

## Traditional education system: its impact on socio-economic development in Mewat District, Haryana, India

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**Abstract.** Madarsa education is very common among the Muslims in India. Hundreds of thousands of Muslim children acquire their primary, and perhaps the only, formal education in these madaras with a cursory knowledge of modern education. As a result they are lagging behind in science education and their representation and participation in the scientific activity of the country is woefully low. As such they are unable to earn sufficiently to lead a comfortable life and provide proper leadership to their community to face the challenges of the modern world. The purpose of the present study is to analyse whether madarsa education becomes a barrier in promoting modern and higher education and secondly how far these institutions helped improve socio-economic conditions of madarsa trained persons in the District of Mewat (Haryana).

In the absence of secondary data, the present study is based on the primary data collected through both extensive and intensive field work. A total of 2,350 households were surveyed and information regarding demographic, socio-economic and environmental conditions of these households was collected. Such a varied nature of data was assigned weightage according to their importance and finally the composite score was calculated to find out the levels of the socio-economic conditions of madarsa trained persons.

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### Contents:

1. Introduction . . . . .	74
2. The study area . . . . .	76
3. Objective of the study . . . . .	77
4. Hypotheses . . . . .	77
5. Databases and methodology . . . . .	77
6. Distribution of madaras . . . . .	78

6.1. Nuh Tehsil .....	79
6.2. Ferozpur Jhirka Tehsil .....	79
6.3. Nagina Tehsil .....	79
6.4. Punhana Tehsil .....	79
6.5. Tauru Tehsil .....	80
7. Role of madarsas in promoting education and development. ....	80
7.1. Promoting education .....	80
7.2 Promoting socio-economic development. ....	81
8. Levels of development .....	81
9. Conclusions .....	82
Notes .....	83
Acknowledgements .....	84
References .....	84

## 1. Introduction

Educational institutions of various kinds are available in our country imparting education that varies from information technology, basic sciences, medicines, humanities and languages to social science. But there are institutions which are meant primarily to impart religious education. Among such institutions, madarsas and maktabas are found across the country, in which religious teaching is the main focus. The madarsa system of education is very old and carries the weight of several centuries (Jhingra, 2005). These institutions are established and maintained by the Muslims either privately or through trusts/registered societies. The *ulema* (1) run a vast network of maktabas, mosque-schools and madarsas or higher Islamic seminaries across the country. Most charitable funds generated within the community by the *ulema* and their organisations are spent on maktabas (2) and madarsas (Sikand, 2008). With the exception of a few, most of these institutions do not have adequate infrastructural facilities, competent teaching staff or a modern curriculum. The mode of teaching is as old as the fifteenth century, when such institutions were started to educate the children of nobles/royals of the Mughal Darbar (3). Much before the national freedom movement started against the British, the *ulema* of North India started a number of madarsas to maintain the cultural identity of Muslims (Engineer, 2001).

Gradually this system of education expanded, especially during the colonial period, and spread all

over the country. Arabic and Persian are the major languages taught in these institutions and Muslims believe that learning these languages is a part of their religious and cultural identity. As a result, in spite of such a rudimentary and out-dated curriculum which is scientifically ill-equipped, institutions of this kind are mushrooming in the country especially in the Muslim majority areas. The role of religious leaders is indispensable in this regard as they have been preaching that every Muslim must read the complete *Quran* at least once in a lifetime. Since prayer (*namaz*) is one of the basic tenets of Islam, learning of the *Quran* is must for a Muslim. And for this purpose, madarsa is the most suitable place for learning the *Quran* and *Hadith*, though home-based teaching of the *Quran* is also going on side by side at a small scale. Since the Muslim masses are religiously, emotionally and socially extremely dependent upon the madarsa-educated *ulema*, they do not dare to go against the *ulema* and their *fatwas* (4) (Jhingra, 2010).

The need of the times has compelled madarsa education to introduce some non-conventional courses like Hindi, Urdu, Basic Science, and Social Studies but very few of them have introduced a modern curriculum of higher learning. Whatever may be the reasons, it is a fact that a large section of the Muslim population sends their children to madarsas and does not prefer school education, especially for girls. As such, most of the girls study in madarsas which are either independent or attached to the mosque, *khanqah* (5) or other religious plac-

es for religious education (Jhingra, 2005). Culture/religion has become a source of a perennial flow of students, both girls and boys, from the community, which may be considered as an important reason for the growth of madarasas in the country. Madarasas have been playing a major role in promoting religious education, but they cannot provide sufficient livelihood nor can they help in broadening their students' knowledge, particularly because of the outdated and obscurantist nature of the course. It must be kept in mind that the madarsa system of education is an independent system which has hardly any common points with the modern system of education or modern attitudes and approach to the world and life (Jhingra, 2010). Modernisation of the madarsa education system may be introduced with the introduction of modern subjects in the curriculum.

Hundreds of thousands of Muslim children acquire their primary, and perhaps their only, formal education in these madarasas with a very cursory knowledge of social sciences. Consequently these children are quite backward in science education and their representation and participation in the scientific activity of the country is woefully low. The situation, if allowed to persist for long, would certainly hinder the growth and the progress of the country. In the era of the twenty-first century, with the fast expanding frontiers of scientific knowledge and its multiplying technological spin-offs, no nation can afford to have a sizeable chunk of its population illiterate in scientific education. Thus, re-orientation of the entire curricula is needed with the perspective of science education, so that the domination of religion in maktabas and madarasas can be modified with the scientific outlook of the present day. This is essential in order to change the prevailing environment of fatalism for a comparatively better and business-like atmosphere (Kaur, 1990). At the same time it is also true that no community can hope for a respectable place in the national mainstream without equipping itself with science and technical education. Since new and more effective methods of teaching are developed, there is more to be learned about these techniques.

The Constitution of India, for reasons best known to itself, gave special constitutional privilege to the minority's institution. But the manner in which the madarasas promote a medieval attitude

among the Indian Muslims at the cost of secular education does more harm to the younger generation. In fact, orthodoxy, religious conservatism and an obsession with medieval identity remain the main focus of madarsa education in India. Islamic modernism has hardly overcome their medieval attitude of intellectual subjugation. They have in fact ignored the real problem of how far madarsa education would be relevant in the contemporary social development of a country. Madarasas have for long played an important role in promoting literacy among the Muslims, who have the dubious distinction of being, along with the neo-Buddhist *dalits*, the least educated community in India (Sikand, 2001; Sachar, 2006).

Whether madarsa education has led to the declining of the educational or economic condition of India's Muslims or promoting anti-national activities is a debatable issue. But the present method of teaching is not friendly to the job market in the contemporary world. In recent years, the government of India, as well as some State governments, has launched some small schemes ostensibly to assist some madarasas by providing them with paid teachers to teach modern subjects. In 1986, the government of India issued a document on its New Education Policy, which included proposals for government intervention in madarsa education through a Madarsa Modernisation Programme. In the government's revised plan of action document issued in 1992, the introduction of modern subjects into madarasas such as science, mathematics, English and Hindi was suggested, the expenses for which would be borne partly by the State (Sikand, 2003). But it seems that the plan was not effectively implemented. Consequently, in the absence of modern knowledge the graduates produced by madarasas are neither able to improve their own material prosperity nor are they able to provide leadership to their Muslim community to face the challenges of the modern world. Their job opportunities are related to mosques and madarasas only. However, the role of the madarasas cannot be ignored in the context of promoting primary education among a section of the population, especially the poor and people of backward areas. The system needs to be augmented and developed in line with the modern and scientific way by incorporating a modern curriculum and trained teaching staff. Otherwise they will re-

main away from the fruits of the development plans of the government launched from time to time specially for the minorities and marginalised sections of society. The purpose of the present study is to analyse what role madarsas have played in promoting education and how far these institutions helped improve the socio-economic conditions of madarsa trained persons in the District of Mewat (Haryana).

## 2. The study area

Mewat is a newly created district of Haryana carved out from erstwhile Gurgaon and Faridabad Districts. The district comprises five Blocks, namely

Nuh, Punhana, Tauru, Nagina and Ferozpur Jhirka with a total area of about 1500 sq. km. The geographical extent of the district ranges from 26° north to 30° north latitudes and 76° E to 78° east longitudes. The district lies on the Indo-Gangatic divide to the west of the River Yamuna (Fig.1). Physiographically, the district comprises the Aravalli range and low plains.

Mewat is a distinct ethnic and socio-cultural region inhabited by mostly Meo tribes (7), who trace their roots to the early Aryan immigration into northern India. The district has a population of about a million mostly residing in rural areas; only about 11 percent of them were found living in towns. The district with the lowest literacy (56%) in the State also had the least female literacy in the country (37.60%).

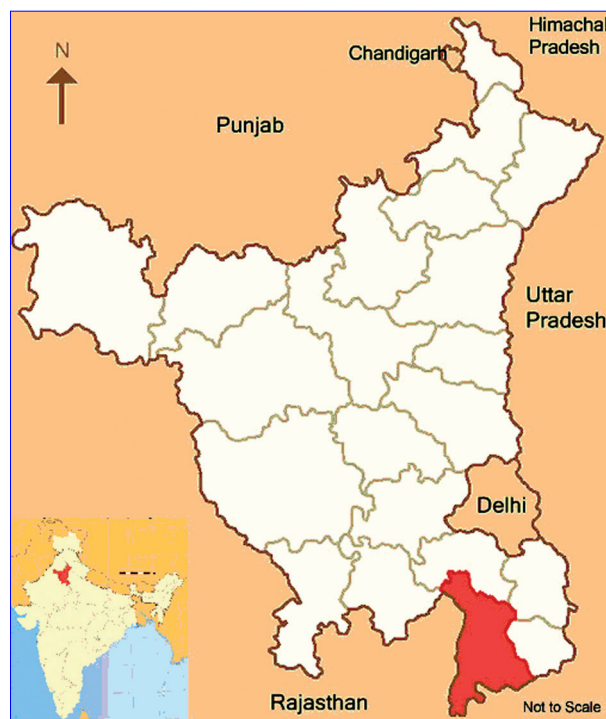


Fig.1. Study Area

Source: <http://mesasnuh.org/about-mewat-3/map-of-mewat>

The people of Mewat mainly engage in agriculture and allied agro-based activities. Only very small pockets have canal irrigation facilities; otherwise the entire agriculture is rain fed. Thus per acre agriculture production is low. Although animal husbandry is the secondary source of income, it has not been carried out at the commercial lev-

el due to lack of capital. As a result, the region has remained backward and lags behind on almost every yardstick of development indices. Many more reasons are associated with such a low level of development but an important reason which many scholars believe is the lack of scientific education among the *Mewaties*.

### 3. Objective of the study

The objective of the study is: (a) to study the growth and Tehsil-wise distribution of madarsas in Mewat; (b) to analyse the role of madarsas in promoting education and socio-economic development; (c) to find out the level of socio-economic development of madarsa trained persons.

### 4. Hypotheses

- (a) Madarsas fail to provide modern and scientific teaching and to promote higher education;
- (b) Madarsas do not generate sufficient employment opportunities or promote socio-economic development.

### 5. Databases and methodology

In the absence of secondary data, the present research is based entirely on the primary data, collected through both extensive and intensive field work conducted in two rounds. Based on our ob-

jectives a well-designed questionnaire was prepared. The questionnaire included several variables: demographic (population, age, sex); social (education, medical assistance, marriage, etc.); economic (income from agriculture, business, salary, etc.); and environmental (house type, water supply and sanitation) (Appendix-1). In addition, the respondents were given a free discussion session in the form of group discussion in which they were able to express their views regarding the role of madarsas, the relevance of courses taught, and the government’s attitude towards these institutions, etc.

In the first round, all the madarsas of the district were visited to collect preliminary information on the questions related to the nature of the madarsa, its management, teacher-student ratio, courses taught, etc. Altogether 14 major heads on which this preliminary information was gathered were interviewed.

The second round of the field survey was more selective as we concentrated on a single madarsa from each Tehsil. In order to meet the required number of sampled households, it was decided to select the largest madarsa from each Tehsil. As such, five madarsas were selected (Fig. 2). The data on socio-economic and environmental conditions were collected from those households whose family heads received education from any of these five madarsas.

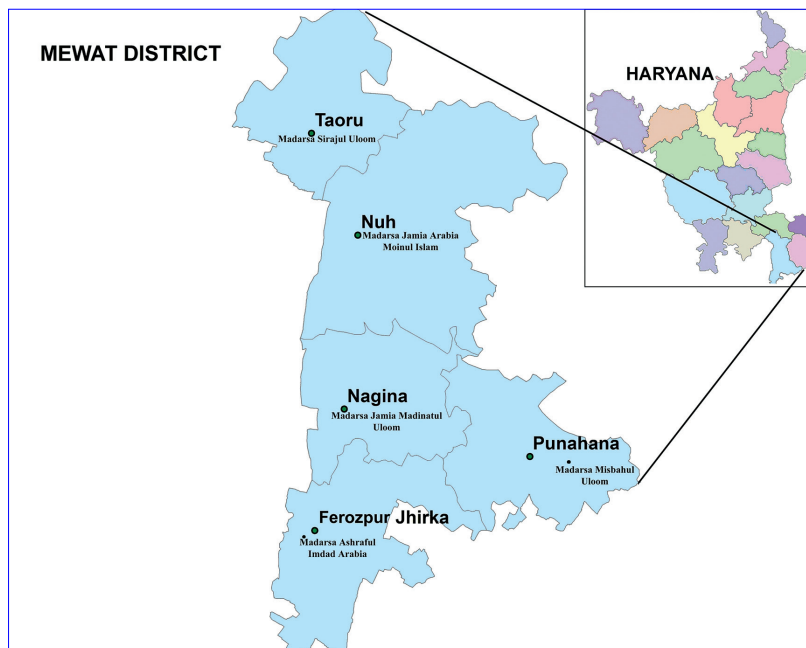


Fig. 2. Areas of intensive field work

Source: [http://www.censusindia.gov.in/maps/State\\_Maps/StateMaps\\_links/haryana01.html](http://www.censusindia.gov.in/maps/State_Maps/StateMaps_links/haryana01.html)

It is important to mention here that carrying out field work in Mewat District is a herculean task. People suspected our researchers of passing the information to the government, which would destroy the traditional system of education. Thus people were reluctant to give a proper reply to the questions. It was only thanks to the kind intervention made by Janab Ahmed Hussain (also known as *Haji ji*), a resident of Khandawali, Ballabhgarh (Haryana), that our research team could manage to conduct the field survey and collect the relevant information.

## 6. Distribution of madarsas

Madarsa education is not a new phenomenon to Mewat District as the first madarsa was established as early as in 1332, known as Madarsa Islamia Arabia Dargah Hazrat Shaikh Musa Rahmatullah, located along the foothills of Arawalli in Nuh Tehsil. Gradually the number of madarsas increased especially during British rule and after the Independence of the country.

Table 1 shows the growth of madarsas in Mewat, which was very slow until 1975; it was only after 1975 that the growth of madarsas was remarkable with the addition of 22 madarsas by 2000, while

since then 38 more new madarsas have been included in the District. The table very clearly reveals that until the British period there was a very limited number of madarsas available in the district, while since Independence both government and people have shown an interest in eradicating illiteracy from the region, which has led to the growth of madarsas and also an increase in literacy in the District.

**Table 1.** Growth of madarsas in Mewat

Years	Numbers
1332 AD.	01
1900-1925	03
1925-1950	06
1950-1975	06
1975-2000	22
2000 - to date	39
Total to date	77

Source: Field Survey conducted during 2009-2010

There does not exist a uniform distribution pattern of madarsas in the districts; rather the largest number of them (26) is found in Punhana, followed by 18 in Nuh, 17 in Ferozpur Jhirka, 10 in Nagina and 6 in Tauru Tehsil. Altogether 8,755 students, most of them living in hostels, are taught by about 467 teachers, giving a teacher-student ratio 1:19. Although the share of female teachers was exceptionally low, girls formed almost 15% of the total students (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Numbers. of students and teachers in Mewat District

Tehsil	A	B			C		
		a	b	c	a	b	c
Nuh Punahna	18	139	04	143	2,335	270	2,605
	26	133	02	135	2,275	610	2,885
Ferozpur Jhirka	17	92	08	100	1,435	175	1,610
Nagina	10	55	10	65	1,020	250	1,270
Tauru	06	24	00	24	385	0	385

Explanation: A – number of madrasas; B – teachers; C – students; a – male; b – female; c - total

Source: Field Survey conducted during 2009-2010

Table 3 shows that out of the total 77 madarsas there were 18 madarsas in which co-educational facilities were available, 59 had included a modern

syllabus up to primary level and 8 were running vocational training programmes.

**Table 3.** Tehsilwise distribution of madarasas

Tehsil	A	B	C	D
Nuh	18	07	12	03
Punahna	26	09	24	02
Ferozpur Jhirka	17	00	14	03
Nagina	10	02	09	00
Tauru	06	00	00	00
Total	77	18	59	8

Explanation: A – number of madarasas; B – co-education; C – modern education; D – vocational education

Source: Field Survey conducted during 2009-2010

### 6.1. Nuh Tehsil

Out of the total five Tehsils in Mewat district, Nuh is one of the most popular, having 18 madarasas. Out of these, seven were large madarasas with more than 200 students each, six were medium madarasas in which the number of students varied from 100 to 200 each and the small madarasas numbered five, with fewer than 100 students each.

Altogether there were 2,605 students and 143 teachers in these madarasas. Most of the teachers and students live in hostels. Besides locals, students also come from Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkhand, etc. to study in these madarasas.

There were seven madarasas in which co-education was permitted and girls up to the age of 15 years were allowed to pursue their study. Altogether there were 270 girls along with 2,335 boys studying in these madarasas. There were only four female teachers found in these madarasas. Moreover, there were two madarasas in the Tehsil exclusively meant for girls, in which there were 210 students and seven female teachers.

### 6.2. Ferozpur Jhirka Tehsil

There were 17 madarasas with a total strength of 1,610 students and 100 teachers. There were four large madarasas, two medium and eleven small size madarasas in the Tehsil. It was noticed that the carrying capacity of most of the madarasas was low across the Tehsil. As such, most of the madarasas

had fewer than 100 students each. None of the madarasas in the Tehsil had co-education facilities. However, there was only one madarsa exclusively meant for girls with 175 students and 8 teachers. There were 14 madarasas in which elementary knowledge of Hindi, Urdu, and basic science was given to the students up to primary level. Vocational courses were available in three madarasas only.

### 6.3. Nagina Tehsil

There were 10 madarasas in Nagina Tehsil with 1,270 students and 65 teachers. The Tehsil had two large, two medium and six small size madarasas. Among the madarasas in the Tehsil, Jamia Madinatul Uloom, Jhimrawat was the largest madarsa. There were two madarasas in which co-education was allowed. In these two madarasas there are 105 girls studying along with 321 boys. The girls younger than 10 years of age were allowed to pursue their studies in these madarasas. Only one madarsa had a female teacher. Besides, there were two madarasas which were exclusively meant for girls, which had 145 students and nine female teachers. Besides religious education, the elementary teaching of Arabic, Urdu, Hindi, English and arithmetic was also available in these madarasas. None of the madarasas in Nagina had vocational training courses.

### 6.4. Punhana Tehsil

The number of madarasas in Punhana Tehsil was 27 with a total strength of students of about 2,885 and 135 teachers. Out of the total, most of the madarasas (17) were classified as small size having fewer than 100 students each, while three madarasas fell in the large and seven in the medium size category. There were nine madarasas which provided co-education facilities. A total of 610 girls below the age of 15 years were studying along with 1,615 boys. Only two female teachers were found in these madarasas. Besides imparting Islamic knowledge, there were two madarasas which provided vocational training also. Urdu, Hindi, English, Persian, Arabic and elementary mathematics were also taught in most of the madarasas at the primary level.

## 6.5. Tauru Tehsil

There were six madarsas in Tauru Tehsil. These madarsas had altogether 385 students and 24 teachers. None of the Madarsas in the Tehsil had co-education facilities or was exclusively meant for girls' education. Teaching of Hindi, English, Urdu and elementary mathematics was available in all six madarsas.

The annual percentage of students graduating for each Tehsil has been given in Table 4 for a detailed comparative study, both temporal and spatial. The trend shows both ups and downs in the percentage pass rate of the students. In the case of Nuh Tehsil, the highest percentage of students graduating (i.e. 16.86%) was found in 2006 while in the case of Punhana it was 2005 (21.05%); Nagina in 2003 (16.95%); Ferozpur Jhirka 2007 (25.42%) and Tauru in 2005 (15.68%).

**Table 4.** Percentage of students graduating during 2001-2010

Tehsil	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Nuh	7.22	14.45	6.02	14.57	10.84	16.86	13.25	4.81	12.04	-
Punhana	15.78	7.01	10.52	17.54	21.05	5.26	7.01	5.26	5.26	5.26
Nagina	15.25	13.55	16.95	10.17	15.25	6.78	10.95	5.08	-	-
Ferozpur Jhirka	-	5.08	-	3.38	6.78	15.25	25.42	13.55	15.25	15.25
Tauru	7.84	11.76	11.76	11.76	15.68	9.80	11.76	9.80	9.80	-

Source: Survey conducted during 2009-2010

The trend of students graduating from the madarsas in Punhana during the last ten years was very much different from the trend of madarsas in Nuh Tehsil. Nagina Tehsil and Tauru Tehsil had shown a decreasing trend while Ferozpur Jhirka had an increasing trend for the pass rate of students.

## 7. Role of madarsas in promoting education and development

Over 77 madarsas across the Mewat District of Haryana are contributing a great deal towards imparting education and promoting socio-economic development. It is believed that the District has the greatest number of madarsas per square kilometre in the country. The role of madarsa education at the lower level is not given much importance as it is mandatory on the part of every Muslim child to learn *namaz* and read the *Quran* but at the higher level specialisation in different areas reveals them to have a different and a more or less effective role.

### 7.1. Promoting education

The field study in Mewat District has changed some misconceptions regarding madarsa education and its role in promoting education among the masses. The local inhabitants were found to be very comfortable with the type of education they receive from these madarsas. Looking at the data in Table 4 for the last decade, it was found that the total number of students who graduated from a madarsa was 309, with Tehsil Nuh topping the list for the pass rate of students with 26.86%, while Punhana, Nagina, Ferozpur Jhirka Tehsils had a little less than 20% each. The proportion of students graduating from the Tauru madarsa was 51, constituting about 16%. The respondents reported that after completion of *Hifz* (9), *Molviat* (10), *Almiat* (11) and *Fazilat* (12) they obtain employment in mosques, madarsas *khanqahs* and also in private teaching as tutors. With minimum efforts, they are employed at a very early age. On the question of modern education they were of the opinion that in order to graduate from a university/college, they had to spend



20-23 years in education and after that there were no jobs easily available to them. They also had the opinion that with the quality of education in government schools available in Mewat; their children could not compete with others for government jobs. Thus, their destiny lies in madarsa education and related jobs only. This kind of thinking among the people did not promote higher and scientific education especially in college/university. A good number of the respondents were of the opinion that a lack of good modern schools and poverty in the District forced them to send their children to a madarsa. It was noticed that some of the people send their children to English medium schools but such families are very few in the District. However, almost 90% of people believed that whatever literate people were found in the District, it was only because of madarsas. Had madarsas not been there, the literacy would have been far behind what we have today. However it is to be noted that in spite of all the effort made by the government and NGOs/Trusts, the level of education could not be achieved up to the satisfactory level. As per the official record, the district has registered only 56 percent of its people as literate.

### 7.2. Promoting socio-economic development

Besides natural resources, the kind of education and socio-political system reflect the quality of development. Mewat, as has already been mentioned, is very different from its surrounding Districts. It lacks not only economic resources but also human resources because people are trained here in Islam-centric education and do not have much exposure to modern education. The District lies in a drought prone area and does not have a proper irrigation system. Except in the foot hills of the Aravalli range, the underground water of the entire District is brackish, which is not suitable either for drinking or agricultural purposes. As such, in the absence of both natural and human resources, the people in the District are surviving on dry/subsistence farming. All these factors have pushed the District to low per capita income, low literacy and poor health and to the lower level of infrastructural development (Khan, 1993). However, the role played by the madarsas during the last few decades can-

not be ignored with regard to opening the doors to employment as Maulvies, Imams (13), Hafiz, etc. outside the district. The madarsas are considered as the life line of the region, where students receive both traditional/religious knowledge and also modern education at the primary level. Because of the limited resources, the people of the region are more associated with the madarsas, which have become a highly emotive issue and have been looked at from the limited perspective of preserving the linguistic, religious and cultural identity of Muslims (Godbole, 2001).

### 8. Levels of development

The following paragraphs attempt to make an estimate of the levels of socio-economic development for those persons who have received education from a madarsa. For this purpose, data were collected for the last ten years (since 2000) from the records of madarsas. Some of the madarsas did not maintain proper records of students who had graduated. After a great deal of effort the records of the students who had graduated were procured, although in some cases estimation was necessary. Moreover, most of the madarsas maintained the records in a haphazard way. These hurdles were overcome with the kind help of the management head.

Altogether 2,350 households were surveyed during the field work in 2009, 2010 and 2011. The collected information on the questionnaires was codified and transferred on to the master sheet. Then it was tabulated and classified. Percentages were calculated for easier explanations.

The information which was collected from the respondents through interview schedules belongs to different social economic and natural domains. This resulted in the difficulty of adding them readily. Therefore they were assigned weightage according to their importance and relevance. Keeping the nature and characteristics of these variables in view, the weightage for the variables (i.e. environmental, social and economic) for all the households was added to find out the composite value for each household  $\left( \sum_{j=1}^m x_{ij} \right)$ . The composite val-

ue for all 2,350 households was added  $\left( \sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^m x_{ij} \right)$  and then divided by the number (N=2,350) to find out the mean ( $\bar{X}$ ). Lastly, the composite value for

each household was divided by the mean  $\left( \frac{\sum_{j=1}^m x_{ij}}{\bar{X}} \right)$  to find out the standardised composite index (SCI) values. The above formula may be expressed as follows:

$$\sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^m x_{ij} / n$$

$$SCI = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^m x_{ij}}{\bar{X}}$$

Where:

- $x_{ij}$  = number of variables over observation (households);
- $m$  = number of variables (social, economic, environmental);
- $n$  = number of observation;
- $\bar{x}$  = mean of sum of  $m$  variables;
- SCI = Standard Composite Ind ex.

The values obtained from the above formula were classified into three categories i.e. low, medium and high levels of socio-economic development. Based on Table 5 it was found that out of the total households, there were 1,390 households constituting about 59.15% falling under the low level of development, in which the composite index value ranges between 0.50 and 1.00. The second category in which the index value varies from 1.00 to 1.50 may be called the medium level of development. Under this category about 890 households were found constituting about 37.87% of the total surveyed households. A high level of development was limited to a very few households numbering 970 accounting for about 2.97% only (Table 5). Taking the results of the following Table into consideration, it may be said that madarsa education does

not provide sufficient employment opportunities expect in the mosque, *khanqah* and madarsa. As such, the levels of socio- economic development of madarsa trained persons were not found sufficient to lead a respectable and comfortable life.

**Table 5.** Levels of development

A	B	C	D
Low level	0.50 – 1.00	1390	59.15
Medium level	1.00 – 1.50	890	37.87
High level	More than 1.50	70	02.97

Explanation: A – categories; B – composite index; C – number of households; D – percentage (%)

Source: Field survey conducted during 2010-2011

It is to be remembered that the calculation and classification of the households in the present study is area specific. This scheme cannot be applied to other regions as it is very much contextual. The respondents belong to a specified section of the population of a particular area. The classification of the households into low, medium and high levels of socio-economic development is also highly subjective. These categories may not coincide with the levels of development in other Districts of Haryana.

## 9. Conclusions

The concentration of the Muslim population and madaras normally go hand in hand as it is considered an important institution for promoting religious education and preserving cultural identity. The Mewat District of Haryana is a Muslim majority district having a large number of madaras through which Islamic knowledge is imparted to the local people.

The establishment of madaras in Mewat District can be traced as early as 1332 A.D. during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq. The growth of madaras during the British period was slow but after the Independence of India the growth of madaras in Mewat was remarkable

Altogether there are 77 madaras in the district. Based on the strength of students 16 madaras were classified as large, 18 medium, and 43 small, out

of which, 18 madarsas had co-education, with five exclusively meant for girls. The remaining 54 madarsas were exclusively meant for boys. Besides religious teaching, there were eight madarsas in which vocational training was imparted while almost all madarsas were teaching modern courses including Urdu, Hindi, Elementary Maths and English up to the primary level.

Almost 9,000 students were studying in these madarsas and the graduate students from these madarsas were mostly *Hafiz*, *Qari* (15), *Maulvies*, *Alims* and *Fazils* who were obtaining employment in various madarsas, mosques and dargahs (15) in Mewat, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. A few of them continued their studies in universities to pursue higher studies. The study reveals that almost 78% of the madarsa graduates were employed in madarsas, dargahs and mosques while around 20% of them were engaged in agriculture and allied agricultural activities and the remaining 2.2% of them were still unemployed and looking for jobs. Apart from teaching some of them were also involved in small business like trade and commerce, transport, etc.

The poor residents of Mewat send their children to a madarsa in which free education is imparted and with not much effort they obtain employment at an early age. But they were very much aware of the need for modern education, and acknowledge it. The survey conducted across the region gave a quite interesting result with 89% of respondents being in favour of a change to the madarsa syllabus. They wished to follow modern education along with madarsa education. As such, they felt that technical education and vocational courses must be taught in all madarsas. The general view of the respondents regarding the government school curriculum was good. However, 98% of people did not appreciate the quality of teaching in government schools. Almost 70% of the respondents wanted to send their children to the English medium schools to acquire modern and scientific knowledge if they got an opportunity.

The findings of the composite score reveal that only around three per cent of madarsa educated persons have attained a higher level of socio-economic development. Otherwise most of them fell into the category of poor socio-economic conditions as madarsa trained persons cannot bring any substantial socio-economic change because their professions cannot bring good remuneration.

It is a matter of serious concern to all of us to promote the quality of education in madarsas. For that there is an urgent need for the modification of the curriculum keeping in view the demands of the job market. To achieve this, teachers in madarsas not only require continual training to keep up with technology changes but the religious leaders also need to change their mind set regarding modern education.

It is suggested that the Mewat Development Agency (MDA), created by the state government of Haryana in 1980 to look after the socio-economic and infrastructure development of the region, should recruit science teachers and vocational trainers. These teachers and trainers should be assigned the duty to teach science subjects in each madarsa and also train the students in welding, plumbing, air conditioning, carpentry, weaving and embroidery, etc. Such training would equip the graduating students to go beyond their traditional jobs and earn more, which would improve the economic conditions and consequently lead to many socio-economic and other changes in the region.

## Notes

- (1) *Ulema* is plural of *alim*. It means a person is a scholar of Islamic knowledge.
- (2) *Maktabas* is a place of elementary religious education.
- (3) *Darbar* means court.
- (4) *Fatwa* is a legal judgment given by a qualified Islamic scholar.
- (5) *Khanqah* is a place for spiritual retreat and character reformation.
- (6) *Dalits* are untouchable population in India.
- (7) Meo is a group population concentrated in Mewat region.
- (8) *Haji ji* is a person who performed Haj.
- (9) *Hifz* process of Memorisation of the Quran.
- (10) *Molviat* is an equivalent of senior secondary (12<sup>th</sup>) level of education.
- (11) *Almiat* is equivalent to graduation (Bachelor of Arts).
- (12) *Fazilat* is equivalent of post graduation.
- (13) *Imams* leads *namaz* in mosques.

- (14) *Qari* is a person who recites the Quran with the proper rules of recitation.
- (15) *Dargahs* is a Sufi Islamic shrine built over the grave of a revered religious person.

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**Appendix 1**

Household Survey

1. Name of the Person:
2. Address: . . . . .
3. Studied in (Name of the Madarsa): . . . . .
4. Qualification: . . . . . Year of passing: . . . . .
5. Demographic structure

Name of the Member	Relationship	Age	Qualification	Occupation

Economic Structure

1. Land owned: . . . . . (In acres/canal)
2. Animals: Buffalo . . . . . Cows. . . . . Oxen . . . . . Goats . . . . .
3. If employed: kind of job . . . . . Salary (per month) . . . . .
4. If engaged in business: kind of business . . . . . Monthly income . . . . .
5. If engaged in farming: what is the monthly income . . . . .
6. Where do you sell your agricultural products? . . . . .
7. From where do you purchase essential items for your consumption? . . . . .

House Types and Basic Amenities

1. Kind of house: All pucca/all katchha/Both Katchha and Pucca
2. No. of rooms for residential purposes:
3. Quality of ventilation: Good/Satisfactory/Poor
4. Water supply: Municipality/Handpump/Well/Boring Pump
5. Do you have a separate kitchen? Yes/No Toilet? Yes/No Bathroom? Yes/No
6. Do you have a separate drawing room to entertain guests? Yes/No
7. Do you have the following assets?

S. No	Assets	Yes	No
1.	Bicycle		
2.	Motor cycle		
3.	Car		
4.	Tractor		
5.	Bullock Cart		
6.	Radio		
7.	T.V.		
8.	Mobile phone		
9.	Three-piece suite		
10.	Dining Table		
11.	Fridge		
12.	Ceiling fan in all rooms		
13.	A.C.		
14.	Desert Cooler		

## Social Information

1. What age did you get married?
2. Have any of your children married?: Yes/No  
If yes, at what age of the child (Daughter/Son)? . . . . .
3. Would you like to send your children to English Medium School? Yes/No  
If yes, only boys or both girls and boys? Only Boys/Both
4. Where do you go if you require medical assistance? Qauk/Tantrik/Nursing Home/Govt.Hospital
5. Do you want Muslims to opt for Birth Control? Yes/No
6. Where do you take your women for delivery? Nursing Home/Hospital/Village
7. Do you have proper facilities for: BCG injection/Pulse Polio/Others?
8. Do you want your children to become Molvi/Hafiz/Teacher/Officer/Businessman/Politician?
9. Do you agree that Madarsa Syllabi should be modified? Yes/No  
If yes, then English, Science and Maths should be taught in this school: Yes/No
10. In what way have you contributed to society after being taught at your Madarsa? . . . . .
11. What is your opinion about the government school in your locality? . . . . .