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EDUCATION OF MUSLIMS IN INDIA BEFORE INDEPENDENCE AND AFTER INDEPENDENCE
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EDUCATION OF MUSLIM IN INDIA BEFORE INDEPENDENCE

INTRODUCTION

Education has played a significant part in human progress. It is a powerful instrument for the socio-economic upliftment of an individual and also for bringing about desirable social changes. The useful and constructive role of education is universally acknowledged by all nations and all sections of the society. The challenges in education and the development in socio-economic life are interdependent and interlinked. As such education is of paramount importance in the development of a country and this is particularly true in the case of underdeveloped and developing countries. It is evident that the progress of a country depends not merely on physical resources but on the quality of people coming out of schools and colleges. It is beyond doubt that education has played a pivotal role in the field of development, as development depends upon people, their attitudes and energies and their willingness to do something about it directly affects themselves. It is against this background of the pivotal role of education in contemporary society that the present study is undertaken. It is an attempt to examine the role of education and institutions in the development of the Muslim community in particular.

Like anybody else Muslims also emphasise the need to receive education but they too lay great stress on the importance of religious education. In the past all education was religious and it was the clergies who administered and controlled education. Religious elites were the custodians and disseminators of knowledge.

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Islam attaches immense importance to the acquisition and extension of ilm or knowledge which with all its scholastic appurtenances involed in the study of the holy Quran, the Ahadith, and other sciences. This is the only road to the apprehension of Truth.  

**IMPORTANCE AND MEANING OF KNOWLEDGE (ILM) IN ISLAM:**

Knowledge is the name of that quality through which the knowable things are known. Many of the qualities of human being are also found in animals but learning is only associated with man. Hence it is necessary for man to think about himself and about his environment and try to learn those things which are useful for him and avoid those things which are harmful to him. As Knowledge is noblest, desire of a muslim man and woman, it is obligatory to make a search for knowledge.

Prophet Mohammed has said search for knowledge is obligatory for both men and women.

Zaiiauddin Al-Zarnuji, has devided knowledge into three kinds:

1. **Knowledge** which is needed for every muslim.
2. **Knowledge** which is needed for some people.
3. **Knowledge** which is never needed by the people and is harmful to them.

The first kind of knowledge is essential for every muslim. The second kind is essential for those who are suited for attaining that knowledge. If some people devote themselves for the attainment for this knowledge others are exempted from it. The third type of knowledge is prohibited (i.e. magic and sorcery).

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As a matter of fact, education has been prescribed as compulsory for every man and woman in Islam. The prophet has imposed upon every Muslim, man or woman, a duty to seek knowledge. He has also declared that good education and training of children, sons as well as daughters, as the best gift that a father can give. He exhorted the Muslims to go even as far a distance as China to receive ilm. Ilm (knowledge) here means scientific studies which was far advanced in China in those days. It has been reported that in the battle of Badr (against the Quresh) led by the prophet himself, the enemies were captured and the prophet instead of penalising them asked the literates among them that each one of them teach twelve Muslims. This again shows that the prophet was not opposed to the acquisition of knowledge even from the unbelievers. He also advised his followers to acquire knowledge and learning from everyone and everywhere. Thus the two maxims of Prophet Mohammed which greatly exercised the minds of Muslim and which are often quoted by Muslim theologians are. "A fragment of knowledge is worth more than a hundred prayers of the martyrs blood". These sayings reveal that the Prophet accorded the highest significance to education and exhorted his followers to acquire education by all means.⁶

The main aim of education in Islam is "To understand the relation of man with God as revealed in the holy Quran". All educational activities of Muslims were (and are) governed by this aim, though it has been approached by different ways and means.⁷
IN HOLY QURAN THE SURAH-I-IQRA REVEALS AS SUCH:

Noble is the mission of the Prophet, selected to proclaim the message of God, the Lord And Cherisher of all His creation, whose measureless, Bounties include the instruction of man
In new and ever new knowledge, but alas
For man! he fancies himself self-sufficient
Turns away from the path, and misleads others.
But nothing is hidden from God.
He will bring All untruth and sin and rebellion to judgement,
And subdue all evil, The righteous bow an adoration to God, and draw closes to Him.

The first revealed version of this Holy book, opens with an injunction addressed to the Prophet to read, and the place assigned to education in Islam can be best appreciated in the light of importance attached to ink, pen and paper - the three indispensable instruments of acquiring and extending knowledge.

Islam has immeasurably contributed to the wisdom of the world and the science of humanity. The Prophet recommended education as meritorious in the eyes of the Almighty and invited all and sundry to acquire it.

In India, the sons of Islam, remotely removed as they were from the rest of the muslim world, could not keep pace, with their brothers outside in material as well as in intellectual advanced, consequently, their attainments in education were not as high as may be expected, yet considering the conditions (4)
of the newly conquered countries and the difficulties they had to face there, they did very well indeed. Many of them were noted for their love of learning and patronage of letters. Some of them devoted themselves exclusively to the acquisition and extension of knowledge.\textsuperscript{10}

**EDUCATION OF MUSLIMS IN INDIA BEFORE INDEPENDENCE:-**

India is a country with a rich tradition of educational progress dating back to an Era when many of the so called modern countries were still passing through the ignorance of the dark ages. On account of this India has the right to feel proud of an ancient and age old educational tradition. Before the advent of the muslims in India, they had already developed a system of education called Maktabs and Madarsahs. We have some records of schools being founded. Hajaj the uncle of Mohammad-bin Qasim, and the governor of Kufa started a school in Taif. A poet Al - Kumait ran a school in the mosque of Kufa in the beginning of the eighth century A.D.\textsuperscript{11}. Muslim children usually began their education with a formal ceremony commonly known as Bismillah Khani or the Maktab ceremony. This ceremony was performed when a boy was four years four months and four days, even today this practice is in vogue. At this ceremony close friends, and family members assemble, the child is dressed in the best clothes, and seated on a cushion in the presence of all. The alphabet, the form of letters used for computations the introduction of the Quran, some verses of chapter LV, and the whole of chapter LXXXVII are placed before him and he is taught to pronounce them in succession. If the child is self-willed, and refuses to read, he is made to pronounce the word 'Bismillah' which answers every purpose, and from that day his education is deemed to have

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commenced. There was no dearth of Maktabs as they were located wherever there was a considerable Muslim population.

THE KUTTAB OR MAKTAB:-

The elementary school was called a Kuttab or Maktab. It was often endowed by men of rank or wealthy tradesman. In these schools the children were instructed either gratis or for a very trifling payment which all parents could easily afford. The children of rich people generally did not attend Maktabs. These parents used to make arrangements for private tuitions at homes for education of their children. The teachers of these Maktabs were commonly called Miyanji or Maulvi.

The curriculum adopted in these elementary institutions was very simple. A novice was first taught the alphabets with their correct pronunciation, punctuation and signs of accents. Then he was taught their combinations and afterwards he was made to read and write sentences correctly.

MADARSAH :- After completing the education in a Maktab, one could come to a Madarsah for higher education. The Madarsahs were most important institutions of Muslim period. Madarshas were granted jagirs (land and villages) by the king for their maintenance. Madarsahs correspond roughly to our modern colleges. The highest education of the period in various arts and sciences was generally imparted to the advanced students in these institutions. Madarsahs were open to every interested person with the result that learning was wide spread among all the types of people and groups. The Madarsahs played very important role in the economic and educational upliftment of the muslims.
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF MUSLIM EDUCATION IN INDIA :-

By the tenth century A.D. India became famous as an important country to which muslims throned from all parts of the Islamic World. There was one way traffic to India from the north - west. The marchers included businessmen, common people, scholars, sufis and saints. As a result a sizeable population of muslims grew even in the remotest corners of this country. There became a need of imparting education to the younger generation of muslims. The education was of course on the same pattern as imparted in other Islamic countries i.e., religious education. Muslims came to India in about eighth century A.D. in Sindh.

Thus the first institution were to be found in cities like Diabal, Mansura and Multan, where the Quran and Hadith were taught in mosques. In northern India with the conquest of the Punjab by Mahmud of Ghazni Muslims spread in this region also. The result was that Lahore became the cultural centre for scholars, preachers, mystics, coming from Iran and central Asia. After Mahmud, Mohammed Ghori was one of the most important rulers who played a vital role in sowing the seeds of education in India. He established some schools in Ajmer inspite of his pre-occupations. The founder of the slave dynasty, Qutubuddin Aibak who loved learned people established mosque schools in his provinces where religious education was imparted to the masses. Altumish who was himself a scholar devoted maximum possible time for the encouragement of learned people. The centres of learning were established during the Muslim rule through out the country. The Mauizzi college at Delhi was one of the best centres of learning in the reign of Sultan Razia Begum. Nasiruddin was also a great scholar and he appreciated and rewarded scholarship.
The Khilji's gave a new shape to the educational system. Their period was highly favourable to the cultivation of literary knowledge in India. In fact it was during the Khilji regime that the seeds of scholarships were properly nurtured and a rich harvest reaped. Jalaluddin, the first king of the dynasty was a great lover of learning. Sultan Ghiasuddin Khilji established a Madarsah exclusively for women because he considered their education essential for the progress of the country.  

**TUGLAQ DYNASTY:**

The Tuglaq dynasty also encouraged education and scholarship. Modhammed bin Tughlaq was the most learned among the rulers of the period. He was well versed at home in almost all the subjects of Arts and science. His literary interest attracted intellectual luminaries from far and wide. Firoz shah Tughlaq was a brilliant student of history. He himself wrote an account of his reign. He respected the learned. Education during the reign of Firoz shah Tughlaq made remarkable advance and education for the first time, was well organised on regular basis. He himself being an eminent educationist deputied teachers to various parts of the empire for the sake of imparting instruction to people. He repaired and reconstructed old Madarsahs which were in decadent condition. He also established new schools and colleges with residential accomodation and paid handsome remuneration to the teachers. During his time education was an important item of state expenditure.

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LODHI DYNASTY:-

The Lodhi dynasty also made valuable contribution to the educational policy and made improvements in the then existing system of education. He valued the society of learned men and loved the learned. He considered the promotion of education as his duty. The mission was further carried forward by Sultan Sikandar Lodi who was a poet of distinction. Being a poet and litterateur himself, Sikandar Lodi established Madarsahs in all parts of the kingdom and invited qualified teachers from distant places to take charge of the institutions established by him at Agra and other places. According to Shaik Abdul Haq Muhaddis Sikandar Lodi invited learned men from Arabia, Persia and central Asia to take charge of education and many men of letters came even uninvited and adopted India as their home. Sikandar Lodhi founded Madarsahs at Mathura and Narwar which were open to all without any discrimination of caste or creed. Education made much progress in his reign. He gave fresh impetus to the art of writing, compilation and translation. When he shifted his capital from Delhi to Agra he established centres of learning in the new capital. Soon Agra grew into a centre of learning having several schools and colleges where people came for study from far flung areas. Education was also given due consideration in provincial kingdoms.

PROGRESS OF EDUCATION DURING THE MUGHAL PERIOD :-

The advent of the great Mughals in India unfolds a new chapter in the history of Muslim education. Right from the first muslim ruler to the last Mughal king education has undergone many changes and modifications.
Never in fact in the whole history of the muslim rule in India did the subject of education receive such a regular encouragement from the reigning sovereigns of Delhi or under the Royal House of Taimur whose every member was its die hard exponent.\textsuperscript{21}

Zahiruddin Mahammad Babur, the illustrious founder of the Mughal empire, was a great literary genious. As a scholar he was second to none in his line. His memoirs are an index to his memory. His society included men who will live long in literature. The fact that the establishement of educational institutions constituted an important item of Babar's administrative programme, speaks much for his interest in the extension of education in his Indian empire.

Babar was succeeded, by his son, Nasiruddin Mohammad Humayan, who was a great bibliophile and a studious scholar.\textsuperscript{22} He had collected a vast number of books in the imperial library. His love for the best books was so intense that even in his military undertakings he used to take with him a selected library for his own use. It has also been noted that under his orders the pleasure house of sher shah, called sher Mandal, was turned into a library during his second reign.

Humayun was deposed by sher shah, the founder of the Sur-Dynasty. He ruled for four years but even during his short duration of his reign he did much for the promotion of education in his dominion.\textsuperscript{23}

Akbar's reign characterized as it was by ubiquitous peace and prosperity, afforded ample opportunities for literary activities in india. Emperor Akbar, highly refined and accomplished, was a great patron of education and learning.
His court was crowded with men who have found an abiding place in the hearts of historians. Allama Abul Fazal and his brother Abul Faiz popularly called Faizi were well known scholars of his time. He opened many schools for Hindus and Muslims all over the state. We learn that Agra in the reign of Akbar was a famous seat of learning and a celebrated centre of education. It had several schools and colleges where students flocked from far and wide for listening to the lectures of renowned specialists. The newly founded city of Fatehpur Sikri (city of victory) was also studded with several schools and seminaris. The well known Ibadat Khana (literally a house of worship, but in fact a debating hall), founded in 1578 A.D. in the new city played a premier part in influencing the life and thought of the people. It was the meeting place of the intellectuals of various nationalities and the centre of a set of brilliant scholars of the reign.

Profound as was Akbar's love of learning and respect for the learned, no less was his fondness for fostering literature which feeds on knowledge and feeds knowledge again and becomes a valuable asset to education in general. Under his patronage, a great number of books on history, philosophy, religion and other sciences were written, compiled and translated, and the result was collection of literature of a very high order. Akbar had early realised the importance of education for the making and development of a nation. He was not satisfied with mere multiplication of Maktabs and Madarshas, but he desired the best quality of education. Thus it is evident that education in Muslim India was at its peak during the reign of Akbar the great.
In his period Lahore was an eminent centre of learning. Akbar introduced many reforms in the system of education and the curriculum was so modified as to enable the students as to acquire education according to their aims and ambitions. The ideals and objectives of education were changed from being strictly religious to secular. Akbar aimed at imparting education to all classes of his subjects irrespective of their race, religion caste or creed. After him Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb also showed keen interest in the promotion of education. Never in the whole history of India did art and literature, science and philosophy industry and commerce flourish as a whole quite as much as during the two hundred years of the great Mughal rule. Thus in the middle ages there was hardly a prince whose name is not, in some way or other, connected with the opening of a school, or a college during his reign. From the evidence recorded, it is clear that muslim kings of Medieval India opened schools and colleges and established libraries in the various parts of their dominions. The streams of literary water, which flowed from the fountains of education, not only fertilized the soil, but supplied nourishment to the seeds of scholarships sown in it, and the result was a rich crop of litteraterurs, poets, savants and scholars. It is evident from the foregoing discussion that in medieval India especially during the Mughal rule, the muslims contributed a lot in the field of science, architecture, painting, music and their contributions was both voluminous and of high quality.
MUSLIM EDUCATION DURING THE BRITISH PERIOD

According to some historians the system of education at the time of muslim rulers were not satisfactory. Such a view is not based on facts and is quite far away from the truth. As pointed out earlier the muslim rulers introduced many changes in the educational set up, considerable advancement was made towards providing better facilities and opportunities to the people for pursuing their studies. According to sir Munroe the education system of muslim India was better than that of many European countries of the time, though inferior to the English system.

The British rulers were interested in changing the pattern of education to suit their needs as the then existing system of education was not satisfactory for them. But the muslim masses did not like the British system of education, As the British system of education come from an alien culture they were particularly averse to learning the English language. The muslims tried to keep themselves away from the British system of education and thus deprived themselves of its advantages. They failed to rise to a situation which was based more on merit than on hereditary roles.
MUSLIM BACKWARDNESS IN EDUCATION

The Muslim power which has been gradually declining from the beginning of the 18th century reached its nadir in 1857. The English turned fiercely on the Mohammedans and considered them as their real enemies. The failure of the revolt was much disastrous for Muslims than for the Hindus. The Mohammedans had psychological effect on them. They though, had lost all their remaining prestige of traditional superiority over the Hindus, they forfeited for the time being the confidence of their foreign rulers and it was from this period that must be dated the loss of their majority in higher subordinate ranks of the civil and military services. ²⁹

Besides this Muslims also did not accept the modern education as a fact of life. Reasons for it may be classified as follows:-

RELIGIOUS SUSCEPTIBILITIES :- To Muslims education was inextricably linked with religion. Therefore modern education was looked upon as against their religion, traditions and requirements. They considered it necessary to learn the portions of Quran by heart for the express purpose of performing their religious obligations. To them the teachings in mosque always preceded the lessons in school. This delayed their entry into the field of secular education and they lagged behind their Hindu compatriots³⁰.

SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL CONDITIONS :-

Muslims were proud of their culture, language and racial superiority. As rulers they were pushed down to subordinate positions. Hindus were considered sympathetically and their positions were elevated.
The Muslim community was averse to take advantage of the opportunity because there was no provision for Islamic teachings in schools. Nathan traces the origin of this attitude of Muslims to modern education in social and historical factors which have proved difficult to overcome. It enjoyed educational benefits less than proportionate to their strength in the total population of India. The disparity between Muslims and non-Muslims was more conspicuous at higher stages of education. To obviate it the British extended additional facilities to Muslims beginning with the later part of the 19th century. Thus they caught up with the non-Muslims in some states, while in others they still lagged behind. The impression that Muslims were adversely placed in the matter of education throughout the country was not wholly true. Their position varied from state to state. In Northern India, Hyderabad, North-West Provinces Bombay and Madras proper Muslims equalled and some times excelled in the use of educational opportunities at the lower stage of education though their position was relatively weak at the higher stage of education.

LETHARGIC HABITS: - Muslims ruling class had taken things for granted. The same habit persisted after they had lost power with the usurping of power by the British. Perision lost its former status. The consequences were more severe for Muslims because; they showed themselves less ready in adopting themselves to the new conditions.

POVERTY: - The land settlement Act 1795 affected Muslims adversely and reduced their socio-economic status to an unimaginable extent. The most important and potent cause of Muslim backwardness was the poverty of the large section of population.
In India on the whole the economic condition of muslim was far from satisfactory. In addition, another but not less important factor that kept them away from the modern schooling was their centemp for the English Language and western culture. The sorry state of affairs of muslim education proved an eye opener for the muslim social reformers who showed keen interest in improving the condition of muslim education. Sir syed Ahmed Khan took lead in this venture and in the year 1863 he established the scientific society at Ghazipur. With the object of stimulating muslims to go in for modern education. The scientific society took the shape of Aligarh movement and finally this emerged in the shape of Aligarh Muslim university.

Sir Syed Ahmed pointed out that the main objective of this movement was to motivate the muslims to pursue modern education. He was the first to take initiative in the direction of re-approchement and re-conciliation with the British. In his mission, he received active support of a group of prominent men, like Ameer Ali, chiraq Ali, Mohsin-ul-mulk, Viqarul-mulk and Agha Khan. But inspite of all this we see there was a slow response of muslims towards this movement. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan on his return from England sponsored a committe for better dissemination and advancement of science among muslims of India. In response to the offer of three prizes for the best essays on reasons why muslims objected to the education imparted in government institutions, the thirty two essays submitted enumerated the main causes of this allergy as; it ignores the religious aspect of education, produces disbelief, corrupts morals, its study is against Islam, concerns superfluous subjects and goes against the habits and manners of muslims.
Thus, we find the two most important factors which hindered the effective use of education by Muslims were their religious orthodoxy and economic backwardness. The Britishers were fully conscious that education was essential for the consolidation of their rule in India. They appointed various commissions to look into the system of education and to recommend measures for the progress of Muslims who were under the patronage of the British were vociferous about their representation in government jobs and educational institutions. They exhorted the Muslims of India to acquire modern knowledge which could open fresh avenues for social and economic progress of the community. They were emphatic in favour of western education which they believed would win an honourable place for the community. They demanded more nomination in professional courses. It was only because of their watchfulness devotion, dedication and continuous hammering of the cause that the government of India through its resolution adopted on August 1871 envisaged series of measures like more life scholar ships and more reservation to encourage education among Mohammedan.  

The British Government in India directed the provincial governments to encourage classical and vernacular languages of Muslims in all government schools and colleges and to appoint Muslim teachers in all the Muslim populated areas. Further the provincial governments were asked to provide grant-in-aid to the Muslim communities to enable them to establish schools of their own. The government continued with its effort to improve the education system in the country, and showed good results.

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The number of Muslim students increased from 11,4,816 in 1871-72 to 2,61,887 in 1881-82. The educational progress showed that the number and percentage of the students attending schools went up considerably, but there was no improvement at higher level. From 1886-1897, the total number of the Muslim students increased from 754,036 to 966,6632 but generally speaking the Muslim education did not advance beyond the primary stage.\textsuperscript{37}

The government continued with its efforts to improve the education system in the country. The percentage of illiteracy in the total population steadily decreased from 93.8 in 1901 to 90.9 in 1931.\textsuperscript{38}

**MEASURES TO PROMOTE EDUCATIONAL CAUSE OF MUSLIMS:**

During this period the education of Muslims did not make much headway. On the other hand, over enthusiasm about the medium of instruction disillusioned Muslims and discouraged them from becoming active participants in the educational programmes sponsored by the government. More over in this age which was more marked by dispondency of Muslims, no concrete steps worth the name were taken to encourage the cause of Muslims education. But still we observed two significant events in the field of education. These were Wood's Despatch (1854) and the creation of the Department of Public Instruction and the appointment of inspectorate.\textsuperscript{39}

To consider the progress of education Sir Charles Wood's Despatch has been called the 'Magna-carta' of education, being the pace-setter for the future developments in education. For the first time, the government accepted as a part of its policy the systematic promotion of general education and the diffusion of arts, science, philosophy and the literature of the west.\textsuperscript{40}
The despatch sympathized with the cause of education of women and Muslims and re-affirmed its policy of religious neutrality.

Even when in 1859 the power was transferred from the court of directors to the crown, it reiterated its resolve to implement the principles laid down in the despatch.

During Mayo's time (1869-72) efforts of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Ameer Ali in the northern India and Bengal, respectively succeeded in drawing the attention of the government to the backwardness of Muslims in education. Lord Mayo admitted that the prevailing system of education did not suit Muslims and, therefore, it had failed to attract them. The government for this reason recommended the appointment of Muslim teachers, the encouragement of classical languages and the vernacular literature for Muslim students.

The government of India records (1873) view the position of Muslims in the field of education as under. In the North-western provinces the number of Muslim scholars was higher than their proportion where as the percentage of Muslims to the total populations was 13.5 in 1871-72 and 14.8 in 1881-82 respectively, its proportion to the total enrolment was in the order of 17.8 percent, 20.2 percent (prog No.74-111) and education commission).

In Madras, Muslim scholars (1870-71) to (1881-82) represented 6-7 percent of the total school-going populuation, where as the community constituted 6 percent of the total population. Muslims held this position only in schools, but in the higher learning level they were at the bottom.
In Bombay in 1871-72 the number of Muslim scholars at school was 15,557 or about 8.7 percent of the total number of school going pupils. However in 1881-82, the number went up to 41,548 or 11.7 percent of the total scholars in schools. When the number of scholars attending indigenous schools was included; the overall percentage was estimated at 14.7 percent.

In the central provinces, out of 46,993 pupils in the various government schools, 3,249 were Muslims; in other words Muslim scholars constituted 6-8 percent of the total scholars in the various government schools as against their proportional strength of 2-5 percent.

In Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Bengal Muslims availed themselves of educational advantages only in the lower classes, after which their number sharply dwindled.

Viewing the overall position of Muslims in education, the Secretary to the Government of India stated:

Wherever the ordinary vernacular of the country is read and written in Hindustani or Urdu character, there the Mohommedans have occupied their proper position in the primary and secondary schools founded or aided by the state (but) when they talk a different language from that of the majority, or where teaching at any rate is in a different tongue and according to entirely separate traditions, there the special arrangements which these special circumstances require for them have not been always organised and their claims to it have often inevitably disregarded.

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However when actual statistics are computed, the disparity in the use of available educational opportunity among Muslims does not follow uniform pattern in the British territories of India. By and large Muslims enjoyed educational gains at the lower stages they lagged behind in higher stages. The fact may be attributed not to poverty alone, but also to their depressed social status.

**EDUCATION OF MUSLIMS IN INDIA AFTER INDEPENDENCE.**

Education has every significant place in human life. It may not be planned in vacum and it must aim at producing best opportunities for every boy and girl, Education is always related to the social, political and economic development of the country.

In India Muslims are an important segment of Indian population and their socio-economic as well as curtural problems are closely linked, along with other segments, with the general development of Indian society. Muslims in India are the second largest group comprising nearly 12% (twelve percent) of the total population. In India since Independence, inspite of a rapid educational advancement, the Muslim community have remained educationally backward.

They could not take adequate advantage of the increased educational facilities in the country. Two main explanations are advanced for their educational deprivation. One explaination is that, "They have been slow to take advandtage at the vast educational development the country has wit-nessed since independence due to particular ethos of their region or a minority psychology."
The other explanation is that the cause of their educational deprivation is an invidious discrimination to which they have been subjected as a minority community.\textsuperscript{48}

After Independence, community wise data about educational status were not published by the government. Therefore systematic data for the post-Independence period are not available. Inspite of the opportunities open to all under the constitution, the spread of education among Muslims does not seem to have been fast, compared to the national educational growth. Though Muslims constitute 12\% (twelve percent) of the total population of India, their representation in the educational field and economic activities is far below that warranted by their population share.\textsuperscript{49} Attempts at collating data on the educational situation among the Muslims in India have invariably shown that at the high school level and higher, the Muslims are at least three to four times behind other communities. The enrolment of Muslim children in primary schools is generally poor, even in those areas where the Muslims constitute a majority. By and large, a significant majority of those enrolled attend Muslim schools or Urdu-medium schools where such schools exist. The enrolment of Muslim girls is extremely low. Moreover, the drop-out rate is significantly higher among Muslim students as compared to their non-Muslim counterparts.\textsuperscript{50} As compared to the performance of students in general the performance of Muslim students is poor and unsatisfactory. Significantly, the Muslims studying in other medium schools do much better than Muslims who study in Urdu-medium schools is not up to the mark or the students attending

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them lack the spirit of competition and whatever progress the muslims have been able to make in the realm of modern education is confined only to the urban areas.

Not surprising, the muslims are reported to have one of the lowest literacy rates in India. In 1951, the literacy rate in the population aged ten and over was 29.6% for males and 9.4% for females.\textsuperscript{51} Also the most conservative 'guessestimates' put it at around ten percent (10%) and the most liberal at around twenty three percent (23%). In either case the extent of literacy among the muslims is far below the average for the country that is thirty six percent (36.2%).\textsuperscript{52} Thus the independent India felt the great need of expansion of education and educational institutions as education and literacy are essential conditions for national development. The national leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Abul Kalam Azad and such other stalwarts were fully conscious of the fact that very soul of the democratic country is education. The national leaders also believed that education of masses is essential for the smooth functioning of the democratic country. The growth of any nation; depends upon the people, their attitudes, abilities and potentialities. The backwardness of any group hampers not only their own development but obstructs the progress of the whole country. Education has been recognised as a key-instrument for change, modernization and development. The framers of the Indian constitution keeping in view the importance of education made necessary provisions for its promotion, but it was also observed that the muslims who remained in India faced unforeseen circumstances and problems.

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The Muslim education suffered a serious setback when the country was divided on the basis of religion. Pakistan, no doubt emerged as a separate nation, but the Muslims continued to be the largest minority in the country. The national commissions and committees made various recommendations for universalization of education, but they failed to pay any special attention towards the education of the Muslims, the most educationally backward section. It has been an ordeal for the secular leadership of the India to bring an educationally but, politically volatile' community into the main stream of national life. To allay any fears among the Muslims of the threat of displacement, the constitution of India guarantees the educational and cultural rights to the minorities. So that they preserve their language, culture and identity.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS REGARDING MUSLIMS EDUCATION:

The framers of the Indian constitution provided constitutional safeguards for the minority educational institutions. They were fully aware of the complex situation and complicated character of the problems of Muslims education. They left no stone unturned in incorporating a number of constitutional measures in the form of guaranteed rights, safeguards and protective right. To protect the interest of the minorities in general and Muslims in particular, Articles 29 and 30 of the constitution guarantee the right to minorities to conserve their language, script and culture and to establish and administer educational institution of their choice, whether based on religion or language.
a) Article 29 deals with protection of interests of minorities. It states that
(i) Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part there
of having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right
to conserve the same. (ii) No citizen shall be denied admission into any
educational institution maintained by the state or receiving aid out of state
funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste language or any of them.
b) Article 30 which deals with right of minorities to establish and administer
educational institutions states:

i) All minorities whether based on religion or language shall have the right
to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

ii) The state shall not, in granting aid to educational institution, discrimi-
ninate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the
management of a minority, whether based on religion or language.

(iii) Article 350(A) deals with facilities for instruction in mother-tongue at
primary stage. It states that:

"It shall be the endeavour of every state and of every local authority with
in the state to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother-tongue
at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority
groups, and the president may issue such directions to any state as he
considers necessary or proper for securing the provision of such facilities."53.

The constitutional safeguards are indeed a re-affirmation of the faith
that India shall be just and welfare state in which all citizens irrespective of
their association with any religious or linguistic combination shall have equal
share and opportunity in matter pertaining to education. The question now arises as to what extent the protection provided by the constitution has improved the educational conditions of the muslims. It is a fact that even after fifty years of Independence no great breakthrough has been made in the most vital field of development of the country, that is education. Also the noble ideals enshrined in the constitution have not been implemented in the spirit in which they were incorporated in the constitution. The National Policy on Education of 1986 has been able to create a feeling among the people that something new and concrete will be delivered to them which shall make them fit and competent to enter the 21st century, with confidence to meet the challenges brought on by the explosion of knowledge. Without being too critical of the National Policy on Education and its Action programme one would be justified in saying that it has signally failed to bridge the gulf between the haves and have-nots, the privileged and the underprivileged sections of society by not providing specific or concrete directions towards its implementation.\(^4\) As a result the strength of the muslims in the educational institutions continued to be at a very low ebb; even after five decades of independence, and as a matter of fact the educational level of the Indian muslims remained inferior to that of the most backward sections. A survey conducted by the Baroda Muslim educational society revealed the startling fact that the muslims of Baroda were no more educationally advanced than that of the Harijans. The proportion of the muslim girls in standard V and VII was lower than the corresponding figure among the Harijan.\(^5\) A critical study the Nettur commission report, 1970 shows that even in a highly literate state like Kerala
the educational level of the muslims is inferior to that of the schedule castes up to standard VII, the schedule castes and the muslims move shoulder to shoulder. But from standard VIII onwards, the former overtake the latter when we consider the number of students per thousand population.  

A.B. Shah (1981) reports that the rate of literacy among the muslim males in India in 1971 was about (10%) ten percent and that among the females only about 0.50% zero point fifty percent. Also a survey carried out by sharma in Delhi city in 1971-72 found that the portion of enrolment in primary schools among the muslims and non muslims was 6.2 and 11.24 and 2.59 and 11.28 in middle secondary schools, respectively. The deplorable position of the muslims in secondary schools is probably due to the massive drop-out at the primary schools.

It is interesting to note that the enrolment of muslims in educational institutions is lower even in the areas where they constitute a majority, and the enrolment of muslim boys and girls is also comparatively low even in the muslim managed schools. According to Rasheeduddin Khan, in Uttar Pradesh where in nearly one-fourth of the total muslim population of the country live, the enrolment of muslims in schools is lower considering their numerical strength. In its study of 430 muslim-managed schools in fifteen states and one union territory, the Hamdard Education Society found that the drop-outs among the muslims increased in number in the higher classes. However the government of India after independence realising the importance of the education provided primary, by and large universal free and compulsory primary education irrespective caste, creed, race and religion. We should
also know that no investment give better results than investment in the educational field, and the survival of our future and existing generations depend upon their awareness of the importance of education. I hope that the elite of our society is seized of the fact that education is the key to the renaissance for a nation, of which any minority is an integral part. No nation can afford to allow any part there of to remain back ward. A gap of one generation will leave the community centuries behind. So far as Muslim minority is concerned, acquisition and Propogation of knowledge is made obligatory on every muslim man and women by their religion. The Islamic concept of education knows no discrimination. Islam commands its followers to acquire knowledge from where-ever and whatever source it is available.58.

It is pleasant to notice that since independence the aspiration for education has increased in people of all communities and muslim community is no exception to it. As education is the best means of creating a new generation of young men and women who will like not to lose touch with their own tradition, who will not like at the same time to become intellectually retarded or educationally backward or who will not like to become aware of developments in different branches of human knowledge. As a result of it, several schools and educational institutions have come up. The muslim community has also come forward and established several schools and institutions of higher learning to provide education. Education, among muslims started increasing day by day.
The following table shows the development of secondary education in Mysore state since independence and the enrolment of students in them.

**TABLE NO.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>No. of Secondary Schools</th>
<th>Strength Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Ratio of girls to boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1948-49</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>1,30,406</td>
<td>24806</td>
<td>165212</td>
<td>1:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949-50</td>
<td>896</td>
<td>1,30,260</td>
<td>38602</td>
<td>181862</td>
<td>1:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-51</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>1,53,785</td>
<td>42470</td>
<td>196255</td>
<td>1:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951-52</td>
<td>924</td>
<td>1,56,090</td>
<td>43097</td>
<td>199187</td>
<td>1:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952-53</td>
<td>934</td>
<td>1,54,057</td>
<td>45199</td>
<td>199256</td>
<td>2:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953-54</td>
<td>977</td>
<td>1,53,755</td>
<td>47390</td>
<td>201145</td>
<td>1:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954-55</td>
<td>1004</td>
<td>1,63,767</td>
<td>51987</td>
<td>215754</td>
<td>1:3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(A critical study of the development of secondary education during post independence period in the state of Mysore).\(^5^9\)

In spite of this leap forward sometimes it is felt that Muslims themselves are responsible for their unequivocal position in the comity of the various communities living in India. Currently India is spending 3.7% of the gross national product on education and this percentage has grown from 1.2 percent as it was in 1950-51 to 3.7% in 1990-91. The budgetary allocations on education are still far below the actual requirements of the education system which first of all, it is felt, needs direction and re-orientation.\(^6^0\).
CAUSES OF BACKWARDNESS AMONG MUSLIMS:

A variety of explanations have been offered for the educational backwardness of the Indian Muslims. Kamat (1985-299) has succinctly summarized these explanations under three main heads. According to him:

a) Some writers trace it to the religious tradition and backwardness of those professing Islam, which as a religion is alleged to identify the religion and the secularism.

b) Some others try to explain in terms of the partition of India and the acute psychological crises of identity it created for Indian Muslim;

c) Some other scholars put forward a reason also based on religion, namely, the deliberate neglect of and discrimination against Muslims.61

Prof. Abdus Salam, from Cochin dealt with "Educational and Economic Problems of Indian Muslims" with the help of statistical data and he showed that the Muslims were very much backward in the educational field. According to some statistics released by the Central minorities commission about the enrolment in schools and colleges it is said that the co-efficient of equality in respect of enrolment in elementary schoolshas been worked out to be only 72 and upper primary level only 58. At the high school level the commission has collected statistics from several district belonging to ten states and the Muslim percentage of population of the area covered is (11.2%) eleven point two percentage. It is seen that the enrolment of Muslims in the area surveyed is four percent 4% in high schools. Therefore the co-efficient of quality with respect to enrolment in high schools is 35.62.
The Historical Background :-

Dr. Iqbal A. Ansari of Aligarh in his paper on "Educational Backwardness of Muslims" maintained that muslims' socio-economic backwardness which was generally traced to the 1857 decade and its aftermath was really traceable to the so called muslim period of Indian History. After conversion to Islam the bulk of the indigenous muslims did not undergo any upward socio-economic mobility by virtue of their being muslims. He further said that constant lack of opportunities and of motivation for the use of talent over a long period of time have rendered muslims backward. Their performance is low only at the formal educational level, but their creativity is manifested in almost all other fields like art, music, poetry, drama films, sports, handicrafts, decorative arts and oratory etc.\(^6\)

It must be borne in mind that the muslims have not always been educationally backward everywhere in India. Studies by scholars such as Bross (1975) Robinson (1975) and Seal (1988) have revealed that even at the turn of the century in many areas governed by the British, literacy and school enrolment among the muslim were comparable to, if not higher than that among the Hindus. It was only in those areas where the muslim population was mainly agrarian and extremely poor, that they were lagging behind considerably also in education.\(^6\) In assessing the trend and status of the educational backwariness of the muslims, one is handicapped by the fact that community wise figures of literacy are not made available. These figures were published

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in the census reports of 1861-1941. In subsequent census reports in 1951, 1961, 1971 and 1981 these figures though collected were not published. 

Therefore, one can rely only on a very sketchy data called out from various sources. It is obvious that at the high school and higher levels, muslims are at least three to four times behind other communities. It has also been noticed that there are certain reasons and various causes for the educational backwardness of the muslims which can be summed up as follows.

1) Religious orthodoxy and cultural ethos of muslims leads them to believe that modern education is a threat to Islamic values and therefore they send their children to Madarsahs with low academic standards.

2) Muslim perception of the Hindu and anti-muslim ethos of contemporary social set up makes them believe that they will be discriminated in job opportunities. It results in their withdraw and lack of investment and interest in education.

3) Since most Muslims are self-employed artisans, workers or petty shop-keepers it makes them indifferent to modern education as it did not bring them immediate economic benefits. Modern education is irrelevant to their present occupational roles. As soon as the child is seven or eight years of age, poor parents would like their children to join the family trade to supplement family income.

4) The frequent recurrence of communal riots generates a sense of insecurity among the muslims and insecurity is not conducive for academic pursuits or constructive efforts.

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5. In states like U.P. Urdu has been driven out of schools as a medium of instruction even at the primary level. This has had two consequences. (a). Parents refused to send their children, especially girls, to Hindi medium schools. (b) Large number of children whose mother tongue was urdu were sent increasingly to Madrasahs (Urdu medium schools). These schools have an exclusive muslim dominated environment with low competitive spirit.⁶⁶

6. The muslim leaders have been laying more stress on cultural and religious issues and have taken up very little concrete social work to reduce the educational backwardness of the community.

7. In the wake of the partition of the country, a large number of middle class muslims migrated to Pakistan. The people left behind were mostly un-educated artisans, small and marginal farmers and petty shopkeepers. They could not respond to demands of modern education. While all the above explanation may have some elements of truth, the predominant reason for the educational backwardness of muslims appears to be a very narrow middle-class base among the muslims.⁶⁶ Apart from this we find one more reason for the educational backwardness of muslims, their medium of instruction which is Urdu and Urdu has been neglected in India. It is identified as the language of only Muslims. In other words Urdu education has become synonymous with muslim education. There is a widely held notion among people in India in general and among muslims in particular that Urdu is the mother tongue of the Indian muslims. Muslims even go a step further and claim that there is a necessary relationship between Urdu language and their culture and religion.
According to 1981 census, there were 35.53 million Urdu speaking people, forming 5.34 percent of the total population of India or the sixth largest linguistic group in the country, next only to those speaking Hindi, Telugu, Bengali, Marathi and Tamil. However unlike these latter groups which are concentrated in one or two states, Urdu-speakers are scattered all over India, as also widely dispersed in each state. It is only in Uttar Pradesh that the Urdu speaking population forms ten percent of the total population.67.

As a consequence of the wide dispersal of Urdu-language in any state except in Jammu and Kashmir, except in Andhra Pradesh, in certain districts of Bihar, and only recently in Uttar Pradesh, Urdu is not even recognized as a second official language.

Even assuming that Urdu is spoken exclusively by the Muslim (which is certainly not the case), in 1971 only 46.58% of the muslims claimed Urdu as their mother tongue. In Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh the ratio of Urdu speakers to the state's muslim population is more than 50 percent.68. But even in these states all those who speak Urdu are not necessarily Muslims. In other words, Urdu is a language that has been used by both muslims and non-muslims in many parts of north India, from the Mughal period down to the present day. Inspite of all this we notice that muslims grieve about the government's indifferent attitude towards and neglect of Urdu language. Muslims educational conferences often complain about the neglect of Urdu, medium schools and teaching of urdu as

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a language and the non-availability of Urdu text books for many subjects.

If we examine the origin of the Urdu language, we find that the splendid literature which it posses has been the creation of the joint endeavour of both muslim and Hindu scholars. Indian Muslims invariably overlook this imporatnt point when they make an exclusive claim to this language. Probably Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had this in mind when he wrote to one of his muslim nationalist friend; "For mysterious reasons Urdu is supposed to be hall-mark of the muslims, with all due deference I am not prepared to admit this. I consider Urdu as my language which I have spoken from my childhood." 69.

However when we examine history of Urdu-literature, we find that Urdu developed through the contributions made by both muslim and non-muslim scholars and thus it is a language of the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. Nevertheless, a majority of the muslims consider the learning of Urdu language as an essential requirments for the muslims of India. According to the 1971 census as many as 28,608 thousand or 5.21% of the total muslim population of india reported urdu as their mother-tongue. In relation to the total muslim population of the country the Urdu-speaking population formed 46.60%. In Karnataka Urdu-speaking population is 9.21 percent.70. It is also observed that not all muslims are familiar with Urdu. For instance the muslims of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Orrisa and also some states do not report Urdu as their mother-tongue. But still we observe that majority of muslims prefer Urdu-medium schools for their children.

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The reasons may be many, some of these may be due to poverty or ignorance or due to their family background or conservatism. They are interested in educating their children only and only in Urdu-medium schools. But unfortunately what is observed after survey is that, the condition of some of the Government Urdu Schools was far from satisfactory. The schools were ailing from inadequate, teaching staff, lack of teaching aids, play grounds etc., The classes were also overcrowded and hence the teachers could not pay individual attention, to the pupils. More over it is tragic to state that in our country educational institutions in particular are managed, controlled and supervised by those who are ignorant of academic problems and their solutions and Urdu medium schools are no exception. The result is that Urdu medium education in karnataka is fast heading towards a crisis. A massive drop out rate should be matter of concern. During the last fifteen years even the vast muslim middle classes have deserted the Urdu schools. These schools now mostly cater to the poorest among the poor muslims.

In Karnataka about 79% minorities, especially Muslims, have an annual income of less than Rs.6,000/. Hardly one among hundred students continue his/her education after high school. Highlighting some of the statistics pertaining to minorities in the state, Mr.K.Rahman Khan M.P. and former chairman of the state Minorities commission, said a survey conducted by the commision showed that most of the welfare schemes have failed to reach the poor as they were illiterates. The survey indicated that while at primary
school level only 60% children in the age group of 5 to 10 years were able to have education, it reduces to 50% fifty percent at middle school level and 10% at high school level. On an average, in the age group of 19 to 20 years only one out of 100 students pursue higher education he added.\textsuperscript{71}

Thus it may be said that in this era of rising expectations, ignoring quantity would be unjust and, because of the competitive nature of society, ignoring quality would be in expedient. Thus every possible effort is to be made to strike a balance between quantity and quality of education. This is true for the entire country and more so for the Muslim community. Hence the Muslim-managed institution must be more careful in attaining this twin objective, which is undoubtedly a difficult proposition.\textsuperscript{72}
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