CHAPTER II

EDUCATION OF MUSLIMS IN INDIA:
PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS
Though the Muslims had inherited affluent erudition and splendid traditions in the past, it witnessed decline and almost became extinct in the modern history. Certain serious initiatives in the sphere of modern education began only during the first half of the last century. Before we go into elaborate discussions of the core area, it would be relevant to examine here the history of Muslim educational institutions, in the Muslim world.

Lerner (1978), a renowned educationalist and social scientist, in his study of socio-educational change in the tradition bound Islamic society, has reported the educational development of six developing Muslim countries.¹

The study was carried out in some selected West Asian countries such as Afghanistan, Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Iran, where it exhibited the positive changes that had taken place in the sphere of modern education. He has also reported the transformations that had happened in the traditional scheme of education in these countries. Against this background, it would be tremendously valuable to analyze the various measures taken in Muslim countries for advancement in general educational in the twentieth century.
Until the first half of the Twentieth century, education in these countries was imparted through the institutions of traditional learning like *maktabs* and *madrasas*. *Maktabs* were primary schools where fundamental or elementary education was imparted. They were also termed as the Qur'an teaching schools, where necessary portions of the Qur'an were taught by heart for their daily prayers. Generally, the *Imam*, the prayer leader, used to impart instructions in *maktabs* and *madarasahs* and he was usually called *miyanji* or *moulawi*. The final stage of education was memorizing the Qur'an.

**A Paradigm Shift of Education towards the Muslim Countries**

In the history of Islam, great empires have come and gone, leaving rich literary and artistic legacies even as their political and military power evaporated. The caliphate of the Abbasids in Baghdad, the Mamluk rule in Egypt and Syria, the Safavid Empire in Iran, the empires of the Mughals and Ottomans all reached breathtaking levels of achievement in education, science, literature, art and architecture, creating brilliant and enduring monuments to their common faith.

The traditional way of learning was replaced by modern education due to the knowledge transformation around the globe. It would be
relevant here to examine the measures which have fueled the spread of modern education in the following important West Asian countries.

Afghanistan, one of the least developed countries in the world outside Africa, is predominantly occupied by the Muslim. It has taken various measures to spread modern education for eliminating inadequacy in education. Infant mortality rates are the highest, unemployment is over 50 percent, inflation is soaring past 500 percent. It has thoroughly modified teaching and recruiting methods and launched a vigorous campaign against illiteracy. In order to meet the new challenges, many secondary, technical and teacher training institutions have been started in the country. In 1950, the Afghan Institute of Technology was founded in Kabul and it produced a number of electronics engineers, mining and automobile technicians. To meet the rising demand for technical education both the government and private individuals started technical institutions. In 1975, around 900,000 students were enrolled; about 80 per cent of these were pupils in primary school (Ghani 1990, cited in Christensen 1995). In 1990, the number of primary schools was 1,200 - less than in 1978 - and during the nineties the situation continued to deteriorate. The war had destroyed 50 per cent of the schools by 1983. Now a series of educational
institutions were set up all over the country even in the midst of constant political turmoil.

Iran has played a most pivotal role in the development of education in the oil era. Unlike other Muslim countries, a number of secondary schools, engineering colleges and universities were started, but these institutions were inadequate owing to want of qualified academic staff. However, arrangements were made for recruiting qualified teachers from other countries and sent Iranian students for higher education abroad. So Iran has given the green signal for technical education today. The most important fact is that, all children from eleven to thirteen would henceforth spent fifty percent of their time on manual work at work benches in city schools and at school farms in villages. Each village school will have its own fields for cultivation experiments and special watering systems for gardening. Each city school will have its workshop complete with tools and equipment. The feature of modern education was very much influenced by modernization theory, nationalist historiography, and the dichotomous notion of reform and reaction.

Jordan considered as an ancient Islamic land now has become a modern nation today. The rapid growth of educational institutions in towns is one of the good auguries of the rapid spread of education. The sacred
land of Islam, viz., Saudi Arabia has drawn up an action plan to promote modern education; science and technology. The major Islamic countries of South East Asia, viz., Malaysia and Indonesia also experienced the cultural reform on the Western model. In Singapore, Muslims have greater concern for Western education.

Turkey, the sick man of Europe, is no longer a traditional society owing to its close contact with Europe. Turkey has followed an urbanizing pattern. Kamal Ata Turk in his fifteen years of rule from 1923 until his death in November, 1938, introduced a series of reforms and in 1924 he established a unified secular system of education. A large number of educational institutions had come up across the country with a view to spread western concepts which was a real encroachment against the belief of practicing Muslims.

However, Kamal Ata Turk initiated a number of very significant educational reforms. His ultimate goal was to refashion the entire educational system along Western, secular lines in order to promote modernization and encourage Turkish nationalism at the expense of Islamic tradition. He mandated the adoption of the Latin alphabet in 1928. His government introduced free, public primary education and waged a campaign against adult illiteracy. Very few Turkish educators and experts
were available; so the program concentrated on the cities and larger towns. In order to alleviate the shortage of teachers the government established a large number of "Village Institutes".

In 1933, Ata Turk and his ministers recognized a window of opportunity to modernize the country's system of higher education. Turkey invited 190 eminent intellectuals who were being persecuted by the Nazis in their native lands (in 1937-38 citizens of Austria and Chechoslovakia were included among the invitees) to help her in this regard. This immigration gave birth to the University of Istanbul which in turn provided much of the academic feedstock as other universities were established in ensuing years.

As a result of the adoption of western model by Kemal, the literacy rate of the country had risen up to 47.8 in 1966 from the pathetic state of 30.4 in the year 1935. With all the adversities of Atta’s Era, the State attained this growth thanks to the emergence of some educational institutions.

All the state schools are coeducational and education is made available to all the people. The educational system is highly centralized, i.e. Curricula, textbooks and the appointment of the teachers were controlled by the states. A curious flaw in the system is that the method of
imparting instruction in the primary schools was based on German and Australian practice, the middle schools is run on French lines, and technical schools follow the Belgian pattern.

Rural education has also received much attention. In rural schools the syllabus is set depending upon the requirements of the day. The students spend half of their time in practical work particularly from secondary schools. Boys receive education in agricultural techniques, building and carpentry, and for girls training is imparted in housekeeping, first aid child care. In this way, Turkey has taken various measures for the development of education.

In Lebanon, the most modern Arab land today, the impact of the West is even more discernible. It has the highest percentage of people living in cities, and almost seventy percent of the total population is literate. It has moved farthest away from Arab Muslim traditionalism. In Lebanon, educators are busy revising the school text books using scientific norms, and are now administering psychological text to teacher trainees in order to select better qualified teachers and provide vocational guidance for young people. Even though the government has taken up the responsibility of education since independence; private institutions are still the main stay especially at the secondary and university levels. Primary
and secondary schools have proliferated within a short span of time in Lebanon.

In 1966-1967 there were four universities, and in all these four universities much emphasis is placed on technical education. The medium of instruction in the American University of Beirut is English, in the Jesuit University of Joseph it is French. Thus, educational standards in Lebanon are the benchmarks in the Arab world and literacy is estimated at 88% for those over fourteen years of age.

The demand for the rapid expansion and modernization of education at all levels from primary to higher, including scientific and technological training in Gulf countries, viz., Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Abu Dhabi and Dubai has increased in the oil era. The traditional educational system remained prevalent among the local and village communities of these states until the introduction of the modern system of education.

Traditional education was exclusively a male domain with the exception of a few girls from the elite families, for whom special arrangements were made at home for teaching elementary reading and Writing. The teaching of the Qur’an was primarily for religious purpose, knowledge of writing and basic arithmetic was considered useful for
keeping records and accounts of pearl trade and simple commercial transactions.

It is significant to note that by the beginning of the twentieth century, both Kuwait and Bahrain had accomplished some limited socio-economic growth due to their increased sea born trade. They realized the necessity of transforming the traditional scheme of education which was imparted in *maktabs* and *madarasahs* as they thought that the traditional education would not suffice to cater to the requirements of society.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century certain Christian missionaries established a primary school for boys in Bahrain, which was followed by the opening of community schools by Iranians and Indians. Several well-to-do Bahraini families took the initiative of sending the boys to these non-Arab schools.

The first Arab school of this region Madarasah al-Mubarakiyah was established in Kuwait in 1911 with a modified syllabus and poorly trained teachers. The basic contents of teaching at that early stage remained very much like those of the traditional educational system, but in the course of time the syllabus was thoroughly revised by keeping in mind the requirements of the time. In 1919, a similar school was started in Bahrain.
From 1950, modern type of education was established in Qatar and in the provinces of the present day United Arab Emirates.

After the consolidation of primary education for boys in Kuwait and Bahrain they took the initiative of extending the same privilege for girls. Bahrain took an earlier initiative by opening a girls' school in 1928 nine years after establishing the boys' school. In Kuwait, however, it was delayed until 1937, almost twenty-six years after the beginning of its first boys' school. In Qatar, there was only a one year interval between the opening of boys' and girls' schools, the former having been established in 1956 and the latter in 1957. In the United Arab Emirates, modern primary education for boys began in 1953. During the initial years it was organized and financed by the State of Kuwait. The most significant achievements came in the late 1930s, when Bahrain and Kuwait extended secondary educational facilities to both boys and girls. The United Arab Emirates was a late entrant in this phase of education.

Today, the petro dollars of the Muslim world has achieved much in the advancement of modern education. A number of modern Islamic Universities were launched across the world and they provided extensive learning opportunities to the Muslim masses. These universities are imparting the best education for the Islamic world.
Apart from ancient Universities like Al Azhar, some premier modern Muslim Universities came into existence in the Muslim countries during the last century. The following are some landmark institutions in this genre. The Islamic University of Madinah, Ummul Khura University - Makkah, The King Saud University - KSA, Qatar University - Doha, American Open Islamic University - USA, Islamic Research Academy (ISRA)- Karachi, Harvard Islamic Legal Studies-Harvard, International College of Islamic Science-London, International Islamic University-Malaysia, Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University- Saudi Arabia, Islamic University of Africa, Islamic University of Gaza - Gaza, International Islamic University Islamabad-Islamabad, International Islamic University - Chittagong, Internet Islamic University - Los Angeles, Islamic University of Rotterdam - Netherlands, International Islamic University London - UK., Mohi-ud-Din Islamic University⁹ - Pakistan, Islamic American University - Michigan, Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University - KSA, Al – Ahgaff University, were the new generation Islamic educational Institutions that emerged in the Muslim world in the 20th Century. As a result of this, Muslim education across the world began conquer new horizons of unprecedented development.
Moreover, a considerable number of male students are studying abroad in the United States, England and other western countries. Thus their percentage has decreased in colleges and Universities in their native countries, resulting in better employment avenues opening to them. It may also be noted that the number of female enrolments considerably increased in the respective countries.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA

Early initiatives

India was famous for its learning from very early times. Certain outstanding, ancient, established educational institutions had their preeminence in the epoch of Vedic education. Aryan culture was confined for a long period to the Western provinces. In the age of the Upanishads, Varanasi came to be counted among the centres of culture, but in modern times it has not gained much importance in the field of education. Some of the Important Ancient Educational Institutions are shown below.

Varanasi

Varanasi had a highly esteemed place in the field of Brahmanical education. The erudition of the scholars of this place was renowned throughout the length and breadth of the country. Sankaracharya is said to have consulted the scholars of Varanasi for the confirmation of his tenets.
Here competent teachers imparted instruction in their individual capacities. People from distant places began to flock there for education. It had become an important centre of culture and learning. During the time of Lord Buddha, it was the principal cultural centre in northern India and it was here that Buddha started propagating his faith for the first time, at Saranath.

**Taxila**

Taxila, the capital of Gandhar province was a great centre of ancient Indian culture and education. It was one of the oldest Universities in the world located in the far North West of India, with much emphasis on general studies. In the hoary past Taxila was an established centre of Brahmanical education. It is mentioned in the Ramayana that Bharath had colonized it in the name of his son Taksh. Whatever may be the origin, Taxila remained popular even in far off lands for thousands of years.

The royal princes used to go to Taxila University for their education; here education was given in the eighteen arts and crafts and in the Vedas. The Buddhist Jataka tales shows that young men from all over the civilized regions of India sought education in this city. It is known that a trickle of Iranian and Mesopotamian influence found its way to India. Among the famous learned men connected with Taxila were Panini, the
grammarian of the 4th century B.C., Kautilya, traditionally the so-called chief master of the Science of statecraft, the Brahman minister of Chandragupta Maurya who taught there, and Charaka, one of the two great masters of Indian medical sciences.\textsuperscript{10}

Taxila had to face various vicissitudes during its long and glorious existence due to its geographical situation. Several inroads were made upon it, and as result of the changing political condition the educational system was also affected and the form of education kept on varying. The Shakas, the Kushans and the Zorastrians (Parsis), the Indo-Grecians, invaded and established their sway over it in the first, second and the sixth centuries respectively. And yet Taxila managed to preserve its own existence anyhow in spite of these invasive upheavals.

Education was however affected by the different cultures and as a result of the Sanskrit and the Persian influence the national script ‘Brahmi’ could not be used in Taxila and instruction in Grecian languages was also started.

Nalanda

The ancient history of India recounts a celebrated seat of learning during the Gupta period (7th C) the Nalanda University, where thousands received education in the Mahayana doctrine of Buddhism.\textsuperscript{11} Hsuen Tsang,
the famous Chinese traveler, also studied there. It provided free training for not less than 10,000 students, who had a large staff of servants to serve on them; it served as a main centre of learning, as did their Christian counterpart in medieval Europe. The number of teachers then at Nalanda was about 1500, and they were divided into different categories on the basis of their specialisations.

With the advent of the Muslims in India, begins a clearly defined period of Indian history. It is, moreover, a period for which the historical material is much more abundant than that of the preceding eras. The history of Muslim education in India is as old as Islam in the country. Arabs used to visit India from the very beginning for trade and commerce and they established the earliest settlements on the western and eastern cost-line of India. A chronological account of the well known travelers Thajir Sulaiman and Ibn Batuta had attested these facts at various junctures. The first conquest by them was made in Sind during the reign of Walid Ibn Abdul Malik (705-715), the Umayyad Caliph, under the command of Muhammad Ibn Qasim in 711.

Later, Mahmud Ghauri’s commanders settled-down in the North Western parts of India, where they promoted education and founded madarasa in the conquered area. During the 11th century, Muhammad
Ghaznavi invaded India several times between 999 to 1026. They were followed by the Khiljis, Tughlagh, Sayyid, Lodhis, Suris, and finally the Mughals came and established educational institutions under their rule.

Education was, by and large, patronized by all Muslim rulers in the world. Because “the search for learning and knowledge is the duty of every (male and female) Muslim”. This verse shows that the significance of specialization and attainment of knowledge is an integral part of Muslim culture. Teaching and imparting knowledge has been considered to be the noblest of professions. It is clear from the familiar sayings of the Prophet: “The learned men among my followers are like the prophets of Bani Israel”,

The Muslim rulers continued to rule the world with the above mentioned spirit and guts. The Prophet himself selected a group of Muslim intellectuals, and introduced them to the cerebral and spiritual basis of Islam for the dissemination of His message, concepts and details which would not be easily processed by laymen.

The Mughals continued to rule the country with this strength of mind until the last Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, who was deposed by the British in 1857. But after Aurangzeb, (A.D.1707) the decline of the Mughal Empire had clearly set in and finally ended in its
complete collapse under the rebellions and conspiracies of high officials, governors and courtiers.

The Raj puts, the Sikhs and the Jats gained strength towards the close of the reign of Aurangzeb and showed their political presence for a short time. Elsewhere, for a while, the Marathas became the chief political and military power in India.\textsuperscript{20} Their predecessors enjoyed high positions in the royal courts of Muslim rulers so that they could educate themselves in the state crafts generously. Shanhji, father of famous Shivaji, began his career as a trooper in the army of the Sultan of Ahmadnagar.\textsuperscript{21} They unsuccessfully tried to establish their own rule in the country.

In the North, the provinces of Oudh and Bengal as well as Punjab under the Khalsa power became independent of the Mughal rulers of Delhi. The occupation of Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali further weakened the central rule and vigorously tried to establish their ascendancy.\textsuperscript{22} Apart from this, there were a large number of small states scattered all over India owing allegiance to some neighboring larger state. Most of these states, whether large or small, were too weak to defend themselves against any external enemy, i.e., the British. On the other hand they often sought help from the British against their native rival rulers.

\textbf{State of Education under the East India Company}
It was on the last day, last month and the last year of the sixteenth century that witnessed one of the unparalleled historical tragedies in Mughal India. That was the formation of the British East India Company. It had come to India for trading purpose, just like other intruders, and had no desire of establishing a territorial decree. ‘The East India Company was cradled in the chilly but invigorating atmosphere of individualism.’

But gradually, they began to realize that they could trade much more profitably and freely if they wrested the political control and established their military supremacy.

In 1609, the Company deputed Captain Hawkins to India, and he reached the court of Jahangir in the same year. Thanks to his arrival, India had faced a huge blow of political thunder. Within a short while, a number of factories were opened at Surat, Agra, Ahmadabad, and Broach. The Company exploited the natural resources as well as the human power in the country as their means to accumulate wealth. With this object in mind, they would fight with the natives and foreigners alike to establish their indisputable preeminence.

Education, Culture, and heritage of a country became frivolous in front of their covetous attitudes. Education under East India Company - one is the process of decay and degeneration and the other is that of
grafting of bits of Western Christian oriented system of English education in India.25 Throughout the period of two and half centuries, from 1600 till 1858, the issue of education, as a basic need of the people, received scanty attention of the authorities of the companies. “In fact, the Company was afraid of educating the natives.”26

Depending on the socio-political imperatives, the Company had taken certain movements in the sphere of education phase by phase. The first phase was the period of devastating trade wars and the company showed little interest in matters of indigenous education.27 It spans a century, from 1600 to 1698.

The second phase is known as the period of gestation which covers from 1698 to 1764. The Company’s servants in India, mostly men of average caliber, more adept with the sword than the pen, were mostly involved in political and commercial pursuits. The gradual dissolution of local powers further led to the disintegration of the country’s existing educational institutions.28 Some efforts were made by the Christian Missionaries to educate the children of the Company’s employees, both Europeans and of mixed parentage. The British who were trying to destroy the economic as well as the cultural backbone of the country to establish their supremacy to a large extent. Macaulay observes, “I have
travelled across the length and breadth of India, and I have not seen one person who is a beggar, who is a thief, such wealth I have seen in this country, such high moral values, people of such caliber, that I do not think we would ever conquer this country, unless we break the very backbone of this nation, which is a spiritual and cultural heritage and, therefore, I propose that we replace that her old culture, for if the Indians think that all that is foreign and English is good and greater than their own, they will lose their self-esteem, their native culture and they will become, what we want them to be, a truly dominated nation.”

It shows the immense grudge of the rulers against their subjects.

The next phase was manifested by the allocation of special funds, which was set apart for the promotion of education. Utilising this, some initiatives were taken towards this sphere systematically. This was followed by the content and medium of instruction. Finally between 1835 and 1854 the Company began to show more interest in educational issues, just for the sake of crafting some English literate men as their menial staff. But in this endeavor, the Muslims were far away.

Some surveys were made in Bengal, Madras and Bombay to collect information about the actual state of indigenous educational institutions. A few charity schools and asylum for the Indian Christian and Eurasian
children were founded at Madras, Calcutta and Bombay.\textsuperscript{30} In fact in the second half of the nineteenth century the British began to establish some premier educational institution at the Presidency towns.\textsuperscript{31} It was the period of the formation of a number of Universities and colleges across the nation. In fact, this time was a period of long drawn debates and controversies with the French who were already struggling for the same objectives in the South. In 1765, the Company also succeeded in establishing their control over the Bengal province. After defeating Tippu Sultan almost all the areas of South India came under their control in 1799. Thus, by the start of the 19th century, the British trading company brought almost all the major parts of India under their colonial rule. Wherever the British went, they crushed and subjugated the local chiefs, disbanded their armies and took the administration or supervision of the area into their own hand.

However, as far as Muslim education is concerned, in British India, Warren Hasting was the first man who took a major step and founded a madarasah in Calcutta in 1781. The madarasah was solely meant to promote and encourage the study of Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages. Moreover, the Islamic law, they often used to term ‘Muhammadan Law,’ was taught there. “The Calcutta Madrassa, or Muhammadan College, was
founded at the request of several Muhammadins of distinction, in the year 1781, by the Governor General, Warren Hastings, who provided a building for it, at a cost of Rs. 57745. The Bengal Government also assigned lands of the estimated value of Rs. 29000 per annum for the support of the institution. The original intention of the founder appears to have been to promote the study of the Arabic and Persian Languages, and of the Muhammadan Law, with a view, more especially, to the production of well qualified officers of the courts of Justice.”

Meanwhile, the work of missionaries was largely promoted by the Company. They were, however, mainly concerned with the propagation of their own religion. The government had convened all possible assistance to the Company to launch a large number of schools across the length and breadth of the country. However, the educated natives, including Muslims, opposed the activities of Missionaries.

Nevertheless, to promote Indian education, particularly among the Hindus, the Government disbursed a huge amount of grant under different educational committees. With this same spirit, the British established a Hindu Sanskrit College in Banaras, the sacred place of Hindus. Rajaram Mohan Roy, Champion of Indian reformation was the man behind the consolidation of such tendering efforts. As a result, a number of
Committees of Public Instruction were appointed in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras mainly with a view to ascertaining the state of education and to aid and advise the Government to take steps to mobilize people and resources for education.

Lord William Bentinck accepted Macaulay’s Minutes and passed a resolution, known as Bentinck’s Resolution, on 7th March 1835. The minutes had emphasized favouring of English education, undermining the rich and sublime traditional culture of Indian civilization. Macaulay observed “to create a class of persons who would be Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect.” For the Muslims, the Minutes were an intimidating step towards their religious education too. The Lamas, Moulawis, and Muslim social workers in different parts of the country demanded the government not to discourage the native education as well as the religious learning. Nonetheless, William Bentinck’s policy of religious neutrality, due to the appeal of Ulamas, gave a slight relief to the apprehensions of the Muslim community.

**Muslims’ Contribution towards Indian Education**

Generally, Education in India, before the advent of Islam, was considered to be the monopoly of Brahmins. They excluded the lower class people to acquire knowledge because they thought themselves superior.
There were mass rebellions against this notion resulting in the creation of Buddhism and Jainism. However, the fact cannot be overlooked that the common people were always deprived of education in earlier Hindu periods. When Islam came to India it had to fight this mindset that prevailed among the masses.

Ultimately, due to the efforts of Muslim rulers every citizen of the country, whether Muslim or Hindu, man or woman, rich or poor, was enshrined with the right to acquire knowledge.\textsuperscript{35} It is the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad. According to various traditions, he himself prayed for knowledge as “\textit{My lord, enhance me in knowledge}.”\textsuperscript{36} He directed the believers ‘to seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave, no matter if their search took them as far as China.’\textsuperscript{37} It is quite true that Muslim rulers in India, under various dynasties, patronized education and learning. It was noted right from the very beginning, they had adopted a secular policy towards education.

The Mughals welcomed the Europeans for commerce and showed liberal attitude towards Christians and permitted them even to carry on missionary activities. "The extent of patronage shown to the missionaries under the Emperors of the house of Babar was extraordinary. They were
the honored guests of the Emperors; they enjoyed privileges which even caused envy among the Mughal nobility.\textsuperscript{38}

Many Europeans had been appointed to the higher military posts in the 18th century.\textsuperscript{39} The Muslim rulers from the early period took interest in the advancement of education. They encouraged and patronized the scholars and the people of pen. There existed many schools and madarasahs and ran smoothly through proper financial arrangement, i.e. \textit{wakf} ‘endowments’, \textit{sadaqa}, and \textit{zakath}. When the British became the political masters this situation further deteriorated as they confiscated or curtailed public trusts and endowments of madrasas.

In the beginning of the 17th century, The East India Company was deliberately unkind to promote education among the Indians generally and for the Muslims in particularly. In 1659, the Court of Directors explicitly stated that it was their earnest desire by all possible means to spread Christianity among the people of India and allowed missionaries to act boldly in this regard.\textsuperscript{40} According to Charter Act of 1698 Chaplains were appointed in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras to look after the education of the Christian children and Anglo-Indian Children.
It is quite true that Muslim rulers in India under all dynasties promoted education in different ways. The systems prevalent then were overwhelming and much envious of the period of the Tudors.

Many Europeans had been appointed to higher military posts in the 18th century. As 'Aziz Ahmad observed that this showed the technical superiority of the Europeans in the manufacture and use of the more sophisticated weapons as well as in their strategy of war.\(^4\)

**Attitude of Muslims towards Western Education**

The Muslim response towards Western education was immensely terrible during the period of British India. They had hatred of the British in their taste and culture so that they had kept themselves away from Western education, which led the community to doom. They were rebelling generally, as if by instinct against the subaltern sensibility preventing the community from accepting British imperialism. The Muslims were very much adamant in their religious belief, practice and worship. The majority of the Muslims were fond of trade and commerce rather than to seek employment under any regime.

Regarding the Muslim's response towards the British as Mujeeb Ashraf, after evaluating, divided them into four categories:
"One group of nobles sincerely considered friendship and alliance with the British indispensable for the continued existence of the Indian states and made it their policy to be friendly with the British ... Another group was so completely impressed by the British and their culture that it sought to organise the affairs of State and the conditions of the society on British lines. A third group was loyal neither to the state nor to the British Government and followed a policy which, in its view, best suited its own personal and selfish interests. There was, finally, a fourth group which was totally opposed to British dominance and the British connection."  

The behavior of the Muslims of Southern and Northern part of India differed from each other in many respects. Southern sections of Muslims showed positive response towards English and Western sciences, while the Muslims of Northern India, to some extent also Hindus, refused to accept Western learning. Abid Husain discussed in detail the reasons for the behaviors of Southern and Northern Indian Muslims which differed from each other in terms of their attitude towards Western culture and sciences. The abstract of his thinking are given in the following sentence:  

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‘The Muslims of the Southern and Western parts of India were descendants of Arab merchants and sailors. To fulfill their material aspirations, they preferred a peaceful society, having good relation with the Hindu rulers, ready to adjust with every new circumstance and were generally educated. While the Muslims of Northern India were descendants of nobles, officers and soldiers who were holding high posts and enjoying privileges. But after the British dominance, all the privileges were curtailed or abolished. They considered the British as usurpers and openly showed their hostility due to social, cultural and political prejudice.’

The study of political events and their impact on Muslims are important to understand the Muslim response. The political events in the aftermath of the battle of Plassey (1757) and the battle of Buxar (1764) had changed the attitude of the British towards Muslims. The British then onwards were highly cautious regarding Muslims. After establishing their hegemony, the British began to destroy the financial strength of the Muslims.

The commercial policy of East India Company destroyed the centres of Indian industries that even Englishmen like Sir Charles Trevelyan and Montgomery Martin felt sorry for, over the plight of Indian
manufactures and laborers. Many of the finer industrial arts of India which was in the hands of skilled Muslims were ruined. Particularly, the Muslims of Bengal were the greatest losers. In 1793, the British passed the land Act, which adversely influenced the economic condition of the Muslims. They changed the relationship with the landlords, especially with regard to the Muslims, and closed the door to their landlordism.

The substitution of English language for Persian as the Court language in 1837 greatly affected the Muslim subordinate officers. Hafiz Malik rightly remarks, "Their strategy was to oust the Muslims from the profession and the position of economic and administrative control."

Enrolment of Muslim Students in English Educational Institutions

When Islam came to India, it had to fight the then mindset that prevailed among the masses. Ultimately, due to the efforts of Muslim rulers, every citizen of the country, whether Muslim or Hindu, man or woman, rich or poor, was enshrined with the right to acquire knowledge.

By the emergence of the British Power in India, the Muslims became the great losers of a splendid heritage. They are afraid that Western culture and education would undermine the religious faith of the community. As this concept was hurling in the sky, the concern of the pupils in the community in terms of attaining modern education was
declining day by day. The following table shows the enrolment of the Muslim students in the institutions where instructions were provided in English.

<table>
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<th>Sl. No.</th>
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<td>Bombay</td>
<td>Colleges</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eng. High Schools</td>
<td>5731</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eng. Middle</td>
<td>14257</td>
<td>781</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20463</td>
<td>906</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bengal</td>
<td>Colleges</td>
<td>2738</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eng. High Schools</td>
<td>43747</td>
<td>3831</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eng. Middle</td>
<td>37959</td>
<td>5032</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>84444</td>
<td>8969</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>North Western Provinces</td>
<td>Colleges</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eng. High Schools</td>
<td>4273</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eng. Middle</td>
<td>4273</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4496</td>
<td>726</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Oudh</td>
<td>Colleges</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eng. High Schools</td>
<td>1081</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eng. Middle</td>
<td>1081</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1207</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>Colleges</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eng. High Schools</td>
<td>453</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eng. Middle</td>
<td>2671</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3227</td>
<td>807</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>All the</td>
<td>Colleges</td>
<td>5334</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the Education Commission of 1882, enrolment of Muslims was generally very meager. Table.2.1 indicates the percentage of Muslim students’ enrolment compared to others in English colleges and Schools in six provinces under British India. The total number of students’ enrolment in the Madras province was 25058; out of this 870 students were Muslims. Meanwhile, enrolment of Muslim students in other provinces such as Bombay, Bengal, North – Western provinces, Oudh and Punjab were showing little signs of improvement. The alarming decrease in the percentage of enrolment highlights the various historical causes as well as the ideological differences of Ulamas. Such an indifferent attitude of the community as well as the aversion of the British towards the Muslims, were largely responsible for the complete ousting from Civil Service too.

**Representation of Muslims in the British Services**

In the second half of the 19th century, Muslims were treated as the main accused of the Mutiny of 1857. As a result, many Muslim families were assaulted to death or persecuted. So the British hardly had desired to include the Muslims in the prestigious British Indian Civil Service. Sir William Hunter in his book *Indian Musalmans* gave the data by which the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>above Provinces</th>
<th>Eng. High Schools</th>
<th>133561</th>
<th>12288</th>
<th>9.2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eng. Middle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>138895</td>
<td>124840</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
pitiably condition of the Muslims during those days could be gleaned. Hunter has shown the Muslim position in the three aristocracy departments such as Military, Revenue and Judiciary. The following chart shows the representation of Muslims and others in the services.

As a whole, Syed Amir Ali writes that up to this time, in 1793, high offices, fiscal as well as judicial were filled by Muslims. But now the higher executive appointments were reserved exclusively for Europeans. The following table is quite sufficient to learn the contemptible condition of Muslim representation in the colonial Indian Civil Services.

**Table 2.2**

**Representation of Muslims in the British Indian Services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of Posts</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>Hindus</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Covenanted Civil Services</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Judicial officers</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Assistant Commissioners</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Deputy Magistrates &amp; Deputy Collectors</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Income tax officers</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Registration Department</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Judges of Lower Court &amp; Subordinate Judges</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2.2 is the detailed statistics of gazetted posts during 1860 – 1870. Hunter categorically explained that representation of Muslims in the services is in a very pitiable position. Out of 1028 prestigious officers in the British Services, only 83 officers were hailing from the Muslim community. This was an irony in the political history of India. Hunter observed “a hundred years ago, the Musalmans were monopolizing all the important offices of the State”\(^{52}\).

Against this sorrowful condition of the community in India, a countrywide alertness was aroused. The Muslims of Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Oudh, Punjab and Madras strongly began to think of their incomparable backwardness. The distressed Muslims from Orissa submitted a petition to their Commissioner E.W. Malony appealing redressal of these grave grievances. It can be seen in the following lines.

"As loyal subjects of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, we have, we believe, an equal claim to all appointments in the administration of the country. Truly speaking, the Orissa Muhammadans have been leveled down and down, with no hopes of rising again. Born of noble
parentage, poor by profession, and destitute of patrons, we find ourselves in the position of fish out of water”.

It can be seen from the memorandum the reflection of a community, which was persecuted by an imperial administration. Earlier they were masters of the land for a very long period. Moreover, the Muslim intelligentsia across the country became aware of the deplorable condition of the community. Keeping this in mind, many memoranda were submitted to different parts of the country. The Muslims from Delhi addressed their grievance to the Governor General in the following form.

“We the Muslim inhabitants of Delhi have since sustained the extreme losses of life, property and honor. At present, we have absolutely nothing to feed our children and ourselves. There is no ceiling under which we could seek shelter against inclement weather, and no clothing to cover our bodies. Thousands of us not bearing the severities of climate perished last year and if nothing is done to protect us many more will die this season”.

When the British became politically and economically powerful, they began to interfere in the educational set up too. For instance, they extended all kinds of assistance to missionaries for the propagation of religion through educational institution. They sanctioned abundant funds to
facilitate English education and modern science through missionary agencies. Meanwhile the British confiscated or withdrew all types of endowments and Waqaf properties through which some sort of charity was chanelised from such institutions for the running of Islamic institutions. Thus enrolment of Muslim students for both Islamic and General education had begun to decrease.

As a result of this biased and discriminating policy of the British, the Muslims were forced to live in shabby conditions. Hence the community was deliberately excluded from the Civil Service. At this circumstance, the pioneer ulama of the time such as Shah 'Abd ul-'Aziz, Syed Isma'il Shahid, Muhammad Ishaq, Syed Ahmad Barelvi, Haji Imdad-ullah Muhajir Makki, Maulana Qasimi Nanautavi, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in Northern India and in Bengal Haji Shari'at-ullah, Titumir, Karamat 'Ali led the movement to teach and preach Islamic traditions and values amongst the Muslims. They devoted themselves to bring about a drastic change in the sphere of education.

**Advocacy of Muslim Intelligentsia**

There was no unanimity of opinion among the Ulamas and the Muslim intelligentsia about the approach of the community towards Western education. While some scholars would attribute that western
education would raise challenges to the *Iman* and *ikhlas* so that they may lose their religious pursuit gradually. On the contrary, from the last decades of the 18th century, a group of religious scholars had Mirza Abu Talib Landani\(^5\) (1752-1806), Abdu Rahim Dahri\(^6\), Lutf-ullah (1802-1854) responded to Western culture, particularly, as they were very fond of the English system of education, customs, and manners. Perhaps the first Muslim who wrote an autobiography in English was Lutf-ullah, who was born at Dara Nagar in Malwa on 4th November 1802. He was impressed by the Western civility, refinement and culture and admired their efficiency, capacity for hard work, sense of cleanliness and their punctuality.\(^7\) Accordingly, a lot of scholars took the initiative to disseminate this ideology.

**Shah Waliullah, the great Educational Reformer**

Shah Waliullah (1702-1763), *Mujaddid* in Islam of 18th century, was considered to be the one who succeeded in building a bridge between medieval and modern Muslim India. Since he was well aware of the religio-political and socio-economic disintegration of Muslims in India, he launched his two-fold reform movement. For the revival of Islam, Shah Waliullah desired to present Islam in its true form which does not admit extreme rigidity and reserve as depicted by the then theologians and the
misguided mystics (sufis), and to break away from the old order, replacing it by the new, to meet the requirement of the time. His religious movement was carried out through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and his educational reforms led to the emergence of many great centres of Muslim learning like Darul Uloom of Deoband in Uttar Pradesh province of India.

Shah Waliullah had seen the decline of Mughal rule in India and observed similar degeneration in other countries of Asia and Africa. The last pious and powerful ruler of India the Munhall king, Auranghazeb had already passed away in 1707 and the East India Company got the power to rule a part of Eastern India defeating ‘Sirajud Dawla’ at Plasse in 1757. Ultimately ‘Shah Waliullah’ came to the conclusion that ‘monarchist and imperialist tendencies were mainly responsible of the worsening State of affairs and he de-formulated basic principles for regeneration and reconstruction of life and human values’. In his book ‘Hujjatu llahil Baligha’ he laid down "labour is the real source of wealth" and "only those people deserve to possess wealth who put in labour whether physical or mental, for the sake of the country and society". All people, he believed, are equal and the position of the ruler of a State is no more than that of a common citizen in the matter of justice and freedom. Right to freedom,
security and property etc. are equal for all irrespective of religion, race or colour.\textsuperscript{59}

It should be noted that he propagated these ideas long before the ‘French, American and Soviet’ revolutions took place. This fact still lies buried under the dust of misinformation raised by Colonial historians. Due to the hypocrisy of modern history this Himalayan personality had been deprived of the deserved place in our modern syllabi or in history books.

\textbf{Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and the Muslim endorsement of Western Education}

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1871-1898) is the eldest of five prominent Muslim modernists whose influence on Islamic thought and polity was to shape and define Muslim responses to modernism in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Like the four-Syed Amir Ali (1849-1928), Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838-1897), Namik Kemal (1840-1888) and Sheikh Muhammad Abduh (1850-1905). Syed Ahmad Khan was deeply concerned with the state of Muslims in a world dominated by European colonizing powers.

Syed was popularly known as a Muslim educator and reformer; a man with versatile personality, jurist, author and founder of the \textit{Anglo-Mohammedan Oriental College} at Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh, India, and the
principal motivating force behind the revival of Indian Islam in the late 19th century.

It was a period of transition in the history of Muslim education in India which began from the last decades of 18th century. Some Muslim scholars had begun to show the green signal to disseminate Western learning within the community. Person like Mirza Abu Talib Landani and Syed Ahmad Khan were the forerunner of socio educational reformers of that period. Their influence on Islamic thought and polity was to shape and define Muslim responses to modernism in the latter half of the nineteenth century. In the history of India’s transition from medievalism to modernism, Syed stands out prominently as a dynamic force pitted against conservatism, superstition, inertia and ignorance. In the subcontinent, Ahmad Khan and his followers were the first champions of this reform agenda.

He was born in the twilight of the Indian Timuri era to a distinguished family. Two years before the birth of Ahmad Khan, his maternal grandfather, Khwajah Farid, had been appointed the Prime Minister of Emperor Akbar Shah with the high sounding titles of Dabir al-Mulk, Amin al-Daulah, Maslah Jang. His aristocratic inheritance inspired him to involve in a wide range of activities—from socio- religious to
education. He left a deep mark on the new Islam and science discourse through his writings and by influencing at least two generations of Muslims who studied at the educational institutions he founded.61

Amidst his strong demand for western education, he faced serious criticism from Muslim scholars and Ulamas of that time. They declared that ‘English was the language of hell and western education is a passport to hell.’ He was of the view that the Muslims in India should embrace such of the Western values as were healthy and morally sound.

In the meanwhile, some religious ulamas such as Abd ur-Rahim Dahri emphasized and wrote a booklet62 on the necessity to acquire English learning by the Muslims. He, like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, advocated Western leanings and addressed a Pamphlet to Lord Hasting regarding the introduction of modern learning through the medium of English language. He was of the opinion that modern knowledge cannot be disseminated through translation.63

Syed’s interest in education had begun soon after 1857. During the Mutiny, Syed Ahmad Khan was at Bijnor; there he saved the life of about twenty families of Europeans and Eurasians. He assured the Collector and Magistrate of Bijnor, Mr. Shakespeare by saying, "As long as I am alive,
you have no cause to worry”⁶⁴, through which, he established an irrefutable relationship with the British.

His ideas and views gradually developed in the form of an educational movement with the support of the British. In 1859, Syed established a Madarasa at Moradabad⁶⁵ and wrote a small pamphlet, both in Urdu and English, about the significance of general education. It was during the decade of 1860s, that Ahmad Khan developed his ideas of a “modern Islam” and a Muslim polity living under British rule.

In 1863, he published an appeal to all people of India regarding improvement of the educational system of the country. Syed perceived Muslims as backward and he felt the need of education. This period also saw an increasing degree of public involvement in the educational and social arenas. In 1864, January 9, Sir Syed convened the first meeting of the Scientific Society to support his movements at Ghazipur and set out the objectives of the society as follows.⁶⁶

1. To translate into such languages as may be in common use, those works on arts and sciences which, being in English or other European languages, are not intelligible to the natives;
2. To search for and publish rare and valuable oriental works (no religious work will come under the notice of the Society);

3. To publish, when the Society thinks it desirable, any periodical that may be calculated to improve the native mind;

4. To have delivered in their meetings lectures on scientific or other useful subjects, illustrated when possible by scientific instruments.

According to him, the vernacular schools run by the Government were utterly inadequate to serve the needs of the time. So he wanted to establish a “vernacular university” for the North Western Provinces but he was discouraged by the champions of Hindi who wanted such a university to teach in Hindi, rather than Urdu.

Ahmad Khan realized that the political realities of India dictated that Muslims should establish their own organizations. In May 10, 1866, he established The Aligarh British Indian Association. The inaugural session was held at the Aligarh office of the Scientific Society in the presence of a sizeable number of local landowners and a few European officers. The Association failed to achieve any degree of impact on the
decisions of the government and, one after the other, its plans were aborted.

While the British government announced assistance for persons traveling to Europe for educational and scientific purposes in 1868, most of the Muslims of northern India considered social contacts with Englishmen undesirable for their moral and religious integrity. Ahmad Khan had been elected an honorary Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society of London in 1864 and he decided to go to England himself to see the ways of the British in their homeland.

After a long seventeen month stay at England, Ahmad Khan returned to his home land on 2nd October, 1870 full of ideas and aspirations to lead his community to be on par with modern developments. During his stay in England, he visited the universities of Oxford and Cambridge and certain private schools, including Eton and Harrow; these would serve as models for his own Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College.

After his return to India, Syed started to implement his educational strategies in a scientific manner. In refutation to the work of Willim Muir’s Biography of Muhammad, Syed wrote *A Series of Essays on the Life of Mohammad* with burning heart against the outburst of Muir. He started a periodical *Tahdhîb al-Akhlâq* “to educate and civilize” Indian Muslims.
He remained in the judicial service until his early retirement in July 1876. After that, he settled in Aligarh where he established the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in 1877. He instituted “the Muhammadan Educational Conference” in 1886, which held annual meetings in various Indian cities. In 1920, the College became Aligarh Muslim University, an institution that had a decisive impact on the course of Islamic polity in India as well as on the educational history of India.

As an aid to his mission, Ahmad Khan decided to write a *tafsîr* because in all previous *tafsîr* literature, he “could only find grammatical and lexicographical niceties, statements concerning the place and time of revelation and descriptions of previous *tafâsîr*.” After long painstaking efforts, it was published in 1892. He was severely criticized by the ulama for the lack of qualifications to interpret the Qur’ân and Hadîth and the shallowness of his knowledge of Western science and its philosophical underpinnings was apparent from his own writings. According to him nature is the “Work of God” and the Qur’an is the “Word of God” and there could be no contradiction between the two.

However, after a long and eventful epoch of Muslim renaissance in India, the light had gone off in 1898. He was mourned by thousands those who had been taken out of their discontent and negligence in the Indian
subcontinent. Addressing a condolence meeting on his death, Professor T.H. Arnold remarked:

“Sir Syed called upon his people to rouse themselves out of the lethargy, the sloth, the ignorance, the degradation into which they had fallen, and behold! A new generation has arisen in response to his call.”^68

In spite of his life-long interest in educational matters, Ahmad Khan did not produce any new theory of education; he was merely interested in promoting modern education among the Muslims and enable them to shape to lives in tune with the trend of the world order.

**Problems of Muslims’ Education in India**

The current educational condition of Indian Muslims has alarmingly deteriorated despite the fact that they make up nearly 15 percent of the national population and have a glorious history of several centuries of enlightened rule that put India firmly on the world map, and are the second largest Muslim community in the world today.

Although, the community is improving day by day for the last two decades and are learning to stand on their own feet they have been deliberately placed in hard social, educational and political conditions ever since the historic defeat of Indians in 1857 Rebellion against the British
until this day. For instance, the number and percentage of Muslims in all government sectors of India has steadily declined from 31 percent in early 1947 to only 2.3 percent in 2001. The ruling class puts the blame on the community, while the facts are different in view of the gradual isolating trend imposed on the community. On the other hand, their attitude was compassionate towards Hindus and many were even inducted in the administrative services. In addition they even replaced Muslims by Hindus in Government services. There were some concessions for Muslims to enter in Government jobs, but after 1857 these concessions were withdrawn. It resulted in the formulation of Simla Delegation and formation of the Muslim League. The Delegation stated ‘there was a time when three Muslim Judges graced the Indian High Courts Mr. Mahmood in Allahabad, Mr. Amir Ali in Culcutta and Mr. Badruddin Tyabji in Bombay. Today (in 1906), with a larger number of graduates, pleaders, barristers and educated civilians, not a single Muslims has been found capable of occupying a judges seat in any of the High Courts in India.  

A graphic picture of Muslim deprivation also emerged from the studies done in recent years by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER). The findings have been summed up in two sentences:
"Muslims in India have a poor human development status. Widespread illiteracy, low income, irregular employment - implying thereby a high incidence of poverty is all pervasive among the Muslims."70

The First major problem faced by the community in terms of education was the anti-Muslim attitude taken by the British before independence. The political consequences of the Rebellion of 1857 further accelerated the hostility which led to a continuous struggle between the British and the Muslims. The rebellion had portrayed the Muslims as the main accused in the eyes of the British. The freedom loving Indian Muslims jumped into the struggle without considering their political future and possible alienation.

Consequently, in the post era of the Rebellion, Muslims were persecuted. Many were imprisoned, hanged, tortured and their properties taken away without any consideration of their status in life; whether a rebel or criminal, young or old. As a result, many Muslim families perished and those who survived were not less unfortunate. After the Rebellion of 1857, Lord Canning, described the situation in the following words:

"The indiscriminate hanging, not only of persons of all shades of guilt, but of those whose guilt was at the least
very doubtful, and general burning and plunder of villages, 
whereby the innocent as well as guilty, without regard of age 
or sex were indiscriminately punished.”

Indeed, the community could not be free from the clutches of the 
consequences of the Rebellion of this political tragedy till date. Their 
dignity being second-rated, their liberty being suppressed and their mind 
set being scattered. The British began to curtail the educational and 
employment opportunities of the community. Unprecedented under 
representation of the Muslims was observed in the covenanted services. In 
addition to this, the indifferent attitude of the Ulamas towards modern 
education made the pathetic picture of the community complete.

The Second significant problem of the Muslim community is its low 
income and filthy and poor living conditions. It could be seen in 
metropolitan cities that many Muslims bearing names similar to former 
Sultans are sleeping in the streets struggling for space with the street-dogs. 
The number of homeless and hopeless Muslims in the country is 
alarmingly increasing every day. Although the economic and social 
situation of Muslims is not the same throughout India, one cannot deny the 
fact that poverty and lack of genuine financial resources are hampering the
socio-economic and educational development of the community at every step.

Official data is, at least, enough to figure out that in post independent India, the Muslim community remained downtrodden economically in comparison to all other majority or minority communities. While comparing with the second largest minority in the country, the Muslims lag far behind with respect to all material benefits, particularly in education and employment. The Sachhar Committee has brought out the backwardness faced by the Muslims through various other indicators. In almost every three Muslim-dominated villages, one does not have a school. Nearly 40 per cent of the Muslim-dominated villages do not have any health facility. The maternal mortality rates, incidence of underweight children and anaemic mothers are comparatively higher among Muslims. Their nutritional status in terms of per capita calorie intake is also lower than the rest of the population. The Sachhar Committee has observed that Muslims are not only the victims of poverty, but have come to accept inequality and discrimination as their inevitable fate.

The Third problem is the absence of committed and genuine Muslim leadership in pre and post independent India. Excepting for a few,
the majority of Muslim leaders had neither consistency nor practical vision to consolidate and guide the community towards a better future. The present Muslim leaders are either puppets of the leading parties or they have no comprehension of the problems the Muslim community is actually facing in India.

At the time of partition, a sturdy demand was raised to dissolve the All India Muslim League in the Indian subcontinent and for all Muslims in the country to join the National Congress. The towering leader, Ismail Sahib strongly negated the demand and formed a new organization called IUML to work in the subcontinent in accordance with the provision of the Indian Constitution. K.A. Jaleel observes that the socio-educational awakening of Muslims in Kerala is due to the political presence of the IUML in Kerala.

The IUML in Kerala has played a significant role in the formation of the Government of Kerala, whether they have been led by the Left parties or the Right. The IUML’s presence as a formidable political party has truly given a feeling of social and political belonging to the Muslims in total.

According to K A. Jaleel, even the level of progress now seen in the community wouldn't have been possible without the League. "A
number of schools and colleges came up because at one time, the education minister was from the League,“ he says. Because almost all governments in Kerala were formed with the support of the League, the community benefited in terms of education.

Today, some states in the country, learning the lesson from Kerala, has taken the initiative to unite and consolidate the Muslim under a suitable political organization. It is a good sign for the Assamese Muslims, at least, who account for 30 percent of the state’s total population. Here a committed social worker and religious scholar - ‘Maulana Badruddin Ajmal Al-Qasmi’ is slowly becoming one of the key factors in Assam politics. He formed a new political party – ‘United Democratic Front’ (UDF) with support from 20 Muslim and non-Muslim organizations in September 2009. Now, they have one M.P. and 18 MLA’s. In an interview with this researcher Ajmal said that he had given top most priority for education to the Assamese. Whereas the Keralites are competing with computers, the Assamese Muslims are struggling with literacy. So Ajmal has promised in public to enable all Assamese, particularly the Muslims, to stand on par with the Keralites.

The Fourth problem of Indian Muslims indirectly impacts their education. This apparently implies the insecurity which is generated
within Muslim minds. Riots and communal violence have become the norm and a sad reality in Modern India. The majority of the victims of riots in India are Muslims. According to Mr. Ram Puniyani, ‘the data from 1961 to 1992 shows that during these four decades, 80 percent of the victims of communal violence have been Muslims’. Recently terrorism has been thought to be allegedly synonymous with the Muslim activities across the country.

The bloody massacre of Muslims in Gujarat in late February 2002 that led to the death of over 2000 Muslims is a ghastly reminder of organized violence with the tacit support of the ruling authorities. Mumbai based writer the late ‘Mr. Rafiq Zakaria has written with anguish about communal riots in India. According to him, it reached genocidal proportions in Gujarat in 2002. It is the continuation of the communal politics habituated by an extreme sect of Indians.

**Prospects of Muslim Education**

While all the matters discussed above come under the severe problems faced by the Muslim community in pre and post independent India, a gradual improvement in the education of Muslims is a happening phenomenon. The emergence of some premier Muslim educational institutions across the country such as Darul Ulyoom Duyuband, U.P,
Nadvathul Ulama Lucknow, A.M.U, Alighar, Jamia Millia Isamia, New Delhi in North, Calcutta Madarasa, in Calcutta, Madarasa Islamiya Shamsul Huda, Patna, Jamia Rahmaniya, Mongheer in the East, Jamia Nizamiya, Hyderabad, Darussalalm Omerabad, Madrasa Baquiyathu Salihath, Vellor, Madaras Aliya Arabic college, Kasargod, Rauzathul Uloom Arabic College, Farook, Santhapuram Islamiya College Malappuram in the South have tremendously improved the prospects of the community in the sphere of both streams of education.

Darul Ulum Deoband is ranked as the greatest institution of its kind in Asia and perhaps second only to the famous Al-Azhar University of Egypt. This great seat of Islamic learning has had an unrivalled place amongst Muslim religious institutions during this period. Maulana Qasim Nanautavi, Haji Muhammad Abid Hussain along with their enlightened friends, after the Rebellion of 1857, decided to found a madrasah at Deoband to preserve the learning of Islam. Thus, the foundation stone of the Dar ul-'Ulfrm had been laid on 30th May, Thursday, 1866 (15 Mubarram 1238) at Deoband, in Saharanpur District of Uttar Pradesh. At the time of the establishment of the madrasah, almost all the old madrasahs were either destroyed or seized or closed due to the curtailment of financial assistance to such institutions.
Initially, there were 16 students on the rolls. Gradually within a century, it had blossomed into a full-fledged university with a total strength of about 1500 students from different parts of the world and accommodating more than 50 teachers. A salient feature of the faculty of Darul-Uloom is its international Character. It has been attracting students from all over the world- Afghanistan, Central Asia, Turkey, Kazan, Danghisthan, Azerbaijan, China, Burma, Malaysia, Indonesia, Ceylon, Nepal, Iraq, Kuwait, Hijaz, yemen, South and East Africa and other countries. However the number of foreign students has dwindled after the partition of the country.

The syllabi of the Dar ul-'Uloom consisted of Qur'an, hadith, tafsir, fiqh and usul-e-fiqh. Along with these subjects, grammar, Arabic and Persian literature, logic, astronomy, kalaam, were also included in the syllabus. The entire syllabi consisted of 106 texts and the students were classed by the text books they studied rather than the year of their study. Darul Uloom aimed at promoting the following objectives:

1. To teach the Holy Qur'an, the Quranic exegesis, the Hadith, the Islamic beliefs and their traditionally accepted interpretation and all the necessary and useful allied subjects; to provide complete Islamic information to the Muslims; and
to render service to Islam through spiritual instruction, guidance and preaching.

2. To give training in Islamic actions and morals and to infuse the Islamic spirit in the lives of the students.

3. To preach and disseminate Islam and to preserve and defend the religion; to propagate Islam through writing and speech; and to cultivate in the Muslims through education and preaching the morals, actions and sentiments as those of "the best of decades" and the pious ancestors.

4. To keep off and avoid the influences of the government and to maintain the freedom of thought and knowledge.

5. To establish Arabic schools at different places for the dissemination of the religious sciences and to affiliate them to Dar ul-'Uloom.\(^{85}\)

However, the objectives were not completely fulfilled as envisaged; the institution has produced hundreds of scholars, reformers, writers, and leaders who were well known for their contribution in the Islamic fields, not only in India, but also in foreign countries. Similarly, students from all corners of India and other countries Australia, Holland, Canada, Nepal,
Bangladesh and some other places used to come to there to quench their thirst of Islamic learning.

Nadwatul Ulama Association held annual session in different cities. But it was soon felt that unless some practical steps were taken to translate these ideals into action, it will not be understood and appreciated by the Muslim masses. The first step, accordingly, was taken in 1898 (A. H. 1316) with the establishment of a Darul Uloom which soon earned for itself a place in India and abroad as a modern seat of Muslim theological learning. This institution was named Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama and was established at Lucknow which is the capital of Uttar Pradesh, the biggest state of India, and an important centre of Muslim culture for many centuries.

In the beginning, the academic supervision of the Darul 'Uloom was entrusted to Maulana Shibli Nomani under whose guidance and inspiration, the institution acquired an intellectual and literary atmosphere from its earliest days. It had developed the taste for scholarship and research and quickly reached the pinnacle of its fame. After the Maulana, one of his celebrated pupils and successors, Maulana Syed Sulaiman Nadwi, took his place. He discharged his responsibilities in the most admirable manner and the way Darul Uloom has profited from his unique
literary abilities, the width of his experience and his prestige and influence are simply unforgettable. When Maulana Syed Sulaiman Nadwi retired, this office was placed under the charge of Maulana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi.

Apart from the above discussed reformers in the country, Maulana Abdu Salam Nadvi, Haji Moinudin Nadvi, Moulavi Abu Zafar Nadvi, Moulana Abullaise Islahi Nadvi Moulana Syed Riyasat Ali Nadvi and so on were the most prominent personalities to propagate the reputation of the Naduva towards the world limelight.

The establishment of Mohammedan Anglo Oriental (MAO) College in 1875 marked one of the most important historical events in the educational and social history of modern India. Its establishment is considered as the first significant response of the Indian Muslims to the challenges of post-1857 era. It was an important vehicle in a process of social change among Muslims.

Moreover, it had another momentous prospect realized by the Community in the sphere of modern education. It had achieved its aims to a great extent, having undoubtedly proved that almost all the educated Muslim personalities across the country were Aligarh products. Had the
institution been established years back, the educational status of the Muslims would have been vastly different.

Under the colonial British rule, two dominant trends joined hands and contributed towards the birth of Jamia. One was the anti-colonial Islamic activism and the other was the pro-independence aspiration of the politically radical section of western educated Indian Muslim intelligentsia. In the political climate of 1920, the two trends gravitated together with Mahatma Gandhi as a catalyst. The anti-colonial activism signified by the Khilafat and the pro-independence aspirations symbolised by the non-cooperation movement of the Indian National Congress helped to harness creative energies and the subsequent making of Jamia Millia Islamia. Rabindranath Tagore called it “one of the most progressive educational institutions of India”.

Responding to Gandhiji’s call to boycott all educational institutions supported or run by the colonial regime, a group of nationalist teachers and students quit Aligarh Muslim University, protesting against its pro-British inclinations. The prominent members of this movement were Maulana Mehmud Hasan, Maulana Mohamed Ali, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari, and Abdul Majid Khwaja
The riots, following partition, which shook northern India affected Jamia; but not its campus. Gandhi observed that its campus remained “an oasis of peace in the Sahara” of communal violence. Maktaba Jamia alone lost books worth seven lakhs in arson. It was also considered that the foundation of Jamia is one of the most outstanding prospects of the community in terms of education.

Whereas the Deoband and Nadwa served the community in imparting religious education systematically, Aligarh Muslim University and Jamia Millia University have been contributing to modern education throughout the century in such a way these institutions have become the irrefutable prospects of Muslim education in India.

In 1884, in the Southern part of India, the Madarasa Baqiyath al Salihathu was established at Vellore by Moulana Shah Abdul Wahab of Athur with the help of his close associates. The alumni of this Madarasa spread out in South India and were engaged in popularising Arabic language and Islamic studies. In the very next year and onwards a large number of educational institutions started in many part of Southern India too.

In addition to the birth of these outstanding educational institutions all over the country, under the strength of this movement, a large number
of Arabic colleges as well as a number of modern educational institutions were also founded in Kerala. Ponnani, ‘the Makka of Malabar’, was known from very early times as the centre of Islamic learning. The genesis of these educational institutions in India during this particular period is being considered as the major prospects of the community, particularly, when the unprecedented socio-educational problems are faced by the community. The development of these institutions in the twentieth century have switched over to the unconventional religious education as well as the modern general education in the state under different Muslim managements and their consequences are dealt with in detail in the succeeding chapter.

End Notes


14 Rizvi, R.S., *Wonder that was India*, II Part, New Delhi, 1993, p. 126.


29 Lord Macaulay’s address to the British Parliament on 2nd Feb. 1835.


36 *Al Thaha, (Quran Shareef)* 20: 144.

37 Hadith reported by Bukhari and Muslims.


55 Mirza Abu Talib Landani was Laison Officer between Oudh Government and the British.

56 ‘Abd ur-Rahim Dahri was an English teacher at the Fort William College and had a prolific knowledge in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, English, Latin and Pushtu.


61 Notably the Aligarh College, established in 1881, which became a university in 1920 and which remained the mainstay of Muslim education in the Indian subcontinent until 1947.

62 The booklet was entitled *Arzdtis 'An appeal for the Study and Dissemination of the English language and Western Culture'*. 


64 Altaf Husain Hali, *Hayat-e Javed*, English. tran. K.H. Qadree and U. Mathew,
Delhi, 1979, p. 47.


72 *Sachar Committee Report* 2007.

73 *A Sample Survey Report* led by Abu Saleh Shariff, NCAER, New Delhi, 1999, p. 3.


75 Jaleel, K. A., prominent Muslim leftist and Former Vice Chancellor of Calicut University.

76 Jaleel, K. A., an Interview with Deepa’s blog, 2008.

77 *Ibid*.

78 Interview was held with Moulana Badrudeen Ajmal on 2010, March 5th at New Delhi.

79 Ram Puniyani, *Apportioning the Blame of Communal Riots*,
http://www.countercurrents.org


82 Ziayaud-Din A. Desai., *Centres of Islamic Learning in India*, New Delhi, 1978, P.16.
83 Ibid., p.19.


86 Bulletin of Naduvatul Ulama, 2005, p. 3.

87 Ibid.
