JETIR.ORG ISSN: 2349-5162 | ESTD Year : 2014 | Monthly Issue
JOURNAL OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATIVE RESEARCH (JETIR)
An International Scholarly Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

MOBILITY WITHOUT PROGRESS: MIGRATION, MARGINALIZATION AND THE EVERYDAY REALITIES OF INDIAN MUSLIMS

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Abstract: The conceptual evolution of exclusion as a strategy for countering deprivation and discrimination has advanced significantly in recent decades. This paper argues that, despite these developments, exclusion continues to profoundly impact Indian Muslims, particularly in urban areas. Data from the NSSO's 68th round highlights concerning trends for Muslims, who have the lowest educational achievement among major religious groups. This is particularly striking given Muslims' long history and presence in urban India, which might have suggested different, more positive outcomes. Contrary to typical migration patterns that offer opportunities, urban migration for Indian Muslims has contributed to their further impoverishment and marginalisation. This calls for a closer examination of how migration actually affects Muslims and why exclusionary practices persist, leaving them vulnerable to poverty and social apathy. Evidence suggests that, while internal migration does not significantly benefit Muslims, international migration, particularly to the Gulf, has helped some Indian Muslim households escape poverty. Therefore, the persistence of exclusion remains a critical issue that needs focused analysis.

Keywords: Muslim, Urban Poor, Migration, Exclusion, Poverty, Everyday Life, Hyderabad.

I. INTRODUCTION

People often view migration as a way to achieve better socioeconomic outcomes. For many Indian Muslims, especially those who move to find work, the experience is very isolating. Using Habermas's concepts of the lifeworld and system, it is clear that individuals' daily experiences are shaped by community-based networks of communication and survival, despite the dominant influence of state and market structures. Habermas warns that "the colonisation of the lifeworld by system imperatives distorts communication and undermines social integration" (Habermas, 1987). Muslim migrants often face informal employment, housing instability, and religious prejudice, illustrating how the system encroaches on their lived experiences, which weakens social cohesion and fosters new forms of exclusion. Migration does not necessarily empower individuals; instead, it can reinforce poverty and inequality in urban environments.. Further, religion has in many ways provided a moral or normative basis for social interaction and solidarity, rather than seen as instrumental in the making and perhaps unmaking of social life.

II. Conceptual Framework

Contemporary migration is marked by an acceleration of the pace of interaction between the host and home setting through multiple networks. Margolis argues that ―immigrants establish and maintain familial, economic, political and cultural ties across international borders, in effect making the home and host society a single arena of social action viii‖. The current phase of international migration has set in motion a plethora of such transnational movements. They are transnational in the sense that they refer to movements which come into being within the social intricacies and specificities of certain communities, yet are increasingly identified and appropriated outside ix. Technological advancements have further strengthened the migrants'links with the home countries on a day-to-day basis. The migrants make efforts to sustain their relations with the sending country through transnational religious practices as well" (Zacharia Oommen).

"Religious communities simulate transnational movements which challenge the way in which we imagine religion and politics traditionally. The migrants often retain their religious beliefs and traditions through various kinds of social and economic links with the home country. Although social scientists have written extensively on the role of religion in the Diaspora, very little research has been done on the impact of transnational religious groups in the sending countries. Transnational Migration and Fading States (1997) by Rudolph and Piscatori concludes that in today's postmodern age religious communities have become vital agents in the creation of a transnational civil society (Oommen, 7-8).

III. Short historical context to Indian Muslims

Historically, Islam and Muslim practices in India have been quite diverse and embedded in the pluralist nature of Indian society. However, it has always propagated the ways and inveighed against oppression, inequality, and injustice in society. The debate has also shifted in response to the nature and phenomenon of deeply rooted inequality in society. In the pre-independence period, the Muslim leadership at the time became deeply involved in the freedom movement through all possible means and methods. The cultural difference or diversity didn't hinder the process of assimilating into the wave of nation building and integration into the new form of democratic government in post-independent India.

The idea here is not to bring up the historicity of Muslims in the past but instead to put the text and questions in the correct context of the present paper. The question is that Indian Muslims have historically lived mainly in and around urban centres. It remained a feature of the Muslim population and continues to be urban even today, with only a small percentage remaining rural in India today.

Table.1. Urban India Religion Census Data 2011

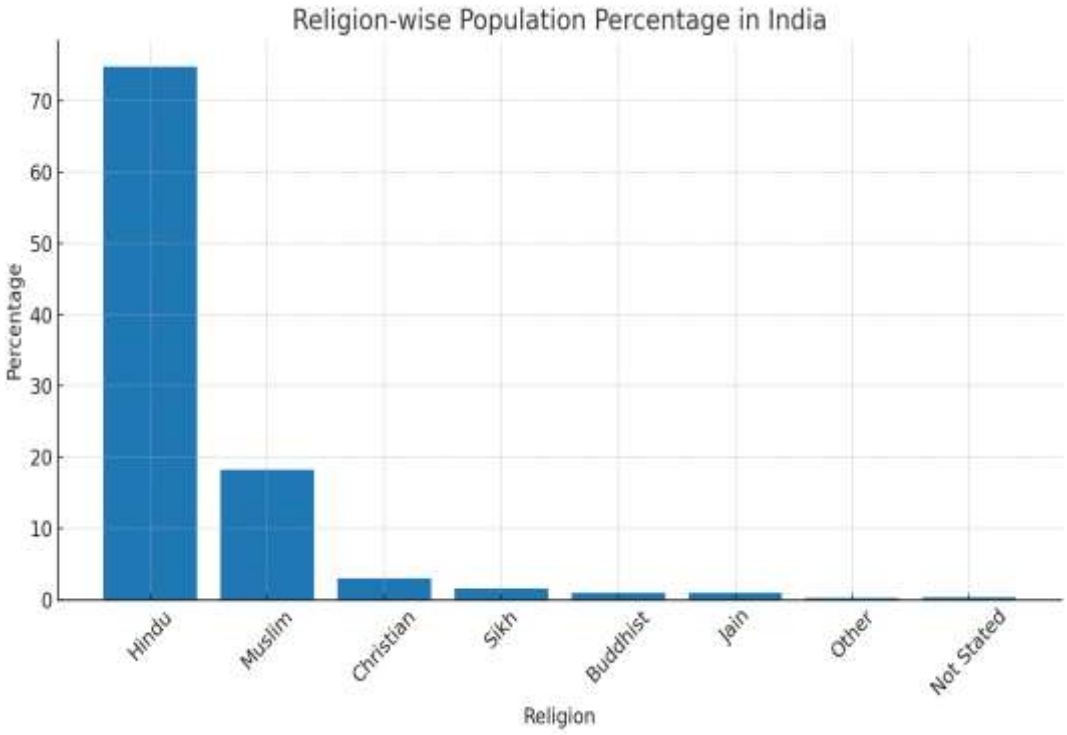

Table.2. Rural India Religion Census Data 2011

Religion	Percentage (%)	Estimated Population
Hindu	82.05%	68.41 Crores
Christian	2.00%	1.67 Crores
Buddhist	0.58%	48.15 Lakhs
Other Religions	0.86%	72 Lakhs

Just after the partition, Muslims were created/constructed as a minority (Pandey, 2016; Ziyauddin, 2020) and faced different challenges in their lives. On one hand, the Muslim elite and leaders struggled to create a cohesive and peaceful space for themselves in a difficult situation in the post-partition period. In contrast, common Muslims continued living with their neighbours and fellow citizens, as they had for centuries. Several other factors, such as cultural differences, still exist. Still, the urban population has continued to grow for several reasons, such as the occasional occurrence of ethnic/communal violence and the demand for traditional skill-based work in the urban market.

The saddest part remains visible in the form of low levels of educational attainment, despite being urban. Individuals living in urban areas often experience lower visibility or participation in formal employment. The housing and sanitation are quite deplorable in the areas populated by Muslims (Ziyauddin, 2022), and inequality in urban settlement remains a visible fact in 21st-century India, mostly in major cities of the country (Jafferelot, 2022; Shaban, 2013 Rahman, 2020).

"Segregation by caste was common in economic, social, and political activities as well". As in settlement, this naturally led to wide inter-caste variations. Most acute were the gaps between the 'Caste Hindus' and the castes treated as 'untouchable', now grouped as Scheduled Castes. Various tribes, collectively labelled now as Scheduled Tribes, suffered from isolation and non-participation in developmental activities. Though education was valued, only a few selected sections pursued formal education. Furthermore, some sections were explicitly prohibited from receiving education, preventing equality in education. Religion has also been a major factor in social stratification. Although India is predominantly Hindu, it also has significant populations of Muslims, Christians, and Sikhs. In addition to theological differences, there are variations in lifestyles and political and historical factors that would have created differentials in education, occupations, and other economic conditions among populations belonging to various religions" (Kulkarni, 2002:1-2).

"Social restrictions on castes and the degree of discrimination on account of caste or religion may be attributable, at least in part, to cultural and historical factors and hence could differ from region to region or state to state. Additionally, in India's multi-tiered structure of governance, it is the state government, rather than the central government, that has a major responsibility in the social sector. Therefore, we expect the state governments' policies and programmes to contribute to human development significantly. The delivery systems and the efficiency of programme administration may also differ among states" (Kulkarni, 2002:1-2).

As a concept and strategy, exclusion has evolved as a potent instrument for intervening in multiple deprivation and discrimination cases. Poverty has always been a hot topic throughout history, and it was even a vast topic in medieval Islam. It is worth thinking about from a historian's perspective, especially in light of what historians of Rome, Byzantium, the medieval and the modern West have accomplished regarding poverty and the poor. However, as is typically the case, the sources for Islamic history, particularly for the early formative decades, provide challenges, but this is unrelated to the current study. I would want to address some of the causes of poverty among Indian Muslims by looking at their educational attainment and how exclusion remains a dominating feature among them despite numerous, albeit modest, interventions. Bonner (1996) (read for detailed analysis on poverty in the early period of Islam and Muslims) uses a historical context to suggest methods and a possible strategy for dealing with some of the relevant sources, which aids in identifying different, competing ways in which the poor were defined in the first centuries of Islam. However, how far studies in the twenty-first century focus on Muslim poverty requires a much broader investigation.

The 68th round of data from the NSSO presents estimations of educational levels and employment market indicators for India's major religious groups. Any analysis of Muslims would be pessimistic if it looked at their educational achievement, which is the lowest of all religious groupings. Muslims' historical presence and residence in urban India may have revealed a different, more favourable image.

In urban Indian Muslims, the hope and promises usually fulfilled by migration have, in contrast, resulted in increasing impoverishment and marginalisation of the families. Alternatively, did it improve? It demands many more studies to understand the impact of migration among Muslims. The survey also points out that the Dalits, Adivasis, and Muslims have fewer networks than other social and religious groups. As India continues to progress ahead, the survey stated that it has much to do with achieving social objectives, as nearly 50 per cent of Adivasis fall under the poverty line, while the Dalits and Muslims have poverty rates of 32 per cent and 31 per cent (NCAER, 2010).

A paper written by Amit Thorat and others (2017) shows that "Religious differences in poverty are more complex owing to different levels of urbanisation, education, and nonagricultural employment. Nevertheless, 31% of minority Muslims were poor, a rate not much different from that of Dalits (IHDS, 2005). Other minority religious groups, Jains, Sikhs, and to a lesser extent Christians, have been relatively prosperous; together their 2005 poverty rate was only 12%, about the same as forward Caste Hindus" (414). It is necessary to investigate the persistence of exclusionary practices in the lives of Muslims in India and why they continue to face poverty, marginalisation, and apathy. Within-country migration does not have a favourable impact, but moving outside of the country, particularly to the Gulf, has improved livelihood for Indian Muslims by alleviating household poverty. Some less studied perceptions prevail that the Zakat, a share of the individuals' income to the poorest, has dramatically impacted the living conditions of Muslims in India and remains another area to be studied.

The hour also needs to understand that poverty among Muslims is not compared with SCs and STs in India and may be different at different intervals of time. Scheduled castes and tribes in India have a significantly higher poverty rate than the rest. Consider rural India, where the scheduled tribes' poverty rate was nearly double that of the non-scheduled castes, at 30.5 per cent in 2009-10. Rural scheduled castes and tribes, on the other hand, have witnessed a lower rate of poverty reduction (53%) than the rest of the population since 1983 (Panagariya and Mukli, 2009 [2]).

The development discourse has to accommodate every social group in the Indian population and across the states. Further, development cannot be fruitful until or unless every state creates an actual model of development based on accurate statistics, not merely by making political rhetoric. The breakdown of poverty for various religious groups across the state provides a striking picture that debunks essential illusions that have dominated India's development rhetoric. Specific observations of Gujarat as an economic development model illustrate the prevalent thinking on economic growth. The numbers, on the other hand, show a different picture.

IV. Not Just Poor, But Urban Poor

Let us also consider that urbanization is a phenomenon that should be viewed as background when understanding poverty. Urbanization is one of the most studied topics in geography and related social sciences (Berry 1976; Costa et al. 1989; Davis 1972; Hauser 1965; McGee 1971). Despite similarities in the process, significant differences exist in the nature, level, and scope of urbanization between more developed countries (MDCs) and less developed countries (LDCs). Similarly, Indian cities have experienced different patterns and paces of change, specific to the policies adopted by their respective states. However, the situation of Muslims as a community has not seen much improvement through new developments and interventions aimed at creating employment.

Scholars have also recognized the difficulties in planning, creating, and managing cities as decent, desirable, and humane places for production and social reproduction (Datta 1990; Cheema 1993; Harris 1992; Kasarda and Parnell 1993; Short 1989; Simon 1992). In many LDCs, these problems are insurmountable, at least in the short term, mainly due to large and growing populations and limited resources (Cheema 1993; Amirahmadi and El-Shakhs 1993; Saqqaf 1987).

While India is a multi-religious, multicultural society, Hindus comprise an overwhelming majority of 82 percent of the population. Indian Muslims account for 12.8 percent, Christians are 2.3 percent, and Sikhs make up 1.7 percent. Nearly 34 percent of the 133 million Indian Muslims live in urban areas, which have a higher rate of urbanization than Hindus. The incidence of poverty among Muslim Indians is higher than among Hindus, Christians, and Sikhs. Furthermore, Muslims in urban India experience a much higher rate of poverty than others. In rural India, the poverty rates are nearly the same for Muslims and Hindus, with about one in five in each community living below the poverty line. However, the difference becomes more pronounced in urban areas. Almost 34 percent of all Muslims in urban India live below the poverty line, compared to 19 percent of Hindus. Additionally, poverty among Hindus in urban India declined by 52 percent between 1983 and 2009-10, whereas urban Muslims experienced a slower decline of only 39 percent.

Unlike their rural counterparts, many Muslims in urban India live in poverty. While overall poverty has decreased in India across all religious groups, urban Muslims have experienced a slower decline compared to others. In a World Bank policy research working paper released earlier this month, Arvind Panagariya and Megha Mukim state that "poverty has reduced steadily in all states and for all social and religious groups" in India. In reality, poverty declined

more rapidly during periods of significant economic growth, such as 2004-05 and 2009-10. The proportion of the BPL population in urban India declined from 32.4% in 1993-94 to 25.7% in 2004-05 (based on a uniform recall period). The NSSO 61st Round indicates that urban poverty has decreased in percentage terms; however, it has increased by 4.4 million people in absolute numbers. The fact remains that the number of urban poor has been increasing since 1973-74, according to the same recall period.

In 2009-10, the poverty rate among Hindus and Muslims in Gujarat was nearly twice that in Kerala, a socially progressive state known for its secular and socialist policies. In Gujarat, nearly 38 percent of Muslims and 22 percent of Hindus were living in poverty. Moreover, while poverty among Hindus in Gujarat declined by 74 percent from 1993-94 to 2009-10, Muslim poverty decreased by only 11 percent. Conversely, in Kerala, Muslim poverty declined by 61 percent during the same period. The incidence of Muslim poverty in Gujarat even increased between 2004–05 and 2009–10.

We need to further examine the causes of persistently higher poverty rates among Muslims and other minorities in urban India. Why minorities have experienced a slower decline in poverty should be a concern for Indian planners. The reasons behind these anomalies may be more complex than they seem. For example, a large proportion of the educated middle-class urban Muslims in India immigrated to Pakistan in 1947. The intergenerational effects of losing this educated middle class could take many decades to overcome.

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Unlike their counterparts in rural India, many Muslims in urban India live in poverty. While poverty has decreased in India for all religious groups, urban Muslims have seen a slower fall than others. In a World Bank policy research working paper published earlier this month, Arvind Panagariya and Megha Mukim claim that "poverty has reduced steadily in all states and for all social and religious groups" in India. In reality, poverty decreased more rapidly during periods of significant economic expansion, such as 2004-05 and 2009-10.

The percentage of the BPL population in the urban areas in India has declined from 32.4% in 1993-94 to 25.7% in 2004-05 (based on a uniform recall period). The NSSO 61st Round shows that urban poverty has registered a decline in percentage terms; however, it has increased by 4.4 million persons in absolute terms. The fact is that the number of urban poor has continuously risen since 1973-74, as per the uniform recall period.

In 2009-10, the incidence of poverty for Hindus and Muslims in Gujarat was almost twice that for Kerala, a socially progressive state in India known for its secular and socialist policies. In Gujarat, nearly 38 per cent of Muslims and 22 per cent of Hindus were impoverished. Moreover, whereas the poverty among Hindus in Gujarat declined by 74 per cent during 1993-94 and 2009-10, Muslims in Gujarat experienced a decline in poverty of a mere 11 per cent. For the same period, poverty among Muslims in Kerala declined by 61 per cent. The incidence of poverty among Muslims in Gujarat increased between 2004–05 and 2009–10.

There is a need to explore further the causes of persistently higher poverty rates among Muslims and other minorities in urban India. Why religious and other minorities have experienced a slower decline in poverty is a question that should concern Indian planners. The reasons behind such anomalies could be more complex than one would assume.

Consider that a large proportion of the educated middle-class urban Muslims in India left for Pakistan in 1947. The intergenerational effects of losing the educated middle class could take several decades to mitigate.

4.1State interventions and Process of Exclusion

The government's intervention is essentially needed to improve social, educational, and economic indicators of the Muslim community. The National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) labour force survey reports that the economic condition of Muslims does not show any signs of improvement despite India being the fastest-growing large economy. Analysing the data on economic and educational indicators for various religious groups reveals that Muslims face a vicious circle of poverty and other multiple forms of exclusion.

The post-1990 economic growth in India and China has lifted hundreds of millions out of abject poverty. The Panagariya-Mukim paper offers further evidence for a growth-induced reduction in poverty in India. The more significant challenge for Indian planners and decision-makers is finding ways to distribute economic growth and prosperity benefits better.

Nearly one-third of Muslims in the nation survive on less than Rs 550 a month, economic think tank NCAER said, amid the ongoing debate on reservations in jobs and educational institutions for those belonging to the community.

A survey completed in 2010 by the National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER) released data that three out of every 10 Muslims were below the poverty line and lived on less than Rs 550 a month in the year 2004-05.

Even among the poor, urban Muslims were better off than those in villages, who survived on Rs 338 a month during the year under review, NCAER said. "The Adivasis are the most vulnerable group with nearly 50% below the poverty line...(followed by) the Dalits and Muslims with poverty rates of 32% and 31%," said the Indian Human Development Survey conducted by the NCAER and University of Maryland of the US.

The survey took the poverty line at Rs 356 per person per month in rural areas and Rs 538 in urban areas for 2004-05. Besides, the survey said Muslims are at the bottom regarding rural household income. However, in the country, Muslim households are slightly better off than Dalits and Adivasis. "Adivasi and Dalit households have the lowest annual income at Rs 20,000 and Rs 22,800, respectively. The other backward classes and Muslim households are slightly better off, with incomes of Rs 26,091 and Rs 28,500,". As per the 2001 census, there were 13.8 crore Muslims, accounting for 13.4 per cent of the total population of India. The survey said Muslims are most likely to generate income from small family businesses, partly because of educational differences across the community. It said social group differences in enrolment are striking.

4.2 Exclusion in Educational Attainment

As is well known, India's educational system provides free education at government-run schools. Children ages 6 to 16 are required to attend school, and their right to education begins at the age of three. One of the most significant pillars of integration is public school education, which provides individuals with the skills and certifications needed to participate in the labour market, either informal or formal. It also has a formative influence on young people's socialisation and creates an assertive citizenry filled with skill and the best mind. Government school is frequently the first public institution most poor Muslims come into contact with. As a result, how schools respond to and respect the requirements of Muslim students is likely to influence their emotions of acceptability and belonging in a wider plural Indian society. So it applies to all other students. Schools also aid integration by offering students and parents of various ethnic and religious backgrounds to interact.

Therefore, Free and compulsory education to all children of India in the 6 to 14 age group is guaranteed under the Right to Education Act, 2009, whereby no child shall be held back, expelled or required to pass a board examination until the completion of elementary education.

The presence of Muslims as one of the largest minority groups is pathetic and very depressing to a democratic and developing economy. The enrollment ratio gives only an idea to study the presence of students/children in educational institutions.

4.3 Muslims and the Poverty Trap

Government intervention is essential to uplift the educational and economic status of Indian Muslims. Although India is recognized as one of the world's fastest-growing major economies, the socio-economic condition of Muslims has not shown corresponding improvement. Recent NSSO Labour Force Survey data indicates that Muslims continue to remain one of the most economically vulnerable communities in the country. A review of educational and economic indicators across religious groups suggests that Muslims are caught in a vicious cycle of poverty, marked by low educational attainment, limited access to formal employment, and weak upward mobility. This persistent marginalization underscores the need for inclusive policy measures, targeted welfare programs, and affirmative action to address their developmental deficits.

4.4 Lowest education levels

The 68th round of the NSSO (2011-12) contains estimates of educational levels and labour market variables among India's major religious communities. Muslims have the lowest educational attainment of all of these groups. The number of male Muslim postgraduates in urban areas is as low as 15 per 1,000, and this figure is around four times

lower than that of other religious groups, such as Hindus, Christians, and Sikhs. For Muslim women, the situation is identical. Muslims had 71 male graduates per 1,000, which is fewer than half the number of graduates (per 1,000) in other communities. Similarly, the number of Muslims with a secondary or upper secondary education is 162 and 90 per 1,000 people, respectively, the lowest of all the communities.

Poor performance at higher levels of education is partly due to similarly low levels of schooling or illiteracy. Around half of the Muslim population over 15 is illiterate or has only received an elementary or secondary education. Muslims have the most significant rate of illiteracy (190 per 1,000), followed by Hindus (84), Sikhs (79), and Christians (79). (57). Muslims had 257 and 198 people (per 1,000) with only a primary or middle school education, respectively. As a result, when compared to other communities, the Muslim population is distributed least at higher levels of education and most at lower levels of education.

Similarly, Muslims have the lowest current attendance rate among all age groups. In urban areas, the number of Muslim males' aged 5 to 14 attending educational institutions is 869 per 1,000 people, the lowest of all religious groups. Christians have the highest rate (981), followed by Sikhs (971), but Hindus have the lowest rate (955), probably due to lower rates of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The differences in present Muslim and non-Muslim attendance rates at older age groups are becoming more significant.

Muslims have the lowest attendance rates and educational attainment, particularly in higher education, which can be explained by their lower socioeconomic status and higher post-secondary school prices. According to the NSSO survey, Muslims had the lowest average per capita consumer expenditure (used as a measure of income) of all religious groups, at just 32.66 per day. Sikhs (55.30) had the highest score, followed by Christians (51.43) and Hindus (37.50). The 71st NSSO survey on education (2014) found that the average course fee for college degrees in technical courses was $25,783 in government institutions and $64,442 in private unaided institutions. Muslims cannot pay such a high price, given their per capita income.

Even though children up to 14 have the right to free and compulsory education, the average course price per student in upper primary education is still $508. While all faith groups pay the same course fee, Muslims pay more because of their higher per capita income. For Muslims, the course fee for upper primary education accounts for 8.5 per cent of annual per capita spending, followed by Hindus (7.4%), Christians (5.4%), and Sikhs (5.4%). (5.03 per cent). One reason for the poor attendance rates among Muslims may be the higher cost of education relative to their financial situation.

Due to their high levels of illiteracy and poor general education, Muslims find themselves trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty. A lack of higher education is harming their work prospects. Degrees of knowledge and skills play a significant role in the dynamics of labour marketplaces. The labour force participation rate (LFPR), defined as the number of people who are either working or seeking employment, is, for example, strongly tied to the desire for employment based on educational attainment. Similarly, academic and skill levels significantly influence the quality of jobs. As a result, if a community falls behind in education, it risks becoming caught in a cycle of poverty.

"It will be challenging to get out of this mess without government action.

Low consumption expenditure and lousy job market indicators, such as the LFPR, employment status, and worker population ratio, indicate that Indian Muslims are trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty. According to NSSO statistics, Muslims have the lowest LFPR of any religious group, at 342 and 337 (per 1,000) in urban and rural areas, respectively. This means that just 342 Muslims in metropolitan areas are employed or eligible for work per 1,000 people of working age. Similarly, Muslim women have a lower LFPR than women from other ethnic groups.

This means that just 342 Muslims in metropolitan areas are employed or eligible for work per 1,000 people of working age. Similarly, Muslim women have a lower LFPR than women from other ethnic groups. Unlike other impoverished communities such as SCs/STs, Muslims live primarily in cities, where work outside the house may be possible; their lack of education most likely explains their low LFPR.

Similarly, in rural and urban areas, Muslims have the lowest worker population ratio (WPR), defined as the number of people employed per 1,000 people. Furthermore, the number of Muslims employed in regular occupations among urban males is only 288 per 1,000 employed persons. The number of Muslims employed in regular jobs among urban Muslim females is only 249, the lowest among all other populations. Christians have the most regular employees per 1,000 employed people (494 for urban men and 647 for urban females), followed by Hindus (463 and 439) and Sikhs (463 and 439), (418 and 482). Similarly, Muslims have the lowest share of households with regular paying jobs as their primary source of income''.

V. **Re-reading migration and Indian Muslim**

The increased migration tendency among rural Muslims towards metropolitan towns is one phenomenon that has pushed them to a new form of exclusion and deprivation. (Anisur Rahman, and Nahid Sarwar). Some research has also highlighted the similar form of migration from Muslim populated states to all gulf countries bringing a new discourse to the problem.

Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh & Telangana, Kerala, Karnataka are some states that has pushed its poor population to gulf countries in large number due to less employment opportunities at their home region. The religious

topography of Kerala, southern state of India, is quite unique. Muslims and Christians together constitute nearly 40 percent of the total population, which is a rather different demographic pattern from the rest of India. Along with the social changes, by the beginning of 20th century, the newly introduced colonial economy prompted Keralites to migrate to plantations in Sri Lanka, Singapore, and Malaysia (Malaya) as clerks and coolies. The discovery of oil in Gulf countries and the subsequent oil boom in 1970s generated a huge wave of migration from Kerala. Currently the state of Kerala sends the largest volume of immigrants to the Gulf countries. The Gulf migrations 'provided a new lease of life for the otherwise poor employment situation in the state, and at present nearly 2.28 million Keralites are working in different Gulf countries. Zacharia writes that as a result of migration, Kerala has witnessed a series of diverse economic and social changes including among others, a money order depended economy".

Take an example of study done by Ginu Zacharia Oommen[1] "The circular nature of the Gulf migrants has significantly influenced the class structure, social hierarchy, worship patterns, family structure and above all religion and religiosity in Kerala. Though several previous studies have examined the economic consequences of migration and remittances in Kerala, no attempt has been made so far to explore how migratory movements and remittances affected religion and religious practices in Kerala thus leading to a subsequent social transformation" (2).

"International migration has drawn much attention from social scientists in recent decades and large-scale migration has become a permanent and substantive part of global socio-economic development. There are many kinds of migration, from refugees to skilled migrants. The migration of highly skilled people from developing to developed countries is known as the brain drain, a form of diasporas based on high education, skills and talents that has been a major point of discussion among different disciplines in the social sciences. India has a very long history of high-skilled migration, being one of the top three sources of migration today. This paper aims to reveal the Muslim brain drain among Indian Muslims since the abolition of 'License Raj' in 1990. To understand the patterns of brain drain among Indian Muslims, literature searches were conducted to obtain relevant data in two ways: (1) describing the nature and consequences of brain drain on both home and host countries; and (2) delineating the push-pull factors that lead high skilled individuals to migrate to developed countries. The findings revealed that many Muslims from India have migrated to UK and US over the last three decades. Indian Muslims constitute a very considerable proportion of population in the above-mentioned countries, with a net population of about 200,000 in the UK, and in the US 4% of the total Muslim population are Indian Muslims. Indian Muslim brain drain is driven more by push-factors in India, including religious discrimination and corruption in the public sector, alongside pull-factors in the West, like political stability, economic development, better career opportunity, high wages and balanced workload. Finally, the study indicates that data available on brain drain from various aspects are insufficient. More studies are needed to increase the understanding of migration, which is now becoming more complex among the Muslim communities[2]" (Subhani, Noor and Diah, 2018). How far it has benefited in minimizing the poverty and reduced the number of urban poor- Muslims?

VI. Ground Realities behind Brain Drain

Selective Benefit: The benefits of brain drain generally go to Muslim people who are already educated and have more money, and who have the means to go. These migrants may help their relatives back home, but this doesn't mean that the Muslim poor in urban India are getting better off in a big way.

a. Limited Spillover: In contrast to Gulf migration, where remittances are large and common among working-class Muslims, the brain drain to Western countries only affects a limited elite group of people. The money that these experts send home isn't substantial and isn't evenly distributed.
b. Persistent Urban Poverty: Muslims living in cities in India still experience systemic prejudice, a lack of jobs, bad housing, and limited access to education and healthcare. These problems are so deep-seated that the small-scale diaspora success stories haven't changed the numbers on urban poverty at all.
c. Symbolic Mobility vs. Mass Upliftment: Success stories in the diaspora, such as those of doctors, engineers, and IT professionals, serve as symbols of upward mobility and community pride. However, they do not directly help the majority of urban poor Muslims who work in informal sectors and live in slums get out of poverty.

VII. Conclusion

The migration of highly skilled Indian Muslims to countries such as the UK and the US has resulted in specific enhancements at both the individual and familial levels, including increased remittances, upward mobility, and improved educational opportunities. However, its influence on alleviating overall poverty and reducing urban Muslim poverty in India remains constrained.

In short, the brain drain among Indian Muslims has led to a tiny but noticeable group of professionals who are successful around the world. This has helped individuals and families move forward and generated some income.

[1] https://www.mea.gov.in/images/pdf/GulfMigrationSocialRemittancesandReligion.pdf

[2] Subhani, Nor and Diah, 2018. Muslim Migration To The West: The Case Of The Muslim Minority In India. Al-Shajarah Journal of Islamic Thought And Civilization of The International Islamic University Malaysia (Iium). ©International Islamic University Malaysia (Iium). Issn 1394-6870

But it hasn't done much to help reduce poverty or the number of poor Muslims living in cities in India. The fundamental socio-economic disadvantage of Indian Muslims—stemming from prejudice, inadequate educational systems, unemployment, and insufficient social capital—persists essentially unaltered. So, even though brain drain may give people hope and a sense of power, it hasn't really helped reduce poverty among India's urban Muslim population. India still needs to make significant changes to its systems to support the community that is being pushed to the edge of society and the economy.

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