the real protector from errors of speech and a saviour from disruption and disease in religious work. This deed of permission was drawn during the month of Ramazan, on a Wednesday. May god extend the bounties of this blessed month. This document was drafted at the order of the Shaikh of the Shaikhs of the World, may God ever protect his honour and prestige, and was written by the humble slave of God, Ishaq son of Ali, a resident of Delhi, in the presence of the Shaikh of the Shaikhs of this world."

In the majalis of the Sufis the most popular Tafsir that was taught and studied, and of which we find several evidences is the ‘Tafsir Madarik’, authored by Hafizuddin Abdullah bin Ahmad Nafsi (ob.1310 A.D.). Especially amongst the Chishti circle this Tafsir had a stronghold. We find evidence that this Tafsir was taught by the Chishti mashaikh.

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"(This litany of the Tafsir-i-Madarik is the method of the way (suluk) of
the saints of this order)."

The Chishti Sufi Shaikh Husam-u’d-din Manakpuri (ob.1449
A.D.) would be busy in the study of the Quran and would try to
understand it’s meaning and always kept the Tafsir Madarik with him and
if found any difficulty in comprehending any verse of the Quran he
would consult it.\(^{50}\) Similarly another famous Sufi Khwaja-Husain
Nagauri (ob.1496 A.D.) along with preaching, was also busy in the
dissemination of religious sciences. His daily routine included the
teaching of ‘Tafsir Madarik’ about which he was very particular.\(^{51}\)
Moreover during the Sultanate period the Quranic issues, it’s meaning
or comprehension or any point of view that were discussed in the Majlis,
the Tafsir books that were used for this purpose were the Tafsir Kashshaf,
Tafsir Razi, Tafsir Zahiri, Tafsir Nasiri, Tafsir Basara and Arais-ul
Bayan.\(^{52}\) Other than these subjects it was essential to teach Tasawwuf
(mysticism) in the majlis. During our period of study the Awarif-ul-

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\(^{50}\) Ibid, p.177.
\(^{51}\) Ibid, pp. 185-86.
125,126,145,163,164, Nizami, K.A., Tarikh-i-Mashaikh-i-Chisht, Vol.1. Delhi,
Ma’arif, Fusus-ul-Hikam, Kashf-ul-Mahjub and Qut-u’l-Qulub were the famous books of Mysticism taught in the Sufi majalis. ⁵³

4. **OBSERVATORIES (Tajurbagahan-i-Mutali’ah-i-Ulum):**

During the period under review other than the customary trend of education in the field of science, research and experiments were conducted in observatories. The Sultan, other than taking efforts for the dissemination of religious education, also encouraged the learning of contemporary education. The Delhi Sultans patronized the rational and other sciences and gave rewards and gifts to the scholars who were involved in research and conducted experiments and especially established observatories and laboratories for research and training in the subjects of astronomy and medicine. From this aspect the reign of Alauddin Khalji and Firoz Shah Tughlaq is more famous. According to Barani during the reign of Alauddin Khalji, Hamiduddin Mutraz was an expert of astronomy and medicine, and was equal to the scholars of Greece in these fields. ⁵⁴ Firoz Shah Tughlaq under his supervision for the study, observation and conducting experiments in the field of astronomy, established an excellent astrolabe and erected it on a minaret (tower) along with a sundial which functioned as a store house also. Here for the scholars of astronomy facilities were available for observation and

research. Both the astrolabe and sundial were also important aids in sea navigation, and by the thirteenth century the Chinese magnetic compass (floating needle) was in use on ships in the Indian seas. Firoz also established a unique astrolabe which was portable. This Sultan’s deep interest and love for the subject of astronomy is also evident by his getting a Sanskrit work on astronomy translated in Persian which became famous as ‘Dalail-i-Firoz Shahi’. Thus we can infer that the observatories were established by the Sultans so that research and experiment could be conducted in the field of astronomy which led to immense progress and development in this field.

5. **HOSPITALS (Dar-ul-Shafa Ya Bimaristan-Barae Ta’lim-i-Tibb):**

In this field of medicine also hospitals, were established and in these Darul Shafas (hospitals) of that period not only was treatment and remedy provided and available to the patients but also lectures were conducted for the students on different aspects of medicine and care was

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taken for the performance of experiments and for this purpose famous doctors were called. We find evidence about the doctors of that period that other than their medical practice they would also impart medical knowledge to the students of medicine and worked as medical teachers and took it as a profession.\textsuperscript{59} Especially during the Firozi period we find evidence that the hospitals (which were called \textit{Darul Shafa}, \textit{Bimaristan} or \textit{Sahatkhana}) other than providing treatment and remedy for various ailments also functioned in the capacity of centres for providing training and knowledge in the field of medicine.\textsuperscript{60} In \textit{Afif's Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi} there is mention of only one hospital but in the \textit{Tarikh-i-Ferishta} the number of hospitals established by Firoz Shah Tughlaq is five\textsuperscript{61} and in the \textit{Tabaqat-i- Akbari} it is four\textsuperscript{62} Thus the hospitals other than being health service centres also played the role of a mode through which medical training and education could be imparted.

6. CENTRES FOR TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION  
(Marakiz-i-Ta'lim-i-Takniki wa Zabani Ulum):

For the information on technical and mechanical institutions for education and training during the period under review, we find scattered and dispersed references in the contemporary sources from which we can

\textsuperscript{62} Nizamuddin Ahmad, \textit{Tabaqat-i-Akbari}, Lucknow, Nawal Kishore, 1875. p.121.
derive at some points. Firstly during that period there were many artists, artisans, and experts in different industries, skills and handicrafts available. Secondly, other than the things and materials used by the royalty, nobles and officers, different kinds of things, tools and weapons were produced and manufactured in the state. Thirdly, for the teaching and training of various arts and talents other than the private centres or household firms or home industries which provided domestic training, there were also workshops or centres of industrial training under the supervision of the administration called ‘Karkhanas’. These Karkhanas were specially established for manufacturing commodities for the use of the royal family, nobles and officers in which under the supervision of expert artisans, craftsman, handicraft workers, training was imparted in the Karkhanas or workshops by expert artisans through the system of apprenticeship where the trading classes maintained their own schools for the instruction of their children or other people from which all took advantage and learnt the arts. This system of providing training in various skills and industry was prevalent in the villages and towns of the Sultanate and was free from various formalities.63 Infact the karkhanahs of the royal household were, factories to manufacture articles needed at the court. During the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq elaborate

arrangements were made for the manufacture of cloth. The Sultan distributed twenty thousand dresses annually. The manufacture of arms, engines of war, armour and other fighting equipment also received great care and attention. There is detailed evidence available of the establishment of Karkhana's and centres for industrial training during the period of Firoz Shah Tughlaq. There was a special department for the technical training and teaching of different arts and skills to the slaves during his period instead it seems this department was specifically established for the training of these slaves. Here it is clear that other than the religious teaching and training, the Sultan was deeply interested in providing industrial training and technical knowledge to his slaves. In these 'Karkhana' under the supervision of the skilled artisans and expert craftsmen training in different arts, crafts, skills was provided to the royal slaves. In this way according to Afif approximately 12,000 slaves became efficient artists and artisans.

From this we can infer that different kinds of commodities were manufactured, amongst the commodities that were manufactured, the utensils for the purpose of eating and drinking, dresses and jewellery, carpets, items for decorative purpose, items given as presents and gifts on

behalf of the Sultans, things for riding, instruments and appliances used for the purpose of hunting and wars, building, weapons and tools etc. were manufactured. Thus the home industries or household firms and Karkhanas functioned as agencies for providing technical and mechanical training.

7. PERSONAL STUDY AND RESEARCH

(Zati Mutaliah wa Tahqiq):

The personal study of books also played a significant role in the process of teaching and learning. The teachers and scholars other than teaching and learning would also conduct personal research and study or to enlarge and increase their knowledge of a particular subject or field. This trend was prevalent and its foundations were strong and firm during the Sultanate period. We have several evidences that inspite of the lack of facilities for printing and publication of books, there was no shortage of important books on particular topics and subjects. Other than borrowing books from each other for study the scholars also travelled to far off places in search of important books. Books for study and copies of their commentaries were made ready and generally people took keen interest in this work. The scholars themselves would make these copies ready for their personal use and also to gift them to their friends, teachers, and Mashaikh. One of the disciples of Shaikh Nizam-u’d-din Auliya, Rukn-
u’d-din Chihmar, was very fond of calligraphy, he copied many books and presented it to his spiritual mentor. Amongst them were the copies of ‘Tafsir-i-Kashshaf’ and ‘Mufassal’.\textsuperscript{66} Another scholar, Maulana Zain-u’d-din Dehlavi presented a copy of ‘Sahih Muslim’ to Shaikh Sharf-u’d-din Yahya Maneri.\textsuperscript{67} During that period there were also such scholars who while copying particular books of different arts and sciences would also write the keys and marginal notes so that while studying or reading the scholar would not have to face the difficulty of separately referring to the key or commentary of a particular work.\textsuperscript{68} Some scholars were so fast in writing books that they would copy hundreds of pages just within two or three days.\textsuperscript{69} This was a discussion about the private or individual efforts for copying books, other than this there was also a group or section that came into existence for making copies ready which adopted this work as a full time profession, they were called Warraq and Nassakh, who would keep investigating and kept information on the important books, as to where and which place they were available and in whose possession, so that they could make copies ready for the scholars when the need arose and on their own also these professional copyists would copy the books in demand, important and popular books and

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{66} Siyar-ul-Auliya, Op.cit, p.327.
  \item \textsuperscript{67} Nuzhat-u’l-Khawatir, Vol.2, Op.cit, p.44.
  \item \textsuperscript{68} Ma’athir-ul-Kiram, Op.cit, pp.48, 225, 229.
\end{itemize}
would keep selling them. Other than the general *Warraq* and *Nassakh* there were also several expert copyists and calligraphists during that period. The Sultans and nobles along with the scholars and experts of arts and science would also encourage the calligraphists and would also patronize them in their *darbars*. It is obvious that a display of their talents would come forward in the form of compilations and writings of books which specially would be installed in the Royal Libraries. These libraries which were an important part of the educational activities of the administration also served as institutes for the spread of knowledge.

During the same period Delhi’s famous Sufi Nizam-u’d-din Auliya had a huge library in his *Khanqah*. His *Khanqah* was in the town called Ghiyaspur in old Delhi and all scholars and seekers of knowledge benefited from it. Shaikh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi writes in one place while describing the circumstances of Shaikh Siraj-u’d-din Uthman:-

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“Later he made a deep study of Kafiyah the Mufassal, the Quduri and the Majma-ul-Bahrain under Maulana Ruknuddin, then for three years, he received higher knowledge from Shaikh Nizamuddin by benefiting from his library which was an endowment. And finally he took with him the robe and ‘Khilafat Nama’ receiving from the Shaikh.”

Libraries were a part of the royal expeditions. The Delhi Sultan always carried important books in the form of small libraries in their war expeditions. Other than the Sultans and nobles the scholars also possessed private libraries and had their private collection of books. The use of paper is likely to have facilitated the copying of books and book trade. It also enabled large collections of books to be accumulated by individuals. Kings and nobles had extensive libraries. Some such libraries, at least, were made available for scholars use for eg, Firoz Tughlaq deposited a large number of books on astronomy and astrolabes in the royal library (Kitab-khana-i-khas) and desired that these be made available to all those who wished to make use of them. It is very surprising that we have many details about the personal accomplishments of the Sultans which prove them as great patrons of education but there is less information available about the presence of libraries. For instance we know that during Muhammad Tughlaq’s reign there were about one thousand

Madrasahs but not a word is mentioned about the existence of libraries, the reason is perhaps that during that period the libraries were usually inside the maktabs, madrasah and khanqahs. Collecting rare and important books was a matter of habit and due to the love of learning. One can make a slight estimate of the large number of copies of books on different subjects and topics of that period by glancing at the large libraries of Hindustan, Pakistan and Great Britain and taking a look at the collection of manuscripts which were related to Hindustan of that period. Slight estimate because in that institutions only those manuscripts have reached which after the decline of the Sultanate came in the custody of the government and those books of private libraries and belonging to families of scholars which the later generations did not care, with the passing of time have gone waste of which no estimate can be formed. Due to the absence of printing press sometimes shortage of books was faced by the people.

During the period under review, availability of books on different subjects like arts and sciences particularly Tafsir, Hadith, Fiqh and the important sources is evident from the sources and reference mentioned in the presently available books which were compiled during that period. In the compilations and compositions not one or two but hundreds of, not only names of books but paragraphs and passages from other sources are
to be found but the books are missing. For instance the compilation of the
*Fatawa-i-Tatarkhania* which is in several volumes, the compilation and
writing of this took place under the supervision of a committee of
scholars. This committee was ordered that the points of differences
between the jurists on different issues should be pointed out and the
opinions of the jurists should be collected.\(^{75}\)

The same method was used for the compilation of *'Tafsir
Tatarkhania'* The method that was followed was that all points related to
the exegesis of every verse and to reach to the depth of every issue the
opinion of the senior scholars of *Tafsir* was taken into account and every
point of difference or a difference of opinion was discussed and written
by providing proves of the experts of *Tafsir* and evidence was
mentioned for every point.\(^{76}\) Other than the books on *Tafsir* and *Fiqh*
there were no lack of books on *Hadith* during the Sultanate period. The
writers and scholars of that period have in their works not only mentioned
the six collection of *Hadith* but also references of other books of *Hadith*
are to be found and are available in their works.\(^{77}\) In the History books of
that period apart from the references and mention of *Tafsir, Fiqh*, and

\(^{75}\) *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* (Afif), Op.cit, p.392, Nadvi, Riyasat Ali, ‘Kuch Fuqaha-i-


Hadith we find paragraphs and evidences of old books related to subjects such as history, medicine, logic, philosophy etc. Thus we can infer that the non availability of these books imposed minor difficulties but this was not such a problem that it could become an obstacle for the personal study and research of scholars.

From the above discussion we can deduce that during the period under review the Madrasahs, were not the only centres to provide education but there were various other agencies or channels through which education could be imparted. Generally the individual centres of scholars were the most commonly used channel for obtaining education and they were popular for the study of some or the other subject. That is the reason why the scholars would turn towards these private institutions, to attain specialization in a particular subject one had to approach the teachers and scholars of that subject and thus they benefitted from them. The observatories, astrolabes functioned as a medium to provide knowledge in astronomy and hospitals functioned as institutes for the provision of medical knowledge, and karkhanas functioned as a medium to provide technical knowledge and develop industrial skill and craftsmanship. Moreover rarely one will come across a scholar who has obtained all his knowledge and completed his studies under one particular teacher or one particular Madrasah, or individual centre. Instead in order
to specialize in any particular science or art, be it traditional (*Manqulat*) or rational (*Ma'qulat*) one had to attend lectures and gain from various different centres for learning and only then this kind of scholarship was possible.