CHAPTER-VI

MUSLIMS EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS FOR WOMEN
IN TIRUCHIRAPPALLI

There are many evidences which show that women in ancient times in India had a much higher status and more independent. We find in one hymn that it is said that an unmarried young learned daughter ought to be married to a learned bridegroom, and that a father should never think of giving in marriage a daughter of very young age. Women too in early times seem to have had the right to utter the sacred mantras.¹ Women’s Right in the Atharva-Veda is evident in the statement that a maiden wins a young husband through Brahmacharya or Vedic Studentship “Brahmacharyena kanya yavanam vindate patim”. This passage is a very important one, being the only Vedic Passage which directly refers to women’s right to studentship and education. The very high standard of learning and culture reached by Indian women during the Vedic Age, and also during the Sutra Period, is too well known a fact to require detailed exposition.

The high standard of Women’s Education set up during the Vedic Age was fortunately continued to a large extent during the Epic Age as well. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the immortal epics of India, are resplendent with the acts and achievements of a good many learned and qualified women. In the first section of the Ramayana, we find a beautiful verse depicting the gracious qualities of the women of Ayodhya.²

The Mahabharata, (the Great India) rightly so called, is far larger in extent and content than the Ramayana and naturally contains a far more elaborate account of the education and learning of women during the Epic Age.³ The evidence regarding women’s right to education and learning is rather indirect. That is, it is known from the cases of large number of learned women that women of those ages were given full facilities for all kinds of education.⁴

¹ V.A. Smith, Oxford History of India, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2005, p. 37.
² Amirk Singh, Fifty Years of Higher Education in India, Sage Publication, New Delhi, p.156.
³ Usha Sharma, Women Education in Ancient and Medieval India, Commonwealth Publishers, New Delhi, p. 56.
⁴ Ibid., p.164.
Women education during the Buddhist and Jainist period

In India during the time of Buddha, there was a racial discrimination in the society. This discrimination was according to birth. In society there were four division of man of whom Brahman was superior. Brahmminism dominated the society and established their supremacy in the country. They enjoyed rights for religious training and education. But other category of people deprived of their religious and educational rights. It is being said that on the foundation of Buddhism a new and special education system originated in ancient India. Buddhism made a tremendous movement which played a valuable role in the development of educational system in ancient India.5

The goal of Buddhist is education to attain wisdom. The chief aim of Buddhist education was all round development of Child’s personality. This included his physical, mental, moral and intellectual development. The aim of Buddhist education is to make a free-man, a wise, intelligent, moral, non-violent and secular man. In the early period Buddhist education was limited within the monasteries and only for the members of the monastery. The monasteries or Buddha Vihars6 were the chief centres of learning and only the Buddhist monks could be admitted to them for education.

Women education during Buddhist period was at its ebb, as the women folk were despised in the sense that Lord Buddha had regarded them as the source of all evils. So he had advised during his life time not to admit women in monasteries. But after some time during to the insistence of his pupil Ananda, Buddha had permitted about 500 women along with his step mother for admission in the Vihars with many restrictions and reservations.

It had been recorded that Mahavira, after the attainment of omniscience at the age of 42. The preaching of Mahavira created a tremendous impact on the minds of all sections of people and especially on the down-trodden sections of the population. The most significant contribution of Jainism in the social field

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5 Manju Gupta, *Education in India*, Khel Sahitya Kendra, New Delhi, 2007, p.52
6 A type of Buddhist temple which usually has living quarters for monks or nuns, a shrine with an image of the Buddha and a meditation space.
was the establishment of social equality among the four varanas, i.e. classes, prevalent in the society. Another contribution of a distinctive nature made by Mahavira in the social field was in the direction of raising the status of women. He removed various restrictions imposed on women especially in the practice of religion.

Further the religious independence given to women had its repercussions in other fields also. Equality of opportunity was accorded to women in several social spheres of action. In education they were given equal treatment with the males. According to Jaina tradition women are expected to know 64 arts which include dancing, painting, music, aesthetics, medicine, domestic science, etc., As a result of this high type of education received by women.7

Islam and Women education

The status of women in Islam is that they are equal to men before God. According to the Quran, men and women are two units of a pair.8 The Quran says: “O mankind! We created you from a single soul, male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, so that you may come to know one another. Truly the most honored of you in God’s sight is the greatest of you in piety. God is All-Knowing, All-Aware” (Quran 49:13). According to the Quran, they complement each other in numerous ways both in mental, physical and emotional qualities. Islam looks at the different responsibilities of each gender. These responsibilities are defined as being the traditional family structure where women are head of the household and men are responsible for earning the livelihood for the family. However, women in Islam are seen as independent and self reliant individuals and thereby therefore challenging the traditional view of a family structure.9

The complex relationship between women and Islam is defined by both Islamic texts and the history and culture of the Muslim World. Sharia (Islamic

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7 Amirk Singh, *Fifty Years of Higher Education in India*, Sage Publication, New Delhi, p.56.
Law) provides for differences between women’s and men’s roles, rights, and obligations. Muslim-majority countries give women varying degrees of rights with regards to marriage, divorce, civil rights, legal status, dress code, and education based on different interpretations.¹⁰

Even where these differences are acknowledged, scholars and other commentators vary as to whether they are just and whether they are a correct interpretation of religious imperatives. Conservatives argue that differences between men and women are due to different status and responsibilities while liberal Muslims, Muslim feminists, and others argue in favor of more original, traditional interpretations.

As long as the education system is governed by the Spirit of Islam, there will be harmony between two modes of social activity permitting women to express themselves in accordance with their natural dispositions and to be given the respect and honour which is so central to the real social message of Islam. Knowledge and Education are highly emphasized in Islam. Both are integral parts of the Islamic Religion. Islam encourages its followers to enlighten themselves with the knowledge of their religion as well as other branches of knowledge. The purpose of raising a prophet in a nation is to teach and to impart knowledge.

Initially learning process of the Muslims started with the Prophet who himself used to teach his companions the Principles of Islam. His Mosque also served as a Centre for Muslim Learning. This educational system was based on moral and spiritual qualities. It recognized no separation between sacred and secular.¹¹

The Islamic Educational System neither separated the training of the mind from that of the soul nor regarded the transmission of knowledge or its

possession to be legitimate without the possession of proper moral and spiritual principles.

The Madrasah often incorporated the *Jamiah* which can be said to correspond to a secondary school as well as to a college and a university education. The religious or the Transmitted Sciences, and the Intellectual Sciences formed two parts of Islamic Education. The religious sciences included the study of the Quran, the *Hadith*, Linguistics and Theology and they dominated the educational activity of most Madarasah. The intellectual sciences included the study of logic, mathematics, and the natural sciences as well as philosophy.¹² The obvious reason for the lack of educational system for Muslim Women is *Purdah*¹³ and general Muslim Conservatism. The education of Muslim girls has been impeded not only by the specific handicap of *Purdah* and early marriage but also frequently by the conservatism of the Indian Muslim Community. *Purdah* lays a restraining hand on the Muslim Girl’s Education.

Muslims in India also did not neglect education. They imparted education to girls through Maktabs, Madarasah, Mosques and Private Houses. There was a unique method of dissemination of knowledge in those days and it was the method of discussion between the learned and the novice. Mosques had schools attached to them. These schools were supported by State Grants or by landholders and nobles. The primary education was to be imparted to the girls through the Maktabs, and the secondary education through the Madrasah. The nature of primary education and its method is essentially the same as are in vogue at present for both boys and girls. From the writing of alphabet to sentence making, everything is similar to that which exists now. The majority of the Maktabs were neither endowed nor patronized by the State. These institutions were left to individual enterprise and they depended upon the charity of noble individuals.

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¹³ The practice in certain Muslim and Hindu societies of screening women from men or strangers, especially by means of a curtain
In the villages, Maktabs were often attached to Mosques, and Madrasahs were little short of full fledged colleges. There were Maktabs for both resident and day scholars. Khanqahs or hospices of Muslim Saints also acted as centres for dispensing knowledge. Since the Maktabs were often placed under the guidance of pious and learned Maulavis, the teaching imparted in these institutions had a religious character. The contents of elementary education imparted in the Maktabs, however, the system of curriculum is varied from place to place. In Tamil Nadu all localities with Muslim population had Maktabs and Madrasahs catering the needs of Muslim girls. The Muslim girls were sent to Maktabs and Madrasahs which were conducted by Muslim women tutors. We also find Muslim girl children attending the Maktabs conducted by men teachers’ upto their age of attaining puberty. Modern education was not accessible to the Muslim girls. Purdah system and early marriages of Muslim girls was hurdle for the Muslim girls in getting into modern schools. Muslims parents were not in favour of mingling of girls and boys in the modern educational system and hence they were reluctant to send their girl children to schools.

**Growth of Women’s Education in Tamil Nadu**

During the 19th Century the higher education of Muslim women was domestic and institutional. Some well-to-do Muslims engaged tutors to provide education for their daughters in their own houses. In Madras Presidency, women education had not been attempted by the direct instrumentality of the Government, but it was carried on to a considerable extent by private schools, some of which received impetus from the renaissance spirit which permeated Indian life.

Earnest efforts for the spread of women’s education in India were made by Christian Missionaries during the first half of the 19th Century. In Madras, the first attempt made by the missionaries for opening a school for girls on 17th October 1821.

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The number of Christian schools for girls gradually increased. In 1845, the first girl’s school under partial Indian Management was opened there. The Rajah of Tanjore established schools for teaching English at Tanjore.

It was reported before the Education Commission of 1882 by the Madras Provincial Committee that the following were the earliest schools for the education of girls in Madras Presidency. “The Church Mission Boarding Schools in Tirunelveli from 1837, the free Church Day School at Chengalpet and Kanchipuram from 1845, the Native Female Education Society Central School, Park Town, Madras from 1845, and the Wesleyan Mission Boarding School, Royapetthah, Madras from 1849 were some of the earliest schools”

Women’s education rests on the claim that it is not privilege of one sex, but equally the right of both and that neither one sex nor the other could advance by itself without a stain on the social and notional system and injury to itself. The British did not show interest in female education during the rule of the East India Company. It is the Missionaries who took the initiative and tried to promote women’s education. For this, the missionary women entered the Zenana to impart secular or western education to Muslim girls. This was the state of Muslim Women’s Educations before 1850 A.D. in the Madras Presidency. It is only after the Wood’s Despatch in 1854 that the British Government accepted the responsibility of promoting female education.

Till 1828 then, the Muhammadan girls had only religious education in the urban schools. In 1871-72, education for men fairly advanced in the Muslim community, but women’s education was almost unknown. The Educational Census of Madras Presidency for 1871 has proved this. The fluctuation in the number of Muslim girls attending religious schools was not remarkable. In 1872-73, there was none; in 1873-74 there were 67 and in 1874-75, the number had fallen back to nine. The Madras Administration Report for 1874-75, states that

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“In other schools, the increase of Muslim girls was steady. The British Government evinced an equally keen interest in the education of Muslim girls.”

The news of the inauguration of schools hit the headlines in Muslim Newspapers. They eulogized the services of Lady Hobart to the cause of Muslim Women’s Education and pointed out how because of her initiative there was friendly intercourse between the Native and European Ladies. The Government Hobart Secondary and Training School for Muslim Girls and Women, Madras was established by Sir Robert Hobart who was Governor of Madras in 1873. It was started to impart education especially to the Muslim girls. The school was first a primary school on the premises of the Royapettah post office. A few years later this school grew into a middle school and was shifted to the present premises at Woods Road, Royapettah. It became a full-fledged Secondary School in 1922. To add to its glory the Government of Tamil Nadu was kind enough to establish Higher Secondary section in 1978. Now in the city it is the only institution which imparts Higher Secondary education through Urdu medium to girls.

Christian Missionaries were also active in the field. Many Muslim and Hindu girls’ schools were started by them. They were referred to as Zenana Schools in which the masters employed in poor Muslim Schools, favorable rates of grants. The attendance had doubled and a further the girls strength was increased. The successful working of Hobart Normal School would, it was hoped, lead to improvement in the standard of existing Muslim Girls Schools. The increase in the proportion of pupils to Muslim Population was very noteworthy and was largely due to the inclusion of Mosque Schools.

A marked advance was to be noticed in the percentage of Muslim boys and girls. The number of Muslim Girls under instruction rose from 6353 to 10564. The report on the Census of India for the year 1891 reveals that the Muslims of Madras Presidency were mostly of Dravidian origin, but a few were

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18 Zenana (Persian)- Zan (woman), the apartments of a house in which the women of the secluded
descendants of Pathan and Mughal Immigrants. This was a small proportion of indigenous Muslims who spoke Hindustani or Deccani but the majority retained the vernacular of their ancestors, Tamil in the case of Labbais”. Muslim girls in the secondary state of instruction improved in numbers. But until a radical change took place in the social customs of the class, the advance would continue to be slow. Women’s Education, being properly a charge on provincial funds, the majority of Local Boards were relieved during 1891-92. Two schools, one in North Arcot and the other in Tiruchirappalli, continued in their charge. An educated Muslim Government Official started a Girl’s School at Walajabad in 1889, with five girls. Islamic Girls’ school, Walajabad was willingly taken over by the Government with effect from 1st Sep 1891 under the Departmental Management.

The only training school for Muslim women in the Presidency, the Hobart Training School, Madras, was in a fairly satisfactory state. Drawing Classes were attached to the Muslim Branch of Training School, Madras and was attended by 58 students in 1891-92, all of whom were also being trained as teachers. The number of Muslim Girls reading in all grades and classes of schools were 14083.

The Muslim Women’s Education did not make satisfactory or impressive progress in any aspect of education-primary, secondary, higher or collegiate or professional. Though the British Government made a lot of efforts to educate the Muslim Women, the result was not satisfactory. Women’s Education before 1850 A.D in general and with reference to the Muslims in particular was domestic and private. The 19th Century renaissance spirit proved beneficial to the education of Muslims as well. The efforts taken by the Christian Missionaries encouraged the Zenana System of Education for Muslim Women.

After 1850 education of Muslim women became institutionalized, thanks to the positive steps taken by the British Government in this direction. The

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British Government evinced keen interest in the education of Muslim women as they were lagging far behind the women belonging to other communities. The personal effort taken by Lady Hobart was noteworthy in the establishment of schools for the exclusive benefit of Muslim Girls.

The Education Commission of 1882 made special recommendations for the education of Muslim Women. This helped Muslim women to make use of the educational opportunities provided to them. There was a steady and gradual increase in the number of women getting benefited by education at various levels. However, in spite of the great steps taken by the British Government and the Mission Schools, education for Muslim, Women till the beginning of the 20th Century made progress only in the Primary Education, and in the Lower Secondary Level of Education. 21

In Madras province there were just 2.1 per cent literate women in 1921.

Muslims of the Madras Presidency also observe the purdah system like their brethrens of other presidencies of the British India and were strongly opposed to co-education even in primary stages. Further, marriage at an early age to close relatives, mainly to consolidate property, was a stumbling block in the education of Muslim women. The dissuasive factors that prevented Muslim parents from sending their girls to schools were the lack of Muslim women teachers, lack of scholarships and fee remissions, lack of adequate means of conveyance to schools for Muslim girls, who generally do not appear before men except close relatives, lack of instruction in Urdu, Arabic and Persian and general belief that modern education did not cater to the needs of the home and neglected religious studies.

But in spite of all the above drawbacks, obstacles and grievances, Muslim female education registered a gradual progress. The number of elementary schools for Muslim girls rose from 229 during 1921-22 to 316 during 1926-27 and the number of students increased from 11,629 to 16,859.

21 G.O.No.7.8, Educational Madras, dated 12th January 1900.
In 1926, compulsory elementary education was introduced in certain areas of the Presidency. Muslim girls were exempted from this, which naturally had a retarding effect in the progress of education among them. At the secondary level, the condition of Muslim women was not at all satisfactory. In 1922, Hobart’s schools in Madras with 166 girls were the only Muslim girl’s secondary schools in the Presidency. Among those who appeared for the final examination during this period, not even one was considered fit for college education. But during 1926-27, of the four who appeared for the examination, three were considered fit for college. There were 322 Muslim girls in all secondary schools for girls at this time. But by 1931-32 there were 11 women students in the Arts College and only one student in the professional colleges.

### Number of Muslim pupils in Secondary Schools in Madras Presidency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Secondary Schools for Muslims</th>
<th>In other Schools</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>No. of Schools</td>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-31</td>
<td>3808 (boys+girls)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-32</td>
<td>3616 (“”)</td>
<td>,,</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932-33</td>
<td>3824 (“”)</td>
<td>,,</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933-34</td>
<td>3864</td>
<td>,,</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934-35</td>
<td>3665</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935-36</td>
<td>3750</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936-37</td>
<td>3566</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937-38</td>
<td>3592</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938-39</td>
<td>4093</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939-40</td>
<td>3748</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-41</td>
<td>3864</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>689</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Source: Report on Public Instruction and Administration Reports from 1930-31 to 1940-41
Number of Muslim pupils in Arts, Professional and Arabic Colleges in Madras Presidency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Arts Colleges</th>
<th>Professional Colleges</th>
<th>Arabic College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1930-31</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-32</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932-33</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>106 (including 2 women)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933-34</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>94 (including 3 women)</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934-35</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935-36</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>126</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936-37</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>134</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937-38</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938-39</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939-40</td>
<td>685</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-41</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Source: Report on Public Instruction and Administration Reports from 1930-31 to 1940-41

The Muslim education committee in its report had recommended the opening of more separate schools for Muslim girls in every locality containing a Muslim population of 500 and above. But the government, unable to accept this recommendation, instead agreed with the committee that in places where there were no separate schools; girls would attend boy’s schools up to a certain age.

Though the government as a policy never rejected separate institutions for Muslims, it was not able to open more elementary and secondary schools for Muslim girls for various reasons which were more or less similar to those in the case of more schools for Muslim boys. But the increasing number of elementary schools for Muslim girls, at the base of the educational system, had created awareness among Muslims of the need of more such schools at not only the
lower but also the higher levels, which alone would contribute to the
development of Muslim women’s education.

**Women Education in Tiruchirappalli**

In 17th century the Christian missionaries worked towards the growth of
education. The two Germans, Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg and Henry Plusehau
who were sponsored by the Royal Danish Missionary Society contributed
towards the growth of education. The Vepery Mission, as it came to be known,
opened a number of schools which admitted girls. A number of missionary
schools were initially opened for the benefit European and Anglo-Indian children
but were latter thrown open to Indian children as well. The need for
women education was felt during the British rule and they encouraged women’s
education. It was the missionaries who first introduced girls’ education in India.
There was no government aided girls school in Tiruchirappalli until 1860. There
were two girls schools unconnected with government with the strength of 63. The
female training institute of SPG at Puthur, SPG girls’ schools, Puthur and
Irungalare, RC Mission girls schools at Cottapolium and Portagudy and a special
school called Chaplian Mixed Schools for European students were the important
girls schools.

Between 1854 and 1882, women’s education made considerable progress.
‘The Government Schools for Girls in 1882 numbered 616 and those aided by the
Government, 1662. Those unaided and uninspected were six. The total number of
girls receiving instruction was 127,066.

The popular prejudice against women’s education is reflected in the 1881
Census of India Report which observes: “Respectable women who could read,
when asked whether they could read and write, would reply in the negative
because it’s not considered respectable for a woman to write, though her ability
to read would not be a blot on her character”.

In spite of the conservative forces resisting women’s education, a number
of Indians, who felt concerned about the backwardness of Indians and who were

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22 Usha Sharma, *Women Education in Ancient and Medieval India*, op.cit., p. 56.
responsive to western liberal thought and civilization, made attempts to encourage women’s education. The Education Commission of 1882 had commented on the extremely backward condition of Women’s Education in India during this period.\textsuperscript{23}

\textbf{Viscount’s Goshan Government Muslim Girls Higher Secondary School}

In the year 1917, with the efforts of the wife of Viceroy Viscount Goshan, a school was started for Muslim Girls, in a small building. Then the school was shifted to the West Boulevard Road, Tiruchirappalli.\textsuperscript{24} In the year 1926, the school consisted of one Head Mistress and four teachers.

On April 24, 1931, the \textit{Meeladi Nabi} Festival was celebrated in a grand manner. The students’ strength has increased and as a result, number of teacher also increased. Her Highness Lady Goshan visited the school, named after her, in October 29 1938.\textsuperscript{25} On June 5, 1939, a Teacher Training School was also incorporated with the school.\textsuperscript{26}

On June 30, 1939, a Hostel was constructed due to the initiative of Mrs. Ismail Khan. In the year 1940, the school was upgraded as a Higher Secondary School. The same syllabus was followed by the school, which was followed by other Government Schools. But the medium of instruction is Urdu.\textsuperscript{27} Apart from school hours, Arabic and Tamil languages also are imparted to the students. Free Education was provided for the Muslim girl students.\textsuperscript{28}

\textbf{MGP School}

Janab Hamilton S. Abdul Rahman Sahib established the M.G.P School for the benefit of girl (Gosha) students (having Urdu as their mother tongue) in the year 1941. Students of this school have chosen Urdu as their medium of learning and Friday and Saturday are observed as holidays. In addition to that, classes are held only from morning to afternoon during the period of Ramalan. Moral and

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., p. 59.
\textsuperscript{24} Plaque from the School.
\textsuperscript{26} 80\textsuperscript{th} year Special Souvenir of Viscount’s Goshan Higher Secondary School, p. 112.
\textsuperscript{27} G.O.No.Ms.643, Education dated 5\textsuperscript{th} May 1942.
\textsuperscript{28} Nargees,15\textsuperscript{th} year Educational Special Souvenir, 1972-1886, p. 209.
religious teachings of Islam are taught. Totally five teachers handle classes from first standard to fifth standard. Students moved to the Pandhkana (Gosha) High School and they continued Urdu as the medium of instruction. These students opted for Urdu as their second language in the college days. They were provided with the bullock cart for traveling purposes in the early days.

After the demise of Mr. S. Abdul Rahman, Tiruchirappalli Municipality (Now it is converted into Corporation school) has undertaken the responsibility of the school. Mr. S. Abdul Rahman Sahib has donated the buildings of this school, to the Wakf Board and the Tiruchirappalli Corporation governs the school by paying a rental amount for the building.

**Khajamian Higher Secondary School (As a limb of Majlis-ul-Ulema)**

To fulfill the educational aspirations of Janab N. M. Khajamian Rowthar and his father Janab Mohamed Mian Rowthar started this school in the Majlisul Ulema Campus in the year 1918.

Initially the school was started as Majlis-ul-Ulema Primary School. In the year 1962, the Governing Body included the son of Janab Khajamian Rowthar, Janab NMK Abdul Khadar Rowthar as the President and Dr. Shafiullah Sahib as the Correspondent. In the same year, this school was upgraded as a High School. Again in the year 1978, the school was upgraded as a Higher Secondary School. The school has been allocated with 12 acres and 32 –cent land.

The land property of the school in the Anna Nagar was sold and the amount had been used for the construction of various buildings of the school. The teachers and students organized various cultural programmes and collected amount to be used for the construction work of the second floor. In the year 1987, the Silver Jubilee of the School had been celebrated in a grand manner.

Later Majlis-ul-Ulema constituted a new Governing Body under the leadership of Haji Janab A.S. Ansar as the President and Janab A.K. Khaja Kamaluddin as the Correspondent. The total strength of the school was 1400 from sixth standard to twelfth standard. The English Medium class supplements each class. The Girls are accommodated from the eleventh standard onwards.
There are forty-nine teachers and twelve office assistants. The school has forty well furnished classrooms, with a science lab and a playground. The students have secured various medals in sports events at the state level.\(^9\)

The services of *Saranar* Movement should be specially mentioned here. At present, the Muslim students are taught moral education and Islamic principles through reputed *Alims*. Other students are offered moral education.

**Muslim Women Higher Education in Tiruchirappalli**

Another milestone in the history of the higher education of the District was the shifting of St. Joseph’s College to Tiruchirappalli in the year 1884, from Nagappattinam where it was founded in 1844.\(^{30}\) Another institution for higher studies started in the District was the National in the year 1919.

The first college for women and the fourth college in the District, the Holy Cross College, came up in the year 1923. The District had only four colleges up to 1951 when two more colleges, Jamal Mohammad College and the Seetahalakshmi Ramasamy College for Women were started.\(^{31}\) The above mentioned colleges met the need for collegiate education in the District, until 1966. All these colleges were aided private colleges run by reputed educational trusts.

Tiruchirappalli is a well developed centre for education and essentially it gives more importance for Muslim Women’s Higher Education. The development of Muslim Women Colleges such as “Jamal Mohamed College for Muslim Women Education” and “Aiman Muslim Women College”, has greatly contributed to Muslim Women Education in Tiruchirappalli.

**Jamal Mohamed College and Muslim Women Education**

Jamal Mohamed College opened its premises to girls’ students only in the year 1999. In 1999, B.Sc., Computer Science, BCA and BBA Courses were started

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\(^{29}\) *The Hindu*, 8\(^{th}\) September, 2006.


\(^{31}\) History of Higher Education in South India, p.162.
and 150 women students were admitted. In the year 2000, B.Com, and B.A.
English Literature, courses were offered. M.Com, and M.Sc, information
Technology Courses were also offered in the year 2002. In the academic year
2003-04, B.Sc., Maths, M. B. A., M. A. English and Arabic Courses were stared.
Admission is given to women students who hail from Tiruchirappalli, preferably
in and around the College. What was started with strength of 150 students in
1999 has grown into a separate section for Women within the with a massive
strength of 1100 girls students in a short span of time.  

The College follows the Principle of Segregation in Women’s Education.
Facilities in the College have been extended to them. They are involved in all the
extra-academic activities. The College offers 11 UG and 15 PG, 11 M.Phil., &
10 Ph.D., programmes for women empowerment. Women’s Administrative
Block houses the Administrative office, Reading Hall, NSS Office, NCC Office
and Prayer Hall.

Figure 1. Girls students strength in Jamal Mohamed College

Prayer Hall

A separate prayer hall for women in the same Administrative Block named. “Rajagiri Umma Abdul Aleem Memorial girls Prayer Hall” was sponsored by one of the illustrious alumni, Mr. S. A. Abdul Malik of Jeddah.\textsuperscript{34}

Conveyance

For the conveyance of girls Students coming from different parts of Tiruchirappalli City, the College is operating more than 10 buses in different routes at concession fare.

Deeniyath Education

The College Management believes that moral education plays an important role in the development of overall personality of the students. Hence moral and religious instructions are given to our students every Thursday immediately after the Fifth Hour. Attendance is compulsory for Muslim Students. A state level Essay Writing Competition on the theme, “Islam and Importance of Family Life” was conducted in Tamil.

National Cadet Corps

- During this year, cadets actively participated in various Training Camps like Annual Training Camp, National Integration Camp, Republic Day Camp etc.,
- Twelve cadets attended the Basic Leadership Camp at Cauvery College, Trichy.

Leo Club

A Social Welfare Organization was started in a grand manner on 08.08.2009 by the Leo Club for women. It has on its roll more than 300 student members, including an Executive Committee of about 27 professors. H. Shagitha Parveen, Sub Warden and Lecturer in Mathematics serve as its Faculty Advisor.

Youth Red Cross

The Youth Red Cross was inaugurated for the academic year 2009-2010 on 31.07.09 by Hajee Dr. M. Sheik Mohamed, Principal, Jamal Mohamed

\textsuperscript{34} The Jamal Mohamed College, Annual Report, 2000 – 2001, p.23.
College (Autonomous). He highlighted the importance of selfless service to the sick and suffering. The Youth Red Cross for women organized Aids Awareness among the people of Ponnamplayam.

**National Service Scheme**

The Women’s NSS Unit of Jamal Mohamed College was inaugurated on 20.01.2004 at the College Auditorium. Dr. M. Sheik Mohamed, Principal of the College, presided over the function.

A questionnaire was administered to a sample of hundred students to find out the aspiration of Muslim girls. The results are

- 90% of educated women are willing to go for a job.
- 98% Muslim Women asserted that they need education and 2% of Muslim Women say that they only needed religious education.
- 85% of Muslim Educated Women preferred Government Jobs.
- 15% of Muslim Women preferred private jobs.
- 80% of Muslim Educated Women opined that education helps in economic terms and 20% of them did not agree with this.
- 75% of Muslim women are willing to do self employment.
- 98% of Muslim women are interested in social service.
- 95% of Muslim women viewed that the education helps in the realization of social security.
- 95% of Muslim women gained self confidence from their education.
- All Muslim women are against the dowry system.
- 90% of Muslim women like co – education and 10% of them did not like.

**AIMAN College of Arts and Science for Women**

Aiman College of Arts and Science for Women was established in the first year of the New Millennium in the firmament of the academic horizon of Tamil

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35 The interview with Muslim Women students in Aiman College.
Nadu. The College was brought into being by the AIMAN Education and Welfare Society consisting of a group of service minded gentlemen who are bestowed with a faculty to look forward to generations ahead and have minds to equip the college with all the necessary infrastructure and facilities so that the nascent college may blossom into a first grade Women's College within a short span of time. It was inaugurated on 17th July 2000. All students are offered Moral Instruction. Muslim Students get the benefit of Deeniyat Education. Other students are offered general moral instruction, to make them morally upright, socially committed and spiritually inspired citizens. Special care is also given to students in the Quran reading in the afternoons after the college hours.

With the appearance of this college, a long felt need has come to be fulfilled and a long - cherished dream, especially of Muslims in Tiruchirappalli, has come true. The doors of the college are open to all sections of society without distinctions of caste, colour or creed. This College will play an active role in spreading higher education among the aspiring young ladies of this country. The College works from 9.00 a.m to 2 p.m on all working days. In the afternoon, the students are allowed to improve their communication skills and computer operations and other useful skills. All students coming from the Tamil medium schools are given free Spoken English Courses in the afternoon.

Aiman College of Arts & Science for Women is situated in a calm and quiet campus at K. Sathanur which is 5 kms away from Tiruchirappalli Railway Junction and Central Bus Stand and 3 kms from Tiruchirappalli International Airport. Tiruchirappalli also has direct Domestic and International flights. The College moved to the permanent site at K.Sathanur during 2002-2003 after the completion of the construction of the Main Block with 18 classrooms and a Hostel to accommodate 192 students. In addition, a Masjid for offering Salath was also constructed in the year 2006.

36 Interview with Prof Umar Basha, Former Secretary and Correspondent, AIMAN College, dated on 9th May 2011.
37 The Hindu, 2nd July 2002.
During the year 2002-2003 the College got affiliation from the University for offering M.A-English Course. In 2008-2009, B.B.A course was started. Thus, the College offers presently six undergraduate courses and two post-graduate courses. Besides, a three –year Diploma in ‘Muballiga’ Course was started for the benefit of the Hostel Students from the year 2008-2009. This Course is conducted with the guidance of the United Welfare Organization, an off –shoot of Al Haramine Trust, Chennai.\(^{38}\)

An additional Hostel was constructed during 2008-2009 to meet the increasing demand for hostel accommodation. An imposing Auditorium-cum-Laboratories Complex, the construction of which was taken up in 2008-2009, is nearing completion. As the work on the ground floor of this complex was over, Microprocessor/ Physics Laboratories, N&D, Chemistry Labs and Library were shifted to the ground floor of this new complex. The Computer Lab. is functioning in the Main Block with 50 systems. There are 600 students on roll of the College. Among them, 300 students are Hostellers. Character building is the main component of the curriculum. Moral and Deeniyat classes is regular feature of the College. There are 30 Lecturers in the various Departments of the College.

The College has been registering consistently excellent results in the University examinations ever since its inception. The College has so far produced 83 rank holders in the University Examinations. Among them, 11 are gold Medalists. Hassena-Nainar Cash Award Of Rs.5,000/-, instituted by Dr. C. Nainar Mohammed, former Principal of Jamal Mohammed College is presented to all First rankers in the University Examination.

**Alima or Islamic Theology Course**

Aiman College of Arts and Science introduced the Alima Course in the academic year 2008-09 especially for Muslim women. In the year 2008-09, Sixty First year and Second year students are undergoing this three year Diploma Course and they will certainly be instrumental in shaping the lives of every

\(^{38}\) Interview with M .M. Shahul Hameed, Secretary and Correspondent, AIMAN College, dated 1st June 2013.
member of their respective families on Islamic ways. The *Alima* Course was started with the support of United Welfare Organization (UNWO), Chennai, which has sponsored this course and keeps monitoring it on a continuous basis.

**Academic English Courses**

The College offers a programme in Academic English. Courses in this programme are designed to strengthen a students’ skill in Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking English. Special Coaching is offered to students who are weak in English.

**Fine Arts**

Towards realizing the juvenile talents, the College conducts Fine Arts Competition, between six teams, namely, Razzle, Regal, Relish, Ritzy, Roister and Royal.

**Computer Course**

Aiman Computer Academy offers Certificate Courses in Computer Software for the Non-Computer Science Students after the college hours.

**Extra Curricular Activities**

Apart from encouraging our students in studies and developing their talents, the College is also keen on making the students to serve the society. In this respect, the College offers NSS, YRC and RRC. All these programmes are very active throughout the year in cultivating social concern among the students.

The overall aim of National Service Scheme is to give an extension to the higher education system and orient the student youth to community service while they are studying in the College. NSS activities of the students are fine tuned to realize this objective. St.John’s Ambulance, Manaparai Centre, conducted a one day workshop for the NSS Students on First Aid Training.

Mahatma Gandhi Eye hospital conducted a one day programme on eye care for the NSS Students and an eye camp was also organized for the students of the College. Fifty Five NSS Students participated in the Largest Blood Donation Camp organized by the Bharathidasan University. The NSS Students planted 500 saplings in the adopted village of Itichamalaipatti. The NSS Students
participated in the Awareness Rally organized for “International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking”. Mr. Lawrence, District Secretary, YRC, gave a talk on AIDS Awareness to the members of the YRC of the College.

Anti Tobacco Day was observed in the College by placing banners and taking oath to prevent the use of Tobacco products in the campus. The seven day Special Camp was organized from 10th March 2009 to 16th March 2009 at the adopted village and as agents of initiating developmental activities in the desired direction. Each one of the college volunteers deserves appreciation for their meritorious services.

Hostel within the Campus

Hostel for the girl students pursuing higher education must necessarily be a home away from home in the sense that it should cater to all their daily needs such as nutritious food, safe and comfortable stay and for a good atmosphere for their studies. But an Ideal Hostel must offer facilities for learning and practicing Deeniyat, arranging appropriate games to promote healthy growth of the students’ physique, providing opportunities for their empowerment and social interaction with the students of all communities and making available to all unlimited scope to build in them excellent character, exemplary behavior and an enviable personality. When the students join their parents after the completion of their courses of study, the latter should find them as paragon of virtues, highly empowered and motivated with an inbuilt ability to shoulder the future responsibilities with courage and confidence.

Arrangements for five time prayers in the beautiful Mosque constructed adjoining the Hostel and facilities for learning and recitation of Al-Qur’an are the features of special care for the Muslim Students. Special Care is bestowed on the Muslim Students to observe Fasting in the Holy Month of Ramadan. Besides, when Non-Muslim Students wish to go to the nearby temples for offering prayers on special occasions, they are taken in the college bus, escorted by the teaching staff. Second and Fourth Sundays of every month are earmarked for parents to visit their wards in the Hostel between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.
Scholarships

Scholarships are awarded to the students who have secured not less than 50% marks in the previous final examination and annual income of their parents/guardians from all sources does not exceed Rs.1 lakh.

Documents to be enclosed with the application:
1. Self attested passport size photograph with signature
2. Attested copies of educational qualification
3. Income declaration – affidavit on non-judicial stamp paper for self-employed parents or income certificate from the employer for employed parents
4. Proof of permanent residence
5. Minority Community Declaration in an affidavit on non-judicial stamp by the student that she belongs to any one of the minority communities notified by the Central Government.

In 2000 the total girls’ strength in the AIMAN College was 20 Muslim girls and 20 Non-Muslims. There was a considerable increase in the student strength of girls in college.

![Figure 2: Students strength in AIMAN College](image)

The graph below shows the increase in the number of girl students who were admitted in the first year course from 2000-2006. In 2006, 168 Muslim girls were admitted and 28 were Non-Muslims. This shows that the Muslim women’s Colleges benefited the girls’ students of Muslim community. The increasing number also indicated the result of introduction of new courses in the college.

**Moulana Azad National Scholarship Scheme for Meritorious Students belonging to Minorities**

Only Girl Students belonging to national minorities can apply

1. Should have secured not less than 55 % marks (In aggregate in the secondary school certificate examination, conducted by any recognized centre / state board of secondary education).

2. Family income of the student from all sources should be less than Rupees 1 lakh in the preceding financial year.

3. It is a one time scholarship.

4. A student getting a scholarship from any other source would not be eligible for the scholarship.

The last date for receipt of application in the office of The Moulana Azad Education Foundation is September 30th every year.

Application can be downloaded from the website: www.maef.nic.in

Hostel Students donate their caution deposit amount of Rs.1,000/- to Students’ Aid Fund when they leave the campus.

**Laboratories**

The College is well-equipped with a Computer Laboratory, a Microprocessor Laboratory, Chemistry and Food Science Laboratory for science students and other laboratory facilities needed for the relevant subject courses.

**Libraries**

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• There is a well-stocked library and reading room for the benefit of the students and the staff.

• The library is kept open throughout the day.

• All the students of the College are members of the library.

• Perfect silence must be maintained in the library

• Books will be issued only on presentation of the Library Card, bearing the name, class, roll number and signature of students. In case the card is lost, the Librarian should be informed at once. A lost Card may be replaced with a duplicate on payment of Rs.5/-.

• Students are entitled to keep a book with them for a fortnight from the date of issue. If the book is not returned on or before the due date, a fine of Rs.1/- per day will be levied.

• No one is allowed to sub-lend the books taken out by her.

• Students must, on receiving books, examine and report to the Librarian, any damage found therein. Otherwise they will be held responsible for any damage that may afterwards be detected.

• The Librarian may recall any book at any time.

M.I.E.T. Arts and Science College

The M.I.E.T. Arts College was established in the year 1994 with the permission of the Government of Tamil Nadu. The main objective of the M.I.E.T. society is to provide educational opportunities for the youth.

Vision and Mission

• MIET will be recognized as a premier Muslim minority institution with a global perspective that educates leaders who will fashion a more humane and just world.

• M.I.E.T shall provide high quality education, training and research facilities in Arts, Science, Engineering and Technology, leading to diplomas, under-graduate and doctoral degrees under recognized
affiliating bodies and pave ways for useful innovations, by creating institutions with world-class infrastructure, excellent facilities and competent faculty.

- It shall focus on the education and training of Muslim minority and provider better scholarship programs for economically challenged and socially deprived classes for social equity and economic stability. It shall emphasize on co-curricular and extra-curricular programmes to promote character building, and impart life skills for peace and prosperity among the nation’s communities.

- M.I.E.T will ensure that the programmes offered by its institutions are of very high quality and are affordable to all.

**Core Values**

The institution’s core values include a belief in and a commitment to advancing:

- The Islamic tradition that views faith and reason as complementary resources in the search for truth and authentic human development, and that welcomes persons of all faiths or no religious beliefs as fully contributing partners to the institution.

- The freedom and the responsibility to pursue truth and follow evidence to its conclusion.

- Learning as a humanizing, social activity rather than a competitive exercise.

- A common good that transcends the interests of particular individuals or groups; and reasoned discourse rather than coercion as the norm for decision making.

- Diversity of perspectives, experiences and traditions as essential components of a quality education in our global context.

- Excellence as the standard for teaching, scholarship, creative expression and service to the institution community.
• Social responsibility in fulfilling the Institution’s mission to create, communicate and apply knowledge to a world shared by all people and held in trust for future generations.

• The moral dimension of every significant human choice: taking seriously how and who we choose to be in the world.

• The full, integral development of each person and all persons, with the belief that no individual or group may rightfully prosper at the expense of others.

• A culture of service that respects and promotes the dignity of every person.

**Strategic Initiatives**

The following initiatives are key to the Institution’s achieving the recognition as a premier Islamic, rural Institution:

1. Recruit and retain a diverse faculty of outstanding teacher-scholars and a diverse, highly qualified, service-oriented staff, all committed to advancing the Institution’s Vision, Mission and Values.

2. Enroll, support and graduate a diverse student body, which demonstrates high academic achievement, strong technical and leadership capability, concern for others and a sense of responsibility for the weak and the vulnerable.

3. Provide an attractive campus environment and the resources to promote learning throughout the Institution:
   - Learning resources that enhance curriculum and support scholarship
   - Technology solutions to enhance learning and improve service
   - Facilities to support outstanding educational programs

4. Continue to strengthen the Institution's financial resources to support its educational mission.
U.G Courses and P.G Courses


Special Features:

Library: A library is the life blood of an academic institution and fully automated modern library is on its way to become an outstanding learning resource centre.

Faculty: The M.I.E.T Arts College has qualified, experienced and dedicated faculties supported by adequate administrative staff and lab assistants.

Hostel: Complete hygienic and fully furnished Hostel is provided by the management for both boys and girls separately.

Training and Placement

Training and Placement Cell is an integral part of the institution. The College has provided the complete infrastructure for effective functioning of the Cell. Various companies are invited for campus interview for the final year students.

Personality Development Courses like leadership training, effective public speaking and time management are organized. Students are being motivated in presenting papers on various topics at various Colleges and Universities.40

Internet

The Computer Lab includes exclusive internet facilities for the students to get access of cyberspace. This is essentially helpful for the students to gain the knowledge from a wide source.

Extra-Curricular Activities

40 The Hindu, 14 September, 2009.
The College aims at the all round development of students and hence emphasizes on extra-curricular activities. The special emphasis is given for both men and women on extra-curricular activities such as club, fine art and sports. The Muslim Women actively participate in the NSS and NCC Scheme. Various awareness programs like Rain Water Harvest, AIDS, Health and Hygiene, Literacy etc are organized.

Muslim Women has long been associated with religious based education system and different social environment. In early period, with respect to education of Women, many were educated only in Islamic system. They were not ready to adopt modern education in their curriculam. The establishment of modern educational institutions such as Jamal Mohamed College (separate section for women), co-education in M.I.E.T. college and AIMAN college for women are major milestones in the women education of Tiruchirappalli. These institutions paved the way to betterment of Muslim women education. The increase in number of enrollment and women participation show the improvement in Muslim Women education. These institutions are successful in imparting modern education along with ethical moral values to women.

There some hurdles behind the growth of Muslim women education. Muslim women are suffering both from internal and external oppression just like the women of other community. Some problems Muslim women faces are of social nature and are common to women of all religions in India. All women face problem of social conservatism as they are reduced to secondary to men. Men are thought to be bread winner and decision maker across religions in India. But only difference is that among Hindus this situation is fast changing at least in urban areas. Women are becoming self-sufficient and, in some cases, also decision makers. But situation is not so bright as far as Muslim women are concerned.

There are reasons for Muslim women facing such odds in their life. Mostly Muslims are engaged trade and self-employed and sociologically speaking they have restricted world-view and live in their own universe. Then there are those Muslims who live in rural areas and are engaged as agricultural
labourers and related operations. They tend to be even more conservative. Both are concerned women education at secondary level.

These sections of society do not know what is written in Qur'an or hadith, much less what are problems with hadith or different schools of law. Basically Islam and its doctrines are not against acquiring knowledge and education. The conservative groups are not tolerated towards modern education in general women education in particular. All the social issues revolve around the Muslim community only on the base of ignorance. The media also tends to give undue publicity to such matters. Thus it is important to understand role of society as much as that of religion. Women are oppressed not so much by religion as by society. In order to bring about change in the plight of Muslim women it would be equally necessary to bring about change in socio-economic conditions of Muslims in India. If Muslims remain poor and illiterate, it will be very difficult to improve conditions of Muslim women.

**Awareness for change**

It is also necessary to understand that things are not totally stagnant on Muslim women's front. An educated middle class is emerging among Indian Muslims - though still small - which is well aware of changing society and need for change among Muslim women. The educated Muslim women exposed to democratic politics, electronic and print media, are becoming aware of their rights and no longer prepared to accept what is being imposed on them in the name of religion.

In last one decade there have been many positive indications of change in Muslim women education in India and Tamil Nadu too. There is great need for Qur'anic literacy among Muslim women. Unfortunately the modern secular educated women know neither Arabic nor are aware of Qur'anic teachings. In order to bring real change in the Muslim women's condition, there is great need to reconstruct the conservative ideas among the social groups.
To avail of this social and political space increased awareness among women is needed. The greatest stumbling block is poverty. One finds even great urge for modern education among women but poverty pulls them down. The Poverty is the main cause for their drop outs. However, Muslim women are far greater achievers in education field than Muslim boys. At the same time their recruitment in job is very low due to social problems revolves around them.

If Sachar Committee Report is implemented in right earnest, it will accelerate the pace of change in women's condition too. But what is most unfortunate is that those who taunt Muslims about plight of Muslim women are today greatest opponent of implementation of Sachar Committee Report calling it 'blatant appeasement' of Muslims. One can very well see whether they are concerned with the plight of Muslim women or really trying to communalize Muslim women's issues. To empower Muslim women, to reduce rate of child birth, to usher in religious and social reforms, there is great need to improve general economic condition which in turn will improve educational status of Muslim women and that in turn will bring in greater awareness for change. There is also great need for internal critique and at least educated Muslim men should attempt an honest criticism of condition of women in their community and consolidate efforts for change and reform.
CONCLUSION

The history of education in India have been evolved in different period in different ways such as ancient, medieval, colonial, post-independence and contemporary period. In this journey, a system of English education took a leading position in the higher education. The higher educational institutions are considered to be most important agency of socio-economic and political transformation as well as the entire development of a country. In fact, higher education in India begins from ancient time. In the Vedic period, two major types of educational system were prevalent such as the Brahminical and the Buddhist. The Brahminical system of education was regulated the religious values and the Buddhist form of education was “secular” in nature. Formal education in India, began with the instruction of religious scriptures, observance of religious rules and regulations, rites, customs, performance of prayers and other injunctions prescribed by religion.

Muslim conquest of India brought a new system of education and culture in India. In early days, Muslims in India adopted, more or less, the same pattern of education as prevalent in the Islamic countries. Muslims drew inspiration from Prophet Mohammad’s famous command “Seek knowledge even if it is available in a distant country like China”. But the major change in Indian higher education took place through the initiatives of the British during their rule, which made a positive and negative impact on the masses. In pre-independence India until 1931, the community based data on literacy and education was made available through census reports. But from the 1941 census, for unknown reasons, this crucial information has never been published.

Muslims being an important minority group among the minorities in the country and consequently they play crucial role in determining the socio-economic and political life of the Indian society. No serious effort was made to maintain a regular record of their access to education. Without such information it becomes almost impossible to know the exact status of education of Muslims.
and other social groups. The Sixth Annual Report (1983-84) of the Central Minorities Commission confirms the backward nature of the Muslims in India. It stated that out of 172 districts of the country were identified as backward by the Planning Commission and 39 districts, classified as most backward with sizeable Muslim population. In the National Sample Survey conducted in 1990 revealed that only 2.3% male and 0.8% female Muslims had acquired graduation in the country.

During 1999-2000 the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) has provided the levels of education achieved by Hindus and Muslims at all India as well as the state level. According to the survey, participation of Muslims in higher education in urban and rural areas was 3.9% and 0.8% against the Hindus participation rate of 11.5% and 1.8% respectively. The NSSO estimates that in urban India, the Muslim illiteracy rate that was as much as 14% higher in 1993-94 had narrowed a bit to 11% by the end of the decade.

Breaking the long period of silence the Government of India ultimately decided to accept publicly the fact that, Muslims are educationally most backward and special actions should to be taken to improve their educational condition. Several provisions concerning education of minorities were incorporated in the National Policy of education- 1986 and in its Programme of Action, various educational schemes chalked out. According to that the schemes like the government recognition of minority educational institutions, coaching classes for competitive examination and modernization of Madarasah curriculum were introduced. The Central Minority Commission in its 12th Annual Report for the period 1989-90, submitted to the Government of India had rightly observed that the Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development did not have information of what was being done by the States and Union Territories regarding education of minorities. The President of India, in his address to the Joint session of Parliament on 25th February, 2005 announced that the Government would recast the 15-Point Programme for the welfare of minorities with a view to incorporate programmes of specific interventions.
The condition of the Muslims continued to deteriorate and which was clearly mentioned in the reports like the report of the Dr. Gopal Singh, High Power Panel for Minorities (1983); the 43rd, 50th and 61st rounds of the NSSO in 1988, 1994, and 2004-05 respectively; the seventh annual reports of the National Commission for Minorities and the report of the Committee of Governor on the welfare of minorities (1998).

By the results of these reports the Government of India constituted committee under the chairmanship Justice Sachar in 2006. The main objective of the committee is to prepare a Report on the Social, Economic and Educational Status of Muslim Community of India. The Sachar Committee Report pointed out that the Muslims are the most economically, educationally and socially backward sections of Indian society. Undoubtedly, the report is immensely useful for understanding the magnitude of this problem, as per the many suggestions that it provides for amelioration of Muslim society.

The Sachar Committee has also looked into the share of different communities in various institutions in order to assess their level of exclusion and discrimination in the access to various services. It has observed that the shares of several religious minorities are far below to the average figures of other communities. It also suggests the adoption of suitable mechanisms to ensure equity and equality of opportunity to Muslims in residential, work and educational spaces. It the first report in India which focuses a strong diversity in the society and also indirectly indicate the government to follow the secular public policy.

The salient findings of the Sachar Committee are as follows the literacy rate among Muslims was 59.1%, which was below the national average of 64.8%; less than 4% of Muslims are graduates or diploma holders compared to about 7% of the population aged 20 years and above. It is estimated that only one out of 25 students enrolled for an undergraduate programme, and only one out of fifty students enrolled for a postgraduate programme is a Muslim. The percentage of
Muslim men enrolling for a degree course is lower than that of women in general.

A multipronged strategy to address the educational backwardness of the Muslim community, as brought out by the Sachar Committee, has been adopted. It was heartening to find that the Report acknowledges the fact that enrolment rates for Muslims have picked up in recent years. The need of the hour is to strengthen and accelerate this trend. The government should move in and do something not for popular votes but for uplifting a major section of the Indian citizens. *Madarasahs* can be transformed into modern educational centres where both religious and vocational studies may be imparted simultaneously. Muslims should be provided reservation in higher education and elite institutions such as the IITs and IIMs.

The main explanation put forward by the committee seems to be generalised discrimination and lack of access, in part because of poverty. But this cannot be the convincing answer, because in some states, Muslim participation in education is much higher than the expectation. In fact, on many measures, Muslims are doing better in western and southern states than they are in the rest of the country. The current trajectory of the implementation of the Sachar Committee Report recommendations is leading it nowhere near the goal of empowerment of the Muslim community. The general opinion is that the basic mistake made by the government was making the Ministry of Minority Affairs, as the nodal agency for implementing the Sachar Committee recommendations. Most of the recommendations of the Sachar Committee favours general programmes with better inclusion of all under-privileged groups, including Muslims, rather than Muslim-centred programmes. The policy-making and implementation task should lie with a general ministry, such as the Ministry of Home or Finance. It is evident from above analysis that saga of Muslim Higher Education is quite sordid in the country that vindicate the hypothesis mainly Muslim representation in education in general and higher education in particular.
is far lower both in relations to their population as well as in relation to other minority communities.

For the Muslims, the Education is only a subsystem of the larger social system which has several dimensions and no wonder the Muslim community shaped its own academic system. At the same time, contemporary educational system also influenced the society. In the case of Maktabs, Madarasahs and Arabic colleges the religious values of the Muslim community guided the functioning of these institutions. No wonder the traditional Islamic schools offered only religious instruction. This cosy interfacing between the Islamic society and Islamic educational system worked well till the rise of Britishers in the 18th century. The traditional Muslim educational system thrived along with the English system of education and the Muslims were reluctant to accept the new changes in the educational phenomena that emerged because of British rule.

The introduction of Modern Western Education created new problems and challenges for both the Hindu and Muslim communities. The changing trend did not alter the historical conditioning of Muslims and the central Islamic value continued to play an important role in the lives of Muslim community. In the beginning, the Muslims were naturally hostile to the modern secular education instead of realizing its emerging importance of during British rule and they continued to instruct their children in their traditional Quranic Schools like Madarasahs.

The rising power of the East India Company was a direct challenge to the Muslims in India and their response is reflected in the need to revisit the traditional mode of Islamic education. The most emphatic response to the British challenge was first crafted in North India by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan who mobilized the Muslims of India to take up modern education. This movement was known as Aligarh Movement and it made an attempt to combine traditional education with modern education. This Aligarh Movement found its echo in the Madras Presidency too. Since 1886, Muhammadan Educational conferences were conducted in Aligarh, Lucknow, Lahore, Allahabad, Delhi and Meerut.
continuously. However in 1901 the fifteenth annual session of All Indian Muhammadan Educational Conference held at Madras, in which set the stage of Educational reforms in South India among the Muslim Community. This conference is responsible for the establishment of Muhammadan Educational Association of South India (MEASI) in 1901. As a result, the Vaniyambadi Muslim Educational Society was established in 1905 as well as the educational institutions were established at Vellore, Peranampet, Gudiyatham and Tirupattur.

The Muslims of Tamil country built *Pallivasals* (*Masjid*: Place for Worship) in coastal region and hinterlands. These worship centres became the centre for learning to teach primary education to the children. Some early settlements had their own Madarasahs adjacent to *Masjid* during the late 17th century. Subsequently the major Muslim populated areas like Madras, Vellore, Vaniyambadi, Thanjavur, and Tiruchirappalli were marked as the places of religious education centres in Tamil Nadu. During the last decades of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th centuries, a number of *Madarasahs* were established in and around the town of Vellore.

Whether *Madarasah* Education has helped the betterment of educational or economic position of Indian Muslims in present environment is a debatable issue. But the fact remains that Islam-centric teaching is not friendly towards the job market in the contemporary world. The graduates produced by *Madarasahs* are neither able to improve their own material prosperity nor provide leadership to the Muslim Community to face the challenges in the modern world. Their job opportunity is restricted to Mosques and *Madarasahs*. The degrees awarded by *Madarasah* are not recognized by Indian Universities except in the Theological Department of Aligarh Muslim University and Jamia Millia. Similarly such degrees are not recognized for administrative jobs in the Government.

However we can’t deny the fact that the main role of Madarasahs are said to have showing the right path to the Muslim Society. *Madarasahs* plays a vital in eliminating many social evils like, dowry, superstitions, lending of money for interest etc. The Madarasahs also propagate cultural value among the people.
Now a days may Madarasahs are hanging for survival and very soon these Madarasahs are going to adopt the modern education along with their curriculum for survival. There are Madarasahs like Bilaliya Arabic College, Nemmeli, Chennai produce Aalima along with degree such as B.Com, B.A., etc.,

Among the Muslim elites, Nawab C.Abdul Hakim was liberal supporter of number of educational, charitable, and religious institutions. He had donated liberally to Arabic Madarasahs, for the building of Mosques, etc. Jamal Mohamed Sahib was also a great philanthropist and had taken interest in religious activities. The other Muslim elites were Justice Bakeer Ahmed, N.M.Khajamian Rowthar, Hajee Karutha Rowthar, Janab A.Mohamed Yunus, Janab M.A. Mohamed Nizam and many Muslim business men were also generally known for their philanthropic and religious activities. The elites and merchants who were initially started religious educational centres such as Madarasahs and Arabic Colleges which helped for the establishment of modern institutions like schools and colleges in their premises. The political background and sound financial condition of some Muslims played a vital role in social and educational upliftment of the Muslim society.

The modern Muslim educational institutions have long been sponsored good civil servants and intellectuals to this country. Jamal Mohamed College and its fifty five years of educational service made Tiruchirappalli region as one of the leading higher learning centres of south India. These minority institutions were started with the objectives of giving proper education to minorities particularly to the Muslims. However these educational institutions became the paradise for all communities irrespective of caste, creed and religion. Even though, Students are also coming from overseas for their higher studies particularly from underdeveloped African countries. The Muslims of Tiruchirappalli have also realized the fundamental need of higher education for future generations.

With respect to education of Muslim Women, many were educated only in Madarasahs. Some of them were not ready to adopt the system of modern education. The starting of separate section for women in Jamal Mohamed
College, co-education in M.I.E.T. College and AIMAN College for women are the milestones which paved the way for the opening up of women education. The enrollment of women and pass out percentage show the improvement in Muslim Women education. These institutions are successful in imparting modern education along with ethical and moral values.

The Muhammedan Education Association of Tiruchirappalli was established by the group of Muslim elites during the 19th century with motto of providing scholarship for the poor Muslim students and educational advancement of Muslim Community. The Nawab rulers of Tiruchirappalli have granted *Inam* of 2732.42 acres of land in Inam Samuthiram village at Tiruchirappalli to the Muhammedan Education Association (The Fort St. George, Gazetteer, Government of Madras, 1958). In the year 1948 the Government of Madras Presidency acquired this land under the Inam abolition and Conversion into Ryotwari Act and allotted a meager amount of Rs 1815.40 as yearly allowance to the organisation, which is left uncontinued. The Muhammedan Education Association is alive in a poor infrastructure at Palakkarai, Tiruchirappalli. The purpose of this grant was diluted and such type of grants were also encroached by the individuals also. In many other districts of Tamil Nadu, it can be seen that there is no single Muslim higher educational Institution existed. The total community has a single Wakf Board college (Madurai) and ten government aided Minority institutions. More initiative from the state is required for creating more institutions for Muslims. Developmental research and other social studies are required in future.

There are several reasons for the backwardness of Muslim in the field of education as follows:

- Poverty
- Lack of awareness
- Illiteracy of parents
- Larger and Joint family system.
• Lack of girls schools and Higher educational institutions
• Poor facilities in Muslim schools (Government & Aided Institutions)
• Problem of Linking education with employment
• Negative attitude towards girls education
• Effect of Medium of Instruction in Schools (Traditional System of Education)
• Lack of vocational education and career Guidance counselling
• Lack of social and political Leadership adopt
• Lack of inculcating modern education in Muslim managed institutions
• Problem of adaptation towards the changing world.

The following remedies could be considered in improving educational standards among Muslims.
• Introduction of job-oriented and value based curriculum.
• Improving economic well being through education
• Increase in awareness about the importance of education and various self employment schemes at the grass root level.
• Integrating vocational education with religious instruction in *Madarasahs*
• Developing the habits of savings
• Establishing Individual sponsored private libraries
• Increasing reading habits among Muslim boys and girls
• Organizing more number of community polytechnics
• Increasing Child Centred Programmes at the primary level
• Selecting good and dedicated leaders among Muslims for community upliftment.
• Increasing dedicated teachers among Muslims in Muslim managed institutions.

• Motivating Muslim youths towards education and constructive works

• Availability of good books in their mother tongue at every level of schooling.

• Imparting spoken and communication skills among the students.

• Providing Government incentives and scholarships at all level of education.

• Strong organization for improving the condition of all centres of primary, secondary and higher learning.

The Political and other Islamic organizations proved their disunity and they disintegrated in the common issues. These community agencies must give their concentration to avail and provide education aid from the government and their own. There are many reasons for the backwardness of Muslim community including illiteracy and poverty. The common awareness is required about scholarship and educational aids among Muslims. In future, the research can be undertaken on the basis of micro-level, to study the socio-economic, cultural and educational condition of Muslims of Tiruchirappalli. Lack of awareness in education made the Muslim community as a backward among the backward class in Tamil Nadu.