



ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF MINORITIES IN INDIA

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Abstract

This paper aims to look at the Secondary Education with specific reference to Muslim Minorities in comparison with other Identities of India. Indian Muslims are among the poorest communities in the country. It was found that most of the Muslims are with non-remunerative work profile born out of low educational / skill status other than the general 'Discriminative' practices that were recorded by SACHAR Committee followed by KUNDU Committee. The NSSO reports that 22.3% of Muslims between the ages 17-29 years are illiterate. Among literate Muslims in this age group, 64% have secondary or below secondary education, 9.8% have higher secondary and only 4.1% have graduate or postgraduate degrees. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and the RTE Act has focused on measuring and delivering inputs, and in this, it has largely succeeded. It is clear, we have recorded good enrolment but we neglected to measure the learning outcomes. Moreover, a large proportion of students in both government and private schools continue to be below 'grade level' in-terms of reading, basic arithmetic skills.

There are three major goals to achieve. 1. Orient the system towards outcomes. 2. Provide tools to teachers and students for effective learning. 3. Improve existing governance mechanisms and pilot new ones Orient the system towards outcomes. States should be encouraged to deploy resources, in particular to provide tools to teachers and students for effective learning. Introduce evidence based Information and Communication Technology tools and focus on foundational learning.

Key Words: *Economic Status, Secondary Education, Minorities.*

Introduction

This paper aims to look at Secondary education with specific reference to Muslim Minorities in comparison with other Identities of India. India is expected to become the second largest economy by 2050 with the world's largest working-age population of 962 million by 2030, these the children that are in the Primary and Secondary Schools that will become the work force of Indian by 2030. We will be the world's youngest country by 2020 with an average age of 29 years. This "demographic dividend" comes at a time when the rest of the world is ageing where, by 2020, the average age in the United States of America (USA) is expected to be 40 years, for Europe 46 years and for Japan 47 years. Thus, India will not only have a young workforce to fulfill its domestic needs, it also has the opportunity to become the global

hub for skilled workforce. The challenge is to skill the workforce with Market Compatible Curriculum and demands the Education sector to evolve it. Policies needs be evolved comprehensively, inclusively to be a knowledge society with a vision or else the much talked “Demographic Dividend” will end up as a “Youth Bulge Challenge”. We, as a country still have time to make our workforce compatible with in the next 10 years if we could evoke a demand driven policy.

The youth of India are ill-equipped to meet the demand on a large scale as of now. The following sections touch on the action items needed in the areas of School Education, Muslim minorities as their share in depravity is relatively high in terms of Education and Economic status.

Demography and Education of Muslims in Comparison

The Census 2011 recorded 121,08,54,97 million as total Indian population out which Hindus are 79.80%, Muslims are 14.23%, SCs are 16.63% and STs are 8.63%. At 42.7%, Muslims have the highest percentage of illiterates. The percentage of illiterates is 36.4 for Hindus, 32.5 for Sikhs, 28.2 for Buddhists and 25.6 for Christians. The overall percentage of illiterates is 36.9 for all communities. For religious communities as a whole, only 5.63% have attained education levels of graduation and above with 61.6% Men and 38.4% Women.

The concept of ‘literacy’ is tricky in a multi linguistic country. Its usage to understand and connect with Constitutional provisions of affirmative action needs to be revised with “Mean age of Schooling” or ‘Specific years of exposure to the Regional official language of the state of residence for the assessment of Educational Backwardness under Article 15 and 16. The Census Schedule needs to adopt this concept in the place of ‘Literacy’ for pragmatic reasons.

The following data set demands equipping present age group of 0-20 with market compatible skills not only to contribute Indian economy but also to avoid ‘Youth Bulge Challenge’. Thus policy maker needs to allocate more budgets in the area of Education, Skills, Research on labor force requirements and the associated issues.

Table -1

Projected percentage of population in the relevant age group

Age group	15-29	30-49	50+
2011-20	38	54	17
2021-30	21	59	20
2031-40	8	42	26
2041-50	-4	17	26

Source: UN, ILO, WDI, GS Global ECS Research projections

Education as per Age groups

In 7-16 years age group for all communities as a whole, 11.7% are illiterate, 1.46% is literate without education, 36.67% are educated below primary and 28.62% have studied primary level; 15.56% till middle school, and 5.69 till matriculation.

In the 17-18 age group for all communities, 11.73% are illiterate, 2.62% are literate without education, 4.62% are educated till below primary, 14.35% till primary, 18.59% till middle school, 31.97% till matriculation and 14.99% till higher secondary level.

In the 19-24 age group for all communities, 16.25% are illiterate, 4.20% are literate without education, 5.73% are educated till below primary, 14.93% primary, 19.66% till middle, 11.58% till matriculation, 16.84% till higher secondary, 0.20% have a non-technical diploma, 1.56% have a technical diploma, and 10.91% are graduates and above.

Age Group Specific Literacy in Census 2011 with Social Identity

With 258 million children in the age group of 7-16 years 30.2 million children are illiterate and 0.38 million are literate without formal education. The no of illiterates among Muslims recorded higher than any other social group with 7.42 million followed by SCs with 5.79, 4.35 in STs and 0.55 in Christians. This indicates that either they are not in reach of Governance or the Governance is not reaching them other than community initiatives in general. Thus, this group needs equal treatment by governance.

The share of Hindus in 7-16 age group out of the total population of that age group is 78.30 [79.80], Muslims is 16.30 [14.23], SCs 17.65 [16.63], STs 9.63 [8.63] and Christians 2.08 [2.30]. This indicates a slight higher age group population of Muslims followed by SCs and STs.

Table - 2
In Terms of Percentages

Social Identity	Age Group	Illiterate	Literate	Literate without	Below Primary	Primary	Middle	Matric / Secondary
ALL	7-16	11.70	88.30	1.46	36.67	28.62	15.56	5.69
Hindu	7-16	10.58	89.42	1.37	36.43	29.10	16.19	6.05
Muslim	7-16	17.63	82.37	1.90	37.94	26.13	12.21	3.85
Christia	7-16	10.23	89.77	1.40	35.75	28.90	17.00	6.48

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SC	7-16	12.68	87.32	1.31	37.50	29.19	14.61	4.45	
ST	7-16	17.51	82.49	1.55	38.43	27.58	11.82	2.83	

Source: Computed by the author from Census 2011 tables C-9 + C-10Sc+C10St.

The policy for the educational empowerment needs in proportion to the requirement for the overall growth of the country unlike the present allocation. While the SCs and ST of this age group gets Scholarships along with other benefits proportionate to their population Muslims are denied though their financial status is more depraved than SCs by many of the Commissions, surveys time and again by successive governments.

Secondary Education

The social group enrolment in Class VI to VIII for SCs with 16.6 percentage of population against 19.49 as per 2011 Census for which 48.78 are Girls, for STs with 8.6 as per 2011 Census is 9.81 for which 48.49 are Girls, for OBCs 2011 Census figure is not available but the data at Class VI to VIII is 44.44, 44.72, 48.81 for the years 2013, 14 and 15 respectively out which Girls ratio to Boys is 48.81, 48.82, 48.84 for the same years. Whereas for Muslims with 14.2 percentage of population as per 2011 Census is 12.52, 12.60, 12.60 for the years 13-14, 14-15, 15-16 for which 48.49 are Girls has the share of 51.38, 51.49, and 51.35 respectively with slightly high enrolment ratio. The data sets have gaps of the relevant years for SCs and STs. Girls share for the years 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015 - 16 was recorded as 48.66, 48.63 and 48.63 respectively. Dropout rate of Girls is notable factors with an exemption of Muslims need to be taken care of. There are 0.93 percent religious Minorities Schools at primary level and 1.17 total schools. Retention of Muslims children in schools is 80.92, which is less than SCs 83.46 and higher than STs 70.88. In comparison with their respective age group Muslim share in Retention rate is lower than both SCs and STs. Thus the dropout rate of Muslims is higher than the other deprived sections of society.

Table -3

Enrolment by SOCIAL Groups at Secondary Level

	Year	General	SCs	STs	OBCs	Muslims	
Seconda ry	2014-	108299	71491	32527	N	N	
	15	54	NA	51	NA	85	
	2015-	107975	27.	73112	18.	33232	8.4
	16	12	58	16	68	35	9

Higher	2014 -	776987		41342		15167	N	100809		N	
Seconda	15	3	NA	86	NA	35	A	04	NA	A	NA
ry	2015-	804189	32.	42874	17.	16747	6.7	107313	43.	N	8.0
	16	7	51	48	33	35	7	17	38	A	5
Seconda	2014 -		30.		18.		7.7		44.	N	9.3
ry	15	NA	10	NA	26	NA	2	NA	93	A	8
+Higher											
Seconda	2015-	NA	29.		18.		7.8	NA	44.	N	9.3
ry	16		49	NA	16	NA	2		53	A	9

Source: drawn from of pages 37, 38, 39, Flash statistics 15-16 SECONDARY EDUCATION IN INDIA Progress towards Universalization National University of Educational Planning and Administration

Madrasa Data

There are 10,064 registered Madrasas and 2,700 unrecognized covered in this data set. The enrolment in secondary level recognized Madrasas is 0.57 and 0.03 in Unrecognized Madrasas in the Country. The enrolment in higher secondary level recognized Madrasas is 0.42 and 0.02 in Unrecognized. While the recognized Madrasas percentage at Higher Secondary is 0.54 and 0.04 unrecognized Madrasas. The percentage of regular teachers in Higher Secondary level is 0.27 in recognized Madrasas and 0.02 in Unrecognized Madrasas whereas the contractual teachers in recognized Madrasas is recorded at 0.04, 0.00 at present Unrecognized Madrasas for the Academic year 2015-2016. However the details of Vedic Pathasalas are not available here.

At Higher Secondary Level

Table -4
Enrolment 2015-‘16 [as on September 30th, 2015]

Year	Gener al	SC	ST	OBC	Musli m
2014-‘15	7769873	4134286	1516735	10080904	-
2015-‘16	8041897	32.4287448	17.31674735	6.710731317	43.8.05

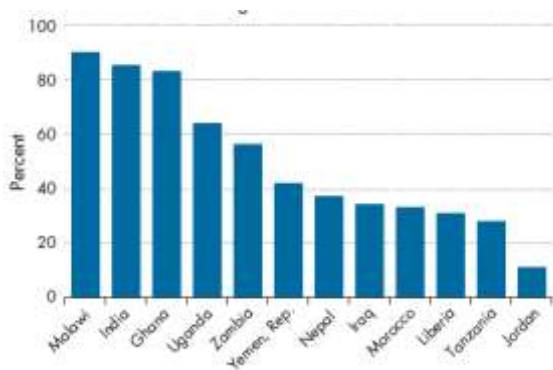
Through initiatives like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, we focused on Universalization of education and succeeded with the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in 2015-16 for grades I-V was 99.2% and for grades VI-VIII was 92.8%⁵. Unfortunately, this success in getting more children into

schools has not translated into more education. We neglected to measure the learning out comes.

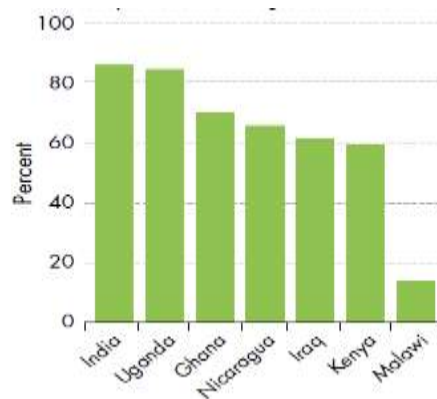
Computing Learning Outcomes

ASER continuously monitoring the learning out comes and the World Bank Development Report 2018 released few days ago also upheld its findings that the Improvement in reading outcomes and arithmetic ability continues to be low. Moreover, a large proportion of students in both government and private schools continue to be below ‘grade level’ in-terms of reading, basic arithmetic skills. Poor learning outcomes are reflected in multiple other sources as well, including the National Achievement Survey (NAS), which found worse results in Class V Cycle 4 (2015) compared to Cycle 3(2012). So, the goal now is to improve learning outcomes.

The ASER and NAS findings serve as a warning ahead of India’s participation in the rigorous Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) to be conducted by OECD in 2021. In 2009, the last time it participated, India was ranked second last among 74 countries and regions, inviting sharp criticism from academics and experts on how Indian education is impacting the country’s competitiveness to become a global powerhouse. The following two figures illustrate the comparison of India with some of the developing countries. Volume of Grade 2 students who could not read a single word of a short text. Volume of Grade 2 students who could not perform two-digit subtraction



Source: Data at http://bit.do/WDR2018-Fig_O-1.



Source: Data at http://bit.do/WDR2018-Fig_O-1

School Education Action Agenda - What Does it Seek to Accomplish and How?

There are three major goals to achieve:

1. Orient the system towards outcomes.

2. *Provide tools to teachers and students for effective learning.*
3. *Improve existing governance mechanisms and pilot new ones Orient the system towards outcomes. Introduce an outcome measurement system.*

The most critical missing pieces that evidence has shown to be effective are - pedagogy that focuses on teaching at the right level, outcome linked incentives, and governance that enables the system to operate. We must focus on introducing changes that help produce improved learning outcomes in the short term as well as lay down the foundation of long term strategic change.

We need to measure the outcomes comprehensively, rigorously for the entire population of children from grades as early as two or three as it is the most critical stage of learning that aim to improve. National Achievement Survey (NAS) can be adapted to meet these challenges. It can be used to pilot larger scale assessments for states to determine shortcomings in the system and move towards their own larger scale assessments.

The concept of Competitive and collaborative federalism may be used to have *School Education Quality Index* (SEQI) for improvements in school quality systematically.

The RTE needs to be modified as a Right to Learning, instead of a Right to go to School. The recent amendment of Rule 23(2) under the Right to Education Act constitutes a positive step by making all state governments to codify expected levels of learning for students in classes I to VIII. For implementing this mandate, states should begin by devising their learning indicators and planning a state-level measurement system for every child with necessary resources. Provide tools to teachers and students for effective learning

The government should Adapt of Computer-based tools to allow children for learn at their own level and highly effective in pushing up learning outcomes on a wider scale.

Focus on Foundational Learning: There is compelling evidence that children who fall behind in basic literacy and numeracy skills in early grades maintain an almost flat learning curve later because the material being taught in class moves past their level and they have no way of catching up. A time-bound national program with focus on ensuring that all children have such basic skills should be launched.

One of the critical changes to be brought is the separation of functions of policy making, regulation and provision in the Education system. The provision of education can potentially be hived off either into a separate publicly owned vehicle, or into a autonomous accountable body with – clear, measurable goals; independence and authority for the management to take necessary steps to reach the goals; and oversight and accountability based on credible

measurement of outcomes. States should regulate only based on outcomes and transparency requirements. Both private and government schools should be regulated in the same way.

Economic Status

Financially, Indian Muslims are among the poorest communities according to per capita expenditures. The majority of Muslims (60%) is working as the irregular workforce; only 28% are salaried workers. The reason of Muslim workforce being self-employed is the skill gap in terms of Education, Communication abilities other than prevailing discrimination. It resulted in *non-remunerative* work profile of the community as recorded by SACHAR Committee [2006] followed by KUNDU Committee [2014] and pushed them into the cycle of poverty that culminated into Backwardness irrespective of Class and Caste among them.

Work Participation of Muslim Community: Work participation rate, i.e., the percentage of workers to total population for the country is 33.69% in 2011 Census for Muslims it is the lowest with 29.09. The Non-workers share is 59% out of the total population; Muslims are highest with 67%. Whereas in the age group of 20-34 belonging to Non-workers Social Identities illustrated in following table that resulted in their relative depravity.

Table -5 Non-workers in Productive Age

Share	Age Group	Non Workers	Students	House Hold Duties	Dependents	Pensioners	Rentiers	Beggars, Vagrants etc.	Others
All	20-34	16.56	21.06	53.52	7.02	0.27	0.04	0.04	18.05
Hindu	20-34	16.39	21.99	52.97	6.73	0.28	0.04	0.04	17.94
SC	20-34	15.37	18.58	53.27	7.47	0.29	0.03	0.07	20.29
Muslim	20-34	17.08	14.45	58.58	8.65	0.21	0.06	0.05	18.00
ST	20-34	10.06	26.55	44.36	7.57	0.33	0.03	0.05	21.11
Christian	20-34	16.75	31.39	35.06	8.05	0.21	0.05	0.01	25.22

Computed from Census 2011 B-13 [Non Workers] Table

The share of minorities more specifically Muslims in government employment remains low - less than half of the share of their total population in the country - despite all efforts. This must be corrected by government-led targeted recruitment drives. In the private sector also their share is non-cognizable in terms of ‘Salaried workforce’. The non-availability of institutional credit is also noted by SUDHIR Commission Report [2016 of Telangana Government] is a core reason for the successive aggravation of poverty. Analyses of the levels of consumption expenditure and changes therein over recent periods show that the position of Muslims community in general has not improved relative to the other SRCs.

Government Role: Total budgetary allocation for minorities in the Union Budget is only 0.49% of the total Union Budget 2016-17 earmarked for minorities although they constitute 21% of total population as per census 2011. The ministries and department allocated fund for minorities include 15 PP* (100 %) and MSDP. The total expenditure reported through 15 PP* and MSDP have shown declining trend in the total expenditure since 2012-13 (budgetary allocation for minorities is being successively slashed).

Table - 6
Budgetary Allocation for Minorities Since 2012

Financial Allocation	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 RE	2018-19 BE
Under 15PP [100%] & MSDP	2,174.00	3,026.00	3,089.00	3,654.86	3,827.00	4195.00	4700.00
Under 15PP [15%] (Entitled)	24,999.10	27,291.86	23,565.33	11,912.28*	6,102.90*	323462.90	
Total Allocation / Expenditure on Minorities	27,173.00	30,318.00	26,654.00	15,567.14	9,930.00	NA	---
Total Union Budget	14,10,372	15,59,447	16,63,673	17,90,783	19,75,194	21,56,419	23,52,213
Share of Expenditure on Minorities in Total Union Budget [%]	1.93	1.94	1.6	0.87	0.49		

*RE - Revised Estimate of Budget, BE - Budget Estimate, NA - Not Available, * Many Schemes don't have full year Data. (All Budgetary Figures are in Crores of Rupees)*

Source Compiled from Ministry of Minority Affairs. GOI

The Ministry of Minority Affairs [MOMA] is implementing Pre-metric, Post-metric and Merit-cum-means based scholarships for the students. The details of scholarships given since inception till 31.10.2017 are as under:

- Pre-metric Scholarship: 431.58 lakh
- Post-metric Scholarship: 52.60 lakh
- Merit-cum-means Scholarship: 7.16 lakh

Total Scholarships given (up to 31.10.2017): 491.34 lakh (30% are earmarked for girls).

The unit cost of scholarship has to be revised relative to the infatuation from Rs. 1000 per annum under pre-Metric, Merit cum means and for free coaching. In 2017-18, Rs.950 crores

was allocated for Pre Metric scholarship. The estimate by excluding the higher income group requirement of the Muslim children up to class 10 (pre-metric scholarship), the total allocation should be around Rs. 2493 crore. MOMA also demanded Rs.1831.2 crore in 2016-17, against the demand; Ministry of Finance had allocated only Rs. 931 crore.

The Actions taken by the Minority Affairs Ministry were not specific in terms of implementation as no specific data is available either from the Ministry or from the agencies that are supposed to look into concerns of Muslim Minorities. Policy making bodies of the country need to engage with appropriate action course to address the lacunae.

Conclusion

The data on the education of the specified age group unveils that the present learning outcomes and the gaps needs to be addressed more inclusively with multipronged strategy and budgetary allocation. The findings of learning outcome that youth who have not acquired basic math skills by age 14 is the same as that of (an) 18-year (old) is the core concern of pedagogy. The issues of dropout rate being highest from the deprived sections of society with different socio-religious identities, courses of non-professional education and employability should be addressed with data based monitoring. Government and its organs should evoke comprehensive policies with an objective to meet the workforce demands of the world to ripe the “Demographic Dividend” not only to avoid “Youth Bulge Challenge” but also to strengthen the Indian Economy.



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