



FUTURE OF INDIAN MADRASAH EDUCATION IN THE GLOBALIZED WORLD

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Abstract

Globalization is on its march with liberalization and privatization, bringing drastic changes in all walks of life including culture and identity. Impact of Globalization in the field of education is far reaching; while education is the most important investment after healthcare in society. One of the major informal educational system, Madrasas have contributed to our country in many spheres like freedom movement, preservation of cultural identity, literacy etc. Now the madrsas are struggling within the floodlight of globalization. Here we need immediate measures to transform the system of madrasa education to overcome the challenges of globalization, like the implementation of curriculum revision, teacher empowerment programmes, innovative instructional strategies, adoption of ICT in learning process and introduction of vocational subjects etc. Utilization of huge Wakaf properties, possibilities of E- Learning and ODL system (Open and Distant Learning), benefits of various governmental minority schemes, equivalent certifications to Madrasa degrees etc. should be taken in to the consideration while implementing the rejuvenation programme. The present study will try to formulate the ways and means of quality enhancement of madrasa education system so that madrasa can utilize or overpower the impacts of globalization as well.

Keywords: *Muslim Education, Madrasa Education, Quality Improvement, Curriculum Revision, Instructional strategies, Teacher Empowerment, E- learning, ODL system.*

INTRODUCTION

Globalization is consistently on its march; present complex scenario shows that technology has brought the world closer. Knowledge has been recognized as the key driving

force in the 21st century and India's ability to emerge as a globally competitive player substantially depends on the management of its knowledge resources. However, under the impact of globalization, the educational system is undergoing continuous change as a consequence of new international agreement, redefinition of the trade and intellectual property right conditions, innovations in information and communications, application of new technologies and the structural changes in labour market.

Madrassa is a traditional religious educational institution of Muslims. Literally it means a place where Dars (lesson) is given to the students. The history of Madrassa system of education began from the Masjid, in Masjid al Nabawi (Prophet's Masjid) wherein there was a platform called al- Suffa which was reserved for the learning people, known as Ashab al- Suffa. So al-Suffa is the first Madrassa of Islamic Tradition.

The modern madrassa system originated in Eastern Iran in the tenth century and spread to major urban centers throughout the Middle East by the late eleventh century. The architect of the **madrassa** as a state-sponsored institution of higher education was Nizam al-Mulk (died 1092 C.E.), the prime minister of the **Seljuk** empire. These residential colleges were designed by the ruling elite both as a training ground for state bureaucrats and as a Sunni Islam response to the propaganda of Ismaili Shi'ism at al-Azhar, the theological learning center founded by the **Fatimid dynasty** in Cairo in 969 C.E. As part of a Sunni Muslim religious-political agenda, the madrassa spread throughout the Islamic world. The madrassa system augmented already extant mosque-centered training sites for the study of religion and law. Unlike these centers, the madrassa forged links between the *ulama*, the religious scholars who directed Islamic education, and the ruling government authorities whose financial support made their control of the madrassa possible.

The madrassa system of education was linked to the mosque, which traditionally had been the place of instruction for Muslims in the Qur'an and in the Hadith - the traditions that preserved the words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad. The madrassa combined the site for education with student residences. Libraries and sometimes hospitals would adjoin the madrassa. Financial support for the educational institution was generated by the state in the form of a charitable endowment called *waqf*. The revenue on these endowments paid for the maintenance of the buildings, student stipends, and instructors' fees.

The course of instruction at a madrassa included the Qur'an, tradition, Arabic language, theology, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and, often, medicine; however, the

study of Islamic law (*shari a*) provided the core of the madrasa's rigorous curriculum. Initially, madrasas were founded to provide specialized instruction in one of the four Sunni legal schools. In time, legal instruction in one or more of the Sunni legal schools might be offered in a single madrasa. The method of instruction relied heavily on memorization - of the Qur'an and as many traditions as possible. (Denise a. Spellberg, 2009)

The word Madrasa includes four types of Islamic educational institutions prevailing all over the globe: (i) *Maktab*, (ii) *Madrasa*, (iii) *Darul Uloom* and (iv) *Darul Qur'an*.

Maktab is a primary centre which functions in a Masjid or a small modest building and provides instruction in religious as well as some secular subjects. Madrasa is an institution that provides education generally up to senior secondary level. Darul Ulooms are institutions of higher learning providing instruction up to post graduation and specialization levels. Darul Quran are sort of madrasa specialized in *Hifz* and *Thajwid* (memorizing the Glorious Qur'an and learning the art of reciting).

Although no regular census of madrasa has ever been taken, government sources estimate that there are approximately 1,05,000 such institutions in India. Every Madrasa follows its own pattern in educational structure and curricula. There is no uniformity with regard to subjects, books, specializations, or duration of various degrees. Its nature, structure, management, curriculum and degrees are varied from state to state. So we have to understand the system of madrasa education in a wider sense.

Madrasa has played a vital role in different fields of society. First of all madrasas helped Muslims to preserve their identity as Muslims. Through Madrasas, Muslims not only managed to protect their Islamic identity but also they influenced the Indian culture and made a good synthesis of Indo- Islamic Culture. The great contribution that madrasas made during the freedom struggle is non-negligible. From 1857 to 1947 they never compromised with the British rule and always held the torch of freedom. Madrasas are the greatest NGOs that promote education among the people. Monarchs as well as masses were educated in the Madrasas in the yesteryears. And even today Madrasa education in India plays a vital role in educating lakhs of Muslim children. The importance of Madrasas lies in its potential to make education available to the poorer section of the society. Madrasas provided free education, free board and free books while the Government of India yet could not manage to provide children with free and compulsory education even after the landmark legislation of RTE -

2009. The contribution in the field of literary and academic works also should be taken into account. Hence, the contribution of Madrasa system of education cannot be neglected.

Era of Globalization

The process of liberalization and privatization started in 1991 facilitates the entry of globalization into the Indian society. The new era of economic, and in turn social development, raised the expectations of equal opportunities to development and progress for all the sections of society, especially for minorities. The Muslim community of India constitutes the largest minority group anywhere in the world. They are the third largest Muslim population of the world after Indonesian and Pakistani Muslims. The history of sixty-one years of independent India shows that Muslims are being deprived of employment and education opportunities, basic health facilities and political representation. They are amongst the most deprived sections of the society. Different reports have brought out especially, Sachar Committee report and Misra Commission report, the socio-political and economic backwardness of minorities in India.

The ultimate aims of the education are i) preservation of the culture ii) transmission of the culture, and iii) transformation of the culture. As a result of Globalization, the problem of cultural identity arises among the youth.

The aftermaths of globalization can be clearly perceived in the society. The influence of media and Information Communication Technology is very high in the globalised world. Consumerism has influenced the society as whole. It is very clearly reflected in these lines.

“The findings challenge essentialist constructs of identity that define Muslims as isolationists and resistant to process of modernization. However, the youth of Jamia did not share the same ideological attachment to their community that was expressed by members of older generations. The youth also gave greater credence to their national identity, as opposed to their Islamic religious and cultural identity. Unlike their mothers, young Muslim women followed examples presented in the media promoting new ambitions and careers outside the community. Among these young women, it was consumerism rather than feminist motives that acted as inspiration for careers outside Jamia. Yet their desires created anxieties among Muslim men. The ambition expressed by Muslim youth to move out of their seclusion and be

part of the wider Indian society was propelled by rising consumerism in Indian society.”(Khan, Tabassum,2009)

Need of Paradigm shift

The madrasas are standing amazingly in the floodlight of Globalization. Here we need immediate measures to transform the system of madrasa education to overcome the challenges of globalization. The only way is to enhance the quality of Madrasa education system. We can rejuvenate the system by implementing the following measures. . But the reform in the madrasa education system can be achieved only after taking the ulama into confidence.

Curriculum addressing the needs of globalized era

The Madrasa have been changing over time, although the pace and scope of these changes may not be as spectacular as some of us would wish. The syllabus of schools and universities keep upgrading/ modifying at the interval of every 5-7 years. The dars-i-nizami, syllabus of the madrasas has not been changed for last 3-4 centuries. There is a need to modify Dars-i-Nizami madrasa syllabus, without altering its core subjects. When we talk about reforming the madrasas we must keep in mind their basic goals and purpose. They are meant to train religious specialists and so reforms must be such that can help the madrasas better fulfill their purpose. Rather than the ‘hard’ sciences, we should be thinking in terms of incorporating the social sciences into the curriculum, along with basic Mathematics and English. Teaching social sciences in the madrasas is important in order that the students can go on to interpret Islam in a socially and contextually relevant manner.

Introduction of technical education and employment of graduates

Vocational training should be included in the curriculum. Ideally, although this is not always the case, one should choose to become an alim not for the sake of a job but as a religious calling. Imamat in a mosque or delivering sermons should not be a paid profession. It should be an honorary, voluntary thing. This is how it was in the distant past. For instance, Imam Abu Hanifa, whose school of law most South Asian Sunni Muslims follow, was not a

professional alim—he earned his livelihood as a businessman. Today, however, the general feeling is that large sections of the ulama live off the donations of others. If one is dependent on others how will one earn the respect due to him? The ulama can gain proper respect only when they are seen as providing benefits, in terms of proper leadership and guidance, to others, rather than, as now, benefitting from them. And, for that, financial independence of the ulama is a must, and hence the need for introducing vocational training in the madrasas.

The reforms in madrasas aim to explore the development of new technologies that make madrasas students job-oriented. Knowledge of Information Communication Technology is inevitable in this globalized era. So there must be space for ICT in the curriculum as an effective learning aid.

Innovative Instructional Strategy

A thorough revision is needed in the instructional strategy for the up-gradation of the madrasas. A shift from the age old method to comprehension and conversational competence is compulsory. Activity Centered Methods are highly useful in the class of jurisprudence. We are getting benefits from modern educational theories in our school classrooms. These strategies should be used in our madrasa system of education also. For this we should use new audio-visual methods, CDs, presentations, documentaries and so on.

Teacher Empowerment Programme

As the teachers play the vital role in the education system, the teachers should be trained. Without ample training they can't do anything with the curriculum. Kerala is a role model in this regard. There is a Muallim Training Centre under Samastha Kerala Islamic Education Board, which runs 9200 madrasas and 300 higher Arabic Colleges. In addition to religious subjects, the Muallim Training Course curriculum includes English, History, Educational Administration, Organizational Training, Teaching methodology, Madrasa Internship Programme and Personality Development Training. The course is of 2 years duration and one who completed matriculation along with Madrasa 7th class, can apply. In addition to that, different teaching-qualification tests are conducting like Muallim Lower and Higher. 40 days In-service training course is also conducted by the Board. All the Arabic college students have to compulsorily undergo 40 days teachers training. Institutes like these should be constituted throughout the length and breadth of the country. We could start with

establishing a sort of central madrasa teachers' training institute, which could offer short-term courses, covering such areas as child psychology, pedagogy, and basic 'modern' subjects.

ODL System and E- Learning

The booming of English medium schools eliminated the chances of religious studies for a majority of Muslim students. In order to compensate this, the possibilities of Open and Distant Learning System and E- Learning should be utilized. Each Madrasa has to cater the students of its surroundings. In addition to providing scientifically and psychologically prepared study materials , weekly or monthly counseling sessions should be conducted. This will be also help full for those who does not get the chances for primary religious education. The e- learning will particularly focus the new generation.

Equivalency to the general stream

Unlike all universities of the country, the madrasas are neither members of the Association of Indian Universities nor their degrees are recognized by it. Moreover, each university is an autonomous body and, hence, decisions of the Academic Council of a particular university do not have binding effects for others. That is why some universities like Aligarh Muslim University, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, etc recognize some degrees of a number of madrasas while other universities have no such provision. Jawahar Lal Nehru University also recognizes some madrasa degrees.

Various Minority Schemes of government

The community should be ready to make use of various minority schemes. The Madrasa Modernization Scheme , which was launched in 1993-94, has changed into Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madrasa (SPQEM) and an amount of Rs. 325 core is proposed for the scheme as per budget provision in the XI th Five Year Plan. There are some schemes in Prime Minister's New 15 Point Programme for the Welfare of Minorities. Moulana Azad Foundation has implemented many programs for the benefit of minorities.

Madrasa Education Board

Madrasa Education Board should be constituted not only in the states but also in the Centre. Now, some madrasa boards are working systematically, many states have yet to constitute it. Without the Madrasa Boards, who will solve the problems related to madrasas

generally like the problem of University Equivalency and Budget provisions etc. The Central Madrasa Education Board bill, which is under consideration of Parliament, should be passed after thorough discussions with Ulama.

Waqf Movement

The huge waqf property in India should be rightly utilized for the empowerment of Muslim education , as Prime Ministers High Level Committee lead by Rajender Sachar Commission recommended. A number of Waqf lands and properties are misused and lost throughout the country. A mass campaign in this regard is needed from the side of Muslim community like campaign against corruption. The Waqf property should be utilized for the rejuvenation of Madrasas in the globalized era.

Madras as the Community Centers

Most of Madrasa and Maktabas are now isolated from the Muslim Community. A small group of people is only attached with it. This situation should be changed. Madrasas and Maktabas should be changed into the community centers which shall deal with the all social- educational problems of community. Then only madrsas can survive in the period of Globalization. “The Community should provide , basic Islamic instruction to all boys and girls in maktabas as in Kerala and rationalize the Madrasa system for quality education and for producing the Islamic scholars it needs: this it can do on its own” (Syed Shahabudhddin, 2001)

CONCLUSION

Madrasa Education is the largest non formal education network all over India. Even though it has its own strength and weakness, it should be strengthened with modern educational practices to cope up with the challenges of the time. As part of inclusive education, Madrasah education cater the needs of the underprivileged and unprivileged sections of the society. Government of India’s initiatives to enhance the quality of madrsa education, lags behind without proper mechanism in monitoring and supervision. Proper mechanism should be employed to ensure the proper execution of the various programs in the field of minority education. Moreover, Community initiative has its own importance in coping the madras education with modern educational practices

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