



Muslims And Education: Elementary Education Of Muslims In Manipur

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Abstract

The paper discusses the history of the development of modern education systems in India which is marked by persistent disparities along various axes such as gender, caste, class, region and religion. The discussion on economic and educational backwardness of the minority groups in general and the Muslims in particular in India has a long history. There has been a significant public debate in recent years on the condition of the minorities especially Muslims. The paper throws light on the three explanations to account for relative educational backwardness of the Muslims. It deals with the broad perspective on issues relating to the education of Muslims in Manipur. It also analyses the participation and the problems of the Manipuri Muslims at the elementary level of education.

Introduction

Education is a broad process that enables a person to adopt a rational and questioning attitude and facilitate the recognition of new opportunities.¹ It also involves retention and enhancement of these capabilities over a lifetime and the ability to transmit education to the next generation.² In order to derive such benefits, not only must a person be enrolled but also remain for a minimum period in a system of education. Article 45 of the Constitution of India stated that "The State shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years." With the 86th amendment to the Constitution in 2002, Right to Education is added as fundamental right flowing from the Right to Life in Article 21 of the Constitution. Article 21-A stated that "The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age six to fourteen years in such a way as the State may, by law, determine." The 86th amendment also modified the Article 45, which now reads as "The State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of 6 years." Thus, the Constitution of India gives its commitment to ensure equal educational opportunity for all.³ The Education Commission pointed out that ensuring progressive equality of educational opportunities to all sections of population was the only "guarantee for building up of an egalitarian society."⁴

The National Policy on Education (1986) states:

In our national perception, education is essential for all...The new policy will lay special emphasis on the removal of disparities and to equalise educational opportunity by attending to the specific needs of those who have been denied equality so far.⁵

Even though there has been rapid expansion of educational opportunities in India, access and participation in education is not based on equal footing.

Educational Development and Disparities in India

The educational system does not function in isolation from wider structures and processes, which not only shape social differentiations in society but also reinforce such differentiations in the education system.⁶ The history of the development of modern education system in India has also been marked by persistent disparities along various axes such as gender, caste, class, region and religion.⁷ In pre-colonial period, education in India was imparted in indigenous schools or religious seminaries. Education was mainly on the learning of religious texts and imparting lessons on elementary accountancy. The indigenous schools were supported and managed by higher castes and classes of the society. Such schools lack the character of mass schooling as socially and economically inferior sections of the society were excluded from the education system.

The colonial system of education not only deviated from its foundational principles of equity and openness, it also sharpened pre-existing modes of inequalities in education. The education system introduced by the British was to serve their political and economic ends rather than diffusing education to the Indian masses for raising the intellectual and moral character of the people. The colonial power allied itself with higher castes and feudal classes which had their vested interest in the education system and often stood against mass education. As a result of vested interest of both the colonial regime and the native educated classes, the provisions of mass education expanded very slowly during colonial rule in India. The slow process of the expansion of educational opportunities for the masses ultimately led to the persistent educational disparities along region, gender, caste or ethnicity and religion.

In the post-colonial period, though basic education was claimed as a focal point of educational policy, mass education based on equal opportunities at the lower stages grew at a much slower pace than higher education. The ruling class in collusion with the culturally dominant and economically stronger sections of the society used the State's resources to their own interests and to strengthen their class position.⁸ It is largely the socially and economically well-off sections that benefitted from a highly subsidised education system and appropriated new opportunities out of it. A large section of the Indian society, especially the lower strata of the social and economic structures, still remains deprived of even few years of schooling. Educational disparities across religious groups have existed along with other forms of disparities since the inception of modern education system in the country.⁹

According to Saraswati Raju, the Indian education system is marked by multiple and overlapping layers of disparities, which are not fully explored.¹⁰ Out of all, much less attention has been paid to educational disparities along the axis of religion although religion does emerge as a significant contributing parameter in creating disparities.¹¹ The Muslim community as a whole has lagged behind other communities on almost all indicators of educational attainment. Many reports have proved that they even tend to have fallen behind the SCs/STs, hitherto the most marginalised communities in India. Muslims in India are at a double disadvantage with low levels of education combined with low quality of education. Their deprivation in education increases as the level of education rises. Sachar Committee Report (2006) is the first attempt to assess the social, economic and educational status of the Muslim community in India. According to the report, as many as 25 per cent of Indian Muslim children in the age group of 6-14 years have either never attended school or have dropped out.¹² Many so-called literates did not have the ability to apply their reading and writing skills to real-life situations and often a substantial proportion reverted to illiteracy within 4-5 years of leaving schools.¹³

The literacy levels in India are expected to be higher for males over females and urban areas over rural areas. The literacy gap of about 20 percentage points between rural and urban areas and across gender has been a persistent feature of Indian society over the last two decades despite the increase in literacy levels during this period.¹⁴ The gap is vast and increasing over time, contrary to the expectation that as the overall educational system improves disparities will be reduced. The Sachar Committee Report observes that while there is a significant rural-urban differential, the gap between Muslims and other communities in literacy level is generally higher in urban areas than in rural areas.¹⁵

Relative Educational Backwardness of Muslims in India

There are a number of explanations, though unsubstantiated, to account for relative educational backwardness of Muslims.¹⁶ The first view explains educational and developmental lag among the Muslims by referring to Islamic theology. Educational backwardness of the Muslim community lies in the factors internal to the community. Muslims give preference to Islamic education over modern education in schools. It has been argued that for Muslims, education has intrinsically been linked with religion as Islam lays emphasis on religious education. Since then, not much has changed in the condition of Muslims as they continue to cling to the same perception.

W.W. Hunter observed:

The truth is that our system of public instruction which has awakened the Hindus from the sleep of centuries and quickened their inert masses with some noble impulses of a nation is opposed to the traditions, unsuited to their requirements and hateful to the religion of the Musalmans.¹⁷

Hunter argued that education of Muslims has intrinsically been linked to religion and so they give preference to religious education over modern education. K.D. Sharma

concludes that economic compulsions and constraints account only partially for the Muslim community's educational backwardness; it is their preoccupation with religious teaching in the curriculum and that to a large extent, is responsible for their aversion to the modern system of education.¹⁸

Muslims were reluctant to take to the new education system because of religious reasons. This dominated the debate of relative backwardness of Muslims compared with other communities. Both Hindus and Muslims resisted when the foundation of modern education system was laid down in India. Both held that the new education system was repugnant to their socio-cultural traditions and belief systems. Though Hindus gave up its opposition quickly, Muslims continued its opposition for a considerable period of time and held aloof from western education system. The steady growth of education among Muslims was an outcome of combined effects of rising agencies within the community and positive attitude of the State towards Muslims. A majority of the Muslim community was poor and so they received the attention of the government at a much later stage than others. Before the new state system of education was put in place, Madrasas and Maktabas were the avenues of Muslim education. With the popularity of the modern education system, the number of students attending such Madrasas declined over the years.

The second view refers to a policy of deliberate neglect of the community by the State. This view is mainly argued by the Muslim elites, who tend to shift the blame on the State and society at large. According to them, Muslims are denied access to educational opportunities one way or the other. Because of the failure of the government schools, they believe Muslim parents are forced to send their children to madrasas, which not only preserves religio-cultural values but also meets educational and intellectual needs. As the State is not necessarily an honest referee arbitrating power struggles between unequal groups, minority groups are generally weaker in many of the crucial resources to compete with the majority group, and would be unable to circumvent the structural barriers that effectively deny them the advantages of educational and economic opportunities and hence their lower educational as well as economic attainments in relation to the majority community.¹⁹ It is mainly argued that there is discrimination of the Muslim community in India by state machinery and agencies in the matters of employment, admission to various institutions, in grants of licences, permits and contracts. Moin Shakir emphasised that the majority community exercises a powerful influence on the administration and succeed in pushing the minority interests to a subsidiary position.²⁰

Minority status is not always related to persistent educational deprivation of any community. Many minority groups in India are ahead of majority groups in terms of literacy and education, such as Parsis and Christians. However, it is a widely held view that minority status is associated with a set of disadvantages mainly because of prejudice of the majority community and unequal power relations, etc. Minority groups often see education as a mean to status mobility and schools are designed to recruit people into the labour market. People who are successful in school as well as in adult life become success

models and inspire parents in raising their children and getting them into school. But when the opposite happens, the minority groups not only get discouraged but also lower their aspirations for education and compel them to withdraw from the education system much earlier than the rest of society. Even though perceived or actual discrimination may be assumed to have impacted participation of Muslims in educational opportunities, yet how much effect it has cannot be quantified and statistically tested.²¹

The third explanation is related to social and economic situations where Muslims are placed in and the perceived value of education in those situations in general. This argument emphasised the prevailing socio-economic conditions experienced by Muslims and the perceived cost and benefit of education in such conditions. It is argued that it is generally the upper and middle strata that take the advantages of modern education. Such group of Muslims is not only small in size but also does not expand to a significant extent. As a consequence of this, the demand for modern education among the Muslims has been very low.

Social disparities in education may increase rather than decrease even during the period of rapid expansion of educational opportunities for it is the advantaged/privileged section that first appropriates the benefits of enhanced educational opportunities.²² As expected, the level of participation in schooling is higher at lower ages than at upper ages. For most households, the elementary level is the critical point where the calculation of potential gains, risks and opportunity costs sets in, leading to discontinuations, nonetheless this concern grips Muslim households far more than others.²³ Rapid expansion in educational opportunities has actually worked to the disadvantage of Muslims as educational disparities between them and other communities have widened rather than narrowed down.²⁴ Muslims in towns and cities are more likely to be lagging behind other communities than in rural areas. The greater the availability of educational opportunities, the lower the level of disparity between groups.

Participation in and duration of schooling varies considerably across economic classes. Higher the economic class, greater the chance of being in school and for a longer duration. There are two reasons for such variation because of economic class. First, education is an activity that involves a certain amount of investment in terms of money, time and energy. Second, investment in education also differs in terms of aspirations for and value attached to education. Even if poor families choose to put their children in school, they are likely to withdraw their children early because it would become difficult to bear the cost of education as they grow up. The lack of motivation and aspiration by poor parents in their children's performance in school leads to disinterest among children, which eventually results in discontinuation from study even at an early stage. On the contrary, economically well-off classes have both material and motivational resources to invest in their children's education for longer years.

The middle or upper class families not only have all the resources but also see education as the most potential source of maintaining and reinforcing their class position,

a complete circle.²⁵ They place a high premium on education and ensure that their children obtain qualifications sufficient to preserve their present class position or at the very least guard against any decisive downward mobility.²⁶ Even if we accept that middle class families generally take to education, those whose middle class position is derived from white-collar professions would be more conscious of education of their children than those owning property (landed or otherwise), running business and so forth.²⁷ It thus follows that the educational status of a social group depends, to a large extent, upon its size of the upper and middle strata.²⁸ But the middle and upper social strata amongst Muslims have been historically quite small in size. Since Muslims lagged behind other communities in the early years of the new system of education, their professional and educated middle class developed at a much later date. Ashraf pointed out that middle class among Muslims came up half a century later than the Hindu middle class like a child born to aged parents.²⁹

Education of Muslims in Manipur

Before the advent of the modern education system, Manipur had her own indigenous system of education based on all-round development of a person with knowledge transmitted orally from one generation to next generation. There was no organised form of schools and learning was confined mainly among the traditional priestly class and Brahmins. Because of the fear of educated public as they will demand concessions in various spheres, rulers of Manipur did not favour education of the masses. Parents were mainly responsible for imparting knowledge to the children and family was the main agency of education.

Following the Muslim settlement in the early seventeenth century, King Khagemba permitted Muhammad Sani, the Qazi and Shanglakpa, to attend the Darbar and used their fluent language skills to translate messages from Taraf into Meiteilon. This was the first official use of the education of a Manipuri Muslim.³⁰ Despite such promising start, Muslims did not give much importance to education, more particularly to western education.³¹

Education among Muslims was confined, in the initial stage to the learning of Arabic, Urdu and the knowledge of the Quran. Religious education (din-i-talim) among the Manipuri Muslims started in the second half of the 19th century and gathered momentum in the first decade of the 20th century.³² Such religious education was earlier imparted by Munshis. They were persons who tried to impart their knowledge of different aspects of Islam among Muslims in order to make them better conversant with their religion.³³ Maulana Ibadullah, Maulana Kiramat Ali and Maulana Abdul Jalil are reported to be the earliest persons who went outside Manipur to study Maulvi courses during the period of King Chandrakriti and King Surchandra.³⁴ Both Maulana Ibadullah and Maulana Abdul Jalil had studied in Sylhet and come back in 1871 and 1876 respectively.³⁵

Gangmumei Kabui wrote that the Muslim self-consciousness had started in Manipur in the beginning of the 20th century.³⁶ Maulvis who had studied from places like Cachar, Sylhet and different places of Uttar Pradesh had renewed the process of making Muslims conform more to Islam. As the scope and reach of Munshis was limited, strong pursuit of Islamic knowledge among the Manipuri Muslims came only with the emergence of well-trained Maulvis who devised their own ways of diffusing knowledge associated with Islam learned mostly from Urdu commentaries of the Quran and the Hadith. Maulvis give lectures (waaz) and advices (nasihat) in Manipuri interspersed with Arabic and Urdu. With the appearance of Maulvis who returned from outside Manipur after their studies, education of the Manipuri Muslims began to start in real sense. Though few in numbers, they began to spread education among the Manipuri Muslims.

To lessen the difficulties faced by the Muslims in going outside Manipur (in seeking religious education and knowledge) and to nurture the Islamic talim, madrasas in different parts of the state were established.³⁷ The appearance of madrasas made the education among the Muslims more formally oriented. But the growth of such madrasas was slow, inadequate and remained confined to few (in number). Ultimately, they were unable to fulfil the needs and aspirations of the Muslims for education. Jamini Devi argues that the modern system of education was introduced in Manipur in the later part of the 19th century.³⁸ For several decades, the people of Manipur in general and Muslims in particular were not aware of the values and importance of education. The idea of mass education was not felt even after Independence. Education was regarded as a restricted activity of the male section of the society. Muslims took to modern education as late as the 1970s and that too was limited to a few elite groups from Imphal. The changing attitude of the Muslim community towards education is evident from the increasing number of school and college-going students both male and female, not only within but also outside the State.³⁹ Muslims understood the significant benefits of education and children were encouraged to go to schools and colleges.

Literacy rate in Manipur has always been above the all India average. Literacy rates in North Eastern States, including Manipur, have been above the national average since 1960s and 1970s. According to the latest Census report 2011, Manipur ranks fourth in terms of effective literacy rates among the North-Eastern States, after Mizoram, Tripura and Nagaland. The literacy rate in Manipur is 76.94 per cent as per the 2011 population census. Of that, the male literacy rate stands at 83.58 per cent while female literacy is at 70.26 per cent. In 2001, the literacy rate in Manipur stood at 66.61 per cent of which 75.71 per cent were male and 57.29 per cent female. Between 2001 and 2011, the effective literacy rate in Manipur increased by 8.7 per cent while at the all India level, the rise is 8.2 per cent.

Out of all the Muslims-inhabited districts in Manipur, the literacy rate of Muslims is found to be highest in Imphal East and Thoubal districts. From the findings of the Report on Socio-Economic Survey of Meitei-Pangals (Manipuri Muslims) 2004, the literacy rate of Muslims in Imphal East and Thoubal districts are 40 per cent and 44 per

cent respectively.⁴⁰ As per the census enumeration of 2011, the literacy rate of Muslims in Manipur is 67.8 per cent (Male – 80.3 per cent and Female – 55.2 per cent). The number of Manipuri Muslim literates is 1,34,292 (79,474 male and 54,818 female).

Elementary Education of Muslims in Manipur

An Expert Consultative Group of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in its operational definition of basic education stated “beyond pre-school education, the duration of which can be fixed by the State, basic education consists of at least nine years and progressively extends to 12 years”. It further stated that such education is free and compulsory without any discrimination or exclusion. In India, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (Right to Education Act), 2009 was notified and came into effect from April 1, 2010. Section 3(1) of the Right to Education Act states “every child of the age of 6 to 14 years shall have a right to free and compulsory education in a neighbouring school till completion of elementary education”. The Act was hailed in many quarters as a major victory in the century-long struggle for getting recognition for the right of Indian children to free and compulsory education. However, enrolment is the only area where the performance of the elementary schools appears to have been upto the mark. According to the Annual Survey of Education Report (ASER) 2011 data, the enrolment in elementary schools in rural areas was 96.7 per cent but the attendance was only 70.9 per cent, representing a decline over the ratio of 73.4 per cent in 2007.⁴¹ It was correctly recommended in ASER 2011 that it is time that attendance instead of enrolment is used as the measure of who is in school.

ASER 2011 has shown that Manipur has made remarkable progress in the enrolment of children in rural schools. In Manipur, 98.9 per cent of the children in 6-14 years are enrolled in schools. However, the actual attendance rate of children in schools is not very impressive. Around 57 per cent of the enrolled children in Class I-VII/VIII were present during the school visits in Manipur. According to the report, the basic infrastructures and facilities of the rural schools required for fulfilling the norms and standards of the Right to Education Act have to be improved in Manipur. Manipur is way behind the other States in this regard. Seeing the ever-increasing trend of parents opting for private schools for their children’s education in the state, ASER emphasised an urgent need to take measures to improve the quality of education given in government schools.

The gap between Muslim and other communities becomes wider and is more pronounced when we move upwards i.e. from the lower to the higher levels of education. As per the Census enumeration of 2011, the maximum number of Manipuri Muslim students is found at the middle level to be 37,588 (22,084 male and 15,504 female). In the rural areas, there is a decrease in the number of Muslim students (both male and female) from below primary to primary level of education. While in urban areas, the number increases from below primary to primary level of education. After the middle level, dropout rates are considerably higher at the secondary and higher secondary levels in both urban and rural sectors.

According to the Socio-Economic Survey of Meitei-Pangals (Manipuri Muslims) 2004, the number of children ever-enrolled in schools out of the total child population of the age group of 5-14 years is found to be highest in Imphal East and Thoubal districts, which constitute about 78 per cent of the district child population of the specified age group.⁴² It has been observed from the survey that most of the parents are reluctant to disclose the actual reason for not enrolling their children to any school. Because of this reluctance, real cause of parents' failure to enrol 76 per cent of children aged 5-14 years in any school could not be ascertained. However, 13 per cent of the children of the specified age group did not enrol in schools as their parents are not interested whereas 9 per cent of the children did not go for education as they were engaged in household economic activities. Only two per cent of the children in the specified age group did not enrol due to the question of affordability. According to the findings of 2004 survey, the main reason for dropout of Muslim students is due to their full engagement in household economic activities. As many as 47 per cent of the Muslim students have dropped out of their studies due to one or other economic reasons.

Discontinuation and dropouts have various factors around religion, gender and location dimension in India. Muslim girls and children from villages are the ones who discontinue their studies more and earlier than others. Children of labourers, cultivators and the self-employed often discontinue schooling at an early stage because there is ready employment for them by the parents at a much early age.⁴³ Children of the self-employed have a better chance of completing primary level of education as parents consider a few years of schooling of their children helpful in running or operating home-based enterprises or petty businesses. The demand of boys in child labour is higher than that of girls, leading to the early withdrawal of boys from schools than the girls.

Factors leading to discontinuation from study could be one single factor or could be the outcome of a combination of many factors together. Financial constraints, disinterest and distance of the educational institution are the prominent reasons for discontinuation.⁴⁴ Financial constraint is greater a reason for discontinuation of boys than girls, indicating greater demand of boys for work to contribute to household income.⁴⁵ Higher discontinuation rate among Muslims due to financial constraints could be attributed to relatively higher proportion of poor and self-employed households.⁴⁶

Age-specific enrolment rate is a good measure of current participation in and utilisation of educational opportunities available.⁴⁷ It also acts as a means of knowing the magnitude of value people attached to education. The enrolment rates are the highest at the early age group i.e. 7-11 years. It declines as the age increases. As a result, a substantial proportion of them revert to illiteracy within 4-5 years after leaving school. Rising cost of schooling and increasing demand of children of poor families for contributing to household income are the two main factors for such decline of enrolment with increase in age.

Poverty is the main problem faced by Muslim parents in educating their children both in elementary and higher education. Though elementary education is provided free of cost by the State, parents still have to spend a significant portion of their income on tuition fees, buying uniforms, purchasing books and stationeries. For many poor families, they cannot afford such requirements for educating their many children and so allowing their children to continue study for longer years is a critical question. Besides, these days, children's education is more dependent on private tuitions and coaching institutes as additional learning institutions in urban areas. The high cost of education, especially that of tuition and coaching centres, is a major consideration in decisions made on schooling, especially for poor Muslims. Many Muslim families cannot afford to provide private tuition to their children as many of them are poor cultivators with low income. Most Muslim parents sent their children to private schools as basic infrastructure and education facilities in private schools are far better than the government schools. Parents do not need to keep private tutors for their children as private schools give some kind of coaching for their students unlike government schools. Some rural Muslim families keep their children in Thoubal (main town) for better facilities like boarding.

Educational status of the head of the household or parents affects educational chances of children in many ways. Educated parents with first-hand experience of understanding the importance of education, motivate and inspire their children not only for educational attainment but also for excellence in studies for better future. Unfortunately, a majority of the Muslim students are first generation learners and so they fail to get any help from their illiterate parents. Illiterate Muslim parents cannot give proper and purposeful attention and guidance to their children. There has been a higher incidence of dropout among the children, particularly those who have illiterate parents. The dropout of school children is also linked with occupation of heads of households. The number of children of agricultural labourers, placed at the bottom of the occupational structure leaving schools midway is higher as compared to the children of other occupations. Farming households do not attach much priority to education because the occupation does not demand education as a prerequisite. They are more likely to provide readily available means of livelihood to their children. Similarly, a self-employed household may have a greater capacity to provide ready employment for their children without requiring educational qualifications.

According to the Sachar Report, the unemployment rates among graduates are higher among non-poor households than among poor households.⁴⁸ Generally, the poor cannot afford to remain unemployed and would typically accept whatever job offer comes their way. The non-poor, on the other hand, may be able to wait for a better job opportunity. Those educated parents who are engaged in regular salaried and white-collar jobs prefer to give better education to their children. Many salaried and well-placed Muslim families from Yairipok have migrated to Imphal to give their children good education. Those educated unemployed Muslims earning their livelihood through new

economic ventures enrolled their children in good private schools for better future than theirs.

One of the important aspects of educational development in Manipur has been the steady growth of private schools both in number and enrolment. In Manipur, among schools imparting elementary education, government schools form 64.5 per cent while private schools form 35.5 per cent.⁴⁹ Socio-Economic Survey of Meitei-Pangals (Manipuri Muslims) 2004 shows that 54.3 per cent of Muslim students are enrolled in private schools while 45.7 per cent in government schools. Maximum number of Muslim students of Thoubal district is found to be studying in government schools constituting 22.46 per cent. The rise of private schools is mainly due to the deteriorating quality of education in government schools. Though all the villages are provided with free primary schools by the government, villagers are dissatisfied with the performance of government schools. These schools are plagued with various problems like inadequate teaching staff, lack of a proper school building, insufficiency of teaching aids, poor learning environment and lack of other necessary educational facilities. Development of infrastructure of government schools is a common requirement for all but it is more necessary for the Muslim-inhibited areas. For many years, Muslim students in rural areas have had the vernacular language (Manipuri) as a medium of education and therefore they do not go beyond the stage of vernacular literacy.

The overwhelming parental choice of private school over government school is due to the availability of 'whole package,' i.e., the feel-good factor of the school, discipline and morality, good habit formation, school uniforms, emphasis on English language learning, commitment of teachers, appropriate examination system, homework assignments, performance, accountability of management over school affairs, etc.⁵⁰ There is a widespread feeling among Muslim parents that private schools provide better educational environment with English as the medium or language of instruction. They have a feeling that their children enrolled in private schools get tangible improvements in their academic performance. Parents unanimously agree that sending children to private schools enables them to become functionally literate.⁵¹ Choosing a private school has become almost universal and unconscious choice of the parents.⁵²

In conclusion, the reluctance of the Muslims to take up the new education system is not because of religious reasons. The number of Muslim students studying in government and private schools is more than that of Madrassas. The modern system of education was introduced in Manipur only in the later part of the nineteenth century. For several decades, the people of Manipur in general and Manipuri Muslims in particular were not aware of the values and importance of modern education. Though Muslims are now aware of the importance of education as a tool of change and progress, poverty is the main problem faced by them in educating their children at the elementary level or in pursuing higher education. Muslim students are enrolled more in the private schools than government schools due to the deteriorating quality of education in government schools.

High dropout rates in the elementary and secondary stages of education led to fewer Muslim children entering higher education.

Endnotes:

¹Social Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India – A Report (Sachar Committee Report) Government of India, 2006, p.86

²Ibid

³Equality of educational opportunities remains a socially and politically complex concept and it varies according to different interpretations. At the most fundamental level, there are four elements of equality of educational opportunities – (a) equality of educational access (b) equality of educational participation (c) equality of educational results (d) equality of educational effects on life chances.

⁴Report of Education Commission 1964-66, p.108

⁵National Policy on Education, 1986, pp.4-7

⁶See Randal Collins, “Some Comparative Principles of Educational Stratification,” Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 47 (1), 1977, pp.1-17; Claudia Buchmann and Emily Hannum, “Education and Stratification in Developing Countries: A Review of Theories and Research,” Annual Review of Sociology, Vol.27, 2001, pp.77-102

⁷Mohd. Sanjeer Alam, Religion, Community and Education –The Case of Rural Bihar (New Delhi: Oxford university Press, 2012) p. 22

⁸ Such argument is given by Krishna Kumar in “Education and Society in Post-Independence India; Looking Towards the Future,” Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 33 (23), 1998, pp.1391-96

⁹Sanjeer Alam, op.cit., p77

¹⁰Cited in Mohd. Sanjeer Alam, Religion, Community and Education –The Case of Rural Bihar, op.cit., p.xi

¹¹Ibid

¹²Sachar Committee Report, 2006 , p.58

¹³Ibid, p.51

¹⁴Ibid, p.52

¹⁵Ibid, p.84

¹⁶For details. Mohd. Sanjeer Alam, Religion, Community and education –The Case of Rural Bihar, op.cit., pp.7-9

¹⁷W.W.Hunter, Indian Musalmans (London: Trubner and Co, 1872) p.174

¹⁸ K.D Sharma, Education of a National Minority: A Case of Indian Muslims (New Delhi: Kalamkar Prakashan, 1978)

¹⁹See Sanjeer Alam, op.cit., p.93

²⁰Moin Shakir, Muslims in Free India (Delhi: Kalamkar, 1972) p.12

²¹Mohammad Sanjeer Alam, “Education and Exclusion of Muslims” in Zoya Hasan and Mushirul Hasan (ed.) India Social Development Report 2012-Minorities at the Margins (New Delhi: Oxford University press, 2013) p.207

²² Ibid, p.196

²³Ibid, p.201

²⁴Ibid., p.202

²⁵Sanjeer Alam, op.cit., p.97

²⁶ R.Nagraj and Andaleeb Rahman, “Booming Bihar: Fact or Fiction?” Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.45 (8), 2010, pp.10-11

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- ²⁷Sanjeer Alam, op.cit, p.100
- ²⁸Ibid, p.97
- ²⁹K.M. Ashraf, "Political History of Indian Muslims" in Zafar Imam (ed), Muslims in India (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1975) p.50
- ³⁰ Irene Salam, The Muslims of Manipur (Delhi: Kalpaz Publication, 2010) p.58
- ³¹Ibid
- ³² Shakil Ahmed, Essays in Sociology: Muslims in Manipur (New Delhi: Genuine publications, 2011) p.115
- ³³Ibid, p.120
- ³⁴Maulvi Mubarak Ali, "Manipurda Maulvi" in Benjamin M.Shah (ed) Pambei (Imphal, Muslim Writers Forum, 2003) p.30
- ³⁵ Hakim Shah A. Khullakpham, The Manipur Governence to the Meitei-Pangal – 1606-1949 (Imphal, Pearl Education Society, 2008) p.169
- ³⁶Gangmunei Kabui, "Socio-Religious Reform Movement and Christian Proselytism" in Dena Lal (ed) History of Modern Manipur (1826-1949) (New Delhi: Orbit Publishers, 1991) p.100
- ³⁷ See Shakil Ahmed, Essays in Sociology: Muslims in Manipur op.cit., p.122-23
- ³⁸ Cited in Irene Salam, The Muslims of Manipur, op.cit., p.57
- ³⁹Ibid, p.61
- ⁴⁰ As per the Report on Socio-Economic Survey of Meitei-Pangals (Manipuri Muslims) 2004, the district-wise literacy rate of Muslims in Manipur is as follows: Thoubal (44 %); Imphal East (40 %); Imphal West (9 %); Bishnupur (6%); Chandel (1%); Churachandpur (0%)
- ⁴¹ NGO Pratham has been conducting ASER, which is regarded as the largest annual survey of children in rural India every year since 2005, with an aim to assess and evaluate the outcome of education of the children. ASER 2011 released on 16th January, 2012 has given detail report of the elementary education of the rural areas of 29 states and union territories of the country including Manipur. The survey covered 558 districts, 16,017 villages, 327,372 households and 633,465 children. ASER team also visited 14,000 government schools to assess progress towards compliance with those norms and standards set in the Right to Education Act that are easy to measure. For details see: www.asercentre.org
- ⁴²Report on Scio-Economic Survey of Meitei-Pangals (Manipuri Muslims) 2004, p.42
- ⁴³Sanjeer Alam, op.cit., p.150
- ⁴⁴Sanjeer Alam, Religion, Community and Education, op.cit., p.152
- ⁴⁵ See G.K.Lieten, "Children, Work and Education," Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 35 (2), 2000, p.2171-8
- ⁴⁶Sanjeer Alam, op.cit., p.153
- ⁴⁷Sanjeer Alam, Religion, Community and Education, op.cit., p.139
- ⁴⁸Sachar Committee Report, p.74
- ⁴⁹ See Manipur State Development Report (Draft) 2014, p.148
- ⁵⁰ Jeebanlata Salam, State, Civil Society and Right to Education (Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 2013) p.228
- ⁵¹ Ibid, p 101
- ⁵² Ibid., p. 96