

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSIONS

In the foregoing pages, an attempt has been made to study, analyse and discuss the problem of equalization and utilization of educational opportunity with reference to the Muslims in Delhi. However, before summarizing our findings it may be mentioned that these may not be treated as final because of the exploratory nature of our study. Besides, the study is confined to Delhi - which being the capital of India receives special attention of the government in all matters. Taking India as a whole, the condition of the Muslims regarding the use of educational opportunity may probably be more dismal and apathetic. Our findings of the study are as under:

1. The Muslim community is able to utilize educational opportunity proportionately to a much less extent than the non-Muslim community at all levels of education. This fact has been established by the computation of 'co-efficient of equality' which comes to 74.0 and 23.6 at the primary and higher secondary levels of education respectively in the Union Territory of Delhi.

2. It is found that the living conditions of Muslim students studying in grade V are not as good as those of the

students from the other communities - a fact which is likely to affect their education adversely. However, Muslim students of grades VIII and XI do not suffer from this type of disadvantage.

3. Our findings reveal that there is no significant difference in respect of the socio-economic status which has been worked on the basis of Kuppaswamy's scale between the two groups in this regard except in the case of Muslim girls who have an edge over their counterparts.

4. Parents of Muslim students in grade V have somewhat poorer educational traditions than their counterparts. On the contrary, there is no such difference in the educational status of Muslim students in grades VIII and XI. However, as against other communities they are under-represented in public jobs at all levels - a factor which might be working as a constraint in pursuit of education.

5. Muslim students of grade V make less use of educational opportunities because of poor study facilities at home, non-availability of time for studies and extra-help from parents or private tutors and long distance between the home and school. But in higher grades i.e. VIII and XI the degree of handicap in the matter of home study, time given to study, and distance from the school is not so glaring. On the other hand, in the provision of private coaching

arrangements Muslim students are better placed than the other communities. Thus as Muslim students go up higher in the educational ladder, they are less constrained in this respect, though their number decreases disproportionately.

6. Muslim students at all stages of education lag behind their compatriots in the availability of the newspaper facilities at home. However, this difference is not very significant.

7. We find that practically in most of the primary schools, libraries are housed in the class-room. However, schools attended by Muslim children offer poorer library facilities in terms of average number of books available and number of books issued per student. Even at the higher stages Urdu-medium schools are providing only nominal library facilities.

8. Most of the Urdu-medium schools irrespective of their type are located in the congested part of the city where sanitary conditions are very poor and environment is far from stimulating. School buildings are in a bad shape and most of them are devoid of basic amenities, such as, proper arrangement of ventilation and toilet facilities. The very look of the building gives the impression that it was not built to house a school.

9. Urdu-medium schools are overcrowded; and a teacher has on the average more students in the class-room than the teacher in a Hindi-medium school. One reason for the overcrowding seems to be the fact that there are very few Urdu-medium higher secondary schools to cater to a larger number of students from the Muslim community.

10. Muslim students of grades V and VIII attend schools which as compared to the Hindi-medium schools are less regular in assigning homework.

11. Excepting Muslim girl students at the primary stage, a majority of the students from our sample at primary and middle stages report that their parents want them to be outstanding in the class. However, on the whole at the primary stage Muslim students and at the middle stage non-Muslim students are somewhat unfavourably placed in this regard.

12. Muslim students attend schools which are by and large, attended by the students drawn from their own community and where largely Muslim teachers teach. In grade XI quite a big chunk of Muslim students prefer to select schools, friends and teachers belonging to their own community.

13. Urdu-medium primary schools are comparatively better than Hindi-medium schools in the provision of medical

facilities. However, in Urdu-medium higher secondary schools these are practically non-existent. But even in other schools, which are said to have the so-called medical facilities, visits of the medical doctor are far from satisfactory.

14. Muslim students both at the primary and higher secondary stages are behind non-Muslim students in appreciating the importance of co-curricular activities in the totality of school life.

15. There are about equal number of students in grade XI in the two communities who point out that the existing schooling facilities available to them are far from adequate.

16. The main reasons which restrict Muslim students of grade XI to attend the schools of neighbourhood are in the order of importance, non-availability of instruction in their mother-tongue, father's disliking for the school and unsuitability of the school programmes on religious grounds.

17. Our study shows that students of grade XI irrespective of community do not have realistic occupational plans. However, the responses of students indicate that there is a general consensus among the parents of students belonging to the two communities that their daughters should adopt the teaching profession.

18. There is a significant difference at .01 level in the mean age and intelligence of Muslim and non-Muslim boys of

grade V. And this difference is in favour of Muslim boys. However, no significant difference is found on other variables, such as, socio-economic status and the scholastic achievement of the two groups. From this it is clear that Muslim boys are late in joining the school. This is also true in the case of Muslim girls of the same grade. However, the Muslim girls included in our sample are of better socio-economic status as is shown by one way analysis of variance that the difference in the socio-economic status is significant at .05 level.

19. We do not find any significant difference at .05 level between mean age, socio-economic status and intelligence of Muslim and non-Muslim boys at grade VIII. But in their achievement in English Muslims are favourably placed as compared to their counterparts. On the other hand, Muslim girls are late in joining the schools. However, there is no significant difference between the Muslim and non-Muslim girls on other variables.

20. When we compare Muslim and non-Muslim boys of grade XI, no significant difference at any level on the variables of age, socio-economic status, intelligence and achievement is observed. However, Muslim girls of grade XI, though of the same mean age, socio-economic status, intelligence, excel their counterparts in their performance in English.

21. It is observed from data provided by teachers that Hindi-medium teachers, both at primary and higher secondary stages are better by 18.0 percent and 29.0 percent respectively than their compatriots of Urdu-medium schools in the matter of having their personal accommodation. But when the accommodation is seen in the light of number of rooms, there does not seem much difference between the two groups of teachers.

22. Teachers of Urdu-medium primary schools have better academic records, but the Urdu teachers of higher secondary schools have slightly poorer educational status (There are more non-Muslim teachers with 1st division and more Muslim teachers with IIInd divisions at all stages of education).

23. On the whole, teachers of Hindi-medium schools have better economic status at all levels; but it is more conspicuous in higher secondary schools.

24. It is found that teachers of the Hindi-medium primary and higher secondary schools are more experienced, a larger number of them are members of professional associations and have attended more in-service programmes for longer duration than their counterparts.

25. Our findings indicate that barriers which stand in the way of Muslim parents making full utilization of educational opportunities for their children may be ranked in

order of importance as social and cultural, economic and religious factors, unrelatedness of education to job opportunity and restriction of admissions in the school of their choice. However, the most potent single cause which discourages Muslim parents from sending their daughters to schools is their abhorrence of modern education which according to their convictions spoils girls.

26. Our interviews with certain public leaders, educators and prominent citizens of Delhi on the problem of Muslim education reveal that barriers encountered by the community in the use of available educational opportunities are varied, complex, interrelated, and rooted in their traditions. Firstly, the cause of the present situation is historical, such as, migration of Muslims with traditions of learning to Pakistan and neglect of their former centres of learning e.g. Bhopal, Aligarh, Lucknow and Deoband. Secondly, this is due to illiteracy prevalent among the Muslim masses. Thirdly, there is no place of religion in the school curriculum. Fourthly, it is feared that there is a deliberate attempt by the government to impose upon them the majority culture through school programmes. Fifthly, economic compulsions do not allow them to spare their children for schooling. Sixthly, Muslims feel the sting of the prevailing bias against Urdu which is their mother-tongue.

Seventhly, the high cost of schooling and unemployment among the educated youth are also discouraging factors.

To sum up, the study aimed at examining three hypotheses. The first of these states that "the Muslim community utilizes less than its proportional share of educational opportunities as compared with the majority community." To test this hypothesis 'co-efficient of equality' has been computed both at the primary and higher secondary stage, which comes to 74.0 and 23.6 respectively. Therefore, this lends support to our hypothesis and substantiates that the community in question is far behind in the matter of using educational opportunities which have been offered by the Union Territory of Delhi. Moreover, this shows that the position is worse at the secondary stage than at the primary stage of education.

The second hypothesis is that "there is something inherent in the educational programme itself which discourages Muslims from taking advantage of the opportunity in an equal measure with non-Muslims." To test this hypothesis two interview schedules, one each for public leaders and parents; and two questionnaires one each for the headmasters and teachers have been administered. It is found that factors which discourage them from the use of educational opportunity are many, namely, scarcity of Urdu-medium books, inadequate

provision of Urdu-medium schools, the fear of Muslims that other schools attempt to impose the culture of the majority community and non-availability of religious education. Further, it is found that the gap in the utilization of opportunity by the Muslim community has widened because of the factors mentioned above. Besides, schools attended by Muslim children are overcrowded, understaffed, housed in dirty and ill-equipped buildings, lacking proper ventilation and library facilities. Since Muslims are concentrated in certain Mohallas, they tend to have a segregated school of an inferior order. Muslims strongly feel that there is a distortion of historical facts in books which injure their feelings. Thus the hypothesis that there are certain factors inherent in the school system itself which discourage Muslims to make a proper use of the educational opportunity is substantiated.

The third hypothesis states that "the comparative backwardness of Muslims in the social, economic and cultural fields makes them utilize educational opportunity to a less degree than non-Muslims do." To test this hypothesis, a questionnaire was administered to a sample of students of grades V, VIII and XII. It is found that there is no significant difference between Muslims and non-Muslims in this regard. This may be due to the fact that the sample taken in

the study consisted of Muslims and non-Muslims belonging to the same class. They are from the same locality, more or less, from the same occupation and have the similar living conditions. Certainly, in the city of Delhi, there are far better schools available for those who receive their education through other media than Urdu. But the same thing cannot be said about those who wish to pursue their studies through Urdu. For there are no better Urdu-medium school available in Delhi than those which have been included in this study. This fact does affect the provision of equal opportunity for education more adversely in the case of Muslims of Delhi who would generally like to educate their children in Urdu-medium schools.

Provision of opportunity, its awareness and utilization are required to be understood in their proper perspective. In one situation, the opportunity may exist, but lack of awareness on the part of users results in its non-utilization. In another case people may have full knowledge about the opportunity provided by the State but it may remain unused because they do not approve of it. An analysis of the prevailing situation makes it sufficiently clear that Muslim masses fall in the second category. An important question arises as to what lands them in this

lamentable situation and why they do not take advantage of the opportunities which are within their access. Causes are not to be found on the surface but these have to be probed deeply in the context of the overall situation which is rather complex. The Muslim community, unlike other communities is classified only into two strata i.e., the lower and upper strata of people. This stratification is relatively rigid. There is hardly a middle class. The absence of the middle class deprives the community of leadership which serves as an important link between the lower and the upper strata, identifies the leadership with the masses and espouses their cause. The upper class of this community is so much pre-occupied with the pursuit of its self-interests that it has no time to think about the weaker section of the Muslim community. This group tries to grab all the opportunities which it demands in the name of the masses. The gap between the two groups is so wide that there is little mutual intercourse.

To say that community suffers in the matter of education on grounds of economic compulsions only is partly true. Muslims are emphatic about the inclusion of religious teaching in the curriculum; and this to a great extent accounts for their aversion to the modern system of education. There is no denying the fact that social justice is not just a matter of

changing the law, but of rather changing the character and structure of our society, its attitudes and its practices.