

RIGHT TO EDUCATION FOR MUSLIM CHILDREN - A CALL AND RESPONSE

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A Civilization can be judged by the way it treats its Minorities.

Mahathma Gandhi.

ABSTRACT

Education plays a accelerate role in overall empowerment of the society. It has massive impact on the velocity of protection of human rights. It can stimulate and intensify energetic attempt of the individual to accomplish human right object. The stricter sense of social justice requires that the education being the grease for the materialization of enjoyment of other human rights of marginalized sections such as ST/SC, disables, minorities etc should be strengthen. Paradoxically, the educational status of Muslim in the country is under very pathetic condition. This article examines the educational status of Muslim community in India. The concerns of the paper include the education as human right, education as wheel for development, the current educational status of Muslim children, Challenges attached to education, policies and schemes created and adopted by the governments in the in the backdrop of weak educational profile of the Muslim community.

Key Words: Education, Human Rights, Muslim, Challenges, Policies

INTRODUCTION

The global community has strongly emphasized the faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human being, in the equal rights of men and women. It is also recognized the need to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.¹ In this backdrop, International cooperation is stressed in strong terms in solving international problems such as economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and

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¹ Charter of United Nations (adopted on 24 October 1945) 1 UNTS 16 preamble.

encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.²

It is further recognized that the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people.³

Whereas, the human rights approach for social inclusiveness of oppressed and tyrannized guarded and shielded under several international documents. The concept of human rights has become a global citizenship frame creating the means for marginalized people to claim those things that will allow them to live with dignity and with a full range of human possibilities. It is not the goal to homogenize human experience but rather, through the extension of relationships of dignity across constructed binaries and boundaries, the commonality of our humanness becomes the response to the case of the oppressed.⁴

While international human right concern has effectively been stalled under United Nation Charter and various Human Rights documents, large parts of the global minority population continue to be a victim of human rights violations, spurred by unusual and unconventional attitude of the society. Despite international as well as Constitutional guarantee of rights and freedoms, considerable amount of global minority community is restricted and sidelined for the benefits and enjoyment of human rights. Therefore, the situation of human rights in the various underdeveloped and developing countries remained

² Universal Declaration of Human Rights (adopted on 10 December 1948) UNGA Res 217 A (III) (UDHR) preamble.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Hilaria Supa Hauman and Shulamith Koenig, 'A Call and Repsonse- Huaman Rights as tool of Dignity and Transformation' in Shultz, Ali A. Abdi & Lynette (eds), *Educating for Human Rights & Global Citizenship*. (State University New York Press, Albany 2008) 11.

tense following the massive attack on marginalized section of the society. The importance attached to minorities and state responsibility can be traced with the words of the great democrat, Abraham Lincoln 'the rule of a minority as a permanent arrangement is wholly inadmissible; so that rejecting the majority principle, anarchy and despotism in some form is all that is left.'⁵

In India, among several downtrodden section of the society, Muslim community and their human rights concern have received unprecedented attention in recent days. Though, constant promotion and realization of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and international cooperation in this regard is well settled,⁶ the Muslim community being largest minority community in the country, constituting 13.4 per cent of the population, are seriously lagging behind in terms of most of the human development indicators. While the perception of deprivation is widespread among Muslims, there has been no systematic effort since Independence to analyze the condition of religious minorities in the country.⁷

Under the backdrop of these issues and concerns attached to the Muslim community, situation of the community is to be improved by ensuring the proper enjoyment of human Rights and freedoms. Therefore, this is a need of hour for the country as the country's constitutional principle and political philosophy closely intervened with the pluralistic society.

Among all the Human Rights issues concerned with Muslim community, Right to Education has grabbed splendid attention of social scientists and policy makers in the country. Education could be described as an institutionalized process aimed at realizing defined learning objectives for defined target groups. The learning objectives comprise disciplinary

⁵ Speech by Shri Fali S. Nariman on Occasion of National Commission for Minorities 7th Annual Lecture (12 September 2014).

⁶ Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, UNGA Res 47/135 (18 December 1992) Preamble.

⁷ Sachar Committee Report on Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community in India, (Government of India, New Delhi November 2002) 18.

social, cultural, and economic items. The target groups can be divided according to age and the level of prior education or development. The educational System tries to provide contexts that support the learning of individuals. Starting from theoretical concepts of learning it has tried to create a set of conditions favoring the individual learning processes.⁸

The Education, both formal and non-formal, public awareness and training are key processes by which human beings and societies can reach their fullest potential. The Plan of Implementation, agreed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in 2002, recognizes two key aspects of education in relation to sustainable development. Firstly, education is the foundation for sustainable development, and much of the work on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) must be closely linked to the pursuit of Education for All (EFA). Secondly, education is a key instrument for bringing about changes in values and attitudes, skills, behaviors and lifestyles consistent with sustainable development within and among countries. Thus, it is a tool for addressing such questions as gender quality, environmental protection, rural development, human rights, health care, HIV/AIDS and consumption patterns as these intersect with the sustainable development agenda.⁹

The above explanation reveals that the role of education in creation and development of the potential human resources of the country is crucial. It is a fuel for prosperity and growth of the nation. The accelerant character of education could certainly intensify the charismatic face of the country at global level. Furthermore, human Rights being set of basic entitlements of the every human being could meaningfully be shaped at the hands of the education. The educational status of the marginalized sections of the society can velocious the capacity of the poor and socially excluded community to attain potential life. This closely related and

⁸ Mieras, Rietje van Dam Mieras, 'Learning for Sustainable Development: Is it Possible Within the Established Higher Education Struture' in B.E.Samuelson, J. Holmberg (eds), *UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development in Action Technical Paper NO.3* (UNESCO, Paris 2006) 14.

⁹ Lorraine Otieno, 'Cultural Considerations in Early Childhood Education for Sustainable Development' in Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson and Yoshie Kaga (eds), *The contribution of early childhood education to a sustainable society* (UNESCO, Paris 2008) 92-93.

contingent relationship between education and human right has necessitated the Government to take immediate and targeted steps to ensure right to education for downtrodden.

STATUS OF EDUCATION OF MUSLIM CHILDREN

India is a country of rich diversity and cultural resources. Minority groups and indigenous peoples are an important part of country's population¹⁰ and cultural richness. But these communities have been systematically marginalized and suffered from grievous human rights violations. The existing situation reveals the ugly face of the human rights violations experienced by these communities. Various studies found that these communities have no way to claim their individual human rights under the current operating laws and policy framework.

The educational level of the Muslim community is considerably improved in recent days as it is preliminary step for problem solving process. According to an analysis of data collected from District Information System for Education,¹¹ the number of Muslim children enrolled in schools in elementary education increased from 1.58 crore in 2005-06 to 2.55 crore in 2011-12. Enrolment of Muslim children as a percentage of total enrolment has also increased from 8.84 % to 12.97%.¹² Nonetheless, the disgusting fact is that the bulk of the Muslim children are far and wide from the educational provisions of the country. Though,

¹⁰ Among the minority communities in India, the Muslims constitute majority in Lakshadweep and Jammu & Kashmir. There are six states where Muslim population is above the national average of 13.4%. These are: Assam (30.9%), West Bengal (25.2%), Kerala (24.6%), Uttar Pradesh (18.55%), Bihar (16.5%) and Jharkhand (13.8%). In absolute numbers, the largest four states in terms of Muslim population are Uttar Pradesh (3.07 crore), West Bengal (2.02 crore), Bihar (1.37 crore), and Maharashtra (1.07 crore). Report of the Standing Committee of National Monitoring Committee for Minorities Education (NMCME), (Ministry for Human Resource Development, New Delhi April 2013) 1.

¹¹ Cited in; *ibid* 9.

¹² For details Enrolment of Muslim Children in Elementary Education, Enrolment of Muslim Children in Primary and Upper Primary Stage, Distribution of Enrolment by Grades, Enrolment of Muslim Children in Major States, Quality of Muslim children, Enrollment of Muslim children in Madras's ect., *Ibid* Para 2.7 to Para 2.24 of the NMCME Report.

some reports and research findings reveals the advancement of the educational status of the Muslim community in the country, the ground reality is ridiculous and ludicrous.

Way back in 1986, the National Policy on Education traced out that "Some minority groups are educationally deprived or backward. Greater attention will be paid to the education of these groups in the interest 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 text-books 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 core curriculum."¹³

According to the official reports the literacy and educational levels among religious minorities vary considerably from one community to the other and from one area to the other. While educational level of Jains, Christians and Parsis is higher, that of Muslims and Buddhists is low and is next to SC/ST. Census statistics on the status of religious minorities reveals that the educational status of Muslims is relatively low. However, disaggregated data presents a picture of unevenness in the educational status of Muslims and Buddhists cutting across the States.¹⁴

The States of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and UP, which account for almost 65 percent of the total population of Muslims in the country, present a dismal picture in terms of social indicators of development for the general population also. In terms of educational, social and economic status, in the under-developed or backward States, the poor and socially and economically backward of each community, including the Muslims, are equal victims and suffer equally from disabilities or deprivation.¹⁵

¹³ National Policy on Education, 1986 Para 4.8.

¹⁴ Report of the Standing Committee of NMCME (n 10) 9.

¹⁵ *ibid.*

The 2011 Census shows that overall level of literacy of the country has increased from 61% in 2001 to 74% in 2011. Bihar (16.8%) and U.P. (13.5%) have shown substantial increase in the literacy percentage. It is hoped that this good performance in improving the literacy has had a beneficial effect on the educationally backward Muslim minorities also. It is, however, disappointing that States having large population of Muslims, i.e. U.P., Bihar, West Bengal and Assam still continue to be behind other States like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra, etc. in terms of literacy.¹⁶

The NSSO 2010 data shows that the rural urban divide is significant as 91.7 per cent of households in rural areas have access to upper primary schools within a distance of 3 kms. In urban areas, 99 per cent households have access to upper primary school within 3 km. The same is true in case of Muslim households as well. The data further reveals that only 57.8 per cent of Muslim households in rural areas have access to upper primary schools within a distance of 1 km. compared to 84.5 per cent in urban areas.¹⁷

The gravity of the problem of educational status of minority population in India can be traced with the recent words of Hon'ble Human Resource Minister for Government of India "The constant endeavor of my Ministry is to increase access to education by opening new institutions, providing equality of opportunity to all, particularly to the deprived sections and to improve the levels of learning and the quality of research at the tertiary stage. I also believe that our academic institutions need to strike a judicious balance between tradition and modernity and between the need for competition and the concern for equality of opportunity, equity and inclusion of the marginalized sections."¹⁸

CHALLENGES IN MUSLIM EDUCATION IN INDIA

¹⁶ ibid 4.

¹⁷ ibid 8.

¹⁸ Key Note Address of Hon'ble Human Resource Minister at the Conference on "Higher Education and Economic Growth" organized by Indian Institute of Management, Indore and Higher Colleges of Technology, at Dubai Men's College, (25th September, 2013).

The biggest challenge in ensuring the right to education for Muslim community in India is the unconventional attitudes and values of the Muslim community towards the education of their children. The childhood care and concern has instrumental role in moulding the education of the children. As pointed out by UNESCO early childhood care and education improves the quality of school experience for children in primary and basic education.¹⁹ According to the official report 'High dropout rates among Muslim students are worrisome. As with many Indians, the main reason for educational backwardness of Muslims is abject poverty due to which children are forced to drop out after the first few classes. This is particularly true for Muslim girls.'²⁰

The parental attitude among the majority of the Muslim is that they prefer earning from the children than supporting and encouraging education for their children. The reason for this kind of parental attitude on the children is that the majority of Muslim community itself illiterate in gauging the consequences of their parental attitude. As Naudeau et al., research reveals Children's readiness for learning and success at primary level depends not only on their cognitive and language development but also on their physical, mental and emotional health as well as their ability to relate to others.²¹ The Standing Committee has emphasized the crucial parental role in the education of the Muslim children in following terms 'The parents of the children also have enormous responsibility on their shoulders to ensure regular attendance of children and their active participation in educational activities in the schools. It is, therefore, necessary that parents and community leaders are sensitized about the need of taking full advantage of the emerging opportunities for improving their socio-economic conditions through better participation in educational endeavor.'²²

¹⁹ UNESCO 'Regional Report on Progress towards Education for All in Asian and the Pacific' (UNESCO: Bangkok, 2011) 4.

²⁰ Sachar Committee Report (n 7) 15.

²¹ Naudeau, S., Kataoka, N., Valerio, A., Neuman, M. J. and Elder, L. K., *Investing in Young Children: An Early Childhood Development Guide for Policy Dialogue and Project Preparation*. (World Bank, Washington D C, Bangkok 2010) 6.

²² Report of the Standing Committee of NMCME (n 10) 18.

The acceptability of education requires that the form and substance of the education in terms of curricula and teaching method should be potential so as to attract the students and prevent the drop out of the students. The curricular changes are pivotal as it can substantially equip students with the skills and knowledge to cope with changing society and appropriate culture. The stretching role of curriculum is stated as follows effective curriculum addresses the child's cognitive, emotional, social and creative development. It is based on the four pillars of education for the twenty-first century – learning to know, to do, to be and to live together.²³

The quality of teacher and their ability to shape the students can also considerably affect the strength of the admission to the educational institution. It is evident that there is a nexus between the quality of the teacher and inclusive education. As it is stated teacher education programmes should be reoriented and aligned to inclusive education approaches in order to give teachers the pedagogical capacities necessary to make diversity work in the classroom and in line with reformed curricula.²⁴ Among key reasons for non-attendance by marginalised groups are: low quality of education, perceived irrelevance of curricula, or poor quality of teaching.²⁵ As Sachar Committee reports 'Government schools that do exist in Muslim neighbourhoods are merely centres of low quality education for the poor and marginalized. The poor quality of teaching, learning, absentee teachers, in turn, necessitate high cost inputs like private tuitions, particularly in the case of first generation learners from the Muslim community.'²⁶

The availability of the education stipulates that the educational institutions and programs have to be provided in sufficient quantity. The number of educational institutions should be in sufficient number to allow all the students to enjoy the educational benefits with basic requirements such as sanitation, drinking water and basic needs of learning materials. The

²³ Delors, J. et al., *Learning: the Treasure within- Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century* (UNESCO, Paris 1996). Cited in; UNESCO, *Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education*, (UNESCO, Paris 2009) 18.

²⁴ *ibid* 16.

²⁵ UNESCO-2011 (n 19) 8.

²⁶ Sachar Committee Report (n 7) 16.

NSSO pointed out that there are large numbers of Muslim dominated Mohallas in urban areas which do not have a school, particularly a girls' school, as a result of which the drop-out of girls is much higher. Though the access to upper primary school seems to be better from aggregated data, there appear to be several pockets in which schools are not available within 3 kms.²⁷

The accessibility implies that the educational institutions and programmes should be accessible in terms of economic and physical accessibility. The privatization of the education and exclusion of the children of downtrodden of the society from the benefits of the education is well established. Though the government has come out with RTE where in the private institution are under obligation to provide seats, the marginalization, the discriminatory practices and reluctant attitude of these institutions has become significant issue in recent days. The private educational provisions can encourage parental choice, competition and efficiency but the risks the exclusion of marginalized children and the proliferation of poorly regulated preschools.²⁸ Despite its some positive facets, this privatization has become serious hindrance for education of the Muslim community. A study of data derived from DISE shows that a predominant proportion of Muslim children attend government schools at primary and upper primary stages. About 68% of Muslim children at primary stage and 55.3% at upper primary stage attended state/central government and local body schools in 2011-12. Private, aided schools account for very small proportion of Muslim enrolment at primary and upper primary stages.²⁹

The discriminatory practices in the educational institution are another impediment for the education of Children of Muslim. Most countries have abolished all formal discrimination, but informal discrimination is still widespread. Children are facing institutionalized disadvantage due to social, economical and financial reasons that restrict their educational opportunities. The social and cultural barriers exclude children, girls in particular, from education and traditional practice either directly or indirectly adds to the disadvantage.³⁰ The meager interest of the

²⁷ Standing Committee Report of NMCME (n 10) 8.

²⁸ UNESCO-2011 (n 19)7.

²⁹ Standing Committee Report of NMCME (n 10) 15.

³⁰ UNESCO-2011 (n 19)9.

government towards Urdu language is another problem of the Muslim education in the country. Sachar committee reports that overnight the knowledge of Urdu has become more a liability than an asset. Lack of Urdu medium schools, the poor quality of teaching in them, vacancies for teachers unfilled for several years and the recruitment of Hindi teachers in place of Urdu teachers are some of the problems afflicting the teaching of Urdu.³¹

The adaptability is the key aspect of the education system. The educational system should be equipollent to the process of globalization and rapid modernization. The hindrance of the Indian educational system is its inability to the exigencies of changing communities and societies. The study shows that the considerable numbers of youths are leaving schools without acquiring the basic skills necessary for work and life. The limited opportunities for those living in remote areas to gain access to skills development education and the poor quality of many programmes pose more constraints to government efforts.³² It is evident from the above that the desperate mindset over the outcome of the worthless education would certainly negatively affect the hope of the parents over their children education.

POLICIES OF THE GOVERNMENT

The intolerance of ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities is a disgust culture of every civilized society. The sub-continent is very conscience about the basic needs of the minorities as it is a big democratic with pluralistic society. In this context, the Hon'ble chairman of the National Commission for Minorities has very recently opined that India is a multi- religious society where, save occasional aberrations, mutual respect and inter-faith understanding guide various aspects of human relations. The Government of the day has an abiding faith in enforcement and protection of minority rights. These guarantees are essential in a democratic and pluralistic polity, because no democracy can long survive which does not accept as fundamental to its very existence the recognition of the rights of minorities.³³

³¹ Sachar Committee Report (n 7) 18.

³² UNESCO-2011 (n 19) 14.

³³ Welcome address by Shri Naseem Ahmad, Chairman, NCM on Occasion of National Commission for Minorities 7th Annual Lecture (12 September 2014).

The State obligation is to ensure proper enjoyment of the human right in its letter and spirit and clear away the situation of uncomfortable self-consciousness. As the State is in a better position to take care of the proper implementation of the human rights, its role in this regard is strongly emphasized by the various international human rights documents and verdict of the apex courts. “An education established and controlled by the State should only exist, if it exists at all, as one among many competing experiments carried on for the purpose and stimulus to keep the others up to a certain standard excellence.”³⁴

Anyone familiar with the educational status of Muslim community in India, can certainly wonder that how irrationally educational policies are executed in the country. Under the context of these pathetic situations of the community and constitutional obligation, the Government of India has come out with certain policies and schemes for the betterment of the educational level of Muslim community in India. This part is devoted to explore such policies and schemes.

RTE (Amendment) Act 2012³⁵

The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002 inserted Article 21-A in the Constitution of India to provide free and compulsory education to all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years as a Fundamental Right in such a manner as the State may, by law, determine. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which represents the consequential legislation envisaged under Article 21-A, means that every child has a right to full-time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school which satisfies certain essential norms and standards. The RTE Act was amended in 2012 wherein the following sub-sections 4 & 5 were inserted: “(4) Subject to the provisions of Articles 29 and 30 of the Constitution, the provisions of this Act shall apply to conferment of rights on children to free and compulsory education. (5) Nothing contained in this Act shall apply to Madrasas Vedic Pathsalas and educational institutions primarily imparting religious instruction.”

³⁴ J.S Mill on Liberty, cited in; Klaus Dieter Beiter, *The Protection of the Right Education By International Law*, (Koninklijke Brill, Leiden Netherland 2008)9.

³⁵ No 30 of 2012.

National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions Act, 2004³⁶

The National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions Act, 2004 was enacted to constitute a Commission charged with the responsibilities of advising the Central Government or any State Government on any matter relating to education of minorities that may be referred to it, looking into specific complaints regarding deprivation or violation of rights of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice, deciding on any dispute relating to affiliation to a scheduled University and reporting its findings to the Central Government for implementation.

Various Schemes³⁷

There are certain comprehensive schemes such as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya, Saakshar Bharat, Jan Shikshan Sansthan Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyana, have been introduced by the Government of India to provide educational opportunity for children primarily with focus on disadvantaged groups, especially SCs/STs and Minorities. The schemes are the objectification of the Right to Education in extensive and inclusive manner. Besides, there are certain schemes specifically designed with an intention to strengthen the education of the Muslim community in the country.

Area Intensive and Madrasa Modernization Programme(AIMMP): The Area Intensive and Madrasa Modernization Programme was recast in 2008 as two schemes, namely, the Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madrasa (SPQEM) and Infrastructure Development of Private Aided/Unaided Minority Institutions (IDMI) for Elementary Secondary/Senior Secondary Schools. SPQEM seeks to bring about qualitative improvement in Madrasas to enable Muslim children attain standards of the national education system in formal education subjects. SPQEM is to strengthen capacities in Madrasas for teaching of the

³⁶ No 2 of 2005.

³⁷ . The author in this part has confined his writing only to provide some glimpses of the schemes of the government of India. The details of all the schemes explained in this part of the paper are available in the official website of Ministry of Minority Affairs. The Ministry is the Nodal Agency of Government of India to ensure a more focused approach towards issues relating to the minorities and to facilitate the formulation of overall policy and planning, coordination, evaluation and review of the regulatory framework and development programmes for the benefit of the minority communities. See <http://www.minorityaffairs.gov.in/abouttheministry>.

formal curriculum subjects like Science, Mathematics, Language, Social Studies etc through enhanced payment of teacher honorarium.

Multi Sectoral Development Programme (MsDP): This is an area development scheme which aims to improve the quality of life of the people and reduce imbalances in the Minority Concentration Districts (MCDs). Identified development deficits are addressed through a district specific plan with provision of infrastructure creation for schools, sanitation, pucca housing, drinking water and electricity supply, besides beneficiary oriented schemes. The focus of this programme is on rural and semi-rural areas of the identified 90 Minority Concentration Districts. The scheme has been restructured for implementation during 12th Five Year Plan. Block has been made the unit of planning in place of district, the programme has been expanded to minority concentration towns/cities and cluster of minority concentration villages.

The restructured programme covers 710 Minority Concentration Blocks (MCBs) & 66 Minority Concentration Towns (MCTs) covering 196 districts of 26 States in the country. This would sharpen the focus on minority concentration areas. Since inception, projects of Rs. 6310.61 Crore have been approved under MsDP and Rs. 4534.25 Crore has been released for its implementation. 1092 Schools building, 20,756 additional Class rooms, 645 hostels, 3645 Health Centers, 34,533 Anganwadi Centers, 117 ITIs, 44 Polytechnic Institutes, 40,799 Drinking Water supply, 3,35743 houses on Indra Awas Yojana pattern have been approved under MsDP till 31st March,2014.

Pre-matric Scholarship Scheme:- Under this Scheme, scholarships are awarded to minority students up to class X, who have secured not less than 50% marks in the previous final examination and the annual income of their parents/ guardian from all sources does not exceed Rs. 1.00 lakh. 30% of the scholarships are earmarked for girl students. During the year 2013-14 total achievement is 7794190 and the amount released of Rs. 963.79 Crore.

Maulana Azad National Fellowship For Minority Students: - The objective of the Fellowship is to provide integrated five year fellowships in the form of financial assistance to

minority students to pursue higher studies such as M.Phil and Ph.D. The Fellowship covers all Universities/Institutions recognized by the University Grants Commission (UGC). 30% of the Scholarships are earmarked for the girl students. During the year 2013-14 total Fellowship sanctioned 3776 under the scheme and the amount release of Rs. 50 Crore.

Merit-cum Means based Scholarship: The Merit-cum means based Scholarship Scheme provides financial assistance to the poor and meritorious minority students pursuing professional studies at graduate and post-graduate levels. 30% of the scholarships are earmarked for girl students.

Grant-in-aid to Maulana Azad Education Foundation (MAEF): Grants-in-aid are released to MAEF towards its Corpus Fund. MAEF provides Grant-in-aid to the minority institutions for infrastructure development and distribution of scholarships to the minority girl students studying in classes XI and XII. The expenditure on these schemes is met out of the interest earned on the Corpus Fund. Till date, amount of Rs.910 crore has been released towards the corpus fund of MAEF.

Maulana Azad Sehat Scheme: The Scheme aims to provide annual health check-up of students studying in institutions aided by Maulana Azad Education Foundation and also provides financial assistance upto Rs.2 lakhs for minority students for serious illnesses studying in institutions aided by Maulana Azad Education Foundation.

The contentedness of the aforementioned schemes and program is to impart inclusive education for the Muslim community in exclusive manner. The intensification of the schemes intent to address the various challenges attached to the Muslim community in different lens. These schemes targeted to address the issues such as low level enrollment, massive dropout, gender disparity, advancement socio-economic condition of the students etc. The schemes

have received considerable attention of the Government in terms of budget execution and monitoring of the schemes.³⁸

CONCLUSIONS, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The process of the Education through acquisition of knowledge improves ability and capacity and instills confidence and competitive spirit every human being. The Right to Education by nurturing and strengthening other basic rights of the citizens can equip the individuals for their overall social and economic development. The distinguished facet of the study is that the advancement of educational status of the Muslim community is positive since last few years. The statistical remarks of the educational position of the Muslim community is quiet optimistic in their enrollment and drop-out. The study reveals that the schemes and programs created and adopted by the government are exceptionally good. The paper explores that there is an indivisible relationship between social-economic condition of the Muslim community and status of education of the Muslim children.

As there is a close link between socio-economic condition of the Muslim community and education of the Muslim children, the socio-economic factors such poverty, financial barriers of the community is to be improved. The prevalence of child labor in various sectors or informal economy is to be identified and the educational benefits are to appropriately be intensified to these children. The structural aspect of the educational system such as lack of school instruction materials, lack of appropriate teachers, quality teachers, teacher empowerment and students safety environment of the schools are to be enhanced. Infrastructural issues such as remoteness of the schools, lack of water and sanitation in the schools, lack of urbanization of the areas are need of hour so as to provide inclusive education for Muslim community.

³⁸ . The budget earmarked for the schemes and expenditure incurred for the schemes are available in the annual report of the Ministry of Minority Affairs. Ministry of Minority Affairs. See <http://www.minorityaffairs.gov.in/abouttheministry>

The good governance has a crucial role to play in the meaningful enforcement of the schemes and programs of the government. As already mentioned, the inclusive educational schemes and programs have abundantly been adopted by the both Center and State government. Nonetheless, the maladministration of educational department, mismanagement of funds of the schemes and poor execution of programs have prominently distorted the process of materialization of the vision and mission of the government in the free and compulsory educational in the country. The sectoral reform with improved governance through the strict and stringent application and enforcement of the anti-corruption laws in the country is very much needed

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16. Speech by Shri Fali S. Nariman on Occasion of National Commission for Minorities 7th Annual Lecture (12 September 2014).
17. UNESCO 'Regional Report on Progress towards Education for All in Asian and the Pacific' (UNESCO: Bangkok, 2011) .
18. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (adopted on 10 December 1948) UNGA Res 217 A (III) (UDHR).
19. Welcome address by Shri Naseem Ahmad, Chairman, NCM on Occasion of National Commission for Minorities 7th Annual Lecture (12 September 2014).