



Educational Backwardness of Muslims in India and its Possible Remedies

KEYWORDS

Muslim, Education, Backwardness, Remedy

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ABSTRACT *The present paper highlights the educational backwardness of Muslims in India and its possible remedies. The oneness of Allah is the pivotal of Islam. Allah is the absolute source of all wisdom and vision and knowledge for the human beings in the world. Allah sent His Holy Quran in the world for the human beings to pass their whole life on the right path for the sake of their other fellow beings. We have to follow each and every instruction as prescribed in our Holy Quran, and each and every Sunnah, the acts as performed by our great leader, Prophet Mohammad Salallahu -Alaihwasallarn (PBUH) in the world of Islam. There are several reasons for the backwardness of Muslims in India like poverty, lack of proper education, large family size, and poor facilities in Muslim schools. Some of the important remedial measures are like increasing working hours, good education, increasing saving level for development, increasing self employment etc.*

Verily: the oneness of Allah is the pivotal of Islam. Allah is the absolute source of all wisdom and vision and knowledge for the human beings in the world. Allah sent His Holy Quran in the world for the human beings to pass their whole life on the right path for the sake of their other fellow beings. We have to follow each and every instruction as prescribed in our Holy Quran, and each and every Sunnah, the acts as performed by our great leader, Prophet Mohammad Salallahu -Alaihwasallarn (PBUH) in the world of Islam,

High above all is God
The King, the Truth
Be not in haste
With the Quran before
Its revelation to those
Is completed, but say,
'O my Lord advance me
In knowledge (20:114).

Verily the knowledge
of the Hour is
with God (Alone)
It is the who sends down
Rain and He who knows
what is in the Wombs' (31: 34).

Glory to Thee:
Of knowledge
In truth it is thou
Who are perfect in knowledge
And wisdom (2:32).

Education has continued to evolve, diversify and extend its reach and coverage since the dawn of human history. Every country develops its system of education to express and promote its unique socio-cultural identity and also to meet the challenges of the times. There are moments in history when a new direction has to be given to an age-old process. That moment is today. The country has reached a stage in its economic and technical development when a major effort must be made to derive the maximum benefit from the assets already created and to ensure that the fruits of change reach all sections. Education is the highway to that goal, (NPE, 1986).

In the Indian way of thinking a human being is a positive asset and a precious national resource which needs to be cherished, nurtured and developed with tenderness and care, coupled with dynamism. Each individual's growth presents a different range of problems and requirements, at every stage-from the womb to the tomb. India's political and social life is passing through a phase which poses the danger of

erosion, to long-accepted values. The goals of secularism, socialism, democracy and professional ethics are coming under increasing strain.

In our national perception education is essentially for. This is fundamental to our all-round development, material and spiritual. Education has an acculturating role. It refines sensitivities and perceptions that contribute to national cohesion, a scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit – thus furthering the goals of socialism, secularism and democracy enshrined in our constitution.

Education develops manpower for different levels of the economy. It is also the substratum on which research and development flourish, being the ultimate guarantee of national self-reliance.

Education is a unique investment in the present and the future life-long education is a cherished goal of the educational process. This presupposes universal literacy.

Suitable incentives will be provided to all educationally backward sections of society, particularly in the rural areas. Hill and desert districts, remote and inaccessible areas and islands will be provided adequate institutional infrastructure.

Some minority groups are educationally deprived or backward. Greater attention will "be paid to the education of these groups in the interests of equality and social justice. This will naturally include the constitutional guarantees given to them to establish and administer their own educational institutions, and protection to their languages and culture. Simultaneously, objectivity will be reflected in the preparation of textbooks and in all school activities, and all possible measures will be taken to promote an integration based on appreciation of common national goals and ideals in conformity with the case curriculum.

To quote late Prof. Rasheeduzzafar, former Vice-Chancellor of Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi, educationally, the Indian Muslims have been trading, trotting and trekking for the last 130 years but are yet to arrive. For all their effort, today they find themselves exactly at the place where they began. On average, only about 3 percent of the Muslim population has reached college level. These conclusions were based on data obtained from surveys related to the educational status of Indian Muslims during the period 1865-82 and again 1981-82 and 1993. In this respect, they are far behind the majority community as well as the other minorities.

The educational, economic and social backwardness of the Muslim Community in India has been established and high-

lighted by a number of official reports, such as Gopal Singh Minority Panel Report, the Report of the 43rd Round of National Sample Survey and the Programme of Action, New Educational Policy 1986. The NSO in its 43rd round revealed that 35 per cent Muslims were landless in the rural areas in comparison to 28 percent Hindus. Nearly 45 percent of Muslims live below the poverty line. The backwardness in reflected particularly in the low level of literacy.

According to the Planning Commission Survey of 1987-88, the national literacy rate was 42 per cent. There is a marked disparity between Hindus and Muslims in respect of education. The percentage of Hindus who have completed high schools is 7.9 whereas for Muslims it is 4.5. The percentage of Hindus who have studied beyond high school is 3.4 while for Muslims it is 1.2. The percentage of graduates among Hindus is 7.9 whereas for Muslims it is 2.3. The dropout rate is quite high among Muslims. On an average, about one third of all literates among Muslim drop out before attaining the requisite level. The highest dropout rate is observed at the middle level. The drop out in the 20-24 years age group is high as 50 percent.

Gender disparity in respect of literacy among Muslims is also existing. The literacy rate for Muslim women is 34 per cent. Only one per cent of Muslim women reach high school. Haryana has reported total illiteracy for Muslim women. At the all India level Muslim women are three times behind their Hindu sisters. The attainment of higher education among girls is a rare phenomenon ever in the urban areas.

The high-power minority panel, headed by Dr. Gopal Singh, had, in its report based on a sample survey of 80 districts made 20 years ago, found that the minority communities, particularly Muslims, were lapsing further into ignorance and poverty. The findings indicated that the dropout rate among Muslims at primary stage in 27 districts of right states was 66 percent. The number of Muslim students at 10th and 12th class was found to be 0.54 lakh out of 13.44 lakh and 5645 out of 2.26 lakhs, respectively in twelve boards. There were 92 Muslims out of 2698 students (3.41 per cent) in engineering in nine universities of six states. The number of Muslims in MBBS courses in eight universities of eight states was 98 out of 2895 (3.44 per cent). Their representation in the government services was very low. In class I and II services Muslims accounted for only 3 to 4.5 per cent while in class III and IV services, it was between 5 and 6 percent.

According to the Report of NCAER (National Council of Applied Economic Research) 'Human Development Profile of India: Inter-State and Inter Group Differentials (November 1996) indicated that the percentage of the land-owners amongst SCs (47%) Muslims (57%) are less than those of the Hindus (70%) and STs (69%). Similarly, the size of land holdings for Muslims (3.6 acres) SCs (2.8 acres) and Christians (2.6 acres) are much smaller to those belong to the Hindus (5.1 acres). The female work participation rate is the lowest amongst Muslims (10 percent), followed by other Hindus (17%), SCs (23%), Christians (25%) and STs (28%).

It is clear from the given data that Muslims have been left behind not only in the field of Education but also in economic field that ultimately further affect their education, economic, political and social field.

In the study of Siddiqui (1995), the following figures are projected about the Muslim and Non-Muslim students of Aligarh:

	Class I	Class V	Class VIII
Muslim boys	998	367	213
Muslim Girls	810	330	170
Non-Muslim Boys	878	501	335
Non-Muslim Girls	665	375	223

The overall drop-out percentage is 53% at the end of Primary stage and 71.9% at the elementary stage. At the end of Primary stage it is 53.71% for boys and 52.21% for girls. At the end of elementary stage it is 70.79% for boys and 73.36% for

girls. For Muslim boys it is 63.23% at the end of primary stage and it is 78.66% at the end of elementary stage. For Muslim girls it is 59.26% at the end of primary stage and 79.02% at the end of elementary stage.

For non-Muslim boys it is 42.94% at the end of primary stage and at the elementary stage is 61.85%. For non-Muslim girls it is 43.61% at the end of primary stage and 66.47% at the end of elementary stage.

On other hand, in the study of Qamaruddin (1996) the drop-out rate of students in Madras is very low as under :

Year	Total students	Total Dropout	Dropout percentage
1989	106678	3554	3.33
1990	116228	3896	3.36
1991	147011	6170	4.2

If we compare dropout percentage of Madaris with the dropout percentage of school, the picture of Madar's seems to be very encouraging. While in the study of Siddiqui the case of Muslim boys and girls is 63.23% and 59.26% respectively at the end of elementary stage and 78.66% and 79.02% respectively at the end of elementary stage. There is a lot of difference in the percentage of Madan's and schools. On apparent reason seems to be high percentage of pass student in Madaris as compared to low-percentage of pass students in schools.

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

1. Economic poverty
2. Lack of proper education
3. Illiteracy among parents
4. Larger families
5. Lack of girls school
6. Poor facilities in Muslim schools
7. Linking education with employment
8. Negative attitude towards girls education
9. Effect of Medium of Instruction in Schools
10. Lack of vocational education
11. Improper Muslim Leadership: social and political
12. Lack of education among Muslims in Muslim managed institutions

The following remedies could be considered in improving educational standards among Muslims.

1. Increase in working hours
2. Improving economic well being through education
3. Increase in awareness about the importance of education and various self employment schemes at the grassroot level.
4. Maintaining small family norm
5. Integrating vocational education with religious instruction in Madaris
6. Developing the habits of savings
7. Developing the habits of purchasing good books
8. Increasing reading habits among Muslim boys and girls
9. Organising community polytechnics
10. Increasing child centred programmes at the primary level
11. Selecting good and dedicated leaders among Muslims.
12. Increasing dedication among Muslims in Muslim managed institutions.
13. Motivating Muslim youths towards education and constructive works
14. Availability of good books in own mother tongue at every level of schooling.
15. Government incentives and scholarships at all level of schooling.
16. Strong organization for improving the condition of all centres of primary, secondary and higher learning in India.

Last but not least, the Holy quran says: "Verily never will God change the condition of a people until they change it themselves" (13: 11).

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