Educational and Political Exclusion of Muslims Minority in India; *Quest for Inclusiveness*

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ABSTRACT

*India's designated religious minorities, constitute about 19.35% of the population numbering about 193.5 million people as per Census 2011. The Muslim Minority, Accounts for 73.6% of the minority population with 14.23% of total India's population and numbers nearly 172.2 million people. India is undeniably one of the world's most unequal societies. In essence, it showed that problems faced by Muslims, in terms of a combination of **identity, security and equity** related concerns – and that these three overlap and feed into each other in myriad ways, to create the lived experiences of exclusion faced by Muslim communities.*

In this paper an effort has been made to understand, the Social exclusion of Muslims in India, particularly, the status of Muslim Minority Education, and compare it to other major communities in India and the varying understanding of the phenomenon. Also try to understand, political deprivation of Indian Muslim in the Political institutions and political process. Finally, some suggestions would be made with regards to deprivation and exclusion of Muslim Minority in India.

Keywords : Social Exclusion, Religious Minorities, Inter-group disparities, Identity, Security and Equity.

INTRODUCTION:

Social Exclusion is a multidimensional concept. Socially excluded people are often denied the opportunities available to others to increase their income and escape from poverty by their own efforts. So, even though the economy may grow and general income levels may rise excluded people are likely to be left behind, and make up an increasing proportion of those who remain in poverty. Exclusion does not cause poverty through a simple sorting of those who, are 'in or 'out,' those who can or cannot participate in society. Socially excluded groups often do participate in economic growth processes. But they do so on unequal terms. Labor markets illustrate this most clearly. The powerlessness of excluded groups is exploited and, at the same time, their disadvantaged position is reinforced, Amartya Sen describes as

'unfavorable inclusion. Namely, through differential treatment in the terms and conditions of a contract discrimination in the price charged and received by discriminated groups, in free and services for water and electricity, rent on houses, and paying a higher price for goods bought. The Muslim community is another excluded group in India. There are more Muslims who live below the poverty line than any other group[i]

Welfare of minority has been high on the agenda of the democratic government of India ever since it adopted 'inclusive growth. As its guiding principle of governance. It is the duty of the state and, as a corollary, the responsibility of the majority community to ensure the welfare of minorities so that all sections of society feel proud to be a part of the democratic set up and thus contribute their best to the development of the nation. Specially, in our historical context, where all communities and sections of people had marched shoulder to shoulder and laid down their lives in the war of independence. The concept of Inclusive Growth' becomes sine qua non for the roadmap of development and progress.[ii]

The state is an important factor which intervenes directly or indirectly in many activities of the people. The policies and actions of the state in production and distribution are thus important for inclusion/exclusion.[iii] There are limits to economic analysis regarding inclusive approach Non-economic factors like norms. Culture and beliefs can also influence the level of inclusion/exclusion. Social practices such as age-old social norms. Gender bias. Religion, caste ethnicity can have positive as well as negative effect on inclusive approach. For example, social capital among different groups can improve Inclusiveness on the other hand; religious, caste and gender discrimination can exclude many people. Thus inclusive approach is a much wider concept and goes beyond the economic analysis. However, objectives or even instruments of social and economic policies are more or less similar, but mechanism could be different in achieving the goals.[iv]

The immediate context for inclusive growth in India is the 2004 general election. It was argued that the verdict in the election was against the urban biased economic development policies pursued earlier. The exclusion problem was thus reflected in May 2004 elections. The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government came to power and its promised to address social policy issues and exclusion problem as mentioned in their Common Minimum Programme (CMP), This government wanted to give more focus. Among other things. To agriculture, rural development, employment, and other social concerns. In this context, the approach paper to the Eleventh Five Year plan suggests moving 'toward faster and more

inclusive growth'; It acknowledges that the economic growth has failed to be sufficiently inclusive, particularly after the mid-1990s. The Approach Paper says that the 11th plan provides an opportunity to restructure policies to achieve a new vision based on faster, more broad-based and inclusive growth. It is designed to reduce poverty and focus on bridging the various divides that continue to fragment our society.[v]

In the first few years of this century, there was a feeling that India shining. It was, however, realized that the 'feel good factor' was only in some indicators such as growth in services. It and communication revolution, balance of payment, foreign exchange reserves. Booming stock market, etc. not in rural India social sector. It was observed that social exclusion was taking place in terms of regions, social and marginal groups, women, minorities and children. Fortunately, these issues of social exclusion are being discussed by politicians, bureaucrats, policy makers, and civil society. The Common Minimum Programme of UPA government also stressed on, among other things, the need for focus on agriculture, rural development and social sector. There is some sort consensus now that growth should be shared by all sections of the society rather than limiting to few categories of population. This is important to reduce poverty, and various types of inequalities in the economy and society.

Two major reason for focusing on the policies of inclusion can be advanced; first, the increased presence of historically excluded groups is a sign of inclusiveness of public institutions, and this, in turn, is an important marker of the fairness of democratic regimes; and, second, greater inclusion of excluded groups in decision-making institutions would provide these Bodies with the presence of people who can articulate the interest of these section, which may otherwise be neglected deliberately or by default. The strongest rationale for repressing particular social groups lies in the manner in which public institutions work-which is to say. They often do not provide adequate policy concern for groups that are marginalized and deprived. It is this exclusion that provides the strongest justification for 'politics of presence'.[vi]

Amartya Sen drew attention to various dimensions of social exclusion. He distinguishes between situations where some people are kept out (unfavorable exclusion). And other where they are included on unfavorable terms (unfavorable exclusion). He further differentiated between active and passive exclusion. The former works by fostering exclusion through deliberate discriminatory policy intervention; the latter works through social processes like the caste system. Exclusion leads to the denial of economic opportunities and consequent

power lessens. Low income, Low merit. Or low productivity are not the causes but the consequences of such exclusion. While these considerations are valid for India. It must be borne in mind that the challenges.

India is undeniably one of the world's most unequal societies; Social inequality revolves around the axes of class, caste, tribal status, religion and gender. Inter-group disparities are sharply marked, with major contrasts of social conditions and chances of sharing in society's material and cultural resources- that is. Income, employment, education, health and so on. These inequalities are rooted in the most advantaged in India the Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribes(ST) among the poorest and most disadvantaged, Frequent overlap between social and economic deprivation is a defining feature of India's social structure. With regard to this overlap Nirja Gopal Jayal observes;

> That there is in India a frequent convergence between cultural inequalities in well Known. This is an overlap between, on the one hand, the inherited symbolic or cultural disadvantages of caste or religious identity and, on the other, of economic disadvantage. Low caste status if often accompanied by deprivation, and traditional and historical forms of social inequality thus co-exist with, and are reinforced by, inequalities arising out of the sphere of production and economic activity.

There is a frequent convergence between social and material inequalities- which is to say there is an overlap between the inherited symbolic of social disadvantaged of caste, on the one hand of socio-economic deprivation and disadvantage, on the other, Low caste status is often accompanied by deprivation, and traditional and historical forms of social inequality thus coexist with, and are reinforced by, inequalities arising out of the sphere of production and economic activity. This is true of large sections of the Muslim minority as well, but is not widely recognized and acknowledged owing to a lack of public awareness on the issue.[vii]

THE STATEMENT OF PROBLEM:

The approach of growth with equity has been followed in India since independence, but the powerlessness of excluded groups is exploited and, at the same time, their disadvantaged position is reinforced, what are the educational status of Muslims in India with compare to other fellow communities, And also they are being used by different political parties, Why not they are actively involved in the political institutions and process.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:

To understand the Social Exclusion and its nature in Indian Context.

To Study, the status of Muslim minority education, and compare it to other major communities in India.

To outline, Political deprivation of Indian Muslim in the Political institutions and political process.

Finally, some suggestions would be made with regards to deprivation and exclusion of Muslim Minority in India.

METHODOLOGY:

The study would be based on secondary sources that are various journals, books, articles and other source of secondary sources.

ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY:

India's designated religious minorities, constitute about 19.35% of the population numbering about 193.5 million people as per Census 2011. The Muslim Minority, Accounts for 73.6% of the minority population with 14.23% of total India's population and numbers nearly 172.2 million people However, for several decades after independence. Religion based demographic data for development was not collected in India. And the previous five year plans have suffered as a consequence of not being able to plan adequate interventions for religious minority communities. While much more disaggregated data needs to be continually collected in the coming years, the 11th plan did have the benefit of insights from data generated by the Census 2001 as well as from analysis of several rounds of the NSSO such as the 43rd, 50th, 55th, and 61st rounds and from other sources. Much of this data was analysed and presented before the nation in the report by the Prime Minister appointed Committee headed by Justice Raginder Sachar, which examined the socio-economic and educational condition of Muslims. The picture that emerged was one of socio- economic deprivation, gross inequality, and considerable exclusion of the largest minority from India's progress on key development indicators.

As mentioned earlier, among minorities, Muslims constitute a sizable segment-14.23 percent of Indians. They suffer from greater deprivation and disadvantage as compared to other minorities. This has been apparent at least since the Gopal Singh Committee Report, in 1983,

declared Muslims a socially and educationally backward group requiring special measures to alleviate their backwardness. The Prime Minister in 2005, constituted a 'High-Level Committee on the social, Economic and Educational Status of Muslim Community of India'. Charged with investigating the socio-economic status of Muslim, the Sachar Committee Report(SCR) found stark under-presentation of Muslims and systemic evidence to show that they are in many respects as disadvantaged as the lowest Hindu caste groups. It showed that in twenty odd years since the submission of the Gopal Singh Committee Report. The Central and state governments had done very little to rectify the backwardness and under-representation of Muslims. This was despite the fact that the 1980s was a period when the government focused specific attention on tackling mass social and economic deprivation. Yet, the policy discoursed and public debate have, for the most part, ignored the problems in regard to the exclusion of minorities because of the widespread assumption that the concept of exclusion is applicable primarily to historically oppressed groups and not to minorities.

Studies conducted over the last few decades show that Muslims, on the whole, have been increasingly marginalized both socially and economically, although there has been admittedly some progress in certain small pockets. This limited progress, however, has been largely independent of the state efforts. On its part, the state appears to have deliberately or otherwise played a somewhat indifferent and, in some states, clearly hostile role in the social, economic and educational advancement of Muslims.[viii]

The majority of Indian Muslims suffer grave deprivation in social opportunity, because of lack of access to education, health care and other public services, and to employment. For the most part, they are even more disadvantage than Dalits and are emerging as India's principal underclass. Forty-three percent of them live below the official poverty line. Muslims are more likely to live in hovels without electricity than Dalits, Only 19 percent have piped water supply. Compared to 23 percent Dalits. Muslim men's work participation rate 48 percent is lower than Dalit malepd (53 percent). For Muslim women, it is just 9-6 percent Less than half of the Dalit women's 23 percent. Muslims are less likely to use the public Distribution System (PDS) for food (22 percent) than Dalits (32 percent) or vaccinate their children (40 percent) than Dalits (47 percent).[ix]

EDUCATIONAL EXCLUSION

Scholars all over the world have opined that the education is a powerful agent of social change. Education is regarded as one of the means for ensuring social mobility. Especially for the Marginalized groups of India. After a long and stony silence lasting decades on the issue of the educational backwardness of Indian Muslims. The Government of India has finally publicly admitted the fact and acknowledged that urgent special measures have to be under taken to redress the situation[x]. According to the 1998-99 Annual Report of the National Commission for the Minorities, The enormous Muslim Population of India is terribly under-represented in all public services both at the national and state levels. Their presence in general educational institutions of the country is also much below their population ratio. And is often found nil.[xi] A UNDP- sponsored survey conducted by NCAER (National Council for Applied Economic Research). Which later took the shape of the India: Human Development Report. Clarifies even more convincingly the educational status of Muslim in India. One can conclude that at all levels of education, Muslims are behind all other major religious communities. Muslims have the lowest literacy rates among all population groups categorized by religious community, according to the Census data (Table-1.1), If we look at literacy rates within religious communities by gender, we find that the proportions of both male and female and female literacy are worst among Muslims than in any other major religious group.

Table 1.1

Literacy Rates of Major Religious Communities by Gender

	India	Hindus	**Muslims**	Christians	Sikhs	Buddhists	Jain	Others
All	64.8	65.1	**59.1**	80.3	69.4	72.7	94.4	47.0
Male	75.3	76.2	**67-6**	84-4	75.2	81.1	97.4	60.8
Female	53.7	53.2	**50.1**	76.2	63.1	61.7	90.6	33.2

Note: All figures are percentage, Others including SC s/STs=52-2% as per Sachar Report Table A-41, p.287.

Table 1.2

Literates Proportion of Population by Age Groups, 2004-05

Age Groups (Years)	Hindu General	Hindu OBCs	Hindu SCs/STs	Muslims	Other Minorties
6-13	90.2	80.8	74.7	74.6	88.5
14-15	95.7	87.5	80.0	79.5	91.9
16-17	95.0	85.2	78.6	75.5	91.3
18-22	91.4	76.9	65.0	70.5	85.8
23 1nd above	74.0	50.6	36.5	46.1	67.0
Total	80.5	63.4	52.2	59.9	75.5

Source: Estimated from NSSO 61st Round, Schedule 10(2004-05)

Table 1.3

Education Levels by Religious Community for Age 7 years and above

	All	Hindu	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs	Buddhists	Jain	Others
Illiterate	35.2	34.9	40.9	19.7	30.6	27.3	5.9	53.0
Literate	64.8	65.1	59.1	80.3	69.4	72.7	94.1	47.0
Literate w/o edu	2.31	2.28	2.65	2.65	1.27	1.76	1.21	1.50
Below primary	16.74	16.53	18.83	15.98	13.08	19.95	11.64	15.30
Primary	16.96	16.92	17.12	18.10	18.07	18.00	14.90	12.39
Middle	10.43	10.53	8.96	13.74	11.75	12.72	11.54	8.21
Matric/ secondary	9.16	9.27	6.48	14.02	14.54	10.23	20.57	5.28
High Secondary	4.37	4.50	2.67	6.98	5.26	5.56	13.02	2.13
Non-Technical	0.04	0.03	0.06	0.11	0.07	0.01	0.08	0.01
Technical	0.42	0.42	0.18	1.64	0.54	0.24	0.88	0.10
Graduate and above	4.35	4.56	2.12	6.98	4.82	4.14	20.19	2.04

| Unclassified | 0.01 | 0.008 | 0.02 | 0.008 | 0.01 | 0.006 | 0.01 | 0.003 |
| Total Population | 100 | 80.5 | 13.4 | 2.3 | 1.9 | 0,8 | 0.4 | 0.6 |

Source: Computed from Census of India 2001.

POLITICAL DEPRIVATION:

Equally disconcerting is the under-representation of Muslims in Politics, in particular, legislatures. Iqbal A Ansari, has painstakingly documented this in Political Representation of Muslims in India 1952-2004. This study, for instance, reveals that Muslim representation has not been satisfactory in the Parliament (see Table). Except for the 1980 and 1984 Lok Sabhas, Muslim under-representation, or what Ansari calls *Muslim political deprivation*, remains around 50%.

TABLE
(Muslims in Lok Sabha)

No.	Year	Total elected members	Muslims elected	Expected representation on population basis	Deprivation %
I	1952	489	21	49	57.14
II	1957	494	24	49	51.02
III	1962	494	23	53	56.60
IV	1967	520	29	56	48.25
V	1971	518	30	58	48.28
VI	1977	542	34**	61	44.26
VII	1980	529*1	49**	59	16.95
VIII	1984	542	46**	62	25.81
IX	1989	529*2	33	60	45.00
X	1991	534*3	28	65	56.92
XI	1996	543	28	66	57.56
XII	1998	543	29	66	56.06
XIII	1999	543	32	66	51.52
XIV	2004	543	36	66	45.45
XV	2007	543	28	66	57.56
XVI	2014	543	23	66	65.15
Total			493	**968**	**49.07**

Notes: *1: Elections were not held in Assam (12) and Meghalaya (1); 2: Elections were not held in Assam (14); 3: Elections were not held in J&K (6) and countermanded in two seats in Bihar and one in UP.

** Including Muslims elected in bye-elections.

Source: Ansari 2006, p. 64. And further it has been updated.

The primary reason for Muslim under-representation is their under-nomination by political parties. In the first-past-the –post system, parties tend to favor the majority community. Under the growing influence of Hindutva, many parties have also reluctant to nominate Muslims, although they might be candidates. If Muslim "deprivation" or under-representation in the Lok Sabha is measured in relation to their population, it is pervasive nationally (47 percent). It is particularly high in Rajasthan(91 percent), Delhi (86percent), Maharashtra (71percent), Madhya Pradesh (50percent), and Tamil Nadu (53 percent), Even in Kerla and West Bengal. States with a strong Muslim presence. The deprivation rate exceeds 40 percent. The situation in State legislatures is even more dismal. In Andhra Pradesh, Muslim under-representation in the Legislative Assembly is 61 percent(much higher than in the Lok Sabha, 41 percent), in Bihar 47 percent, Gujarat 79 percent, Karnataka 71 percent, Madhya Pradesh 69 percent, and Maharashtra 62 percent Rajasthan shows an improved index (56 percent) over its Lok Sabha score, But Utter Pradesh shows deterioration (from 39 to 46 percent), These figures speak of a total betrayal of the inclusive promise held out just after independences, When the Constituent Assembly debated and rejected reservation of legislative seats for the religious minorities in 1949, Nehru called it" an act of faith above all for majority community because they will have to show after this that they can behave to others in a generous, fair and just way{by keeping their representation commensurate with their population}. Let us live up to that faith." But sadly India has not live up.[xii]

One of the worst forms-but a good index of states real attitude- of discrimination against Muslims is their over-representation in prisons in all the States surveyed barring Assam. In Gujarat, Muslims are two-and-a half times likelier to be in prison than Hindus in relation to their population. In Maharashtra. Muslim account for 10.6 percent of the population, but for 40.6 percent of all prisoners, Even in Tamil Nadu. A state with a legacy of intense non-Brahmin movement. The proportions are 5.6 percent and9.6 percent. More than 60 percent of this prison population consists of under trials- probable victims of the selective recent application of antiterrorist measures to Muslims.[xiii]

It is often claimed that the poor are the same everywhere, and suffer similar disabilities. But being a poor from a Muslim background poses its own set of challenges. A variety of factors have been identified to explain the observed relative deprivation among Muslims in India. As Basant argues, these include differentials in endowments across social groups; actual or perceived discrimination; and behaviour patterns or attitudes and supply of educational and

employment opportunities.[xiv] Thus poor Muslims are further burdened: they suffer problems faced by the poor generally – poor assets, poor capabilities, and active discrimination by state and social forces, wanting to maintain the status quo. On top of this, poor Muslims face the additional disabilities specific to belonging to the Muslim community.

Sachar report used the framework *of **identity, security and equity***, to explain the multidimensional nature of Muslim exclusion. In essence it showed that problems faced by Muslims relate to a combination of identity, security and equity related concerns – and that these three overlap and feed into each other in myriad ways, to create the lived experiences of exclusion faced by Muslim communities.[xv] To take an example, fact of one's Muslim identity means that, for Muslim youth, finding a room to rent in mixed habitation settlements, or being able to land a job in a company is increasingly becoming difficult. Frequent and periodic violence against the community in riots or through discriminatory actions by the police, means that the youth, in this case, are constantly in a state of siege, resulting in poor mobility or poor ability to access education opportunities, especially for girls.[xvi] Exclusion, of course, most directly impacts what are called 'equity' concerns. In the case of education, for example, these are about poor availability of school infrastructure in Muslim concentrated areas, poor quality of education provided, including insensitive text books, poverty coming in the way of children fully utilising the opportunities that are available, and low perceived benefits from education.[xvii] Implication is that efforts to ameliorate the conditions too must take the multidimensionality of poverty/well-being into account.

CONCLUSIVE AND SUGGESTIVE REMARKS:

Inclusive approach is not a new thing to the world in general and India in particular. The approach of growth with equity has been followed in India since independence. This is also true for many other countries in the world. Actions of different institutions or actors such as state, Market and civil society organization can decide inclusion/exclusion of populations in various activities. Norms, values, religious and cultural beliefs can also determine the level of inclusion or exclusion. Social exclusion keeps a social group outside the power-centers and resources. It takes the form of segregation of certain people from the social, political, economic, cultural, educational and religious domains of society, It thus, imbues a sense of superiority and inferiority in members of a society or culture and results in a system of

domination and subjugation. These processes ultimately lead to oppression and exploitation.[xviii]

The present poignant conditions of Muslims demand urgent rectification through affirmative action, Affirmative action need not to be debated. It just will not do to dismiss the reservations argument it its rejection leads to inaction and perpetuation and aggravation of Muslim exclusion, as happened with the Gopal Singh Report. We simply cannot afford further exclusion and alienation of Muslims- morally, politically, or in its implications for social disharmony, strife and violence. Eventually, one must move towards a proportional representation-based electoral system. This system is far superior to the first-past-the-post system**.** But in the immediate future. Some steps are necessary; The most underprivileged and the OBCs among Muslims must be given a share in the overall Dalits and OBC job and education quotas. And 15 percent of all plan expenditure must be set aside for the religious minorities, who constitute 19.35 percent of the population. The lion's share must go to Muslims. The MHRD has done well to start recording enrolment of Muslims in schools and sanction 7000 primary and upper primary schools in minority- dominated districts during 2006-07, and 32,250 centers under the Education Guarantee Scheme. It is focusing on the 93 districts that have more than a 20 percent Muslims in the population. Much more must be done at all levels of education. Measures such as these will help empower Muslims. But the problem of exclusion will still remain. It will need other forms of affirmative action. Such as aggressive recruitment to "sensitive" positions in police. Military and intelligence agencies- not through quotas. But as special. Focused measures to be repeated until Muslim representation reaches an acceptable level. It goes without saying that the government must simultaneously de-communalize its counter-terrorism strategy and bring the culprits of recent communal violence to book. This is essential to restoring the Muslim community's confidence in the state and the possibility of getting justice. At the end of the day, exclusion spells social disintegration. India's democracy will only be as strong as its pluralism and ability to be inclusive.

The National Advisory Council (NAC)'s draft recommendation to the 12th plan for the empowerment of Muslims stated that, "Today, on the eve of the 12th Plan, we must embrace the lessons of the 11th Plan period, acknowledging not just the achievements. But also without hesitation the limitations of some of the efforts, Overall, whereas a significant start

has been made in addressing the development deficits of religious minorities, serious bottlenecks remains' as under.

a) The scale of government interventions must be large enough to make a dent into the numbers of the marginalized, the depth of their economic and educational deprivations, and denial of public services.

b) The design and implementation structures of the programmes do not often target minority settlements and people directly and effectively.

c) The institutional structures designed to implement these initiatives- from the Ministry of the Minority Affairs to districts officials and below-require strengthening, of personnel, mandate, training and support.

d) The demand side needs to be strengthened as well; the administration needs to plan and monitor programmes for development of minorities in more participatory ways (consulting and planning with women, youth and working men from poor minority communities), and also the leadership and community institutions of women, youth and working men from poor minority communities need to be actively fostered, and

e) Allocations overall need to be enhanced, given that religious minorities, including Muslims, constitute 18.4% of the population, but budgetary allocations of schemes designed for them is a little over 5% of total plan allocations. The per capita plan allocation of resources for minorities in 2010-11 at Rs.797 is significantly lower than allocations for other marginalized groups.

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