ABSTRACT

Title of the Study:

"Development of Madrasa Education in Assam Since Independence With Special Reference to Barak Valley Region."

The acquisition of knowledge and learning is considered as an act of religious merit in Islam. It assures education to each and every individual irrespective of cast, creed, age and gender. The Prophet (SAW) gave it the highest priority. Hundreds of the teachings of the Prophet (SAW) say about the good qualities that education showers on its acquirers.

The system of Islamic education started right from the early Islamic period and is continuing till today. The institution where the Islamic education is provided is known as Madrasa. During the early Islamic period, the teaching of Islamic education was carried on in the mosques. Gradually, madrasas were set up out of mosques for Islamic teachings. Encyclopaedia Britannica describes madrasa as an institution for religious training, set up independently of the mosques. The madrasa functioned till the 20th century as a theological seminary and law school with a curriculum centered round Quran. In addition to Islamic theology and law, Arabic grammar and literature, mathematics, logic and in some cases, natural sciences were studied in madrasas. Tuition was free and food, lodging and medical facilities were provided free of cost as well. The teacher issued certificate to his students which
was considered as permission to take up teaching profession.

Institutions of madrasa education are of two types: maktabs (elementary schools) and the madrasas (institutions of higher learning). Madrasas are the apex of this system of education. Both these institutions concentrated on the study of Quran, Hadith (sayings of the Prophet (SAW) of Islam), Tafsir (commentaries), Fiqh (jurisprudence) and Kalam (Muslim Scholasticism).

In India, with the advent of Muslim rule, the system of Madrasa education started. After the rule of Mughal emperors, the Britishers captured India. The Madrasa system got a set back with the start of British rule. However, the Muslim scholars carried on with their task of Islamic learning and scholasticism.

Assam, one of the North-Eastern states of India also got a comprehensive system of madrasa education. Right form the 13th century, the Islamic system of education started in Assam. The percentage of Muslim population in Assam is higher than the other states of India except Jammu and Kashmir. It has got a systematic madrasa education system.

Assam is divided into two regions in accordance to the name of two major rivers. One is the Brahmaputra Valley Region and the other is the Barak Valley Region.

This thesis is based mainly on the system of madrasa education in the Barak Valley Region of Assam.

The present thesis consists of the following six chapters:-
1. Introduction,
2. Review of Related Studies.
3. History of Madrasa Education in Assam
4. Contribution of Government and Private Enterprises Towards the Development of Madrasas in Assam
5. Analysis of Data.
6. Findings and Suggestions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
The following are the main objectives of the present study:
1. To study the development of Madrasa System of Education in Assam in historical perspective with special reference to Barak Valley Region;
2. To study the contribution of Government and Private Enterprises towards the development of Madrasa System of Education in Assam, specially in Barak Valley Region;
3. To study the present scenario of the madrasas in Barak Valley Region;
4. To study the institutional and non-institutional problems related to the madrasa system in Assam, specially those located in Barak Valley Region.

SOURCES OF DATA:
To undertake the present study, the investigator has used the following sources of data:
--books related to the Madrasa System of Education;
--different research works done in the field of Madrasa Education;
--different journals related to Madrasa Education;
--encyclopaedias;
METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

A questionnaire was prepared to collect data on educational programmes, infrastructural facilities, financial pattern, curriculum and the methodology of teaching in the madrasa system of education in Assam with special reference to Barak Valley Region.

The respondents to the questionnaire were individuals as well as the principals and the teachers of Madrasa System of Education.

The data was collected from 126 respondents. The information was collected by the researcher himself so as to get the accurate information. In some cases, the researcher had to explain the items in the questionnaire to the respondents. After collecting the data, it was tabulated, analyzed and interpreted. The tabulation of the data was in accordance with the various aspects of the madrasa education, for example, year of establishment, infrastructural facilities, curriculum, description of staff, etc.

Apart from the collection of data, through questionnaire, the researcher also had interviews with eminent persons and scholars in the field of madrasa education and incorporated their opinions in the interpretation of the data.
CHAPTER-WISE SUMMARY OF THE THESIS

The **first chapter** introduces the work to be undertaken. It includes the objectives, sources of data, methodology as well as the area for the research work.

**In the second chapter**, the Review of related studies has been made. The review includes the Ph. D. thesis, Journals, Encyclopedias and books.

The **third chapter** deals with the history of the development of madrasa system of education. The chapter starts with the history of madrasa education in the early Islamic period. In this period, the efforts were made by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) along with his Sahabas (his followers) towards the development of madrasa system of education in the Arabia. After early Islamic Period, the development of madrasa system of education during the Umayyad and the Abbasid periods are discussed.

The madrasa education in India is discussed under three headings:

a) Madrasa Education during the Sultanate Period.
b) Madrasa Education during Mughals and
c) Madrasa Education in Assam.

The present researcher made an attempt to cover different aspects of developments of the madrasa system of education. The introduction of 'Dars-e-Nizamiya' system, compilation of 'Fatawa-i-Alamgiri', popularly known as 'Fatawa-i-Hind' and the establishment of Calcutta Alia Madrasa, Darul Uloom, Deoband, Nadwat-al-Ulema, Lucknow is discussed specifically.
The Madrasa Education in Assam covers its history right from the 13th century till date. The type of madrasa system prevailing in the state as well as their administrative organizations is discussed.

In the fourth chapter, the contribution made by different organizations towards the development of madrasa education in Assam is discussed.

There are two main organizations working in Assam to govern and run the madrasas. One is the “State Madrasa Education Board, Assam”, which is running all the Government madrasa and the other is the “All Assam Tanzim- Madaris Qawmiya”, which is running all the Non-Government or Qaumi madrasas in Assam. The administrative set up and functions of both the organizations are discussed in this chapter.

In the fifth chapter, analysis of data has been made. The researcher collected the data related to various aspects of the madrasas specially located in the Barak Valley Region. Government and Non-Government madrasas have been studied separately. The following aspects have been covered in the analysis of data:

1) Establishment of madrasa and its location;
2) Infrastructural facilities;
3) Curriculum;
4) Medium of instruction;
5) Annual Income of Madrasas;
6) Annual Expenditure of Madrasas;
7) Madrasa Staff;
8) Administration of Madrasas.
After the analysis, it was found that Assam has a comprehensive system of Madrasa education. The madrasa system started since long time and is continuing till today. The Government madrasas are financially more stable as compared to private madrasas, though the teachers’ commitment and devotion are more in private madrasas. However, both are contributing a lot towards the development of Madrasa education in Assam.

The sixth and final chapter deals with the findings and the suggestions related to the madrasa education in Assam and specially to the Barak Valley Region.

Findings:

1. The history of Madrasa System of Education is very old. It started from the days of Prophet of Islam (SAW). As days passed on, the teaching of Islamic education started to spread in other parts of Arabia. Later on it spread over in the whole world.

In India, the Madrasa System of Education started from the days of Mohammed Ghori in the first decade of the 13th century. The system flourished during the days of other emperors from time to time till the last Mughal emperor. In the beginning of the British rule in India, the system suffered a lot, but due to untired effort of the Ulema, it maintained its position. Now a days, the Madrasa System of Education is one of the important system of education in India.

The Madrasa System of Education in Assam was also initiated in the first decade of the 13th century, i.e., from the days of Ikhtiyaruddin Bakhtiyar Khilji. Though there was a Madrasa System of education in the preceeeding
centuries, but no proper administrative set up was there until the 20th century when the madrasas were brought under three administrative boards, namely, State Madrasa Education Board, Assam, established in 1934, The Azad Deeni Shiksha Board, established in 1937 and The All Assam Tanzim Madaris Qawmiya, established in 1955. These boards are now governing all the madrasas in Assam.

The Barak Valley Region, the area under the present study, is situated in the Southern part of Assam. It has the facility to impart Islamic system of education along with the other parts of Assam. As the region is predominantly a Muslim dominated area, there are a good number of madrasas.

Thus, it is found out that the history of the development of Madrasa System of Education in Assam and specially in the Barak Valley Region, is neither very old nor new.

2. The contribution of different Government and Private enterprises towards the development and running of madrasas in Assam, specially, those located in the Barak Valley Region seems to spectacular.

The Government enterprise was struggling hard for the upliftment of the madrasa education system. Many new madrasas were coming into existence and were coming under the jurisdiction of the Government Madrasa Board. The blooming period for the Government enterprise started during the 6th decade of the 20th century when the Government of Assam sanctioned deficit grant to 9 (nine) of the madrasas run under the State Madrasa Education
Board, Assam. Some of these madrasas were also located in the Barak Valley Region.

Regarding private enterprises, it is found that, both the Private Madrasa Boards tried utmost to make the Madrasa Education System flourish.

Thus, it is found that both the Government and the Private agencies contributed their best for the development of Madrasa System of Education in Assam, specially those located in the Barak Valley Region.

3. There exists two types of madrasas in Barak Valley Region. One type of madrasas consists of those madrasas run by Government, commonly known as Pre-Senior Madrasa, Senior Madrasa and Title Madrasa. The study about these madrasas reveals that:

i) the madrasa education started in Barak Valley in a systematic manner right from the 19th century. But it paced up in the 20th century, specially, after independence. Maximum number of madrasas came into existence after 1947;

ii) regarding the infrastructural facilities, the Government and Private Madrasas are found to be differing in some aspects as given below:

a) Most of the Private Madrasas are located in the rural areas of Barak Valley in contrast to the Government Madrasas which are located in the urban areas;

b) The ratio between the number of rooms and the number of students is found to be better in the case of Government Madrasas. Private Madrasas are suffering in this regard;
c) The hostel facility in the Private Madrasas is better than the Government Madrasas.

iii) a) there is no arrangement for dining hall facility in any of the residential madrasas;

    b) there is no proper library facilities in the madrasas of Barak Valley, except in few madrasas;

    c) there is no arrangement for computer education in the madrasas of Barak Valley. However, 3 madrasas have started the programme of computer training;

    d) these madrasas provide desk-benches for students sitting and in some madrasas there are mat arrangement for sitting. Some madrasas have both the sitting arrangements.

iv) the syllabi in both the type of madrasas are based mainly on the Dars-e-Nizamia. Apart from this, the teaching of mother-tongue, Assamese for the non-Assamese speaking students and elementary modern subjects are taught. Some of the madrasas are having vocational educational programmes like tailoring and typing;

v) one special feature of Government Madrasa is that the students passing out of the Senior Madrasas are entitled to get admission to senior secondary level education directly;

vi) the medium of instruction in all the madrasas in Barak Valley is Bengali language as the region is dominated by the Bengali people;
vii) the Government Madrasas are getting no financial support from the public unlike the Private Madrasas. The Provincialized Madrasas are getting salary for the staff from the Government. The rest of the Government Madrasas are working voluntarily in the hope of being undertaken by the Government in the near future;

The Private Madrasas are getting financial support from the public donations which are not sufficient enough to meet even the essential requirements;

viii) unlike the Private Madrasas, the Government Madrasas are found to have sufficient teaching staff. The Private Madrasas are suffering in this regard mainly due to financial constraints;

ix) the administrative set up of the madrasas in Barak Valley Region is found to have a systematic ladder. They have both Administrative and Academic Bodies to administer and run the madrasas in a systematic manner.

4. both the type of madrasas face a number of problems regarding public and Government support in regard to socio-economic aspects. Remedial measures have been suggested and the same should be properly implemented for bringing about improvement in the Madrasa System of Education.
SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES:
The following areas can be undertaken for further research studies:

- The History of Development of Madrasa Education in Assam – Both in Barak Valley and Brahmaputra Valley.


- Analytical Study of the Present Scenario of Madrasas in Barak Valley and Brahmaputra Valley.

- Origin, development and improvement of the Syllabi of Dars-e-Nizamiya.

- A Comparative Study of the Madrasa Education System in Assam and other states of India.

- Study of the Madrasa System of Education in the Medieval India and Afterwards: A Comparative Study.

Publication out of this Thesis