CHAPTER V

DEVELOPMENT OF MADRASA EDUCATION UNDER SUNNIS
The advancement of religious education in Kerala was effectively started in the 19th and 20th century by religious reformative leaders. But their reformative ideas were not meaningfully absorbed by most of the orthodox Muslim society. Since the reformation leaders were, to a great extent, against the traditional and long-established values of the society, it could be seen that reformative ideas had no significant effect upon the larger masses. In this situation the people who advocate the orthodox values contribute still to the religious and cultural realm of Kerala societies in their own ways are known as Sunnis\(^1\). The word Sunni literally means those who follow the Sunnath, the traditions of Prophet Muhammad and his followers\(^2\).

It was already stated that the Islamic educational reform movement had been led by individual scholars at the initial stages. Similarly, those Ulamas\(^3\) who opposed the movement had been working individually. When the former organized themselves, the latter also resorted to organized work. Thus no sooner had the Kerala Jamiyyat Ulama been founded than the Sunni Ulama formed a similar organization namely Samastha Kerala Jamiyyat Ulama for upholding the traditional Islamic values. At this stage, it was easy to perceive the continuity of

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\(^1\) Sunni Islam refers primarily to the customary practice of Prophet Muhammad. The term Sunni derives from Sunnath and has the general meaning of the customary practice. This practice, this Sunnath is preserved in the Hadith, the tradition that consists of the accounts of what the Prophet said or did and sometimes with his tacit approval of an action.


\(^3\) Ulamas were the religious leaders of the Muslim community. The Ulamas enjoyed respectable position in Muslim society.
the traditional values inherent in Kerala society at large. It is really odd that we had failed to give an effective religious education to a community so sensitive to religious education.

However, we have to take into account the socio-political situation in Kerala in those days while discussing such pertinent issues. It is true that the socio-political situation was not at all conducive to giving a fruitful religious education especially, to those who had converted themselves into Islam at the time. Still it was encouraging and at the same time wonderful that the religious scholars could progress much on the way to educating the masses.

Many organizations came forward aiming at Muslim reformation in the 19th and 20th centuries. The reasons behind such an advancement of reformative movements may be different, but it is a fact that most of the Islamic communities had not yet accepted the reformative ideas disseminated all across Kerala. Most of the Muslim communities still subscribe to traditional ideas and so the scholars of such groups are reluctant to join such reformative movements and support their ideas.

In the light of the Islahi movements gaining momentum in Kerala a new movement called 'Kerala Jamiiyat Ullama' was formed. In the early stage, most of the religious scholars participated in the movement. Despite their allegiance to the new organization, they found themselves uncomfortable with most of the

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ideas discussed in the 'Jamiyyat Ulama;' so it led to the formation of a new scholars' movement under the leadership of K.P. Muhammed Meeran Musaliyar.

Consequently, a convention to activate the movement was held in Kozhikode town hall under the presidency of Sayed Shihabudeen Kunjikkoya Thangal. It was in 1926 and most of the religious scholars all over Kerala attended the convention and the name of the organization turned out to be Samastha Kerala Jameatul Ulama. The office bearers of the organization included Sayed Abdul Rahman Ba Alavi Mullakkoya Thangal, A.P. Ahamadkutty Musaliyar Pangu, K Muhammad Abdul Bari Musaliyar Valakkulam, K.M. Abdul Khadar Musaliyar, P.K. Muhammed Meeran Musaliyar Mangadappallippuram, P.V. Muhammad Musaliyar and P.K. Muhammad Musaliyar, and in total it came to 40 out of which Musavara of Samastha was elected.

By the year 1934 the organization got established and registered under the Ulama Charitable Society Act. A constitution for the above organization was accepted by which anyone who has undergone a religious curriculum consisting of Alfiyah (Arabic grammar), Fathul Muin (Karmashasthram), Jalalaini (commentary of Alfiyah, Samastha Kerala Islam Matha Vedhyabhysa Board, Jubilee Souvenir, 2002, p.10.

7 Ibid.

8 Constitution of Samastha Kerala Jameatul Ulama, p.2.

9 Musavara it is an Arabic word that means a committee of religious leaders.

10 Kalpadukal, op.cit., p.10.

Quran) etc. was eligible for its membership. It stipulated that only those Ulamas who could cooperate with the government were eligible for membership of the Samastha.

The Samastha used the method of public lecture to express views on Islam and on rare occasions came out with pamphlets for explaining the various issues raised by other Muslim sects. In addition to the Mujahids, the Samastha had to confront a number of movements and organizations. The earliest among them was Ahmediya Movement (Qadiyanism). Like Mujahids, the Sunni Ulama was in the forefront to oppose Qadiyanism and emphatically declared that they were outside the pale of Islam. During the mid of 1940s when the Jamaat-e- Islami began its work here, the Samastha vehemently opposed its ideology. Various kinds of thoughts existed among the Muslims in Kerala during the beginning of the 20th century.

The present position of the Samastha Kerala Jame at Ulama and the whole progress it has attained are due to the sincere activities of many Islamic religious scholars, among whom Parel Ahammadkutty Musaliar was the looming figure. He was known as a writer, poet and orator of much reputation. And he had

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12 Ahamadiya a messianic movement in modern Islam. The Ahamadiya has been one of the most active and controversial movements since its inception in British India in 1889. Mirza Gulam Ahmad, is the founder of the Ahamadiya movements in Islam.
14 ‘Samastha Uthbhavavum Valarchayu’ (Mal), Samastha Kerala Jame at Ulama 60th Annual Souvenir, 1985, p.40.
served as the general secretary of Samastha Kerala Jame at Ulama and had also started Al-Bayan magazine. His contribution to the development of Madrasa education is worth mentioning in all respects. He was a postgraduate in religious education from Bakhiyathul Swalihat, the apex religious institution at the time.

Ahammed Koya Chaliyethi was also one of the great personalities who worked behind the organization of Samastha Kerala Jame at Ulama. He started his religious education from the Dar of Ali Musaliyar, who had been the forefront leader of the Khilafat Movement and the Mappila Rebellion, and the rest of his education was under Chalilakath Kunjahammad Haji and a scholar from Madras, who was also the Mufthi of Shamsul Ulama Moulana Mufthi Muhammed. Later he moved over to Velloor Latifiya College, one of the best institutions in South India in those days, and completed his Nizamiya syllabus. He also served in the capacity of college lecturer at Riyazul Jinan College at Thirunelveli in Tamilnadu.

It was after such a long period of academic and professional life that he came to Kerala. He was able to identify the major problems in religious education and succeeded in bringing about wonderful changes in the same, by which he could also promote the onward march of the Samastha. However, he

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16 *Baquiyathul Swalihat* is an important Arabic college situated at Velloor in Thaminad District. During that period this college was considered as one among the important highest religious educational institutions in India.
17 Kalpadukal, *op.cit.*,p.16.
18 *Nizamiya* is an Arabic degree given from the *Lathifiya* Arabic College Vellore.
was hard against the arguments of the modern religious reformers among the Muslim community and even countered all the arguments based on traditional religious norms and premises.

Another important leader, Kanniyathu Ahammed Musaliyar was very explicit simply by the fact that he occupied the post of the president of the *Samastha* from 1967 to 1993. Ahammed Musaliyar had been a luminary disseminating basic Islamic ideas to the students all across Kerala. He had served in the capacity of *Darul Ulloom Mudris* from the 1930s up to 1970s; and from 1941 to 44 at Mattur, in 1949 at *Ponnani Juma at Mosque* in the post of *Mudris*. In 1967 he became the principal of *Jamia Nooriya Arabic College* at Pattikkatu and in 1973 at *Ummathoor Sakafathul Islam Arabic College*, Parakkadavu.

E.K Aboobakker Musaliyar, the stalwart of *Samastha Kerala Jameat ul Ulama* is a cult figure both in Kerala and outside, especially through many religious dialogues with the thinkers belonging to different sections in the religion. He was highly critical of the misreading of the *Quran* and *Hadith* by the *Qadiyanis* sect. He had been the general secretary of the *Samastha Kerala Jameat ul Ulama* from 1957 to 1996, till his last breath. However, *Samastha Kerala Jameat ul Ulama* has turned out to be the best and foremost influential organization in Kerala.

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19 *Mudiris* means religious teacher in the *Dars*.
As the *Shura*\(^{22}\) comprises of the most venerated scholars, its decrees have been held secret by it admirers. Thus within a short span of time it became the symbol of a large section of Muslims\(^{23}\). Even today there are a number of sub-organizations under it such as 'Samastha Kerala Vidyabyasa Board', the 'Samastha Kerala Sunni Yuvalanasangam' and 'Sunni Students Federation'.

Presently the 'Samastha Kerala Jame at Ulama' has become the most dominant organisation working in the field of religious education among the Muslims in Kerala. The 'Samastha Kerala Islam Matha Vidhyabyasa Board' founded in 1951 with the aim of initiating many educational activities is now on the track in giving a new light to those concerned with religious education\(^{24}\).

The 19\(^{th}\) annual meeting of the *Samastha* was held under the presidency of Moulana Muhammed Habibulla Sahib took its wonderful step in organizing a board for *Madrasa* education. The subsequent meet held at Kozhikode in 1951 March 23 to 25 also took a decision to propose a unified a syllabus for religious education. The meeting held at Vazhakkulam Jamaat mosque came forward with various steps on how to work and also the mode of operation and finalised its decisions in the following way\(^{25}\);

\(^{22}\) The *Shura*, the supreme body of the *Samatha Kerala Jame at Ulama* pronounces decrees on every matter relating to the Muslim public in respect of religious matters.

\(^{23}\) M. Abdul Samad, *op. cit.* p.133.

\(^{24}\) Vakkath Abdulatheef Musaliar and Abdusamad Faizy,(ed.), *Ezhupathu Pinnitta Samastha* (Mal.), p.29.

\(^{25}\) Kalpadukal, *op.cit.*,p.85.
To promote Madrasa education and to establish them at the new places.

To unify all the institutions under Samastha.

To prepare necessary textbooks and other materials.

To establish training centres for the teachers of religion.

To recognize the Madrasas and also to bring about an effective examination system and also to frequent the Madrasas whenever needed.

A syllabus committee also has been organized at the same meeting; the preparation of textbooks and syllabus was entrusted to the committee. The syllabus committee was assigned with the task of preparing syllabus for one to five classes. The important syllabus committee members were Paravanna Moideen Kutty Musaliar, K.V Muthukoya Thangal, K.M Kunjimusa Musaliar, O. Abdurahman Musliar, and P. Aboobakkar Nisami.

The board meeting of the members held in Tanoor in 1956 incorporated many positive changes in the syllabus up to 5th form and the syllabus for classes up to the 8th standard was also designed. It is true that the syllabus has undergone many positive changes over the years. But the present syllabus even up to the 10th standard very effective and compact.

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27 'Vaikjanika Veplavathinu Thiri Koluthiya Vidyabhysa Board', Kerala Jame at Ulama 60th Annual Souvenir (Mal.), 1985, p.35.
28 Pinagode Abubakkar op.cit., p.34.
The Madrasa Board of Education has very precise and practical objectives as per the bylaws of the board, which state that the board is subordinate to the Mushavara of Samastha and thus has its final word over everything.

The ideal principle of divine Sunnath advocated by the Samasth Kerala Jamatul Ulama has to be uniform in all the Madrasas and Dars in Kerala.

The curriculum and the textbooks in line with it meant for all the Madrasa and Dars are to be published by the board.\(^{29}\)

All the Madrasas and Dars seeking recognition under the board are to be recognized and an acknowledgement is to be granted to the institutions.

The officials are to make sure if the recognized Madrassas and Dars are running effectively and up to the bylaw of the board\(^{30}\).

The administrative body of the directors comprises of the following members- elected members not less than twenty from the Samastha Mushavara; members not less than forty from the men who are loyal and devoted to the Samastha and who have something to do with the running of the Madrasas; elected members not less than twenty from the central Jameat-ul-Muallimeen, all coming to not above 80 which from the general body plus twenty six elected members from the general body itself - they all constitute the board of directors\(^{31}\).

\(^{29}\) Constitution of Samastha Kerala Islamic Educational Board, p.2.  
\(^{30}\) Ibid. 
\(^{31}\) Kalpadukal, op.cit.,p.87.
The *Samastha* had to face so many obstacles on the way ever since its inception especially from the traditional system of religious education oriented in a *Gurukula* system. Hence the priests tuned up to the traditional system of education were reluctant to be part of the *Samastha*.

It was on 26 August, 1952 that the *Madrasas* came under the board of education. It was *Edakkula Bayanul Islam Madrasa* that first got registered under the *Samastha Madrasa Board*, following which so many *Madrasas* in different parts of Kerala came forward to join the board and started operating under its rules.\(^{32}\)

The Board suggested many schemes to improve the quality of *Madrasa* teaching. They stimulated certain Islamic educational qualifications for the appointment of *Madrasa* teachers. But they received only a small amount as salary, which was quiet insufficient for their livelihood. That was why usually people from the lowest strata of Muslim community chose this profession. The necessary income for the expenses of the *Madrasas* were generated by each *Mahal*.

However the *Samastha* has really paved the way for a socio-cultural reawakening in the whole society bringing about extensive changes in the realm of religious education. The influence of the *Samastha* has recently been extended to places even outside Kerala like Lakshadweep, Andaman, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil nadu, Pondicherry and also in countries like Malaysia, UAE, UAE.

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Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and thus the role of the Samastha is so vital and indispensable in the sphere of Islamic education.

The influence of the Samastha all over Kerala is very explicit, especially in the total number of students studying at the Madrasas coming under its jurisdiction. There are about 8437 Madrasas operating under the registration of the board, and these Madrasas are divided into ranges for administrative convenience and the total number of ranges comes to 382.

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33 Register Records of Samastha Kerala Jame at Ulama, 2005, p.3.
Table I

Statistical survey- 2006- Samastha\textsuperscript{35}.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of Madrasas</th>
<th>Ranges</th>
<th>Mufathish</th>
<th>Tutor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8437</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textit{Muallin} taken by MSR, 77232

Number of students in recognized \textit{Madrasas}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>505978</td>
<td>498672</td>
<td>1004650</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students Passed Public Exams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fifth standard</th>
<th>Seventh standard</th>
<th>Tenth standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1646339</td>
<td>376242</td>
<td>14406</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Candidates passed in \textit{Muallim} Exam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Higher</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Hisb Course</th>
<th>Training Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16983</td>
<td>3695</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>31425</td>
<td>21293</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is so encouraging that the Samastha has been operating very scientifically, especially in terms of the administrative structuring and in its smooth paces.

Modern society being media sensitive is to be addressed with some publications dealing with the major agenda of the movement as such, thus the board of administration decided to publish certain materials aimed at instructing the people and as a positive gesture of the same, a daily titled ‘Sunni Times’ got released under the leadership of K.V Muhammad Musaliyar in the year 1964\(^\text{36}\). The major agenda of the daily was to disseminate the ideals and the philosophy of the Samastha, but it was unfortunate that the Samastha had to cease publishing the same in the year 1997 mainly because of some technical problems. At present, the organization has an organ named Sunni Afkar, which concentrates more on ethics (Karma Shasthra) and on history apart from contemporary issues, and thus it has opened up a new page in interacting with people all over Kerala\(^\text{37}\).

The role of the supporting organizations in piloting the activities of the Samastha among the Muslim community is really pivotal. Moreover, the role of youth organizations in volunteering the activities of any organization is undeniable, and so the organization of ‘Sunni Yuuvajana Sanghatana’ formed in 1961 at Kakkad in Thirurangadi was a realization of the fact\(^\text{38}\).

\(^{37}\)Kalpadukal,op.cit.,p.93. 
The ‘Sunni Yuvajana Sangham’ is so active, particularly in discussing all the relevant issues related to Islamic society and also very vibrant in taking up the social responsibilities for the enrichment of the Islamic community at large.

The Samastha has been active even among the students and for the same purpose an organization exclusively for the students was formed with the name Samastha Kerala Sunni Vidhyarthi Federation in 1989.

Similarly, an organization for teachers was also organised under the Samastha with the name of Samastha Kerala Jamathul Muallimeen. The foremost intention of the organization is to make the teachers capable enough in the filed of teaching, especially teaching methods, to generate a psychological approach to teaching. It is a fact that the teachers in the earlier days were really unaware of such things and almost neglected it. It was to guide such teachers that the organization had been formed and consequently training centers, Hisb\textsuperscript{39} and record studies were introduced as part of in-service courses and model classes were held to help the teachers to be time-bound and also to succeed in teaching profession.

The main objective of the Samastha was to enlighten the people with Islamic ideas and also to bring about religious and cultural change in the Islamic society as a whole; hence the Samastha initiated teacher-training programmers

\textsuperscript{39} Hisb is an important course offering by the Arabic College. The course more stress on the study on Quran in a proper manner.
for the teachers at the *Madrasas*. The *Samastha* was very much cautious in introducing a rigorous and systematic syllabus pertaining to almost everything that a student had to study even at the outset. In the 1st standard the children were to be introduced to certain basic notions about Islam and also to be familiarized with the alphabets.

Students from the 2nd standard onwards were given a detailed picture of Islam and they were introduced to the small *Suraths* from the *Quran*, and it was at this stage they were taught *Arabi Malayalam*, one of the important contributions of Islamic community in Kerala. Apart from the above things, the 2nd standard students were taught texts like *Fikh*, *Diniyath* and *Ahlakh*. 

However, all the Islamic religious education administrative bodies in Kerala were smooth on the track of religious education through the religious education boards. Two of the famous traditional religious organizations (of the orthodox sections of the Muslim community) named ‘*Samastha Kerala Islamic Religious Education Board*’ and ‘*Dakshina Kerala Islamic Education Board*’ are very

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42 The textbooks titled *Fikh* deals with the Islamic ethics (*Karma Shasthra*) in general and as a part of which the students are taught how to take *Namaskaram* and what all are the conditions to be maintained for the same. And in addition to it they are also taught the prayers to be taken while taking *Namaskaar* and also the other rituals to be followed.
43 The *Diniyath* addresses the importance of believing in God and also the things a believer has to know in his personal life.
44 *Ahlakh* addresses the character formation of the children and it is aimed at making the children the best in character drawing inspiration from the great personalities in history, for which the children are introduced to some famous biographies of such individuals who could be the models in life. The book also insists on being decent and respectful to parents and all the elders.
keen on carrying out their responsibilities of designing and executing study materials and curriculum necessary for an effective religious education. Both the boys and girls of all sections in the Islamic community were enrolled in such centers of religious education, and the Mahals were the centers in which the activities in the concerned areas were organized to facilitate comfortable educational activities. People from all walks of life were rendering their wholehearted support for the success of these institutions.

The Samastha is very keen on having a set syllabus from the 1st standard to the 10th availing three periods in a day with 240 working days around the year. The curriculum designed for the children is kept in tune with their mental disposition and over all development.

The syllabus set by the Samastha gives more importance to the Quran studies even from the 3rd standard onwards and the same importance is given to Hifz (learning the Quran by heart). The lessons supplementary to Ahlakh, Fikh and Deniyath follow in the later stages in their studies. Apart from the above, the two subjects named Tarigh (History of the Prophet) and Luthul Arabia (Pertaining to the Quran language) also were taught from the 3rd standard onwards.

All the textbooks required for each class were published by the Samastha itself; similarly the syllabus meant for each month was also being published by

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45 Most of the Muslim settlements are concentrated around one Masjid. This kind of Muslim settlement is known as Mahals.

46 *Curriculum of Samastha Kerala Islam Matha Vedyabhyasa Board, op.cit., p.2.

47 *Muallim Training Notes, op.cit., p.6.

the board of education. The teachers were to prepare their classes as per the monthly syllabus dividing it in weeks and days, and special care was to be taken for introducing the difficult portions even at the early stage⁴⁹.

The chief of a Madrasa educational system was supposed to keep a general timetable including study time and other details. It was categorical that the teachers teaching at Madrasas should be efficient to achieve the common goals already set. The examination system designed by the Samastha was competent enough as that of the system in operation designed and executed by the central and state governments.

A public examination system is at work in the fifth, seventh and tenth classes and the students scoring the highest mark are given cash awards. The question papers for the public examination is set by the examination board working under the Samastha. The examination supervisors are appointed in proportion to the students in each Madrasas and that of students attending the examination. The Board members visit the examination centres while the examinations are in progress so as to ensure maximum justice in the examination conducted at each centre⁵⁰.

Of all the examinations conducted by the Madrasa Educational Board, 1646339 students from the 5th standard, 376242 from the 7th standard and 14406

⁴⁹ Samastha Notices, op.cit.,p.185.
⁵⁰ Kalpadukal,op.cit.,p.89.
from the 10th standard have got through successfully. The qualifying certificates are given to the successful candidates and a special recognition is given to those Madrasas where all the students who attended the examination get through.

In the earlier days, all the students had to depend on Dars in the mosques immediately after their Madrasa studies for their higher studies. The Madrasas in those days gave more importance to ethics (Karma Shasthra) and the scholars at that time were organized under Dars as the centres of higher learning. But the Dar system of education was not systematic or organized. However, the religious reformers were aware of the limitations of the above-mentioned institutions; consequently they tried to build many Arabic colleges at different centres aiming mainly at religious education and giving prominence to Arabic language and literature.

If we look at the history of religious education, after the 1950’s it can be seen that many Arabic colleges have been established all over Kerala. These Arabic colleges have contributed much to the realm of religious education and so have played a major role in the upcoming of a new educational culture among the Muslim community.

It is also obvious that the majority of the students at the Arabic colleges are financially deprived. So most of the Arabic colleges are working like charitable institutions collecting no fees from the students and at the same time e

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giving them free food and accommodation. The fund required for the same is collected from other sources, and it is really a boon to the students. The functioning of the Arabic colleges is essentially different to the system followed in the Mosque Dars. The teaching-learning processes at the Arabic colleges are so systematic and effective that the students are to the extent of making them awarded an Arabic degree after passing the qualifying examination.

The learning system at the Arabic colleges also reflect every change taking place in the socio-cultural and educational spheres, which is instantiated by the equal importance given both to spiritual and materialistic education. These Arabic colleges are never indifferent to the modern education and give importance to the material needs of the people by introducing graduate and post-graduate courses.

The insight operative in the Arabic colleges shows equal justice to the spiritual as well as the material domain, by which the modern students anticipating a religious life in the most modern situation could be kept in tune with the vagaries in different spheres of life; it also ensures the attendance of all types of students in the Arabic colleges.

There are so many Arabic colleges working at different centres in Kerala, particularly under the traditional sections in the Kerala Muslim community such as the ‘Dakshina Kerala Jamathul Ulama’ and ‘Samastha Kerala Jamathul Ulam’. As they are run by different managements each college awards degrees in its own way. Despite the differences existing at certain levels the curriculum followed in
all the colleges is almost the same, in which Arabic language is given prime status. The major objective of all these institutions is to create a new generation of students embracing Islamic values and practicing them to the full extent.

Most of the Arabic colleges set their syllabus as per the curriculum of the 10th standard of the Madrasas. A seven-year syllabus is set for the candidates passing from the 10th standard. The first year in the Arabic colleges is based on a Khitab (book) named Majmuh, in which mainly Arabic literature and grammar are dealt with. The textbook for ethical (Karma Sasthra) studies in the first year is Hulasathul Fikhil Islamiya and ethics is considered to be important in Islamic education. Shafi and Hnafi are the two prominent Madhabs followed by the Muslims in Kerala. Fikh differs from other two Madhabs. Those who are to follow Hanafi Madhab for Fikh mostly use the Khitab Nurul Indah. There are only a few differences in terms of beliefs existing in the matter of ethics. For example, those who follow the Hanafi Madhab keep the hands joined together just below the belly button, whereas the followers of the Shafi Madhab keep the hands just above the belly button. From the first standard onwards thirty Juzuh of the Quran are introduced and also another text containing the rules of reciting Quran. The same is a part of the syllabus set for the Arabic colleges.

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53 See more details on Arabic College Syllabus in Kerala.
54 Abdul Rahman Bava, Hulasathul Fikhil Islamiya (Arabic) Vol.1, Samastha Kerala Sunni Education Board, nd.
55 Islamic community follows four recognized Madhab. They are Shafi Madhab, Hanafi, Maliki, Hanbali. The most of the Muslims in Kerala follow Shafi and Hanafi Madhab.
56 Sheik Hussain Ibnu Aliy, Nurul Indah (Arabic), Indadiya Publication, Duband, nd.
57 Juzuh is an Arabic word which means chapter. Quran is divided in to thirty Juzhus.
The lessons taught in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} year are a continuation of whatever was learnt through the \textit{Khitabs}\textsuperscript{58} in the 1\textsuperscript{st} standard. Another important textbook prescribed is \textit{Thaallemul Muthaalim}\textsuperscript{59}, which deals with the decency and decorum to be maintained by the \textit{Madrasa Muthaalim}. The 3\textsuperscript{rd} standard students also are to study \textit{Fikh} and Arabic grammar, besides a text entitled \textit{Fathuhul Muyeen}\textsuperscript{60}. \textit{Almuhathasarul}\textsuperscript{61} also is one among the important ethical treatises taught to the \textit{Hanafi} students. However, the basic textbook in the Arabic language studies is nothing but the \textit{Quran} itself, so a hermeneutical study of the same is inevitable for which \textit{Riyasul Zualiheen}\textsuperscript{62} is taken as a basic text in the 3\textsuperscript{rd} standard itself. Besides, the Arabic colleges also give importance to logic and the textbook; \textit{Mirkhath} is prescribed for the purpose.

Thus it is clear that the students who are able to develop a comprehensive perspective on subjects related to Islamic religion reach the 4\textsuperscript{th} standard. They continue the study of \textit{Zanudheen Makhuthun} and \textit{Fathul Moineen}. The \textit{Tafseerul Jalani}\textsuperscript{63} is introduced as an interpretation of the Quran. In order to teach logic, \textit{Tahdeep} is taught even in the 4\textsuperscript{th} standard. All the Arabic colleges give equal

\textsuperscript{58} Arabic text book known as \textit{Kithab}.
\textsuperscript{59} Aminul Islam, \textit{Thallimul Muthaliimeen} (Arabic), litho publication, Tirurangadi, nd.
\textsuperscript{60} Zainudhin Makhdum, \textit{Fathuhul Muyeen} (Arabic), Litho publication, Thirurangadi, nd.
\textsuperscript{61} Abdul Hussain Ibn Aboobakkar Muhammed, \textit{Al Muhathasarul Khuduri} (Arabic), Indadiya Library, Duband, U.P., nd.
\textsuperscript{62} Imam Navabi, \textit{Riyazul Swaliheen} (Arabic), Ashrafi book depo, Delhi, nd.
\textsuperscript{63} Jalaludeen Muhalli and Jalaludeen Suyuthi, \textit{Thafseerul Jalalyni} (Arabic), Thujurul Khutub, Mumbai, nd.
importance to Hadith studies. Mishkathul Masabeeh is prescribed for the 4th standard so as to give a comprehensive understanding of the Hadith textbooks. The important Arabic textbooks Tafseerul Jalaini, Fathahul Moieen etc are included in the curriculum for the 5th standard in the Arabic colleges. Another textbook titled Tariqul Ulafah detailing the history of Khalifas is also introduced for studies. Muhathasar Mahani is a textbook, taught with the purpose of making the students enlightened with Arabic literature.

Religious studies are made more authoritative from the 6th form onwards. The children at this stage are trained to present Islamic beliefs and laws interpretatively to all those ignorant of such things and it is with this purpose books like Jamrul Jawamir, Mishkathul Masabah, Sharahul Minhaj, Shanul Akhaitha, Tafsanul jalallaini and Muhatsur are prescribed for studies.

The students are expected to somewhat complete the Islamic education by the time they reach the 7th standard. The most important of all in Islamic studies is the Bukhari. So the Hadith connected to it is introduced in detail for

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64 Valiyudeen Muhammad Ibn Abdillahi Khathibil Thibirisi, Mishkathumasabeeh (Mal), Litho Power press, Thirurangady, nd.
65 Jaluludeen Suyuthy, Thareeful Ulafah (Arabic), Jamily press, Mumbai, nd.
66 Maulana Mahmood Hassan, Muhthasar Maabi (Arabic), Makthabathul Asharafiya, Duband, U.P., nd.
67 Thajudeen Abdul Wahab Jubukhi, Jamul Jawamir (Arabic), Thujarul Khuthub, Mubmai, nd.
68 Muhammad Ibnu Ismail, Saheebul Bhukhari (Arabic), Al Makthhabathul Sahba, Duband, U.P., nd.
the 7th standard students, and also Rushidiya for Logic and Tafzeerul Bilavi⁶⁹ for the interpretation of the Quran.

It has been stated that Arabic colleges in vogue give equal importance to spiritual education and modern education and for these two educational methods to co-exist, a new and special methodology based on a particular ordering of periods is maintained in all colleges. Most of the Arabic colleges begin with their curriculum immediately after Zubahi⁷⁰ prayer, that is up to 8.30 a.m after which the classes for modern education begin by 9.30 a.m and the same end by 2.30. The Arabic subjects are commonly taught after 3 pm on all days.

All the Arabic colleges conduct debates and discussions on contemporary issues, and special training is given in elocution and other things. Most of the Arabic colleges are provided with comfortable library and reading rooms. Many of the Muthaalameengal (teachers) enroll themselves for different courses like B.A, B.Com and P.G course under Universities like Mahathma Gandhi University, Calicut University and Kerala University and continue their studies in the Arabic colleges.

_Jamiya Nooriya_ is one of the important Arabic colleges working under the Samastha, which has its origin in 1962⁷¹. The students studying in this college are given a degree named Mawali Fazil Faizi; in addition to it they are also trained in

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⁷⁰ Zubhi is the morning Prayer of the Muslims which starts around 5.30.
⁷¹ Records on the _Jamia Nuriya Arabic College_ Perunthalmanna, 2000,p.2.
modern education. The curriculum of *Bagiyath Swalihath*, Velloor is followed here\(^72\).

*Chemmad Darul Huda Islamic Academy* is one of the foremost institutions in Islamic studies, which is famous all over Kerala. The religious education system in progress here lasts for 12 years\(^73\). In such a long period of study, much importance is given to religious as well as non-religious subjects and languages like Arabic, Urdu, English, and Malayalam are also taught\(^74\). Those who complete the course after twelve years get the degree *Moulavi Fazil Al Hudwi*\(^75\) and B.A degree from Calicut University. Students who have completed the 5\(^{th}\) standard from *Madrasas* and also those who have completed 12 years of age are interviewed on the basis of their knowledge on general Arabic and about 80 admitted in the college in every year. Presently the *Darul Huda Islamic Academy* has gained even the recognition of international universities like *Al Azar* in Egypt, *Zaithunna* in Tunisia and also *Jamiya Milliya* in Delhi\(^76\).

Institutions like *Thanoor Islahul Uloom Arabic College*, *Farhur Zabilul Hidaya*, *Muttil Inan Ghazzali Academy*, *Puthuponnnani Mounuthul Islam Arbic College*, *Kappad Inul Islam Arabic College* are working in accordance with the syllabus and objectives of the *Darul Huda*. The *Darulssalam Arabic College* at Nandi in Kozhikkode district is also an important Arabic college, which was started in

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\(^73\) Register Records on *Chemmad Darul Huda Islamic Academy*, 2004, p.3.

\(^74\) Ibid.

\(^75\) *The degree awarded from Chemmad Darul Huda Islamic Academy.*

\(^76\) Register Records on *Chemmad Darul Huda Islamic Academy*, *op.cit.*, p.3.
1976. The degree awarded from here is *Muthawal* and the subjects include both religious and non-religious studies.

Another famous Arabic college working in Kozhikkode district is *Rahmaniya Arabic College*. The students after completing the 7th standard are admitted to this college and the total strength in a year is 100*. The students completing the course of 10 years are awarded *Rahmaniya* degree. Apart from religious subjects, Arabic, Urdu, etc also are taught. It has many associated institutions like a boarding *Madrasa* high school, Computer academy, Orphans' Educational centre and Arts College. The Arabic College *Marakkassuthul Biyathul Islamiya* working in Malappuram district is one among the famous colleges; it awards *Muthazar* degree. Aspiring students in the college are permitted to pursue B.A. English literature course. The college is facilitated with a good library and special training in elocution also is given to the students. A B.Ed Training College, I.T.C, L.P and U.P Schools and a hospital are also working under the trust.

Another prominent institution in Malappuram is *Sakafathul Islam Arabic College* in which the syllabus of Calicut University and curriculum and syllabus of other institutions like *Al Azar* in Egypt, *Darul Uloom* in Duban, *Bakhiyath Swalihath* at Vellor and *Darul Uloom* at Luknow are combined to prepare a new

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* The degree awarded from the college is *Muthawal*.
* The degree is *Rahmaniya*.
* The degree is given by *Darulssalam Arabic College*. 
* The degree is *Muthazar*. 
* The degree is given by *Darul Salam Arabic College*. 
* The degree is given by *Darul Salam Arabic College* at Nandi in Kozhikkode District.
syllabus to be taught at this institution. Many Arabic colleges are working in the northern and southern areas of Kerala under the direction of Samastha Kerala Jame-at-Ulama.

All these institutions subscribing to the Ahlu Sunnathu Wal Jama aim at bringing about a reawakening in all spheres of religious and social life; the syllabus for all these institutions is designed by the Samastha itself.

While hectic activities of both reformists and the Sunni Ulama organizations were going on in the north, the southern part of Kerala remained silent without any such activity. Though the wind of reform among the Muslim blew from south, it ended with the death of Vakkom Moulavi. Nobody from the Ulamas of the south came forward to keep his message alive. Likewise, both the Sunnis and the Mujahids did not pay enough attention to the south.

The south has a good number of Ulama's who are either disciples or classmates of the prominent Sunni Ulama's of the north like Quthubi Muhammad

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82 Darul Uloom Arabic College, Wayanadu, Rushidiya Arabic College, Malappuram, Darul Najath Arabic College, Palakkadu, Bafakhi Yatheemkhana, Valavannoor Majlis Arts and Science College, Valancherry Anzarul Islam Arabic College, Perinthalmanna, Sabeelul Hidaya Islamic College, Kottakkal Imam Gazali Academy, Wayanadu, Kolavattoor Arabic College, Kondotty, Kolloor Vila Madeenathul Uloom Arabic College, Kollam, Islamiya Arabic College, Kalamassery, Darul Rahna Arabic College, Thozhiyoor, Janathul Uloom Arabic College, Palakkadu Odungakkadu Darul Mareef Arabic College, Kozhikkode, Fathima Suhra Islamic Women's Arabic College, Thiroorangadi, etc.

83 Those who follows the traditional Islamic law.

84 C.K. Kareem, op.cit.,p.628.
Musaliar and Pangil Ahamad Kutty Musaliar. When the Samastha came of age its leaders advised the Ulamas in the south to form an Ulama organisation of their own in the south. Heeding to their advice, a group of Ulama of the south met at Kollam on June 26, 1955 and formed 'Travancore-Cochin Jamiyyathul Ulama'.

More than two hundred Ulamas attended the conference and realized the necessity of the new organization in southern Kerala. It worked for the development of Islamic education in south Kerala. P.K.Yunis Maulavi was the president of this conference. The Ulama association was strengthened to solve sectarianist tendencies among the Muslim community in Kerala. The committee nominated 53 Ulama members from Tiru-Cochi state to govern the activities of this area.

During this period, the political condition of Kerala took a decisive change and the Malayalam speaking areas of south India were unified to form Kerala state. After the formation of Kerala state in 1956, the organization changed its name to 'Dakshina Kerala Jame at Ulama'.

During that period almost all the Ulama's supported the activities of Dakshina Kerala Jame at Ulama. Its prime objective was not different from the

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85 M. Abdul Samad, *op.cit.*, p.137.
Dhakshina Kerala Jame at Ulama and Samastha Kerala Jame at Ulama. During the first phase of the organization, they were completely against the activities of the reformative sections of the Muslim community in Kerala. The main motto of the Samastha Kerala Jame at Ulama and Dhakshina Kerala Jame at Ulama was to overcome the reformative ideas.

At the time of its formation, Dakshina Kerala Jame at Ulama adopted a constitution, which made it a major Muslim Ulama organization in Kerala. The constitution provides rules and regulations for those who wish to join the Ulama organisation.

a. Believers who follow Ashari and Mathurithi.

b. Religious rites as followed by for four Madhab i.e. Hanafi, Shafee, Maliki, Hanbali.

c. One who follows Ahlu Sunnathi Wal Jama at.

d. One who has the basic awareness of Tafsir, Hadith, Akeeda, Fikh, Tasauf.

e. One who has completed the age of 20.

Maulavi, Padamilam. V. Muhammad Maulavi, Alamkodu S. Abdul Khadar Maulavi, Mekkoo K.P. Muhammadkunju Maulavi, Pulippara Sheik Maiheen Kunju Musaliar, Karunagappilly M.B. Aboobakkar Musaliar, Vaduthala C.K. Ahmamd Maulavi, Kunnankulam Koya Hassan Maulavi, Pulippara Abdul Khadar Maulavi, Y.S. Abdul Latheef Maulavi, Kanchippuzha Maulavi K.M. Aboobakkar Labba, Thornakkal Hassan Musaliar, Kayamkulam Hassankunj Musaliar, Pavalla Abdul Sathar Maulavi were the innumerable leaders active worked for the development of Dhakshina Kerala Jame at Ulama.

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91 Constitution of Dakshina Kerala Jame-at-Ulama, 1993, pp.3-4.
92 Ashhari was an important Imam of the Muslim Community.
93 Mathuruthy was an important Religious leader of Muslim community.
Apart from stressing the importance of conviction it upheld some other objectives such as:

a. To protect Shariat order and to eradicate the caste rigidification in Kerala.

b. To solve the internal problems among the Muslim community in Kerala and try to unify themselves.

c. To start Journals to improve the basic awareness among the traditional Muslim community in Kerala.

d. To unify Islamic educational system in Kerala and establish a syllabus to improve the standard of religious education in Kerala.

e. To start an orphanage centre for the protection of economically backward sections of the society.

The organization formalized a systematic order forming taluk, district and statewide units for the progress and efficiency of the organization. One of the important contributions of *Dhakshina Kerala Jame at Ulama* is the unification of south Kerala Muslims under one leadership.

At times the *Ulama* organization was actively involved in the social problems faced by the Muslim community in Kerala and it creatively worked to solve the leading issues faced by the community.

During the formative years, the *Dhakshina Kerala Jame at Ulama* took the initiative to organize an Educational Board in 1968 in order to remedy the

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* Ibid.
* Ibid.
religious educational problems of south Kerala. The constitution of the Dakshina 
Kerala Jame at Ulama clearly states the activities and objective of the board⁹⁸.

a. To prepare Muslim students under the teaching of Ahlu Sunnathu Wal 
Jama at.

b. To unify the activities of Madrasa under one syllabus.

c. To establish Madrasas wherever necessary.

d. To prepare syllabus and textbook for Madrasa education.

e. To appoint inspectors to check the efficiency of Madrasa activities⁹⁹.

f. To establish training centres for Mullas.

The educational board appointed a Mufathish¹⁰⁰ who was to inspect the 
progress of educational activities. Moreover the education board conducts mid-
term and annual exam to check the efficiency of students. The passing students 
are given cash price for diligence. As the economic condition of Mullas was not 
good and their salary was very low as compared to other jobs, the Madrasa Board 
organized a Muallim welfare association to protect the Madrasa teachers. The 
board provides some economic aid to teachers. The first task of the Dakshina 
Kerala Islam Matha Vidhyabhysa Board was to modernize the Madrasa syllabus¹⁰¹. 
The great scholar Aboobakkar Labba was the chairman of the syllabus advisory

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⁹⁸Ibid, p.25.
¹⁰⁰ Mufathish who was in charge of the inspecting the activities of the Madrasas
¹⁰¹ Constitution Dakshina Kerala Jame-at-Ulama Madrasa Educational Board, op.cit.,p.25.
committee. During the initial stage, Aboobakkar Labba played a leading role in the unification of the *Dakshina Kerala Jame at Madrasas*.

The *Dakshina Kerala* is trying to reorganize the traditional Muslims who were following the educational system in south Kerala. The *Madrasa* Board established a curriculum in a scientific manner. The classes were divided into one to ten. The *Quran, Hadith, Tafseer, Fikh, Akeeda, Akhlakh, Triq, Tajveed,* and *Luthu* were the important subjects taught these *Madrasas*.

The *Madrasa* Educational Board prepares textbooks for each class and distributes them in every *Madrasa*. The *Madrasa* board publishes an academic calendar to calculate academic days. The academic days are prepared in such a way as not to affect modern school education. The *Madrasas* are established in almost all the Muslim settlements in south Kerala. Today there are 2374 *Madrasas* run under this Board.

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Table II

List of Madrasas under *Dakshina Kerala Jame at Ulama Vidyabhyasa Board* ¹⁰⁵

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of Registered Madrasas</th>
<th>2740</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>131000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>145000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total strength</td>
<td>276000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of teachers</td>
<td>8050</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to make the teaching effective, the board formed an association for the teachers of the Madrasas with the name *Lajnathul Muallimeen* and later it was decentralized into thirty-seven ranges. Through periodical conference and orientation courses under the auspices of this body, the teachers have enriched their abilities. The *Lajnath* constituted a fund for extending financial assistance for the teachers in Madrasas in 1980, and thousands of rupees have been given to each of them per month so far ¹⁰⁶.

Several other sub-organizations are working under the *Dakshina Kerala Jame-at-Ulama*. The *Jamaat Federation* is the other important sub-organisation of the *Dakshina Kerala Jame at Ulama*. This is the outcome of the effort undertaken by

¹⁰⁶ M. Abul Samad, *op.cit.*, p.139.
the scholars of the Dakshina to bring the Muslim Jamaat of the southern region under its spiritual control. One of he spectacular advantages of this venture was the creation of unity among the leaders and scholars and among the community and by this unity it attained control over the Muslim public in southern Kerala.

‘Dakshina Kerala Islamic Students Federation’ is another important organization which actively works among the students in Kerala. Kerala Muslim Yuvajana Federation, Kerala Muslim Jamaat Federation, Dakshina Kerala Lajnathul Muallimeen, Ulama Publications, and Dakshina Kerala Muallim Kshemanidi board also are creatively working under the Dakshina Kerala.\(^{107}\)

The Dakshina Kerala Islamic Vidyabhyasa Board is working not only in the field of Madrasa education but also in the higher educational field. In the field of higher religious learning, ‘Mannaniya Islamic University’ established in Varkala is an important institution of the Dakshina Kerala Jame at Ulama. In 1986 the institution was registered under the society act\(^{108}\). In addition to an Arabic College, the Hifz college, which trains the students to learn Holy Quran entirely by heart. A boarding Madrasa and orphanage are also functioning under this trust\(^{109}\). The classes are regulated here after the pattern of the Bakiyatu Swalihath, Vellore. Maulavi Fadil Mannani degree is awarded to those who pass out from this college. Muhthasar and Muthawal are other important degrees awarded by

\(^{107}\) Thevalakkara Aliyarukunju Maulavi, op.cit.,p.18.

\(^{108}\) Register Records on Mannaniya Islamic University, 2000,p.2.

\(^{109}\) Kadakkal Abdul Azeez Maulavi, ‘Mannaniya Islamic University Muslim Samudayathende Abhimana Sthambham’, Annaseem 40th Annual Souvenir, p.22.
this college. Since 1995 a trust has been functioning in the field of higher education by establishing the Mannaniya College of Arts and science at Pangode, Kallara in Thiruvananthapuram District. Now the college is affiliated to Kerala University.\footnote{Ibid., p.140.}

*Majilisthul Abran* is another important college in southern Kerala. The college was established in 1976\footnote{K.M. Muhammed Kunju Maulavi, ‘Majilisthul Abran Oru Hraswa Veekshanam’, *Al-Abrar*, 10th Annual Souvenir of Rahmaniya Arabic College, 2003, p.25.}. During the early days the institution gave much importance to Islamic studies. This institution was reorganized in 1993 and renamed Rahmaniya Arabic College.\footnote{Ibid., p.26.} It fully supports the modern educational developments in Kerala and offers an eight-year course. *Maulavi Alim, Maulavi Fazil* degrees are awarded to those who pass out from this college. Moreover the Arabic college, the *Hifz* college, trains the students to learn by heart Holy Quran (three years of study), and *Dwaurathul Hadith*, (Hadith training).\footnote{Ibid.}

*Jamia Badariya Arabic College* was established in 1979 at Pezhakkappily near Muvattupuzha under the Chairmanship of K.M. Fareedudhin Maulavi.\footnote{Register Records of Jamia Badariya Arabic College, 1998, p.11.} The aim of the trust is varied and apart from running the Arabic college, they have in their program plans to start an orphanage for economically backward
Muslim children and such other social services among the Muslim community\textsuperscript{115}.

The Arabic college produces qualified ‘Alims’ with thorough knowledge in Arabic language, literature, \textit{Quran}, \textit{Hdith} and \textit{Fiqh}. The college has established a new academic curriculum which gives equal importance to modern and religious education. S.S.L.C. is the basic qualification of admission. The college introduced a new type of curriculum, which gives stress to the religious as well as modern education. The college gives opportunity to students to study for recognized degrees and postgraduate courses. This kind of effort has been a great turning point in the history \textit{Madrasa} education in Kerala. The college has produced a number of scholars, and is efficient in the field of religious and modern education.

Even today there are a number of institutions working under the direction the \textit{Dakshina Kerala Jame at Ulama}\textsuperscript{116}. The colleges offer different degree courses. But the syllabus is more or less the same. We cannot see any type of

\textsuperscript{115} Jamia Badariya Arabic College \textit{Trust Pramanam}, 1975,p.5.
\textsuperscript{116} \textit{Assasu Da-uvathul Islamiya} Arabic College, Chelakkulam, Vengola., \textit{Hidayathul Islam} Arabic College, Kollam, \textit{Jamia-Hasaniya} Arabic college, Vazhakkulam, \textit{Anwarul Islam} Arabic college Shasthamkotta, Thiruvananthapuram, \textit{Mannaniya Umarul Farook} Arabic College, Kilikkollur, Kollam, \textit{Rahmaniya} Arabic College, Kayamkulam, Alappuzha, \textit{Jamia-Hasaniya} Arabic College, Kayamkulam, Kollam, \textit{Al-Abrar} Arabic College, Vaduthala, \textit{Mumbahul Hairath} Arabic College, Erattupetta, Kottayam, \textit{Hidayathul Islam} Arabic College, Kanjirappilly, Kottayam, \textit{Falahiya} Arabic College, Chenganassery, \textit{Baquiyathul Swalihath}, Kanjar, Thodupuzha, \textit{Hidayathul Isalm} Arabic College, Punthura, Thiruvananthapuram, \textit{Azaz Dawathul Islamiya}, Chelakkulam, Aluwa, \textit{Usmaniya} Arabic College, Thookupalam, Idukki, \textit{Vaipur} Arabic College, Pathanamthitta, \textit{Jamiya Kausiriya} Arabic College, Idathala, Aluwa, \textit{Anwarul Hikkam} Arabic College, Kollam, \textit{Badarul Huda Orphanage}, Pallarimangalam, Koythamangalam, \textit{Rasheediya} Arabic College, Thiruvananthapuram, \textit{Al-Azar} Arabic College, Ernakulam, etc. were the important Arabic College under the direction \textit{Dakshina Kerala Jame-at-Ulama}. 
differences in the activities of the *Samastha* and the *Dakshina* in the field of higher religious education. The important books are taught by the *Samastha* and the *Dakshina* are almost same. *Quran, Thafseer, Fikh, Hulasathul Fikhihil Islamiya, Kitab Noorul Indah, Tha allimul Mutha allimeen, Fathuhul Muyeen, Al- Muhathassarul Khuduri, Riyasul Swaliheen, Mirkath, Miskathul Masabeen, Thariqut Ulafa, Muhathassarul Mahani, Jamrul Javamir, Rashidiya, Thafsserul Bailavi* are the important books which are prescribed for learning.

Most of the colleges which function under the *Samastha* and the *Dakshina* offer the courses divided into six or seven years. In several Arabic colleges their syllabus has been totally changed. They introduced secular education along with the religious education. Most of the students of these institutions come from economically backward families. All these colleges provide free food and lodging and they need not pay any fees. So the lower middle class or economically backward students are mainly attracted to this kind of educational system. Today there are more than hundred Arabic colleges under the direction of the *Dakshina Kerala Jame at Ulama*.

The *Markaz* centred in Malabar is one of the notable institutions working in the filed of religious education. An academic and cultural center committed to scholarly research, teaching and charitable activities. *Markassul Sukhafathi*
Sunniya was established in 1978 under the leadership of A.P. Aboobakkar Musaliyar\(^\text{17}\).

In the year 1978, the initiative of a group of farsighted and intelligent leaders like Sheikh Aboobakker Ahammed, E.K Hassan Musaliyar, Said Abdul Khader Ahdal and Said Fassal Pookkoya Thangal culminated in the establishment of Markaz Sukhafathi Sunniya in 1982\(^\text{18}\). While concentrating on Islamic curricula, Markaz promotes secular education as well.

Today this institution is one of the major cultural and educational institutions in Kerala, and attracts students from various parts. The Markaz is not restricted to Kerala alone. It has extended its operations to other states like Tamilnadu, Uttarpradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan\(^\text{19}\). It gives prime emphasis both to spiritual and material education. And it also keeps on being active in religious propaganda. The institution, Islamic research centre established in 1987 is committed to providing relevant research techniques to develop useful skills required for a Muslim preacher. This is well known for its research activities, particularly in four accepted tenets of Muslim world that is the Quran, Hadith, Ijna and Quiyas\(^\text{20}\).

The systematic structure of this centre enables the students to gain command over Islamic teachings and Arabic linguistics. The reputation of this

\(^{17}\) Markaz Brochure, p.3.
\(^{19}\) Register Records on the Markazu Zaqafiya Sunniya, 1994, p.7.
\(^{20}\) Markaz Brochure, p.5.
centre and excellence of the trainers empower the students to develop their abilities and to pursue their particular research interest. After successfully completing the course, these scholars are awarded the Masters degree, ‘Moulavi Kamil Sakhafi’. ‘Markasul Skhafathi Sunniya’ meets all the expenses of this centre.

Another institution, Markaz Shariath College offers a vast range of courses in Islamic studies. The particular attraction of this college lies in the range of religious subjects taught. Established in 1980, Shariath College is a part of ever-growing network of Markaz Educational Institutions\(^1\). Apart from Kerala, students come from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Kashmir, Orissa, Karnataka, Tamilnadu, etc\(^2\). Students entering Markazul Saqafatiya Sunniya Shariat College will find an emphasis on personal fulfillment and a suit of subjects that emphasises preparation for the real world of an Islamic preacher. They are thoroughly exposed to topics like Thafazeerul Quran, Hadith, Al figul Islami, History, Mathematics and Engineering. The students are also trained on speech and creative writing in languages like English, Arabic, Urdu and Malayalam. The Markaz is also active in countries like Africa, Indonesia, Malaysia, America and Middle Asian Republics\(^3\). The Assuna Foundation operating in America under the leadership of Sheik Muhamed Gabbani is active in disseminating the Islamic teachings through the Markaz. It supports the activities of Shahul Hameed

\(^1\) Editorial Al-Irfath Monthly, February,2007,p.5.
\(^3\) See more details of Educational Curriculum of Markaz Educational Board.
Santhapuram sends four or five students to Egypt making use of the affiliation of the Al Azar University.

The *Markaz* has recently developed special residential centres for the promotion of women's education. Special *Yateem Khanas*\(^{124}\) are also running for girls both in Kerala and outside\(^{125}\). All these centres are meant for giving the most updated education for the girls.

At present, there are about 4869 *Madrasas* operating in and outside Kerala under the *Markaz*\(^ {126}\). The religious education controlled by the *Samastha Kerala Sunni Vidhyabhyasa Board* was established in 1990. The educational board also follows more or less the same subjects of the *Samastha Kerala Islam Matha Vidhyabhyasa Borad*.

List of *Madrasa* under *Samastha Kerala Sunni Vidhyabhyasa Board*\(^ {127}\).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of Madrasas</th>
<th>4869</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>175894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>195754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of students</td>
<td>371648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>14607</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{124}\) *Yatheemkhanas* means an Orphanage of the Muslim students.

\(^{125}\) 'Markaz Navodhana Veedhiyil', *Al- Irfath* (Mal.), September, 2000, p. 19.

\(^{126}\) This is based on the statistical Records on the Samastha Kerala Sunni Vidhyabhyasa Board, 2006.

The Markaz has gained its glory not only because of the importance given to religious education but also of the contributions given to modern education. There are 40 institutions working at different centers in Kerala, which include schools, Engineering colleges, BEd colleges and Arts and Science colleges.

The Markaz movement operating under the leadership of A.P Aboobakker Musaliyar is an instance in point to explicate the fact that the traditional Muslim community is not restricted to religious education alone.

While we speak about the contribution of the Samastha Kerala Jameat Ulama, the Dakshina Kerala Jameat Ulama, and the Markaz in the field of Madrasa movements the Kerala the State Wakf Board deserves special mention. It is a government department provides facilities to perform the religious and charitable rituals and rites of the Muslims. It has established mosques, Madrasas schools, colleges and libraries and orphanages for the social and cultural

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128 Markaz Higher Secondary School, Markaz English School, Markaz al Farukhiya high School, Fathimabi High School, Boys Residential School, Madrasas, Girls Residential centre, Markaz Institute of Medical Science,etc. were a lot of other institution were worked modern religious education. At the same time they established several Arabic college throughout the state and the important Arabic Colleges were, Markazul Hidaya, Kombam, Mannarkkad, Palakkad, Markazul Huda Islamic Arabic College, Chenganashery, Kottayam, Jamia Mahmudiya, Perijanam, Trishur, Al-Maghamul Sunniyathul Isalm, Thalipparambu, Kannur, Al-Ihsan, Vengara, Malappuram, Al-Mujamul Islami, Thikkarippur, Kazargode, Jamiya-Azeeziya, Kodunjallur, Thrissur, Jamiya Sa-Hadiya Arabiya, Kalanadu, Kazargode, Muhimathul Muslimeen Education Center, Kumbala, Kasargode, Jamia Hasaniya, Palakkad, Mansahau Thazkiyath Issunniyyathil Islamiya, Mattool, Kannur. C.M.Valiyullahi Memmorial Centre, Mdavoor, Kozhikkode, Jamiya Ashariya Islamiya, Cheranallur, Cochi,etc.
advancement of the Muslims in the state. As per their statistics there are 7206 mosques and 1200 Madrasas registered under them\(^{129}\).

The Board provides the following activities also\(^{130}\).

a. Pension to the scholars and teachers in Arabic language and literature.

b. Financial aid for marriage, and medical treatment under social welfare Scheme.

c. Loan scholarship for professional education.

d. Grant scholarship for technical and higher secondary education.

e. Providing grant for libraries from the Central Wakf Council

f. Issuing marriage certificates.

g. To provide financial support to start Islamic chairs in Universities.

However, the formation of the Samastha Kerala and the Dakhina Kerala and the Markaz was a turning point in the history of the Muslim Madrasa education in Kerala. The traditional proliferation of Madrasas started from the hands of Samastha Kerala Jameat Ulama. These three major traditional Muslim organisations have built more than ten thousand Madrasas and thousands of Arabic colleges all over Kerala. It shows the importance given to religious education among the Muslims.

At the same time the contributions and attempts made by the Muslim reformers in the field of Madrasa education is noteworthy. They reveal the


\(^{130}\) Wakaf Bordine Aduthariyuka (Mal.), 2005, pp.10-15.
backwardness of the existing traditional *Madrasa* educational system in Kerala. The reformers have started several *Madrasas* also under their direction. These reformative efforts strongly influence the traditional Muslim community in Kerala. Traditional Muslim community is ready to change their educational system which is helpful for the development of *Madrasa* and Arabic college system in Kerala.