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The subject undertaken for the Ph.D. dissertation work is the study of “Development of Education for Muslims in Bengal with special reference to Burdwan and Murshidabad from 1835 to 1947 AD: A comparative study”. The work is intended to be a study of education for Muslims in Bengal with special reference to Burdwan and Murshidabad Vis-a-Via the development of modern and western education. The period, 1835 to 1947 A.D. and the area, that is Bengal with two districts, Burdwan and Murshidabad chosen for study has its own coherent boundaries and importance. The choice of starting point was indicated by the introduction of Anglicist education through Macaulay Minute and the end point was fixed at 1947, the year which witnessed the end of British rule in India and independence of India. In this vast period, as will be seen, important and far reaching development took place effecting the socio-economic life of the people both of Hindus and Muslims of Bengal.

The purpose of the study is to investigate and explore whether there was any degeneration of Bengal Muslims and how the Muslims of Bengal particularly the Muslims of Burdwan and Murshidabad district reacted and responded to the development of modern education.

The work analyses the liberal and rational thoughts and activities of the Muslim intelligentsia for the modernization of the society and Muslim’s response to it. This work has primarily dealt with the backwardness of Muslims in educational fronts specially in modern, secular, scientific, technical and vocational education. The study evaluates the different stratas of Bengal Muslim Society and the position of education among themselves and also examines the historical factors which have influenced it.

The British Colonial rule in India was originated in Bengal despite its' ruthless exploitation of the country did play some progressive role. Many of the institutions for modern, scientific and secular education were established. This
has not only opened the gates for entry into modern and scientific institutions of Bengal but also created new opportunities of lucrative appointment in Government Services but the Muslims of Bengal remained untouched for more than hundred years since the foundation of British rule in Bengal to share this most important development and they lagged far behind in education. During the first half of twentieth century the Muslims of Bengal had their numerical superiority but the Muslims of Bengal not only suffered from educational backwardness they also lagged far behind the Hindus in all aspects of life. There were lot of apprehensions and grievances of the community which were reflected through the press and legislators. The length and the breadth of the study which included the position and situation of education among Muslims in Bengal in general and Burdwan and Murshidabad in particular just before and after the arrival of Britishers needed the overall study and examination of the revenue proceedings and endowments granted by number of private and states agencies.

The several revenue proceedings, the endowment reports and the committee of public instruction reports were consulted. The reports prepared and presented by William Adam were quite helpful in carrying out this particular work. I have depended mainly on the following Libraries: West Bengal State Archives, Calcutta, the National Library Calcutta, the Maulana Azad Library of Aligarh Muslim University and the District Libraries of the Burdwan and Murshidabad district. I take this opportunity to thank all the librarians and staffs of all those libraries for their help.

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