

## EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS OF MUSLIM ADOLESCENTS: A STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MALABAR REGION

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### ABSTRACT

*This study was conducted to identify the Major Educational Problems of Muslim adolescents of Malabar. Malabar is the six northern districts of Kerala in India. The sample consisted of 1009 students of Malabar for the first phase of study and 140 students for the Second Phase. Mooney Problem Check List was used for the first phase and self developed Questionnaire was used in the second phase of study as tools to collect the data. The statistical techniques used were percentage and Mean. In Kerala, the set up of guidance is in infant stage. Therefore, it hardly affected the educationally backward community's. A few schools are conducted one or two guidance programmes in a year. Nevertheless, there is no separate guidance worker or counselor. The result shows that the urgent need of Guidance for the adolescents of Malabar and the Muslim boys had more problems in Educational area of Guidance than girls.*

*Keywords: Educational Problems, Muslim adolescents, Malabar*

### INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of Education is self realization, Personality development and Social adjustment. Here Education is synonymous with Guidance. It also renders assistance for the child which helps him in his best development –Educational, Vocational, Personal, Social, Moral, Physical etc. All Education commission one way or other emphasized the importance of guidance in education. The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) in their memorable report observes that “the secret of good Education consist of enabling the student to realize what are his talents and aptitude and in what manner and to what extent he can best develop them so as to achieve proper social adjustment and seek right types of employment(Government of India. 1952-53). In Democratic society, the purpose of Education is not only to prepare the child for a good life but also for an efficient life. For attaining this, a full development of the personality is essential.

Education fundamentally shapes an individual life chances and social status. Duration and levels of education are associated with people's income, socio-economic status, living standard, life style and the respect and esteem they enjoy .Failure to fulfill educational potential may have long term consequences for later occupational and social life, as well as creating problems for society at large (Francis Brill and Felicity Fletcher 2006).Schools of today, however have a vastly different job to do than they did a generation ago, and the fact that personal services were not available then is hardly any argument that they are not needed now. It may well be that many of the disturbed adult of today would be happier and more secure people if they had available the services of some person who was the equivalent of the modern guidance counselor. All humans have their needs, some being more extreme than others, and these needs obviously differ with age, sex, intelligence and so on. As children grow up, each unsatisfied need increase the intensity of the need that lie ahead, and make their satisfaction more difficult.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Santra, Binata, (1984) identified the educational needs, probabilities and problems of Santals. The main objective were

- I) To identify the life needs and Educational Needs, the Santals and
- II) To develop a variable curriculum to meet the needs.

Some of the observations were, i) The Santals belonged to a distinct tribe very closely related to the Mundari group of tribes of Indian. Most of the Santal lived in Orissa, Bihar and West Bengal. They could easily be drawn in to the main stream and many had been drawn through conversion to Christianity. There was a tendency to retain the cultural identity within the main stream.

ii) Literacy was very poor and so also education many causes were in operation for depriving them of Education and Economic development. However they had developed an urge for development and an aspiration for better life through education. Education aspiration was very low level, Vocational aspiration being at a very poor. The converts to Christianity had, however, developed these to a much higher level. The number of highly educated Santal's was very small.

III) The researchers identified needs in such areas viz economic, environmental, personality, and communication, socio-cultural, socio-political and political.

IV) The Educational needs were classified in to four developmental areas viz development of the child as a person, a learner, a worker and a citizen.

V) The probability of different schooling strategies to meet the needs and solve the problems was studied.

The identified problems were,

- i) Apathy of community members to education
- ii) Enrolment
- iii) Retention
- iv) Stagnation retardation
- v) Relevance of the content of Education
- vi) Post Education Occupation
- vii) Alienation and
- viii) Communication.

Mowji, M.N. (1975-77) has done an investigation in to the, educational and Vocational problems of higher secondary students, in greater Bombay

The study were focused,

- 1) To investigate the nature, Degree and extent of the problem, both educational and vocational of the junior college students
- 2) To locate the specific problems of students of three academic streams –arts, Science and Commerce
- 3) To help students with their educational, Vocational problem
- 4) To enquire in to the pros and cons of the implementation of the new pattern of education in greater Bombay.
- 5) To find out the difficulties of the professors while teaching

6) To find out the administrative problems of principals while introducing the +2 pattern in their college.

The main findings of the study were:

- 1) Junior college students faced educational and vocational problems. They had to face difficulties due to absence of guidance at school and college level.
  - 2) The new pattern had failed due to lack of co-ordination between schools and colleges and due to faulty planning.
  - 3) In the absence of proper implementation there was confusion everywhere in 1972 in greater Bombay
  - 4) The main purpose of the 10+2+3 was Vocationalisation .It had completely failed as everybody joined the academic stream in the absence of any vocational stream
  - 5) School and colleges had not properly trained teachers .They were neither trained before implementing the new pattern nor afterwards
  - 6) Syllabus and books were prepared without taking consideration interest and level of the students
  - 7) Science students had no time for any curricular activities, while arts students had plenty of time at their disposal
  - 8) Admission were given more influence of the parents rather than on merits of the students
  - 9) Large classes in Science and commerce stream created more problems of indiscipline
- No proper liberally facilities for junior college students were provided.

George ,E.I. (1968) studied the needs and problems of high School and College students. The study surveyed,

1. The needs and problems of school and college students to find out their nature and extent and
2. To indicate the extent to which students personal work was needed in meeting the different needs and solving the problems.

The main findings of the study were,

1. There was close correspondence between the problems and needs of school and college students
2. Highest frequencies of problems of both the sample were in financial, educational and vocational areas and study habits and personal and social areas
3. The areas in which maximum help was sought by law socio economic groups and rural pupils.
4. Girls had more problems than boys among school students and less problem among college students
5. School students received more help from all sources than college students
6. Among college students, art group students had higher number of problems than science group students.
7. The need of guidance services was brought out in the study even though the sample was not aware of guidance services.
8. The main areas in which guidance was needed were educational and vocational.

Tumuti, S (1985) has done the needs assessment for guidance and counselling in Kenya.

Formal guidance and counseling in Kenya is recognized more than ever. The development of effective guidance and counseling programs will be guided by needs assessment. This study used data from a larger study on guidance and counseling needs assessment of primary school pupils of Gachika

Sub-location, Nyeri Town, and Nairobi City. Differences in ethnic groups, location of subjects (rural, semi-urban, and urban), age of subjects, and discrepancy between pupils' perception of their own problems and perceptions of their teachers were some of the factors that contributed to the necessity of carrying out a needs assessment before developing guidance and counseling programs in study sought to delineate academic, occupational, and psychological needs of pupils (N=720) in grades seven and five. The pupils rated their perception of their problems regarding how often each stated problem affected them. In addition, 69 teachers who taught the pupils were used in that study to countercheck the pupils' responses.

The results indicated that pupils were under great pressure to perform well in the Certificate of Primary Education and to be admitted into government secondary schools from parents and relatives. The pupils expressed a high anxiety and fear related to this pressure. A guidance and counseling program could be effective in changing such devastating and unrealistic attitudes on the part of parents and pupils themselves

Mallum (1981) conducted a study on educational wastage and need for guidance in the Nigerian Schools. He found that the wastage in Nigerian schools was due to the insufficient vacant plans in the next class or next level of schools. Other aspects of Educational wastage were due to the irrelevant and misguided types of education and the non-employment of those school leavers. He identified the common Educational problem among students were under achievements, ineffective study skills and retarded reading ability. According to him the guidance counselors and the school administrators would get many chances to correct them by providing education to even the poorest children, making school subject relevant to the pupils and community. So that the students could identify their educational and career goals and these activities would develop motivation in students and encourage the parents to show interest in the education of their children.

## PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In adolescence, children are in the process of their all round growth and development. It couldn't be a very smooth affair. It is a transition phase. It leads to adult hood. It is not an easy a passage that the adolescents traverse. It is rather a path full of problems .It has its impact on their personality development .This impact should be positive and healthy, what guidance they have needs to ensure it as follows. (Anand, 2005)

During the period of adolescents, they should take large number of decision about the courses and the subjects to be studied. The adjustments in such courses are essential. It develops problems to the adolescents. Several personal and contextual factors in adolescence are important for later educational attainment .Social background has a significant impact on educational choice and attainment.

Now Kerala has been first position in case of literacy. But the picture of Muslims is very poor in case of Higher education. Wastage and stagnation are common, and it is higher in the case of secondary education. In comparison with their southern counterparts, Muslims of northern Kerala have been facing severe problems. Most of these are first generational learners. So they don't have opportunities for getting proper guidance from their parents and elders.

Now days, the district under Malabar are generally called northern Kerala. The districts under Northern Kerala are Palaghat, Malappuram, Calicut, Wyanad, Kannur and Kasargode.

In Malabar the Muslims are backward in every field, especially in Educational. Recent investigations show a clear evidence of the backwardness. Justice Narendran Commission noticed the poor performance in Educational and Vocational fields of Muslims. This may be due to the lack of Guidance of children from their parents and elders. This pointed out the importance of Identifications of different Guidance needs of Muslim Adolescents of Malabar.

The new studies conducted on Muslim age group of 18-25 ,College going group are only 8.1 % ,other studying groups are 6.2% ,that is total 14.3 % are studying. The remaining 85.7 % , 30.5 % were doing job and 55.2 % were un-employers. This survey shows that Muslims are far behind than that of Scheduled cast and Scheduled tribe (Aravindan, 2006).

## OBJECTIVES

To study the Educational guidance needs of the adolescent Muslim Students of Malabar.

## METHODOLOGY

Mooney Problem Check List for the students was administered on 1009 Muslim adolescent students of Malabar. It consisted of 60 items related with Educational area. The presence or absence of the behavior may be indicated by checking "yes" or "No" or the type or the number of items may be indicated by inserting the appropriate word or number. Questionnaire developed by the investigator to study in-depth the students' problems were administered on 140 students. It consisted of 9 items related to Educational area. Data was tabulated and analyzed.

Section –A: Analysis of data collected by Mooney Problem Check List

The data categorized in to three, on the basis of problems checked by 30% students, between 20-30% and 10%-20% students. The Table 1.1 shows the number of pupils and their percentages selecting a particular problem relating to educational area.

**Table 1. Number and Percentage of Students Selecting a Particular Problem Relating to Educational Area**

Item No	Item	Number of respondents	%
<i>Items checked by more than 30% of students</i>			
270	Worrying about examination	485	48.12
211	Trouble with mathematics	484	48.12
324	Afraid of failing in school work	430	42.66
267	Poor memory	391	38.79
50	Not spending enough time in study	389	38.6
106	Text books too hard to understand	377	37.4
105	Afraid to speak up in class discussions	372	36.9
158	Not interested in some subjects	370	36.71
160	Don't know how to study effectively	310	30.75

From Table 1 it may be noticed that about more than 48% students stated that they were worried about examination .More than 48% students felt that mathematics was a difficult subject. 42.66% feared about failing in school work. 38.79% students believed that they had poor memory. 38.6% stated that they didn't spend enough time for study. 36.9% feared to speak up in class discussions. 37.4%.students perceived that text books were too hard to understand.36.71% students observed that they were not interested in some subjects. 30.75% students didn't know how to study effectively.

**Table 2. The Problems selected between 20-30% students with its Number and Percentage**

Item No	Item	Number of respondents	%
<i>Items checked in between 20-30% of students</i>			
159	Can't keep my mind on my studies	253	25.1
156	Not getting studies done on time	247	24.50
104	Trouble with oral reports	242	24.01
47	Being a grade behind in school	236	23.4
213	Weak in spelling or grammar	230	22.82
162	Too much work required in some subjects	218	21.63
329	Lunch hour too short	218	21.63

About 1/4<sup>th</sup> students perceived that they couldn't keep their mind in their studies and were not able to complete their studies on time. 24.01% were troubled with oral reports .More than23% students perceived that they were a grade behind in school .21.63%students checked their problems that they were facing the difficulty of too much works required in some subjects. 22.82% students felt that they were weak in spelling or grammar. About 21.63% students felt that their lunch break was too short.

**Table 3. Number and Percentage of Students facing a Particular Problem in between 15-20%**

Item No	Item	Number of respondents	%
<i>Items checked in between 15 -20 % students</i>			
46	Missing too many days of school	196	19.44
<b>102</b>	<b>Unable to express myself well</b>	188	18.65
330	Poor assemblies	184	18.25
109	Too little freedom in classes	176	17.46
212	Weak in writing	173	17.16
48	Adjusting to new school	168	16.67
275	Unfair test	163	16.17
54	Made to take subjects I don't like	158	15.67
52	Family not understanding what I have to do in school	153	15.18
161	Not enough good books in the library	153	15.18

Table.3 indicates that in between 19% to 16% students selected the such problems as they were not able to attend school regularly(19.44%) ,unable to express themselves well(18.65%), having too little freedom in classes(17.46%), were weak in writing (17.16%),facing problems relating to adjustment in school(16.67%), . 16.17% students felt that the tests were not fair. About 16% of the students were forced to take subjects they don't like .15.18% of the student's families didn't understand what they have to do in school. More than 15%students disclosed that their library lacked enough good books.

## Guidance Needs related to Educational area

From the above results it may be summarized that major educational guidance need emerged from the studies can be put under the following heads:

- Guidance needs related to performance in examination
- Lack of interests in school subjects like difficulties in mathematics
- Lack of effective study habits
- Lack of concentration, poor memory etc.
- Weakness in reading and writing
- Fear in having interaction in classroom
- Dull classroom
- Instability of the teachers

## Section-B Analysis of data collected in second Phase through Questionnaire

In the Second phase of study, a Questionnaire was used for studying the problem of students in depth .It was on the basis of the data obtained from the analysis of Mooney Problem Check List. It was administered on 140 students of 20 Schools. Eight items were given in the questionnaire for studying the problems related to Educational Area in depth. The same are given in Table.4

**Table.4**  
**Profile of Parents Education and Employment**

Parents Qualification	Number of respondents	%
Between 3 <sup>rd</sup> to 7 <sup>th</sup> standard	15	11
9 <sup>th</sup> standard	30	22
S.S.L.C	75	56
Degree	9	7
P.G of professional degree	5	4

Table.4 shows that the parents backwardness in education.11% parent's maximum qualification was in between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> standard.22% students parents completed 9<sup>th</sup> standard.56%parents maximum qualification was 10<sup>th</sup> standard.7% parents were graduates and 4% parents having Post graduation. This data shows that 89% parents maximum qualification was S.S.L.C or, below.

Over the last several years, parent's involvement in their children's education and career development has received increased attention in education research. Education reform movements have also focused heavily on parental involvement. Adolescent's perception of parents personal involvement and parents reports of their own behavior were both related to educational expectations. Parent involvement, care, support and monitoring are related to many adolescent perceptions and behaviors including higher career aspiration, career decision making, and academic success (Jerry Trustry, 1998).

A low performance of Chile in the TIMSS 1998/99 international study of Mathematics and Science achievement was a great disappointment for that country. To investigate the likely causes for low performance in Mathematics, this study compared to three countries and one large school system. The major finding was, Chilean 8<sup>th</sup> graders have parents with fewer years of schooling and with fewer educational resources at homes (Maria-Jose Rairez, 2006).

**Table 5. Parents' employment profile**

Nature of parents' employment	Number of respondents	%
Working in Gulf countries	50	36
Business	37	26
Coolie	33	24
Government Service	9	6
Farmers	7	5
Moulavi	2	1.5
Unemployment	2	1.5

Table.5 shows that 36% students father were working in gulf countries. So these students were not having availability of parents at home for seeking their guidance .26% students' father's were in business.24% students father were working as coolie.,6% parents were government employees,5% students father's were farmers.1.5% parents working as Moulavi's and 1.5% were unemployed.

In the questionnaire for students item No.4.about the school subjects in which they are facing difficulties. The results have been given in Table.6

**Table 6. Difficulties Found by the Muslim Adolescents in School Subjects**

Item No	School subjects	Number of respondents	%
4	Mathematics	98	70
	English	22	16
	Hindi	11	8
	Arabic	9	6
	Science	15	11
	Social Studies	6	4
5	Reasons of difficulties in Mathematics,		
	Not able to understand teaching	13	13
	Not have enough time for practice	20	21
	Some of the basic concepts are not known	65	66

In response to the question, "in which subject do you have difficulties"? Majority of the students (70%) stated that they had difficulty in Mathematics, 16%students had difficulty in English, and 8% students stated that they had difficulty in Hindi. According to 6% of them they were having difficulty in Arabic; Science was difficult for 11%students and social studies for 4% students. A further probe of the reasons of difficulties in mathematics was done with the help of item No.5 of the questionnaire. The Table.6 students gave different reasons for the difficulty in Mathematics.13% students opined that the difficulty was due to the inability to understand teaching.21% students perceived that difficulty was due to lack of enough time for practice and 66% students replied it was due to lack of clarity of basic concepts of mathematics basic concepts.



Table .7. Problems Relating to Teachers and Class Room.

Item No	Description of item	Number of respondents	%
7	Are doubts not cleared by the concerned teachers?	132	94
	Yes	8	6
	No		
9	Do teachers encourage speaking up in classes?	50	36
	Yes	90	64
	No		
10	What makes you afraid to speak up in class discussion? Language trouble (English, Hindi, Arabic)		
	Yes	40	29
	No	100	71
	Feelings		
	Yes	66	47
	No	74	53
	Pressure of the teacher		
	Yes	34	24
	No	104	74
11	Are teachers more critical about your mistakes		
	Yes	83	59
	No	57	41
13	From whom of the following you get help to understand the text book?		
	Parents	3	2
	Teacher	110	79
	Peer	27	19

The question whether doubts are not cleared by the concerned teachers, majority of the students (94%) responded 'Yes' that the teachers were not clearing the doubts, but a small group opined that teachers clearing their doubts.

In response to the question, “do teachers encourage to speak up in classes”? 36% students responded teachers encouraging speaking up in classes, but majority of the students (64%) opinioned the teachers didn't encourage.

Table 7 shows that language trouble made afraid to speak up in class discussion for 29% students .47% students stated feelings alone making afraid to speak up in classes.24% students said the pressure of teacher was made afraid to speak up in classes.

Out of 140 students, 59% students responded that teachers were more critical about their mistakes .But 41% students didn't felt.

In response to the item, do you get more help to understand the text book from; 2% students replied that they were getting more help from their parents to understand the text books. But majority of the students (79%) got the help form their teachers to understand the text books.19% students got the help from their friends to understand the text books. No one explained the type of help obtained.

Major Educational Problems of the Muslim adolescents of Malabar

*The study were conducted among the Muslim adolescents of Malabar, following findings has been formulated*

- a. 48% Muslim students of Malabar were worried about examinations.
- b. 48% Muslim students were troubled with mathematics and 36% adolescents were not interested in some subjects.
- c. 42% Muslim students were facing the difficulty of failing in schoolwork.
- d. 39% Muslim adolescents checked the problem concerning the poor memory.
- e. 39% Muslim students were not spending enough time for studies. Too much work required in some subjects was felt as a problem for 22% Muslim adolescents.
- f. 37% Muslim students of Malabar were facing difficulty to speak up in classes.
- g. 31% Muslim students did not know how to study effectively.
- h. The 25% Muslim students of Malabar did not keep their mind in their studies and were not getting studies done on time.
- i. 24% of the Muslim students were troubled with oral reports .
- j. 23% Muslim students felt that they were weak in spelling or grammar.
- k. The educational level of Muslim parents was very low. 90% Muslim parents maximum qualification is SSLC or below. 10% Muslim parents had the qualification above SSLC.
- l. 36% Muslim parents were working abroad, 26% were as of theses were in business, 24% Muslim parents were working as cooli, only 9% of the Muslim parents were in government job.
- m. Mathematics was the difficult subject for 70% Muslim students and English was difficult for 16% Muslim students.
- n. The difficulty is due to the lack of basic concepts for 66% Muslim students.
- o. The students attend the classes and activities well. Nevertheless, the teachers were not cleared the doubts of 94% students and 34% opinioned teachers were showing partialities.
- p. About 94% of the Muslim students stated that their problem could not be cleared by the teachers.
- q. 34% of the Muslim student felt that teachers were having partial attitude towards them.
- r. 64% Muslim adolescents were stated that they were encouraged by the teachers to speak up in classes.

- s. The 59% Muslim students of Malabar felt that teachers were more critical about the mistakes of the students.

## **FINDINGS**

From the above analysis, the investigator found that more than 1/2 of students had guidance needs relating to Educational area.

The educational level of Muslim parents was very low. It shows the reduced chance for getting educational guidance from their parents to the Muslim adolescents.

Muslim boys had more problems in Educational area of Guidance than girls and they need more guidance.

## **DISCUSSION**

All the schools should set up the guidance program of seven services. They are Orientation services, Individual inventory services, General information services, Counseling, Follow up services, Research and Evaluation services. It is possible certain extent if the Principal is interested and inculcated the importance of Guidance and Counseling without waiting the appointment of separate guidance worker or counselor by the government. It can be with the help of teachers of the same school and the experts from the outside with the help PTA or NGO's.

The findings of the present study pointed out the necessity and urgency of starting guidance and counseling in Schools of Malabar in Aided and Government schools. If it continues, the backwardness may remain for generations day by day the problems may be aggravated. It will be helpful for the first generational learners of other sister communities too.

## **CONCLUSION**

Guidance is that systematic, organized phase of the educational process, which helps adolescents grow in their power to give point and direction to their own life. A pronounced need for guidance exists within the schools. In order to develop an effective guidance programme, continues assessment of needs is necessary because needs changed with time and vary across geographical, socio-economic, caste and age or grade groups.

However, in Kerala the set up of guidance is in infant stage. Therefore, it hardly affected the educationally backward community's especially the first generational educators of Muslims of Malabar. The present statuses of Muslims are far below the level that of Scheduled casts. The adolescents, studying in different schools with bundle of problems. Their parents are unable to give proper guidance to their children especially in Educational and Vocational areas due to the lack of proper education. A few schools are conducted one or two guidance programmes in a year. Nevertheless, there is no separate guidance worker or counselor. The teachers were loaded with daily classes and additional duties.

If the authorities appointing the guidance workers in the schools, that will be helpful not only for the backward minorities but also for the first generational learners of sister communities also.

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