

## Conceptual change in education: Muslim education 1947-2047

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### Abstract

Education is the training for real life, here and hereafter. Human resource development guides all other developments. Human resource development is a true indicator of development, because all decisions including that of developmental one are taken by the human beings. Indian Muslims remain more as population, less as human resource. Two parallel routs of Education for Muslims - (1) *Maqtab* /Madrasa Education and (2) School /College Education. As both complementary, they must be convergent in every individual. But unfortunately, they are divergent or at least parallel. Muslim women literacy is far below the national average, and projection shows after 100 years of independence (1947) when all other communities will achieve cent percent literacy, only half of the Muslim women will be literate! Poverty and non-conciliation of the social requirement with the content/ environment of school /college education are the main reasons.

**Keywords:** education for here and hereafter, Indian Muslims more as population, less as human resource, non-interacting *Maqtab* and School education, non-conciliating social requirement with the content of education

### 1. Introduction

Islam has paid topmost importance to education, where Allah orders the mankind to read, in His first revelation, “*Read in the name of your Lord.*”<sup>[1]</sup> In spite of that the scenario of Muslims education in India is not up to the satisfactory level. In addition to many factors, Indian Muslims experience some uneasiness in school/College Education. The most important one is the clash between the curriculum content of education system and the social norms, Islamic philosophy, etc. Other impediment is the intermingling with the concept of Indian Nation with the Hindu Spiritualism. According to M.N.Roy, a renowned social thinker, “*Spiritual imperialism is an outstanding feature of our nationalist ideology. But this nasty spirit is the most pronounced in relation to Mohammedanism.*”<sup>[2]</sup>

The concept of education among Muslim community has changed during the course of time. Initially, this community in corollary to others, by education meant ‘Enlightenment’. Gradually it changed to the present meaning of ‘Human Resource Development’ and the tendency is towards the adaptation of ‘Professional Competence’, as the meaning of education. This conceptual change of the meaning of education suggests its degrading or deviated status in the society. Common Muslims, by education means only a medium of good employment. Needless to mention, this is a very narrow concept regarding education, what they harbour in their mentality.

### 2. Discussion

The above conceptual change is manifested in a number of educational parameters, as mentioned below:

#### A) Quality of Teachers

##### i) Teachers’ Knowledge Level

As Muslim community has to encounter with two types of teachers – *Maqtab* Teachers and School /College Teachers, so the knowledge level of both types of teachers are considered separately.

##### 1. Knowledge level of *Maqtab* Teachers (with exceptions)

Past	Present	Future
Competent	Much below the level of competence	Expected to increase

##### 2. School /College Teachers (with exceptions)

Past	Present	Future
Good	Much better than the <i>Maqtab</i> Teachers	Will increase further

##### ii) Professionalism

Education is no more a men-making, nation-making service or endeavour; it is rather a profession like other professions in the market. This is a direct result of Globalization. The Western individualistic, consumerist Philosophy made direct access into our life and society. As a result, dedication, sacrifice, etc. valuable qualities of teachers gone away by the individualistic concept of professionalism. Both, the *Maqtab* and School teachers are more or less affected. The trend is towards more and more Professionalism in Education today.

##### iii) Personality Aspect

Majority of the teachers suffer from incomplete or defective personality. This is a direct consequence of specialization and only knowledge based Education curriculum. Out of the three major domains of human endeavour, our school /college education curriculum focuses manly the cultivation of the cognitive domain only, neglecting the affective and psychomotor domains altogether. Whereas, the *Maqtab* education system put emphasis mainly on the development of affective domain neglecting the other two. In other words, both types of education system strive to develop human resources in an incomplete manner. The result is incomplete personality. Regarding personality aspect, both types of teachers (with exceptions) undergo the following conceptual changes in education –

**1. Maqtab Teachers**

Past	Present	Future
Good	Much below the requirement	Urgent need for betterment

**2. School /College Teachers**

Past	Present	Future
Up to the requirement	Not up to the requirement, but much better than the <i>Maqtab</i> Teachers	May worsen further

**iv) Value, Ethics, Morality, etc.**

Majority of our ‘educated’ people including that of the teachers, mainly the school /college educated ones suffer from the disease of value, ethics, morality erosion. This is the result of the Atheist Curriculum, Globalization, Western consumerist cultural aggression in our education system. In this regard the school /college teachers are the worst affected but the *Maqtab* teachers are also influenced to some extent. This trend is likely to continue or even can worsen in future.

**v) Social Responsibility & Acceptance**

All around consumerist atmosphere made the general teachers - selfish, coward, narrow minded, etc. This state has deteriorated their social status. They are not becoming the role model; hence face difficulties to discharge their duties as a human maker. Again, due to the non-fulfilment of social expectation, their social acceptance further get rejected.

**B) Education Curriculum**

If education is the training for real-life, its curriculum shapes the direction and nature of that training.

Thus, inclusiveness and sustainability in development rest on the inclusiveness and sustainability character of the education curriculum. So, the question arises – what should be the model of a good curriculum? According to Delors Commission Report (1996) – Education is, ‘*Learning: the Treasure Within*’. This is in corollary to Swami Vivekananda’s definition, “*Education is the manifestation of the perfections already in men.*” So, the process of education facilitates the manifestation of this ‘Treasure Within’ i.e., the potentialities. According to this report, education curriculum should have the materials for flourishing the human endeavour as:- Learning to Know, Learning to Do, Learning to Live Together, and Learning to Be.

**i) Curriculum for ‘Learning to Know’**

The curriculum should have elements for comprehensive knowledge. Otherwise incomplete and misleading concepts will form. In our present day education, knowing is convergent to examination passing only. People are reluctant to know anything beyond his/her immediate requirement of doing aspect (i.e., his/her immediate professional usage). Thus, knowing is convergent to doing only. As for example, a student is not ready to know beyond his/her syllabus set for the upcoming examination, a part of the whole knowledge only. A Physician is reluctant to read beyond his/her required medicinal knowledge only. This led to the specialization and professionalization of knowledge, i.e., narrowing down the content of one’s knowledge domain. On the contrary, our school curriculum does not provide professional knowledge to the vast majority of dropout masses (94.3%) [3, 4]. It is fixed only for the benefit of micro-minority 5.7% privileged

learners, who are lucky to move beyond class XI.

It is the duty of the education system to preserve the knowledge received from our ancestors, enrich it and transmit to the next generation. But unfortunately, our ancestral, community and religious-cultural knowledge, the ‘Treasure Within’ is neglected badly, mainly since independence. As an illustration, the verses of the holy Qur’an says, “*Do not the Unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were joined together (as one unit of creation), before we clove them asunder? ... It is He who created the Night and the Day, and the sun and the moon: all (the celestial bodies) swim along, each in its rounded course.*” [5] The first verse talks about the greatest discovery of today, the Big Bang theory, the second about another very important recent scientific discovery that all the celestial bodies including that of the sun are in motion in their defined rounded course. These knowledge treasures were there since about 1.4 thousand years past, but we did not bother to have a look on it, simply because of its non-Western source! Such rich treasures of knowledge will be found in other scriptures also, - if we take the ‘pain’ to search it out. We are paying a heavy price for that; have destroyed our environment, ecology, mental peace, family life, etc. and invited newer and newer life-threatening diseases.

**ii) Curriculum for Learning to Live Together**

This means discovering others and collectively working towards common objectives. The prime condition of having a happy family-life, there must be faith, respect and reliability between the husband and wife, – the two important components of a family. Each one must know, understand others’ culture, history, religion, etc. So, knowing is the prime condition of living peacefully and happily together. India is a big family of more than 2800 castes [6], where Hindus and Muslims are the two major components. So, each must know the others in order to have a happy and prosperous India. But, unfortunately, this is not the case. According to a famous social thinker, M. N. Roy, “*No civilized people in the world, is so ignorant of Islamic history and contemptuous of Mohammedan religion as the Hindus.*” [2] This dark state of ignorance leads to develop mistrust among the co-citizens, which further leads to develop suspicion, and suspicion outbursts in the form of conflict /clash among themselves. We are number one country in the world where maximum number of communal riots take place [7]. This was not the state of our society earlier, although Hindus and Muslims are living side by side for thousands of years here. The table below depicts this along with its non-encouraging gloomy trend.

Past	Present	Future
No communal riot before 1890 [8]	On an average 3 riots per day [25]	Gloomy

Maintenance of peace is the prime condition for any development, including educational one. Our curriculum can play a significant role here. It can include Sanskrit and Arabic as the compulsory subjects in school education, so that learners of both the communities can understand their scriptures and their religion and culture better. This will grow respect and reliability between and among them. We need to replace the ‘Made in England’ History curriculum meant for ‘Divide & Rule’, in the light of the true History of the land.

**iii) Curriculum for Learning to Do**

As education is the training for real life, and in real life people has to do something in order to meet his/her need of sustenance. So, the education system has to inculcate some vocational skills among the learners.

▪ **Vocational skills for above average learners**

Our whole educational activities are mainly centred-around to meet the vocational skill needs of the above average learners only. Its outcome is the professionalization of education, i.e., nobody needs to know the whole; only a part is sufficient. Due to lack of complete knowledge, the person remains confused, lacks self-confidence, it affects his/her wholesome personality and kills his/her creativity. The result is before us, after 69 years of independence we failed to produce a single real thinker!

▪ **Vocational skills for below average learners**

According to the Govt. of India’s report, 94.3% learners are dropout (up to class X) in our country [3, 4]. Our education curriculum does little for this vast majority regarding ‘Learning to Do’ aspect. This state frustrates these economically weak learners and drives to leave such education system. Hence, dropout rate increases. These unskilled mass practically remains unemployed and subsequently creates social problems, disturbs social equilibrium, social harmony. They are the real threat to peace and sustainability in our society.

**iv) Curriculum for Learning to Be**

Our curriculum lacks proper mechanism to explore

potentialities in all dimensions of human endeavour. It emphasises only on materialistic philosophy; development of human qualities, e.g. honesty, selflessness, fellow feeling, etc. are in the back banner. In order to have a complete human being, - value, morality and religious education are needed. Without this it is not possible to produce human resources, in true sense. Our present curriculum produces only some skilled hands – alike to machine /robots, devoid of humanity, morality, value, ethics, etc. Thus, according to National Crime Bureau report, in every 20 minute one rape is being committed in our country [11]. Exploitation by the ‘educated’ ones crossed all records, 77% people are forced to live on below Rs.20/- per day! [10] India ranked the fourth most corrupt country in south Asia [11]!

Other forms of corruption are also there; intellectual, ethical and moral corruptions. The worst form is the intellectual corruption. The sense of accountability to God, only can restrain oneself from doing evil acts. Our curriculum badly needs to inculcate this.

Neither of the two systems of education available to us, - are inculcating all the four pillar of education. Although, the curriculum of our *Maqtab* education focuses on the ‘Learning to Live Together’ and ‘Learning to Be’; but neglecting altogether the ‘Learning to Know’ and ‘Learning to Do’ aspects. On the other hand, the school /college curriculum revolves only around the ‘Learning to Know’ pillar and to very limited extent the ‘Learning to Do’ pillar.

**C) Illiteracy & Women Education**

Year	Muslim Literacy			National Literacy		
	Male	Female	Average	Male	Female	Average
1947			<12.2%			12.2%
2001	67.6%	50.1%	59.1%	75.3%	53.7%	64.8%
2011	74.9%	50.3%	67.6%	82.14%	65.46%	74.04%
2047	100%	51.02%	98.2%	100%	100%	100%

From the table above, it can be said that in consistent with the national literacy, Muslim literacy also has increased since 1947, but the average rate of increase among the Muslims is lower than that of the national literacy. We are lagging behind particularly in women literacy. The last two censuses witnessed practically no increase in the Muslim women literacy. If this trend is continued, in 2047, after hundred years of our independence, only about half (51.02%) of our women will be literate! Whereas, all other citizens will acquire almost cent per cent literacy. So, we must think seriously about our women literacy. According to Premji (2011) – Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and

Tamil Nadu; both Muslim males and females have got better literacy rate than other communities [12]. Dropout is one of the major causes behind the poverty stricken Muslim population. Out of the total enrolment in class I, in our country only 5.7% reaches up to class XI [4]. According to Ex.-MHRD, Mr. Kapil Sibal - minority-dominated districts of Malda and Murshidabad have the highest dropout rates in the State, and Malda stood at 10.5 per cent —maximum in the state [13]. According to Hon’ble Justice Rajindar Sachar, “As many as 25% of Muslim children in the 6-14 year age group have either never attended school or have dropped out” [14].

Muslim Enrolment in Elementary Education in India is shown below: (Data collected from more than 1.28 million recognized schools in India.) [15, 16, 17]

	Year									
	2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11 <sup>(8)</sup>	
	Class (I-V)	Class (VI-VIII)	Class (I-V)	Class (VI-VIII)	Class (I-V)	Class (VI-VIII)	Class (I-V)	Class (VI-VIII)	Class (I-V)	Class (VI-VIII)
% of Muslim enrolment	9.39	7.52	10.49	8.54	11.03	9.13	13.04	11.47	13.04	11.25
% of Muslim girls enrolment	-	-	-	-	-	-	48.89	50.03		
Overall girls % enrolled	-	-	-	-	-	-	48.44	47.58		
Total Muslim enrolment (million)	-	-	-	-	-	-	17.17	6.20		
Overall enrolment (million)	-	-	-	-	-	-	131.72	54.02	135.2	57.8
Overall Muslim % enrolment	-		-		-		12.58			
Overall Muslim girls % enrolment	-		-		-		49.20			

Based on 2019-10 date, in 2047, 70.93% Muslim girls will be in Class VIII, in India

State wise data also show a general trend of increase in Muslim enrolment (except Andhra Pradesh). The increase is almost three fold in Karnataka State from the year 2008-09 to 2009-10, at both the Lower Primary and Upper Primary

Levels; although a slight downfall was observed in the preceding year. Similarly, in Kerala a sharp increase was noted [18]. Similar trend was there in Lakshadweep, J&K, etc.

State/UT	% Muslim	% Muslim Enrolment								
		Lower Primary Level (Class I to V)			Upper Primary Level (VI-VIII)			Elementary Level (Class I to VIII)		
		2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2008-09	2009-10	Total
A.P.	9.17	10.51	10.79	8.99	9.45	10.07	8.13	10.55	8.70	944379
Gujarat	9.06	4.57	4.73	6.45	4.52	4.75	6.44	4.74	6.45	504031
J&K	66.97	59.29	66.42	67.80	58.22	63.96	65.14	65.62	66.9	1320192
Karnataka	12.23	15.06	14.67	35.52	16.73	13.81	37.13	14.42	35.99	2748170
Kerala	24.70	21.49	26.22	33.24	19.09	21.98	29.23	24.51	31.61	1060733
W.B.	25.25	28.13	28.28	30.03	18.91	20.08	22.59	25.79	27.68	35,07164
In 2047, WB									69.93%	88,60404

Based on the data of 2009-10: In 2047, only 69.93% of Muslim children will be in Class VIII, in W.B.

In higher education the scenario is alarming. Community wise Graduates as per proportion of population by age group. All India 2004-05:

Age Gr. (In year)	Hindu			Muslims	Other Communities
	Gen.	OBCs	SCs/STs		
20-30	18.6	6.5	3.3	4.5	11.6
30-40	16.8	4.6	2.3	3.3	9.2
40-50	14.6	3.2	1.5	2.8	8.1
51 & Above	9.8	1.9	0.9	2.1	5.7
Total (Av.)	15.3	4.4	2.2	3.4	8.9

Source: Sachar Committee Report (2006), p.67.

In premier colleges only one out of 25 under-graduate students and one out of 50 post-graduate students is a Muslim [19].

Following data provided by the Govt. of West Bengal in response to the RTI application in 2009 [20]

	Calcutta University			Jadavpur University			Higher Education Departments	Higher Education Directorates
	Student		Teacher	Student		Teacher		
	UG	PG		Male	Female			
Total No.	2,72,000	-	592	4600	1600	524	-	346
Muslim No.	13,138	656	19	27	6	6	-	8
Muslim %	4.83	5.93	3.2	0.58	0.37	1.14	2.83	2.31

Vidyasagar and Kalyani University did not furnish any data on this. According to the Govt., the situation is more or less same in all over India. UGC maintained that the GRE for Muslim is half of national average [26]. In the elite IIMs and IITs, Muslim students constitute only 1.3% and 1.7%, respectively [27]. School enrollment among urban Muslim boys is only 80%, as compared with 90% of SC/ST boys. Only 68% of Muslim girls attend schools, while the figures for Dalit & non-Dalit girls are 72% and 80%, respectively [27].

The present status of Muslim Education is likely to drop in future, because the gap between rich and poor is increasing day by day and Indian Muslims are generally poor and the quality of education in Govt. schools are being deteriorated deliberately.

#### D) Communicating with New Generation

Western concept of excessive individual right is the main problem, because it develops within the learners a feeling of self-centredness, personal comfort, disobeying the authority of others including that of parents and teachers, indifferent attitude towards the community, etc. In this situation, it became very difficult to communicate with the new generation with community's value, culture, religion, etc. This can be countered with the Islamic Philosophy from the very beginning of their life as well as to keep them at safe distance from cable

TV and other sources of Western Culture, as possible. But, schools with Islamic environment is essential in order to have a controlled environment favourable for communicating our new generations as per our value, ethics, culture, etc.

#### 3. Conclusion

- (i) The main problem arises due to the conflict between social norms, values, religious-cultural aspects and the curriculum of the school education system. So, a major section of Muslim community are forced to avoid the school education and stick back to socially managed Madrasa (*Moktab*) education. So, the education curriculum should be made compatible with the social values.
- (ii) Poverty prevents Muslim community to purchase modern education. The Govt. acknowledges [20] that the monthly Per Capita Expenditure of Muslims is much lower than the national average. 27% children never attend school due to too much costs of education [21]. 14% (approx.) dropouts were for the reason of too much educational costs [21]. So, the cost barrier to education should be removed or minimized, and the Govt. financed educational institutions should provide quality education.
- (iii) Dropouts rate is high among Muslim male than that in female. This again is the symptom of poverty which

forces the parents to withdraw their physically capable male wards (above class VII) from the school in order to engage them in some menial work. 34% adolescents are dropped out from school due to financial difficulties <sup>[22]</sup>. 24% (approx.) dropouts are due to the fact that these children were required for work for money <sup>[21]</sup>. Solution of this problem lies in the equitable distribution of country's wealth among her citizens.

- (iv) The socio-economic conditions and social inequalities of caste, class and gender are the major causes of educational deprivation in India <sup>[22]</sup>. These barriers need to be removed at the earliest and a social force needs to be emerged to put forward these demands.
- (v) *Moktab* degrees do not find validity either in continuing education in other institutions e.g., Schools, Colleges, Universities, etc., or in the employment market. These two education systems are running parallel, where there is no interaction between them. They must meet for the sake of wholesome personality development. Muslim community as a whole is more practicing religious than any other community in the world. If school education is combined with the religious education, catered in *Maqtabs*, the aim of education will be achieved.
- (vi) Urdu language has been unfortunately identified with the religion of Islam and hence faces the neglect <sup>[20]</sup>. This state should be changed.

Lastly, the attitude of Muslim community towards school /college education is not negative. But a number of factors are coming in the way of their educational achievement. The factors are:- monetary, non-availability of schools within easy reach, absence of girls' hostels and community teachers, cultural aggression by the dominant community, biasness in curriculum, etc., <sup>[20]</sup>.

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