

## Present Status of Muslims in India and Recent Government Initiatives

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### **Abstract:**

*In a democratic country like India each and every citizen has equal rights. It is the duty of the state to ensure equal opportunities to all its citizens in social, political and educational spheres. The benefits of democratic system go to all the citizens of the country without discrimination based on caste, community, gender, religion and region. If any region, caste or community lags behind the average pace of the nation, the states have the right to take special measure to raise their status. The progress of a nation depends on its human resources. Every citizen of a country is a human resource for the nation. India as a country cannot imagine the progress without the development of 13.4% of its Muslim population. This paper examines the current position of Muslims in relation to their social, economic and educational status, and the pace of educational development among Muslims.*

**Key words:** India, minorities, mundane, education, democracies, social indicator economy

Social and educational status of Muslims in India seems to have become a matter of serious concern for the policy makers of the country and for the intellectuals of the community who believed that the nation would develop optimally if at all

sections are socially and educationally empowered to effectively participate in the process of development and will be able to share the fruit of development. Social and educational degradation of Muslim started since independence and is still continuing. Before the independence social and education condition of Muslims was good as compared to today.

Indira Gandhi had appointed the Gopal Singh High Power Committee to assess the social, economic and educational status of the Indian Muslims in 1980, which had submitted its report to Mrs. Gandhi in 1982. Gopal Singh Committee worked hard to collect the valuable data and made concrete suggestions for improving their social, economic and educational condition. The committee first brought into light the startling fact that Muslims in India are educationally most backward, in some ranks even worse than the historically backward schedule caste and scheduled tribes, in the country.

#### **Muslim Population Growth per census**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Muslim Population</b>	<b>%age</b>
1951	361,088,090	35,856,047	9.93
1961	439,234,771	46,998,120	10.70
1971	548,159,652	61,448,696	11.21
1981	683,329,097	77,57,852	11.35
1991	846,427,039	102,586,957	12.12
2001	1,028,737,436	138,159,437	13.43

(Source: Wikipedia)

From the above table it is quite evident that the Muslim population is grew at a fast rate. In Sachhar Committee reported that the total fertility rate of Muslims is above than the nation's average total fertility rate.

#### **Muslims population in major state**

Muslims are in majority only in Lakshadeep and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh has 18.55%, Assam 30.9%, Kerala 24.6%, Jharkhand 13.8%, West Bengal 25.2%, Bihar 16.5%. Though

Muslims are in the majority only in Lakshadweep and Jammu and Kashmir, there are six states where the Muslim population is above the national average. There are 110 so called minority constituency- concentrates districts – areas where Muslim account for at least 20 percent of the total population. No party can afford to ignore the problems of Muslims as the voting pattern of Muslim influences the outcome of an election, yet, no party has done much to uplift and integrate the community into the mainstream.

Minority community in India, as per the National Commission of the Minority Act, 1992 are Muslim, Christians, Buddhist, Sikh and Parsis As per 2001 census these communities constitute about 18.4% of the total population of the country numbering 18.94 crore, out of the above percentage 13.4% is constituted of the Muslim minority with 13,81,88,240.

**Hindu Muslim demographic data from census 2001**

Name of the Religion	% of the total population	% of 0-6 population to total population	Literacy rate Male	Female literacy	Male literacy	Total work participation		
						Total	Male	Female
Hindu	80.5%	15.6	65.1	53.2	76.2	40.4	52.4	27.5
Muslim	13.4	18.7	59.1	50.1	67.6	31.3	47.5	14.5

The tables show that 15.6% population of Hindus is below 6 years but for Muslim it is 18.7%. It is evident that Muslim birth rate and total fertility is more than the Hindu community.

Literacy rate among the Muslims is below 6% in comparison to Hindu community. The gap between male Muslim literacy and Hindu male literacy is 8.7whereas in the case of women’s literacy the gap is 3.1. The difference in female literacy is good in comparison to male literacy. In case of work participation the condition of Muslim females is pitiable.

**Representation of Muslims**

According to Sachar Committee Report, representation of

Muslims is 2.5% in bureaucracy, 3% in Indian Administrative Service, 1.8% Indian Foreign Service, 4% in Indian Police Service, 1.4% IIMs. Only 3% Muslims are in higher education as compared to 17% of the general population.

### **In 2012 Educational Representation**

- The number of Muslim children enrolled in elementary education increased from 1.58 crores in 2005-06 to 2.55 in 2011-12.
- The total enrolment of Muslim children from 8.84% to 12.97%.
- At the primary level, too, their representation increased from 1.23 crores in 2005-06 to 1.82 crores in 2011-12.
- At the upper primary level, Muslim enrollment increased by a little more than two times between 2006-07 and 2011-12 ie from 35% to 72%
- Matriculation education is lower than SCs, STs in both rural and urban areas.
- The improvement during 2004-05 to 2009-10 is least among Muslims.

### **Employment among Muslims**

*The Economic Times*, August 19, 2013 quoted that unemployment graph among Muslims dropping shows NSSO data. According to the data released by the NSS organization, Muslims are mainly engaged in self employment or as rural laborers. Unemployment among Muslims is going down, marking an encouraging trend to gladden the champions of inclusive growth. The unemployment rate for the community declined from 2.3% in 2004-05 to 1.9% in rural areas and from 4.1% to 3.2% in urban area. However, a vast majority of Muslims in both rural and urban areas are not part of the organized workforce compared to other religious groups. In contrast, Hindus had a stable employment rate, 1.5% in rural

areas during the five year period, while it fell from 4.4% to 3.4% in urban areas.

In cities and towns, Muslims are at the bottom of the ladder in the regular salaried category among the major religious groups, with only 30.4% of Muslims households in regular jobs followed by Sikhs 35.7% Hindus 41% and Christian 43%, The proportion of households with major sources of earning as self employment was the highest for Muslims. In villages 41% Muslims are the largest group employed as rural labor with another 46.3% in the self employed category. Majority of households of all religious groups other than Muslims belong to self employed in agriculture category, the survey found in rural areas, the proportion of households depending on self employment was the highest among Sikhs 48%. The communities major source of earning in self employment in agriculture (around 36%), followed by Hindu 33% and Christian 30%. Around 25% Muslims are engaged in self employment, Christians 14.7% and Sikh 12.4%. according to the NSSO data.

**Percentage of self employment of various religious groups in Non-agriculture areas**

Muslims	Christians	Hindus	Sikhs
25%	14.7%	14.5%	12.4%

According to NSS Organization, various sources of employment among rural Muslims

Manual Labor	Self employed	Agriculture
41%	46.3%	36%

**Percentage of different religious groups involved in the Agriculture sector**

Sikhs	Muslims	Christians	Hindus
48%	36%	30%	33%

The per capita spent by Muslims is low as compared to other religious groups. The monthly household per capita consumer

expenditure (MPCE) is lower among the Muslims. A Muslim household spends Rs. 980 (Rs. 6272 in urban areas and Rs. 833 in rural areas).

The average MPCE for both urban and rural areas is higher for the Sikh households, followed by the Christians and Hindus. The average MPCE of Sikh household was Rs. 1659 (Rs. 2,180 in urban areas and Rs. 1,498 in rural areas).

The Hindu reported: The Sachar Committee which analyzed the social economic and educational status of Muslims in India – based on the data for the 1990, concluded that Muslims were doing much worse than the rest of the population on most social indicators. Most of the findings of Sachhar report have been re-examined by the Indian Human development report (IHDR) 2011 based on the data of 2005.

IHDR: Most of the data collected was in the end 2000s, it was a decade gap between Sachar data and IHDR data. IHDR finding portrayed Muslim as better than scheduled cast and scheduled tribes on most social indicators. Gaps between Muslims and the national average on most human development outcomes are narrowing, reflecting Muslims improving condition.

Social Indicator	Convergence Rural	Divergence Urban
Per capita consumption expenditure	✓	✓
Unemployment rate	✓	
Child labor rate	✓	
Female Malnutrition		✓
Body Mass Index (18.5)		✓
Infant Mortality Rate(IMR)	✓	
Under five mortality rate(U5MR)	✓	
Total fertility rate	✓	
Child immunization	✓	
Toilet facility	✓	
Literacy	✓	

The above social indicator for Muslims converging with rest of India across the board, most economic and social indicators for

Muslims show convergence through the 2000s: Per capita consumption expenditure, employment rate or child labor rate, health related ones like infant/child mortality rate, total fertility rate or child immunization, access to toilet and literacy.

<b>Sign of Improvement</b>	
Sacchar Committee on Muslim	IHDR data show convergence with rest of India
IMR, U5MR both decreasing between national average and Muslim average increasing (1992-93 to 1998-99)	IMR, U5MR both decreasing, convergence between national average and Muslim average increasing (1998-99 to 2005-96)
<b>Underweight</b>	
Worse than national average (1998-99)	Better than the national average (2005-06)
<b>Fertility rate</b>	
Higher than the national average by 0.7% points in 1992-93, the difference increased to 1% point in 1998-99	On an average higher than national average by 0.6% points in 2005-06 but converging
<b>Literacy</b>	
In rural 6% points and urban areas (10% points) below the national average in 2001	In rural (3.5% points) and urban (8.5% point) convergence with national average

IMR: Infant mortality rate

U5MR: Under five year mortality rate

IHDR: Indian Human resource development

Muslims literacy rate is improving faster than the average with the gap narrowing over time. The difference between the national average and the Muslims average in literacy in rural area was 6% and in urban areas 10% in 2001. Both fell to 3.5% and 8.5 percentage points respectively (although Muslims still continued to have lower literacy rates compared to the national average in 2007-08). According to national social sample survey, about 75% of total population aged 7 years and were literate in 2011-12. The literacy rate for Muslim climbed to 72 percent only 3 point below that for India.

The most sensitive health indicators, which tells most about the states of health, are infant and under five child mortality rates. Both have been converging for Muslims with the rest of India in the 2003, while the Sacchar committee had

found they were diverging in the 1990s.

Sachhar committee had noted that the fertility rate of Muslim was higher than the national average by 0.7 in 1992-93. The difference increased to 1 in 1998-99. However by 2006, the Muslim fertility on average was higher only by 0.5 (3.09) compared to the national average (2.6) and converging with the latter. It is unlikely that the Muslim count should have changed from its 13.4 percent count in census 2001.

### **Recent Reach Outs of Indian government to The Muslim community:**

**Interim Budget 2014:** The Finance Minister did try to reach out to the minorities in the recent vote-on-account by increasing the allocation to the Minority Affairs Ministers by 12 percent or Rs. 3,511 crore.

**Maulana Aazad Taleme-Balighan:** This scheme is being launched to impart functional literacy, Basic education, vocational skill development and continuing education to cover about one crore Muslims adults in the age group of 15 years and above.

**Sarva Siksha Abhiyan SSA:** Fifteen percent of the outlay under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is targeted at the minority concentrated districts (MCD) to achieve the goal of universalization of elementary education, to meet the infrastructure gaps for schools, classrooms, teachers and providing access by opening new schools.

**Degree Colleges in 90 districts proposed:** Voicing concern over the level of participation of minority children in higher education, a committee favoured setting up of modal degree college in 90 minority concentrated districts with full central assistance to the state. One college may be established in “each such district which may offer course in science, humanities, and commerce” The Standing Committee for Minority Education suggested this on its report presented to

the HRD Minority recently.

The report emphasized on the need for an efficient system of data collection to know the actual situation of minority education in the country while noting that data of enrolment of minority children was not available.

**Govt. to setup Equal Opportunities Commission for minorities:** The government cleared a proposal for setting up the much awaited Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC) a statutory body to check discrimination of minority communities in job and education. It was the Sachar's recommendation to set up such a panel which will look for the discrimination against the Muslim. The proposal got the union cabinet nod on 18.02.2014.

EOC will also deal with grievances like denial of accommodation or buying rights to minorities in society. It is mandatory that EOC will deal exclusively with minorities. EOC's mandate is to ensure that no minority community is discriminated against on religious grounds by redressing complaints. It has to make binding recommendation that people from minority communities find adequate representation in government jobs and educational institutions. In an attempt to develop a consolidate action plan to ensure quality access to quality education of Minorities, it has commissioned a national level database that will capture all their education related data. This decision was taken to know the reason of high dropout at senior secondary level among Muslims. The database will take the all information from the schools number of Muslims students enrolled, infrastructure in the Muslims dominated blocks of various district.

**Madarsa Education:** National Monitoring Committee for Minorities education suggested salary of graduate teacher under the scheme for promoting quality education. It should be enhanced from Rs. 6,000 to Rs,. 8,000 and for post-graduate teacher from Rs. 2000 to Rs. 15,000. Examination fee should be waived for madarsa students opting for examination conducted

by National Institute of Open Schooling and on passing out, they should be given a cash incentive of Rs. 1,000 so that more students can be attracted to take the examination.

**National Waqf Development Corporation Limited:**

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh formally launched the National Waqf Development Corporation Limited (NAWADCO), a new public sector enterprise, in the Capital on Dec 31<sup>st</sup> 2013. The enterprise has an authorised share capital of Rs.500 crore to mobilise resources for developing Waqf properties in agreement with Shariah laws. Resources thus generated will be invested in activities for the welfare of Muslims. In his inaugural address, Dr. Singh referred to the Sachar Committee Report on the Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community. He said the report estimated that Waqf properties, if properly developed, could fetch an annual income of Rs.1,200 crore. India has the largest number of Waqf properties in the world with more than 4.9 lakh registered. The current annual income from the assets, according to the Ministry of Minority Affairs, is close to Rs.163 crores.

## **Conclusion**

Progress and prosperity of a country depends upon socio-economic and educational development of all sections of its society. No one can be ignored and marginalized if true development is the target. Muslims constitute about 14% of Indian population. But they are below national average in most of the important fields of life. They are poor, unemployed, uneducated, leaderless, insecure, living in ghettos and prone to many social evils. Educational crisis is the greatest problem of Muslims in India. Their literacy rate is below national average but the gap is only 3% because of the contributions of maktabas and madarsas. Enrolment of Muslims at the primary level is 14.2% (2012-13). Their enrolment is increasing because of the mid-day meal scheme at primary level. It shows that due to

poor economic condition of Muslims, they are not able to provide food to their children so they send them to school to get mid-day meal. At the upper primary level enrolment is 12.1% which shows a high dropout rate. The condition of Muslims at the higher level is degradable because of poor economic conditions, unavailability of colleges in their areas, poor quality of elementary and secondary education, tough competition in professional courses, lack of proper guidance, illiterate parents, and non-recognition of madarsa certificates in government and private jobs. Only 8.7% of Muslims are getting higher education (including madarsa education) as compare to 16.8% in case of Non-Muslims. Quality of their higher education is also not good because they are unable to compete and cannot afford to go to good and reputed institutions of higher education.

The data indicates that most of the human development outcomes are narrowin, reflecting their improvement. Muslim fair better than scheduled castes and scheduled tribes on most social indicators. However, except for child mortality indicators (infant mortality rate and under-five mortality rate), access to toilets and the percentage of underweight children and the absolute level of most other indicators among Muslims are lower than the national average. For all communities, per capita consumption has been increasing and poverty has been declining. However, a cause for concern is that per capita consumption expenditure for Muslims in urban areas has been diverging from the rest of urban India even though in rural India it has kept pace with the rest of India.

**“GOD DOES NOT CHANGE THE CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE UNLESS THEY CHANGE THEMSELVES”**

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