CHAPTER – VII

CONCLUSION
Education is a composite structure of knowledge of arts, science, customs, traditions and values transmitted from preceding generation to succeeding generation. During the mediaeval period the Madarasa system of education of the Muslims remained not merely the seat of learning of the Muslims only but also that of Hindus. But, when conditions changed during the modern period, unfortunately the transmission of the Madrasa system of education to the succeeding generation was not possible due to lack of advancement in the field of education. However, education as an indicator of social well-being has increased among the Muslims after a long debate, trial and efforts of the Muslim leaders and elites of the community in the twentieth century onwards.

In India the sons of Islam were remotely removed from the rest of the Muslim world, as they could not keep pace with their brothers outside in material as well as in intellectual advancement. Consequently, their attainments in education were not as high as it was expected. During the mediaeval period India was no way lagging behind the West. This condition was reversed only in the modern period, because the East had failed to cope up with the Western advancement in science and arts.

Before the introduction of Western education almost all requirements in public and private life of the Muslims ranging from religious rituals to the functioning of the state missionary were based on
the Madrasa system of education. Even among the Hindus there were many scholars and poets in Persian and Urdu language who derived their knowledge from this system of education, except the portions of learning Quran and Hadith, which were compulsory only to the Muslims. From such educational centres all kinds of knowledge were imparted to the students and hundreds of scholars and intellectuals were produced by this system. But the trend slowly changed after the dawn of modern period, there was a need for all around development in the field of education. This transition from mediaeval to modern period took place only after the advent of the Europeans in India.

The social condition and the demographic divisions of the Muslims of Tamil Nadu are different from their counterparts in North India. Among the three divisions namely the Rawthers, Maraikkayars and Deccani Urdu speaking Muslims, the first two groups are widespread in Tamil Nadu and contributed much for the promotion of the education of the Muslims especially in Tiruchirappalli and Thanjavur districts. The Muslims of these two districts are mostly agriculturists and traders. Their wealth and philanthropic mind made them contribute liberally to the promotion of the education in these regions.

The Muslims’ attitude towards Western education was very hostile in the beginning because of the social, cultural and religious reasons. The Muslims put themselves in isolation and kept away from the Western education because they felt that the British had ruined them politically by replacing them from ruling India, which made them see the British with inimical eyes. The British East India Company as a private body never took keen interest in the education of the Indians.
later they felt the need and took efforts to qualify the Indians for the posts of clerks. But the Muslims did not respond to it. As a consequence it affected the academic life of the Muslims. They thought that the aversion towards English men and avoidance of English language was no mean a loss to Muslims. On the contrary, the new generation of Muslims who came out of the portals and institutions of the secular education with their mindset remained altogether different from those of religious institutions? Moreover, the Muslims also thought that in the Western teaching there was no familial morals and values, fear of God thus, making the individual rigid and indifferent to the values and responsibilities towards the community. This opinion is not correct because the ethics of education are only to enlarge the horizon of knowledge and wisdom of an individual. It should not be viewed through socio-religious and cultural ethos. The Pre-British Indian educational systems of both Hindus and Muslims were primarily religious because of this reason they conceived a wrong idea on the Western education. Besides these reasons the Muslims were patriotic too.

When the British Government of India in general and the Government of Madras Presidency in particular paid more attention towards the education of the Indians, the Hindus were first to respond to it with the right spirit whereas the Muslims did not take it seriously. Because of this, they were lagging behind the Hindus in the Government appointments and other fields too. The Christian missionaries in India paid more attention to the Hindus than to the Muslims. The reason for this was the question of conversion was hardly possible with the Muslims. Inspite of the lethargic response of Muslims, the Government took various measures to improve the education of the Muslims. It
granted funds to start educational institutions; instituted schools specially meant for the Muslims, extended half fee concessions to the Muslim students and granted liberal scholarships from primary to the college level. Even after these measures the Muslims showed very less response. However, there was an appreciable change and advancement towards the end of the nineteenth century.

In the beginning of the twentieth century the Indian education development suffered because of the reactionary regime of Lord Curzon, but the situation changed soon after his reign. The introductions of Dyarchy in 1919, subsequently the formation of the Government in the Madras Presidency by the Justice Party were instrumental in the development of the education. The demand of the Justice party Government to transfer education as a State subject and the immediate sanction of this request by the British Government of India was an epoch-making development in the field of education. Following this, the Government encouraged the public to establish educational institutions for the people of their community. This was another turning point in the educational history of the Muslims. Many schools and colleges were started in the Madras Presidency by the Muslim philanthropists. The Government also took keen interest in the education of the Muslims, the Director of Public Instruction, the various District Collectorates and the Department of Education and Public Health were ordered to work for the development of education among the Indians in general and Muslims in particular. Due to these measures a number of schools and colleges were established all over the Madras Presidency.
There was a significant change in the attitude of the Muslims towards the Modern education. The enlightened Muslim leaders and the elites of the Muslim community propagated the importance of the Western education among the Muslims and made them to understand without its help the progress of the community is impossible. The Muslim Newspapers and Magazines did yeomen service in the promotion of education of the Muslims. They highlighted the issues and demands of the Muslims in their Newspapers and attracted the attention of the Government towards the grievances. The Muslim philanthropists founded trusts and associations for the cause of education. The entry of the philanthropic effort was a major turning point in the growth of education of the Muslims. As a consequence to their efforts there was a good response from the community. Financial help, endowment scholarships were instituted and made available to the Muslim pupils at all levels of education. The Government had sanctioned lands and sites for building schools and colleges, building grants were sanctioned to construct infrastructures for the educational institutions. Local Governments and local funds were diverted towards the development of education of the Muslims, where the Muslim population was more.

The Government orders were passed when and wherever required to implement educational reforms. The Government also paid attention to the emoluments of the teaching and non-teaching staff of the educational institutions and granted salary grants. The schools must have good teachers to teach the students otherwise the basic cause of the education will get collapsed. So, the Government allotted seats for the Muslim students in the Teacher Training schools. The Muslim inspectors both ladies and gents were appointed to supervise the Muslim
educational institutions. As the Muslims attach more importance to their religion, religious instructions were allowed in the schools specially intended for the Muslims and moral instructors were appointed by the Government. Arabic and Urdu languages were taught and Urdu was allowed as the medium of instruction where the Urdu speaking people were thickly populated.

Whenever there was a problem or crisis in the field of education or some concessions taken back by the Government, the Muslim leaders appealed to the Government even fought with the Government and solved the problems or preserved the concessions which were given already. The Muslim inhabitants of a village or locality submitted their grievance petitions and memorandums to the British Government and got the things done in their favour. The old Nawabs and Princes whose dynasties were once ruling over the various fragments of the Madras Presidency also contributed their mite for the cause of education. For example, the Arcot Nawab (Azam Jha) and the Maratta Prince of Thanjavur had donated lands and extended financial support to establish Madrasas and schools for both boys and girls in their respective regions.

The efforts of British Government to improve the education of the Muslims and the response of the Muslims received a momentum in the first half of the twentieth century. An overall assessment was made with the help of all kinds of the Government records, which shows a big change in the condition of the education of the Muslims, which was far better than their condition before the implementation of the Government measures. The comparative study and analysis made on the three religious groups namely Hindus, Muslims and Christians shows that the
education among the Muslim males was better than their Hindu counterparts whereas the improvement of the education of the Muslim female was not up to the expectation. For this pitiable condition of the female education, the Government could not be blamed.

The steps and measures taken by the Government in the field of education were disturbed due to the Second World War, because the Government diverted its attention and funds for the purpose of war. The freedom movement of our nation received a greater momentum during this period, so education reforms were not paid much importance. After the independence, as far as the education of the Muslims was concerned, no separate measures were taken. The free Indian Government followed the policy of secularism and the educational developments and reforms were implemented generally. At this juncture, in the absence of separate measures for the Muslims, the Muslim philanthropic magnanimity came to the rescue of the education of the Muslims.

The earliest private effort taken in 1919 in Tamil Nadu, even to say in South India was by the Vaniyambadi Muslim Educational Society. Private efforts had been revived in the middle of the twentieth century to establish educational institutions in various places of the Madras Presidency. Between 1950 and 1960 a good number of institutions in the school and collegiate levels had been established in the various districts of the Madras state to serve the need of the society. The Muslims and Christians were given minority status in the new Constitution of India. The Christians took full advantage of the minority rights more than the Muslims. In the absence of liberal external contributions to Muslim Organisations in India, the Muslims had necessarily to depend upon the inland resource only. Naturally the Muslims were lagging behind in the field of education.
The Muslim philanthropic efforts and establishment of educational institutions in Tiruchirappalli and Thanjavur districts of the Cauvery delta region are highly appreciable. Now they cater to the needs of hundreds of students both Muslims and non-Muslims not only of that locality but also from all over Tamil Nadu; especially to say about Jamal Mohammed College of Tiruchirappalli and the Khadir Mohideen College of Adirampattinam in Thanjavur district. The latter institution established by M.K.N. Madrasa trust, is located in an offshore coastal area serving the cause of education to the local and rural population. But for this college the education would have been denied to many and they would not have become graduates and postgraduates in this region. Even though the college was established for the benefit of minority Muslim community, in reality it is serving to the need of the all others too. In fact out of the total strength of 2,000 students studying in Khadir Mohideen College in the academic year 2004-05 only 400 students were Muslims.

The educational service (both modern and religious) of the Marraikkayars of Adirampattinam to the people of this remote offshore region is a thankless job. Even though there were many rich people in other communities only the Marraikkayars pioneered the cause of the education. The Muslim population of Tamil Nadu is not even one-tenth to its total population, yet they have made considerable contribution to the growth of education of the State. But in quite contradiction to this fact the Muslims are still lagging behind in the advancement of education.
The spread of Modern education in Tiruchirappalli and Thanjavur districts had brought in its train socio-economic changes. The result of the comparative analysis of the conditions present some fifty years ago with that of the conditions prevailing now shows that the Muslims women of these regions have progressed in their education to some extent. However, they have still a long way to go to achieve their empowerment. It is also true that their conditions are improving day-by-day and far better than their position some twenty years back. The general life style and status of the Muslims have improved and their industries and business received a modernization as a result of their educational development. An overall assessment of the social, economic and political conditions of the Muslims of these regions definitely showed an improving trend because of their educational empowerment and there is a wide scope to progress further in the future also. The impact of Modern education has been very much realized by the Muslims of Tiruchirappalli and Thanjavur districts, their educational institutions bear a witness to it.

In the survey done as a part of this thesis and from the personal experience, it is found that the Muslims of Thanjavur district are more literate than their counterparts in other districts. This is mainly due to the contact and affinity with the Brahmin community of this district in their day-to-day life especially in their trade activities. They happened to learn more, which elevated them to a higher place in literacy than the Muslims of other districts. This ultimately resulted in making the district to stand first in literacy during the Madras Presidency period and even now in Tamil Nadu.
The advantages of the modern education are understood by the Muslim community. The Muslim intellectualism changed its pattern from medievalism to modernism; this does not mean that Muslim intellectualism is useless, but not up to date. The Indian literature, both Hindu and Muslim, of Pre-British India did not include any work on nationalism. One of the causes for the rise of Indian nationalism, especially among the Muslims was the enlightenment attained through the English education. Syed Murthuza, Khaja Mian Rawther and Jamal Mohammed of Tiruchirappalli and Abdul Hammeed (I.N.A) and Ibrahim Maraikkar (martyr) of Adirampattinam deserve a special mention here. The Muslim society felt the need to change its policy, attitude and superstitious beliefs about the Modern education because of the efforts taken by the intellectuals of their community. The Muslims feared in the beginning that the learning of Western education will bring an opportunity to the Muslim youth to inculcate the European manners and habits. But this hypothesis formed in general was not correct. For example, both Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Abul Kalam Azad were well-learned men; Jinnah developed western manners and customs whereas Abul Kalam Azad did not develop such things. So, inculcation of manners and habits purely depends upon the individual taste and not just by learning Western education.

The Muslim community came to know about the distortion of Indian history by the Britishers and other vested interested forces only after learning Modern education. The study of the English language thus provided an opportunity to the Muslims to study the social libertarian, natural scientific and rationalist philosophical literature in that language. Because of the Western learning the educated Muslims came to know the English democratic principles like ‘all are equal before law’ and the
reversal of the same by the Britishers in India, which induced more Muslims to take active participation in the freedom movement. The Muslims advanced their intellectualism by learning the knowledge of modern scientific world through their study of English education and the same was transmitted to their own people.

The introduction of the Modern education and the acceptance of the same by the Muslims opened a new era in the educational advancement of the Muslims. As a result of this, Muslims attained progress in economic, political and social fields. Further, English learned Muslim middle class and intelligentsia rose in the Muslim community. The acceptance of Western education by the Muslims proved that the Muslims were not indifferent to knowledge or wisdom, but they were indifferent to British and their cultural traits only.

Despite the development in the education of the Muslims, the educated middle class in the community is very less. An overwhelming population of the Muslim community still remains illiterate. The percentage of educated women folk in Muslim community is very meagre. The main reasons for this state of condition are their poverty and oppression of the women by men. The affluent group of the Muslim society is not ready to devote their resources for the welfare of the community. The step to eliminate mass poverty prevailing among the Muslims is not yet begun. Particularly in Tamil Nadu, a comprehensive plan of socio-economic reconstruction is not tried by the Muslims. A free and economically prosperous Muslim society alone could evolve a promotion of education and social services. It is not yet developed up to the requirement of Muslim community.
The conditions of the educational institutions of the Muslims are not up to the mark. Those who have started educational institutions, excepting a very few, in due course of time became educational entrepreneurs. The real visionary and passionate philanthropic attitudes in the affluent group of Muslim community have not come up with full bloom. Therefore the liquidation of mass illiteracy still remains as a problem before them.

There is a discontentment prevailing among the Muslims that the Central and the State Governments are not giving importance to the educational and economical development of the Muslims as it is given to the majority community. They demand for the right implementation of the Fundamental Rights guaranteed to the Muslim minority under Articles 26 to 30 of the constitution. In the course of the survey the researcher met some Muslims who opined that the Muslims should become a self-sufficient and self-dependant community without always having to rely on the Governments, which call themselves secular. And the Muslims should emulate the example of the Parsi, the Sikh and the Christian communities in making themselves non-dependant on the Government in the field of education. They also said that there was still enough wealth available with the affluent members of the Muslim community, provided that they cease to be niggardly for the cause of education and if properly materialized will take the community towards the empowerment and positive progress for the betterment of the community.
In the technical and technological field also, the picture is gloomy, none better so far as the Muslim minority community is concerned there is still great need every year to bring home to the Government the just needs of the minority Muslim community in the matter of admissions to the medical, engineering and other professional colleges. The community does not secure its due share even on population ratio. The Muslims should demand it as their legitimate right and press upon the Government.

The Muslim educational institutions established by the philanthropic munificence of the Muslim community also cater very largely to the needs of the majority community. Restrictions imposed in the matter of the medium of instruction, the matter of admissions, with regard to reservation of seats for the minority community, by whom these institutions are established and above all in the matter of inclusion of religious instruction in the regular curriculum are to be liberalized by the State Government. The Universities are playing an important role in the promotion of higher education; if they liberalize the conditions on minority institutions there is a scope for improvement and expansion of the educational activities of the minority communities.

As a self proclaimed secular state, India shows equal respect to all religions and maintains equal distance from all religions. But there has been violation of this principle in the recent years; it changes from one Government to another. Moreover there is an ambiguity in the case of India’s domestic policy and affirmative action to uplift the Muslim community. According to India’s constitutional setup Hinduism as understood includes the Sikhs, the Buddhists and the Jains. Schedule
castes and schedule tribes also come under the fold of Hinduism. But Muslims want to keep their religious identity and remain as a separate group. Most of the Muslims in India are converts from various sects in India especially from the downtrodden people. So, as a social justice, the reservation quotas and concessions extended to other sects may also be extended to the Muslim community as well.

The problem of religious education has assumed an uncompromising proportion towards secular education. This apparent conflict has to be solved, for Muslims there are no watertight compartments for religious and secular education, as such. These two aspects of education require to become integrated into one healthy whole, so that the system of education that is imparted in several theological colleges. Madrasas and seminaries becomes useful for the students in their every day life, not merely to lead a pious life but also to enable them to eke out their livelihood in an honourable manner. Mere employment as Moazzins and Pesh-Imams in mosques or as religious instructors in Maktabs and schools will never solve the economic problem of a Muslim in the present context of the world. It is also an object of an educational system to prepare students for practical life.

The world has become competitive in every walk of life and that the Muslims could not survive if they do not rise to the occasion. They should face the challenges with all efficiency and such efficiency can be attained only through their education. There should be an “All-India Muslim Educational Association” to look after all the educational economic and cultural interests of the Muslim community in India as a whole. Association of this kind need not concern itself with politics;
instead it should have members from all parties, so that when a problem arises it can deal it with political standpoint. There was already an organization existing in the name of “All-India Educational Conference”, but after independence it became lifeless and the organization lost its direction and pace. It has become inactive and it has ceased to serve many useful purposes for various reasons. It should be rejuvenated and brought to full-fledged action.

The most important matter to be considered by the Muslim community with zeal and earnestness is women’s education especially their higher education. Ninety nine percent of the Muslim girls are not given the chance of pursuing their higher education; this is a very deplorable condition of the Muslim community. In the perspective of prejudice towards female education, it is surmised that almost the whole country has long been the victim of narrow mindedness, and aversion to female education. But the Muslims have been more ruthless and conservative. A good reason for illiteracy and backwardness of Muslims has been that they had no penchant for female education, but this has changed now. Now-a-days the Muslim girls are coming forward to take up the advantages of the higher education. Early marriages, non-availability of suitable bride groom (if the girl has higher educational qualification) and appalling poverty are some of the greatest stumbling blocks in the path of the education of women. It should be removed with all efforts of the community.

Some years ago, the attitude of Muslims towards female education was very bad which could be gauged by an instance of event that occurred in a liberal institution such as Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College where Sheikh Abdullah (an exponent of the Muslim
female education) put forth a proposal to establish a school for the girls. His proposal was vehemently opposed by the conservative Muslims. By the organized efforts of Sheikh Abdullah a girls’ school was established in 1907, which is today a unique residential institution for the female education in the all India level. Nearly 4,000 girls from various parts of the country from the primary to the higher level are receiving their education from that institution. Like this, in Tamil Nadu Justice Basheer Ahmed Syed was the pioneer of the promotion of Muslim girls’ education. He founded SIET College for women in Madras (this is now called as Justice Basheer Ahmed Syed College for Women) in 1951 unmindful of the criticism commented on this effort. He could be called as ‘Sir Syed Ahmed Khan of South India.’ In the last few years, the Muslims had realized the significance of women’s education and are paying their attention to it. Some of the Muslim Organizations have stressed their demand for the creation of a Muslim Women’s University and the Anjuman-i-Islam in particular even prepared the plan for setting up a Muslim Women University in Maharasstra or in Chennai. The progress of the community concerned is not merely with the male population alone, but largely by the liberal education of the women also, and it has to be realized by the Muslim community.

The Muslim community of Tamil Nadu has a unique characteristic feature in the field of education, for example, even though the it has only 35 lakhs of Muslim population, it has 22 Arts and Science colleges to its credit whereas Uttara Pradesh which has more than three crores of Muslim population has only 29 Arts and Science colleges to its credit. This shows the enthusiasm and the zeal of the Muslims of Tamil Nadu in the promotion of education to their community.
In the recent years, the curriculum in Hindi belt states was given a communal colour; because of this trend the Muslim children keep aloof from the Government schools whereas in Tamil Nadu there is no such attempt. There is a scope for bright and better future for the education of the Muslims, provided they come forward and devote their energy and resources for the cause of education. Whenever there is a provocation and inimical acts of the opponents to the Government measures and reforms for the welfare of the minority community, the Government should take a firm stand and implement them with out any hesitation.

The main difference between the Muslims of North and the Muslims of South especially of Tamil Nadu is the Northern Muslims emphases much on traditional and religious system of education whereas the Southern Muslims are afford to meet the demands of the modern age and opt more for the Western educational system. But this does not mean that they have no liking for religious education, instead they understand the need of the hour. Generally the educational dropout among the Muslim children is more than other communities and the cause for this state of affair is their poor economic condition. To eliminate this drop out condition attention must be paid by the affluent people of the community to provide them technical and professional courses to earn their livelihood and emancipate themselves from poverty. According to a survey report, in Tamil Nadu, if 100 Muslim children are admitted in the first standard, the number decreases to 30 when they reach the fifth standard. So, measures must be taken to bring back the 70 per cent dropout into the fold of education.
The Muslim community has to impress upon the Government with homogenous effort to assert and enforce its fundamental rights on education as dignified citizens with the sense of honour and self-respect. The Muslim community should also take up the full responsibility for the education of its youth, both men and women, from the beginning to the end, without purely depending upon Government assistance or grants. The Muslim community should traverse and explore the resources of the community and shall find the funds in ample measure. The community must so organize as to be self-reliant and self-dependant and survive the struggle for existence in this competitive world. This could be achieved only through a liberal education in Arts, Sciences and Technical fields, to the boys and girls of the community.

Moreover, the Muslims have to concentrate more on imparting knowledge to their youth in the field of information technology also. The Muslims do not have proper information about the Muslims Managed Educational Institutions spread all over the country. They are under the general impression that the community is far aloof from advanced education. Hence, an information centre like ‘Guidance Cell’ should be established so as to supply proper information and counseling to the Muslim students. The Muslim community must show itself that it has come to the conclusion that Muslims have included education into their agenda and despite their limited resources. If the Muslim intellectuals happen to come in a big way and enthusiastically for the guidance of institutions established for the welfare of the community, it would certainly gear up the educational, social and economical future of the Muslims of Tamil Nadu.