



## Status of madrasas under modernization programme in Varanasi division

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### Abstract

Though Indian Muslims have developed Madrasa System of Education spread widely across the country, these institutes by and large had failed in producing desired result in the field of education after independence. Therefore the central government had taken initiative to modernize them by providing monetary support, introducing modern curricula and incorporating trained teachers. The scope of this paper includes the assessment and evaluation of the modernization scheme implemented by the government.

**Keywords:** infrastructure, madrasa, modernization programme

### Introduction

The Indian state after independence had worked considerably harder in order to create well developed system of education with a number of Universities, Colleges and Schools both Government and Private to provide modern day education in contrast to its Gurukul and Madrasa system of education prevalent before colonial education. However under different articles of the constitution the state also empower the religious minorities of the country to establish and manage the educational institute of their choice so that they can disseminate the religious teachings of their religion among the followers. Muslims are the largest religious minority group in Indian sub-continent with 14.2% of the total Indian population (Census 2011) <sup>[2]</sup> and at the same time the least educated Indian group with a literate population of 59.1% (Census 2001) <sup>[1]</sup>. Although Islam stress on acquiring knowledge, Muslims are not only educationally backward section of the society but are also socially and economically backward. Wide spread poverty, deep rooted patriarchal attitudes, indifference of state and Muslim leaders to issues of Muslim education has all contributed to make Indian Muslims the least educated section of Indian society (Sikand, 2005) <sup>[4]</sup>. Most of the Muslim population looks towards Madrasa as the only source of acquiring knowledge because of its inexpensive education. In order to maintain their identity in a heterogeneous Indian society, common Indian Muslim rely more on Madrasa education than government funded secular schools. Much debate had been done to discuss the role of Madrasa in Indian educational context. The Madrasa system of education and its continuity in India has been a topic for hot discussion since the colonial regime but particularly after the rise of global terror and some leaders allege the links it have with radicalization, this system still continued to educate the students.

But sooner it was felt that the Madaris alone were not capable enough to furnish the need of the students, the children of the educationally backward Muslim

minorities who attend these *Maktabs, Madaris and Darul-Ulooms* had little participation in the national mainstream education system and therefore for the uplift of all the students up to a certain level of education the Central Government has been implementing the Area Intensive and Madrasa Modernization Scheme. The scheme as implemented during the X Plan had two components, namely infrastructure support for educational institutions catering to educationally backward population and introduction of modern subjects in traditional institutions of Madrasas.

The Central Government further constituted National Monitoring Committee for Minorities Education (NMCME) in 2004 to look into all aspects of education of minorities. An Expert Committee of the NMCME was also constituted to give inputs for revising the programme of modernization of Madrasas which suggested various steps and measures to be taken for the improvement of the modernization scheme. After taking into account the assorted inputs suggested by the expert committee of NMCME the Madrasa modernization programme has been recast as- *Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madrasas (SPQEM)* in 2009. The SPQEM is a demand driven scheme and endeavor to cover a total of 4500-6000 Madrasas in order to provide modern education in addition to their religious education. An amount of Rs. 325 crore was proposed for the scheme as per budget provision made by Planning Commission in the XIth Five Year Plan. The objective of the Scheme is to encourage traditional institutions like Madrasas and Maktabs by giving financial assistance to introduce Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, Hindi and English in their curriculum so that academic proficiency for classes I-XII is attainable for children studying in these institutions. However, the process of modernization of traditional Madrasas and Maktabs is voluntary (MHRD, 2009) <sup>[3]</sup>. The scheme also tends to provide opportunities to students of these institutions to acquire education comparable to the National Education System especially for secondary and senior secondary levels which would

enable children studying in these institutions to progress to higher levels of learning and also open up better job opportunities for them.

**Need of the study**

With over six years since the inception of the SPQEM under Madrasa Modernization, an evaluation of this scheme is necessary to assess the efficiency with which this scheme has been administered and implemented. In this backdrop the present study is an attempt to study the availability of basic physical and human infrastructural facilities conducive to teaching learning in the Madrasas under Modernization Programme.

**Methodology**

The method adopted for the study is Descriptive Survey.

1. Population- All the Madrasas of Varanasi Division registered under Madrasa Modernization Programme which is 339 (as per August 2015) constitutes the population of this study.
2. Sample of the study- Initially it was decided to select some Madrasas under MMP from Varanasi division but during pilot study it was found that few of the Madrasas were reluctant to participate in the study. Therefore it was decided to include all the Madrasas in study and therefore the Madrasa Modernization Programme Questionnaire (MMPQ) was sent to all the 339 Madrasas of Varanasi division by mail. However after two reminders only 171 Madrasas responded and so formed the sample. The final study is based on 171 Madrasas who responded.
3. Tool of the study- A self-constructed Madrasa Modernization Programme Questionnaire (MMPQ) was used as the tool of the study. The tool contains both close and open ended questions.
4. Informal interview and small group discussion with Principals and Teachers of the Madrasas were also conducted to have an in-depth understanding.

**Presentation of Data: Analysis, Explanation and Findings**

The following analysis and explanation is based on the data collected through the administration of the questionnaire.

**Table 1:** Status of Madrasas under Modernization Programme

	No. of Madrasas
Total Responded	171
Aided	43 (25.14)*
Non-aided	128 (74.85)
Affiliation to Arbi Farsi board	171 (100)
Prior experience of teaching modern subjects	170 (99.41)

\*Figures in parentheses are in percentage

Before the colonial education in India the Madrasas were bestowed with state’s wealth in form of grant, salaries and scholarships which were seized after 1857, after which almost all of the Madrasas functioned only due to individual effort followed by community support (Such as Nadwa in Lucknow, Salfiya in Varanasi and Darul Uloom in Deoband) and even today almost as high as 75% Madrasas run due to individual and community

support. In Varanasi division out of 171(responded) Madrasas registered under Modernization Programme only 43 madrasas are aided and receive grants while rest of the Madrasas are non-aided, that means only a fewer number of Madrasas receive government aid and thus function slightly better than those who do not receive any grant from government and therefore these madrasas due to lack of monetary support are barely providing the “good” education.

All the madrasas registered under MMP are also affiliated with the Uttar Pradesh Arbi Farsi Board, Lucknow and follow its’ curriculum and prescribed syllabus and at the same time 99.41% of madrasas had previously included modern subjects too in their curriculum along with religious subjects before registering them with the modernization programme.

**Table 2:** Madrasas Teaching Modern Subjects prior to MMP

Subjects	No. of Madrasas
English	170 (99.41)*
Hindi	168 (98.24)
Maths	169 (98.83)
Science	159 (92.98)
Social studies	144 (84.21)
Arts/Music	89 (52.04)

\*Figures in parentheses are in percentage

Nearly all madrasas had already incorporated subjects of temporal learning along with religious teaching prior to modernization programme however the thrust and zeal with which spiritual or religious learning were being carried was missing with temporal teaching, no particular curriculum or syllabus was formally adopted for temporal learning. Main focus was on teaching languages (Hindi and English) in addition to Arabic, Persian and Urdu and working knowledge of Maths, usually the four basic operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division). As a Principal of one of the Madrasas of Chandauli district said

“...madarson ke kiyaam ka maksad schooli shiksha dena nahi balki deen ki taalim dena hai, aise me hum apne madarse me naye zamaane ke hisaab se angrezi, hindi, ganit aur vigyan ki buniyaadi shiksha to dete the par modernization scheme me aane ke baad sarkaar ka in vishyon par zyada dhayaan hai.”

(“...the purpose of Madrasas is to provide religious knowledge and not worldly knowledge in spite of this we had included basic education for English, Hindi, Maths and Science but under modernization programme governments’ focus is more on these subjects”).

**Table 3:** Status of Madrasas professing various Schools of Thought

School of Thought	No. of Madrasas
Ahle-Sunnat	4 (2.33)*
Barelwi	66 (38.59)
Deobandi	21 (12.28)
Ahle-Hadees	17 (9.94)
Shia	2 (1.16)
Hanfi	4 (2.33)
Not Particular	57 (33.33)

\*Figures in parentheses are in percentage

It has been largely criticized on the part of Madrasas that they promote orthodoxy by promoting particular School of thought and it appeared to be true, the data itself revealed that most of the Madrasas adhere themselves to

a particular sect of Islam and discriminate fellow Muslims on this ground. Only 33.33% Madrasa do not associate them with any particular school of thought rest all madrasas adhere to one.

**Table 4:** Madrasas with different levels of Education

Levels	No. of Madrasas
Primary	31 (18.12)*
Upper Primary	36 (21.05)
Secondary	63 (36.84)
Senior Secondary	16 (9.35)
Graduation	6 (3.50)
Post-Graduation	19 (11.11)

\*Figures in parentheses are in percentage

Most of the secondary madrasas (Aliya) are located in urban areas where as the primary and upper primary madrasas (Tahtania and Faukania) are located in rural areas. In some of the rural areas these primary and upper primary madrasas are the only source of education in Muslim ghettos.

**Table 5:** Status of Educational Activities in Madrasas

Educational Activity	No. of Madrasas
Laboratory Work	52 (30.40)*
Excursion/Educational Tours	105 (61.40)
Seminars/Conferences	2 (1.16)

\*Figures in parentheses are in percentage

**Table 6:** Infrastructural facilities in Madrasas for Science Teaching

	Facilities	No. of Madrasas
	Library	117 (68.42)*
	Computer Lab	101 (59.06)
	Science Lab	47 (27.48)
	Lab Equipments	
a	Microscope	13 (7.60)
b	Slides	16 (9.35)
c	Museum specimen	8 (4.67)
d	Science kit	133 (77.77)
e	Maths kit	136 (79.53)

\*Figures in parentheses are in percentage

Only 27.48% of Madrasas said that they have a functional science lab and other data reveals that most of these science labs lacks basic lab equipments too, therefore one can easily assume the quality of lab work conducted by teachers of these Madrasas.

lack of awareness regarding education, may be the more affluent people send their sons to private schools and daughters to Madrasas or may be the sex ratio in these areas are better, are the questions which need additional investigation.

**Table 7:** Gender Composition of students studying in Madrasas

Students	Number
Female	37553
Male	32382

The number of girls studying in these Madrasas is 37553 whereas the number of boys is 32382. The number of girls slightly outnumbers the boys; the reason for this may be many which needs further research. Most of the Madrasas are generally set up in Muslim ghettos and area with higher number of Muslim population where majority of the people are economically poor, involved in small business of handicrafts, weaving either by handloom or power loom, general store types shops and stores or repairing shops of machinery, where there is poverty and

**Table 8:** infrastructural Facilities in Madrasas

	Yes	No
Own Building	164 (95.90)	7 (4.09)
New rooms constructed	102 (59.64)	69 (40.35)
Playground	93 (54.38)	78 (45.61)

Among all the Madrasas registered under MMP, 95.90% of the Madrasas had their own building, rest of the Madrasas run on rents. However according to the MMP requirement the Madrasas which are supposed to be registered under MMP must have their own building, so how these Madrasas without their own building had been eligible for MMP is under question? 59.64% of Madrasas said that they required additional rooms after getting registered themselves in the MMP programme.

**Table 9:** Teachers’ Academic and Professional Qualification

Subject	Qualification									
	M.Sc B.Ed	M.Sc.	B.Sc. B.Ed	B.Sc.	*M.A. B.Ed.	*M.A.	*B.A B.Ed	*B.A		
Science Total Teacher 167	2 (1.19)	20 (11.97)	3 (1.79)	59 (35.32)	19 (11.37)	25 (14.97)	1 (0.59)	38 (22.75)		
Social Studies Total Teacher 171	M.A. B.Ed 11 (6.43)	M.A. 83 (48.53)	B.A. B.Ed 1 (0.58)	B.A. 75 (43.85)	*Intermediate 1 (0.58)					
Maths Total Teacher 160	M.Sc B.Ed 5 (3.12)	M.Sc. 6 (3.75)	B.Sc. B.Ed 11 (6.87)	B.Sc. 36 (22.5)	M.Com 2 (1.25)	B.Com 2 (1.25)	*MA B.Ed 9 (5.62)	*M.A. 46 (28.75)	*B.A B.Ed 2 (1.25)	*B.A. 41 (25.62)

Qualification marked with \* designates that the teachers concerned lack the eligibility to teach that particular subject.

Teachers are an important human infrastructure required for providing quality education and instructions in academic areas and are the biggest assets on which any educational institutes rely upon for imparting the education. Under Modernization Programme, each registered Madrasas had to recruit three teachers for teaching temporal subjects whose salaries will be

reimbursed by the government. However due to meager salary paid by government most of the madrasas face problem in recruiting teachers and therefore face not only shortage of teachers but had recruited teachers who are neither trained nor eligible to teach subjects like Maths and Science.

**Table 10:** Teachers’ Training, Recruitment and Number of Teachers in Madrasas

	No. of Madrasas	
	Yes	No
Teachers trained by DIET	118 (69)*	53 (30.99)
Guidelines followed in recruitment	164 (95.90)	7 (4.09)
Sufficient Teacher’s strength	135 (78.94)	36 (21.05)

\*Figures in parentheses represent percentage

Although the data show that almost 69% of the teachers recruited under modernization programme were trained by the concerned DIET, one of the teachers of a prominent Madrasa of Varanasi district revealed that-  
*“.....training to bas naam ki hoti hai, zyada log to jana bhi nahi chahte. Kuch teachers to aisa karte hai ke dus din ke hisaab se jitney din ka TA/DA banta hai us hisaab se DIET me paisa khila deta hain, badle me DIET wale attendance bana ke certificate de dete hain. Female teachers to ekdam jana nahi chahti aur male teachers bhi yahi karte hain.”*  
 (“.....training is only a formality; most of them do not want to participate. Few of the teachers calculate their TA/DA allowance for an average of ten days, pay it to DIET (bribe), the DIET in favour manages their attendance and handover them the certificate of participation. Most of the female teachers do not want to go and male teachers too follow the same”).

Clearly in the absence of strict vigilant and monitoring body corruption like these in training and recruitment are weakening the base on which the modernization programme is built upon.

**Table 11:** Madrasas linked with NIOS and ITI

	No. of Madrasas	
	Yes	No
NIOS	2 (1.16)*	169 (98.83)
ITI	2 (1.16)	169 (98.83)

\*Figures in parentheses represent percentage

The vision with which the Madrasas were thought to be linked with ITI and NIOS is lacking because of the apathetic attitude of the Madrasa management because they had not tried to get their Madrasas linked with either of them which could provide additional skill training to be used by students for participation in workforce or open new avenues of education.

**Table 12:** Status of Madrasas Receiving and Utilizing Funds received other than Government

Funds Received	No. of Madrasas
Community	97 (56.72)*
NGO	2 (1.16)
None	72 (42.10)
Funds Utilized	No. of Madrasas
Infrastructure	77 (45.02)
Library	4 (2.33)
Orphanage	9 (5.26)

\*Figures in parentheses represent percentage

It is evident that most of the madrasas are functional due to community or individual support. As most of the madrasas do not charge any fee and offer almost charity

based education the infrastructure, quality of teachers and school ethos all are influenced by it.

**Table 13:** Status of Madrasas with respect to Timely Inspection and Receiving of Salary

	No. of Madrasas	
	Yes	No
Inspection on Time	141 (82.45)*	30 (17.54)
Salary Received on Time	60 (35.08)	111 (64.91)
Problem in receiving salary	139 (81.28)	32 (18.71)

MMPQ had few open ended questions and in addition to this researcher has conducted informal interviews with teachers and managers of Madrasas. All the responses were coded and thematic analysis of the content was done. The following findings were obtained after the analysis of qualitative data-

**1. Reluctant Government-** As per the guidelines of the MHRD for SPQEM under Madrasa Modernization Programme, each Madrasa registered under MMP is supposed to receive financial support to improve its infrastructure: the classrooms, science lab, computer lab and library. But all the Madrasas had denied of receiving any sort of fund or monetary support from the government for the same and therefore poor infrastructure and lack of resources including teaching learning facilities, poor sanitation facilities and unavailability of clean drinking water still persists in these Madrasas.

One of the senior teacher of Varanasi District had also alleged that government want that the children should also receive computer education but does not provide computer teacher and the Madrasa cannot afford a computer teacher or the cost of maintaining the computer lab, therefore providing computer education to these vulnerable children is only a dream for the government who is reluctant to help them. In the name of building and maintaining computer lab government had provided a single computer to these Madrasas.

**1. Problems with salaries-** The salaries of the teachers appointed in the SPQEM scheme are to be paid by the government. Most of the teachers working under this scheme claimed that they receive late salary, after more than six months or a year. Few of the teachers of Ghazipur districts alleged that their salary for more than a session had been lapsed under the veil of current and previous financial year.

**2. Poorly qualified teachers-** Most of the Madrasa personnel claimed that the salary as proposed by the government to these teachers recruited under MMP is so inadequate that better qualified teachers with zest for teaching are unwilling to join Madrasas and therefore in the absence of suitable candidates most of the teachers recruited are not apt for quality teaching.

the scheme have not been fulfilled by the government. Thus, basically the SPQEM has failed in improving the infrastructures and basic facilities in the Madrasas.

A large number of teachers are not trained and lacks essential qualification too for teaching particular subjects. Most of the Madrasa’ teachers had received their education from Madrasa itself and therefore lack the basic approach of child centered learning. As per the guidelines of SPQEM, although each of the Madrasas had been provided three teachers under MMP whose salaries are paid by government, most of the teachers are still untrained, as they had not received the training form DIET. SPQEM fails to follow its own guideline.

Problems with dropouts still persist in Madrasas. Further research is required to understand the reasons of dropouts.

Most of the Madrasas lack basic TLM resources conducive to learning environment, they still use century’s old methods of teaching and even simple educational activities like educational tours and excursion are not included in their curriculum which could attract student’s attention. Even those Madrasas who do have resources aren’t able to ensure its usage therefore observation for changes in pedagogy are a subject of further research.

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**Conclusion**

Number of non-aided Madrasas is more in Varanasi division which do not receive any grant or monetary help from government, apart from three teachers and their salaries. Most of the provisions and promises made under