



HISTORY AND PRESENT STATUS OF MADRASA EDUCATION IN INDIA

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Abstract

Madrasas in India have a centuries-old history. The present paper describes madrasas during the medieval period in India, Colonial India and in Independent India. Madrasas have always contributed to the welfare of society. Madrasas continue to function to serve the educational and religious needs of the Muslim community in every situation particularly to Muslims from low socio-economic backgrounds in rural areas and also in urban areas. The scheme of the government of India for the modernization of madrasas is also discussed in this paper. Finally, the shortcomings in the implementation of the scheme and also the challenges ahead have been discussed.

Index Terms: Madrasa, Education, Madrasa-Modernization, Madrasa Curriculum

Objectives of the Study

- (i) To know the concept and history of Madrasa education in India.
- (ii) To find out the hurdles in providing quality education in Madrasas in India
- (iii) To suggest measures for improving the system of Madrasa Education

Methodology of the Study

Secondary sources like books, journals, magazines and internet sources have been used for the present study.

What is a Madrasa?

Pronounce "mud-ra-sa", it is an Arabic word derived from the word dars (d-r-s) which means "to study", Madrasa means the "place of study". Generally, the word "dars" means lecture or sermon. It is also used in the sense "to train" or to "discipline". In modern Arabic, "Madrasa signifies any educational institution from preschool to high school. So every secular school in a city like Cairo is called a madrasa. (Moosa, Ebrahim,2015)

In India, the word madrasa is used for an educational institution where education-related to Islam is imparted along with many other modern subjects like English, Hindi, a state language, Science, Social Studies and Mathematics. The curriculum of madrasas may vary according to their affiliation.

History of Madrasa Education in India

In India, the Islamic educational system was introduced after the conquest of Makran, Sind and the province of Multan in 712-13 A.D. With the planting of Arab settlements on old towns and the foundation of new cities such as al-Mansura and al- Baiza in Sind processes of social change began. India got exposed to foreign influence. The introduction of Islamic ataractic polity and the educational system paved the way for upward social mobility. The first Madrasa is said to have been established by Mohammad Ghori in 1191A.D at Ajmer. (Qamar Uddin,2005) Some of the Sindhis belonging to the second and third generations of the Indian converts distinguished themselves as leading scholars of the Quran and the hadith (the traditions of the Prophet).in

India, the city of Lahore under the Ghaznawids acted as an integrative nucleus in spreading urban culture in the area around. In 1192, Malik Qutubuddin Aibek was appointed sipahsalar (military governor) of the territories beyond the river Sutlej in Haryana and Delhi. He showed keen interest in the progress of education. He had Masjids and Madrasas built in every town. The grand madrasas founded by him were named after his royal master as the Madrasa-i-Muizi. The references contained in the Tabaqat-i-Nasiri and the Fawa'id-ul-Muizi of Delhi tend to show that it was an important institution and its spacious building had a magnificent lofty gate. (Siddiqui, I.H, 2005). There was a Muizi madrasa in Badaon also. (Kirmani, S.M,1302). In Bihar and Bengal, the Khilji rulers, Malik Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khilji (1206-07) and Sultan Ghiyasuddin Iwaz Khilji beautified towns in their dominions with the construction of Masjids, Madrasas and Khanqahs. The teachers of eminence were appointed to serve in the madrasas and with their arrival, the towns of Maner and Bihar Sharif in modern Bihar state and Lakhnauti the capital in Bengal had important madrasas. Delhi, which had become the capital of Sultan Shamsuddin Iltutmish in 1211A.D, developed from a pargana headquarter into a city of international fame. Its rapid expansion led to the foundation of a new madrasa. By the year 1228, the rival Sultans of Bihar and Bengal and Sind and Multan were destroyed by Iltutmish and then the Sultanate of Delhi had become a magnificent one in the Islamic world. To cater to the educational needs of his expanding capital, Sultan Iltutmish founded the largest madrasa of the country in Delhi and named it after his deceased crown Prince(Nasir Uddin Mahmud)as Madrasa-i- Nasiriya and made rich endowments for its maintenance. Of the madrasas of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the madrasa of Firuz Shah(1351-1388) in Delhi and that of Khwaja Mahmud Gawan at Bidar are worth mentioning. Sultan Firuz Shah planned the construction of the madrasas amid beautiful surroundings at a considerable distance from his capital Firozabad. The Madrasa-i-Firoz Shahi was built on the southern bank of the Hauz-i- Khasas. The Principal of the Madrasa-i-Firoz Shah, Maulana Jalal Uddin Rumi's fame as a scholar of tafsir, hadith and fiqh attracted students from different places to gain perfection under his guidance.

Regarding the literal atmosphere created by the role of madrasa in the country. since the advent of the Khaljis to power towards the close of the thirteenth century, the opposition to the study of Ilm-i- Maqul (rationalist sciences) ended and rationalism was encouraged by the Sultan. The Standard of education was raised high, in the fields of science. For example, discoveries were made in physics and astronomy. The madrasas performed an important role during medieval times, not only diffusion of knowledge took place in the urban centres, it enhanced upward social mobility as well. The literary works produced in the thirteenth and fourteenth-century writers in Persian became pioneers in Persian literature. The madrasa education system introduced during this period continued to provide a cultural reference point throughout medieval times.(Siddiqui, I.H,2005)

Madrasas and Education during the Colonial Period

During the colonial period, the term Madrasa did not signify primarily a place of religious learning, meant only to educate and train the students to pursue ecclesiastical profession; on the contrary, its existence was the dissemination of true knowledge of all subjects for the harmonious intellectual, moral and material development of society. The transformation of madrasa into an institution of purely religious instructions was the phenomenon of the late nineteenth century when the traditional sciences ceased to be parts of the academic syllabus because these had been rendered obsolete by the role of the new techno-scientific changes and developments in the colonial process. (Malik, Z.U,2005). Warren Hastings founded the Calcutta Madrasa in 1781 in response to a petition submitted by a section of Muslims of the city under the leadership of Maulana Majid al din alias Maulana Madan on 05 September 1781 to teach the Muslim students Islamic theology (dinyat) and other religious subjects. An English army officer, acquainted with Arabic and Persian languages, was appointed its principal. The government granted aid to the Calcutta Madrasa and also the payment of stipends to oriental scholars. In North India not only the old madrasas survived and flourished, but many new ones were opened. The towns in the eastern parts of Uttar Pradesh, which in that age enjoyed the status of 'Shiraz of Hind', resembled cities with tall buildings, masjids, madrasas and Khanqahs, fully developed and crowded. These towns were inhabited by a large number of teachers, scholars, saints, people of noble birth belonging to different nationalities, and also agriculturists, artisans, traders, professionals and servicemen. Bilgram, Kora, Kachand, Kannauj, Deva, Mausoli, Khairabad, Gopamau, Lucknow and Pilibhit were some of

the important centres of education in the region, and these provided educational opportunities to both the rich and poor students.

Madrasas in Independent India

Now multi-disciplinary education is imparted which includes English, Science, History, Geography, Tibb (medicine) besides the religious disciplines.

At present in India, there are three types of Madrasas. They are

- (i) Maktab for elementary education
- (ii) Madrasa for Secondary and Senior Secondary level education
- (iii) Darul Uloom for higher education

Among these Madrasas, there are Government Aided and Un-Aided Madrasas. Mostly madrasas are registered from the State Madrasa board or some other boards. Some Madrasas are not registered. Their purpose is to provide education to children from poor families who cannot afford to go to school.

At present, there are nearly 24,010 Madrasas in India. Uttar Pradesh has the highest Muslim population. So it has the highest number of Madrasas in India. There are approximately 7,742 Madrasas in Uttar Pradesh. (Ministry of minority affairs, Govt. of India). There are Madrasa Boards in states which govern the functioning of these Aided and Un-Aided Madrasas. States like Assam, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Rajasthan has its own Madrasa Board. But there is no specific central board that governs all these boards. The salary of teachers was initially provided by the central government but now it is funded by both state and the central government.

According to the NPE 1986, all children in the country should be provided education of comparable quality. Taking this into consideration, SPQEM (Scheme for providing Quality education in Madrasas) was formed. This scheme was funded by the central government. According to this scheme the recognized madrasas from Madrasa Boards in the states were provided with teachers in modern subjects like English, Hindi, Science, Social Studies and Mathematics to raise the quality of education in the madrasas. This is also called the madrasa modernization scheme. These teachers were graduate and post-graduate teachers, they were given a fixed amount as an honorarium for their job. There was another scheme called (IDMI) Infrastructural Development in Minority Institutions, which was meant to facilitate infrastructural facilities in madrasas to improve the quality of education. Both these schemes were funded by the central government. Both these schemes came in 2009-2010.

The government of India in 2014-15, formed a new scheme known as SPEMM (Scheme for Education of Madrasa and Minorities). It covered both SPQEM and IDMI. The funding pattern for the SPQEM component was 90:10 for North Eastern States, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand, 100% for UTs without legislature and 60:40 for the remaining States. For IDMI Component, the funding pattern was 75% Central Share and 25% by the Institution concerned. Based on this, now the scheme is not fully centrally funded but it is centrally sponsored. And the honorarium for graduate teachers was up to Rs. 6,000/- pm and for postgraduate teachers with B.Ed it is up to Rs. 12,000/- pm and would be provided by the central government. (Ministry of Education, 2021)

But from five years the state government and the central government has not given any fund for teachers' salary/ honorarium. (The Wire, 2021) So, the teachers are teaching without pay. Due to non-payment of salaries/honorarium teachers are getting demotivated. And the purpose of creating the schemes for the modernisation of madrasa education is not being fulfilled.

Challenges

1-The teachers under the madrasa modernization scheme have not received a salary for 53 months (The Wire, 2021). Because of this, they may be demotivated to teach and it will affect the quality of education.

2-Due to the low Socio-Economic status of Madrasa students, they are not much motivated towards studies. Bringing these children at par with other children is a challenging task.

3- Improving the level of mainstream subjects in Madrasas and bringing it up to the level of NCERT is also a difficult task when the teachers of modern subjects are de-motivated to teach due to non-payment of salary from the past five years.

4- Scholarship of Rs.1000/- per annum is being given only to few students as the fund is not sufficient to give scholarships to all students. So, this insufficient scholarship will not help students for their further studies.

5- Motivating students and teachers with such limited resources are really difficult.

Suggestions and Conclusion

Madrasas in India are institutions running for the past few centuries. During the present times, they cater to the educational needs of Muslim children from economically weaker sections. The Constitution of India in its several articles has granted provisions for the upliftment of minorities regarding their education. The National Education Policy 2020 emphasises quality education for all children irrespective of caste, creed, religion, sex and region. The Government of India has to implement measures to ensure quality education in madrasas also. Financial assistance to Madrasas need to be raised and a timely supply of funds from the state as well as the centre has to be ensured which is necessary for quality education.

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