

## **A Study on Madrasa Education System of Karnataka**

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### **Abstract**

Madrasa in Arabic means school. Saudi Arabia and in Arab countries school is termed as Madrasa. According to a Karnataka Government assessment there are more than 960 Madrasas in our State. In this survey probably Maktabas (Madrasa meant for small children) are also included. And Pallidars attached to Masjids might not be included in those surveys. Therefore it is difficult to admit the survey of the government as accurate. Students Islamic Organization of India having conducted a survey of 29 Madarasas published a report in the past. As the next phase of endeavor, it has conducted a survey of 55 chosen Madarasas covering diverse schools of thought in different districts. In this survey based on the infrastructure and community participation, teaching environment, innovative activities, faculty, integration of secular and religious education those securing 90% and above are graded as A+, those securing 80% and above as A, those securing 70% and above as B+, those securing 60% and above as B and those scoring below 60% is graded as 'C'. Further those Madrasas possessing infrastructure like water, good food, playing ground, residential facility, the availability of teaching and non-teaching facility, clean environment, etc are awarded 60 marks, those Madrasas providing a semblance of secular and religious education will be awarded 70 marks, apart from which if there are sports equipments, library, computer education and first aid facilities 80 marks are awarded and those having innovative activities, expert faculty, language training, physical education and well ordained campus 90 marks are awarded.

### **Introduction**

Madrasa was the cradle of new inventions nay new civilization during the middle ages. In our country too, the contribution of Madrasa towards educational and political revival cannot be denied. It was the springboard of freedom movement. It was the abode of intellectuals, poets, writers and revolutionaries. Every education system has its own history. The history is a sort of mirror for it. AS such it is felt to throw light on the path trodden by madrasa over the period. Lots of similarities could be traced in Indian gurukul system and madrasa education system. A human values

driven system of education. Where the Guru and disciple relation is sacrosanct. These were the centers of many scientific innovations too. Those reviewing the history of madrasa education of those days and contemporary learning will find lots of gap in it. Madrasas was the forerunner of modern civilization. Spain of middle ages is the living proof. It was a model for the world in medical science, astronomy, chemistry and other technological fields. Madrasas achieved revolution in educational domain which the modern universities would not think of! Its impact was felt in India and especially in Karnataka. It was the Madrasas from which many of the Kings of India acquired education. In the educational reforms in Karnataka the contribution of KhuliKutub shah of Bahmani Kingdom, Adil shah of Bijapur sultanate is quite immense. In fact the Islamic university established by Gawaans of Bidar and its spacious library is world renowned. Thus madrasas were the centers of scientific innovations and acted as laboratories for scientific subjects. It was a center of exchange of scholarship and renowned scholars from across the world. It also remained an inspiration for many of the world renowned architectural buildings. For example the architect of Gol Gumbuz Yakub Dabul learned the architecture from one of these madrasas. Not only that, Burdamajlis, Daf, qawwali, Mushaira and to a whole lot of cultural forms were born from these madrasas. Even the literary advance paved the way in inventing Urdu language by Walidaqni. He is called the pioneer of Urdu language.

While the Madrasa initiated the new renewal and harbinger of inventions it is regrettable for having secluded the institutions today as the mere provider of religious teachings. It wouldn't be an exaggeration if we say that it has lost its pristine glory and its true status! According to a Karnataka Government assessment there are more than 960 Madrasas in our State. In this survey probably Maktabas (Madrasa meant for small children) are also included. And Pallidars attached to Masjids might not be included in those surveys. Therefore it is difficult to admit the survey of the government as accurate.

### **Methodology**

The study is not one-dimensional. Research was mainly through baseline survey of madrasas. The data is collected by visiting the madrasas, interacting with students, faculty and neighborhood residents. Books & journals are also referred.

### **Discussions**

We have visited various Madarasas across the state and by collecting the opinions of people on teachers and pupils of those Madarasas have examined an assessed the information to arrive at the following submissions.

- There is absence of basic infrastructure facilities in many of the Madarasas.
- There is low self-esteem found among many of those pursuing studies including the faculty. After learning in such Madarasas they felt that they may have to serve in Masjids and Madarasas where they may be paid lesser honorariums. As they keep away from the public domain they are cut off from the social mainstream.

- The negative image created by the media regarding Madarasas has infused a state of fear and concern among students. The enigma remaining behind these Madarasas are portrayed to create an atmosphere of fear or terror! By relaying misconceptions round the clock people are brainwashed to hate these poor souls!

When our representatives visited a prestigious Madarasa in Hubli, the principal confided a sad event before them. Every week the personnel from Intelligence Bureau and Police Department visit to inspect the attendance rolls and examine the class rooms. As the police visit often, the students who come to the Madarasa come with a feeling of apprehension and fear! Due to this constant intimidation, there is not only significant reduction in student admission; even the parents are hesitant to visit the Madarasa for the fear of social standing!

- There is no encouragement for physical sports. Most of the Madarasas lack suitable playgrounds. Even few of those having are not being used. Or there are no physical education teachers to train them. Thus, community leaders have to deliberate over this matter and promote sports among Madarasa students.
- There is lack of residential facilities in many Madarasas. For example, when 20 pupils are housed for sleep in a small room it reflects the sorry state of affairs.

#### **Quantum of punishment in madrasas:**

It is a known fact that only love and empathy contributes to a good education. However this cannot be said of the madrasas. Even to silence small children parents sometimes say that they will be sent to madrasas. It signifies Madrasas as some sort of prisons. Islam does not encourage punitive action for pursuit of knowledge or education. It is childish to say that in order to acquire religious knowledge punishment is inevitable! There is not a single instance where the greatest teacher of all Prophet Muhammad (S) having inflicted punishment on any of his Revered companions or those who came in contact with him. In this connection we would like to bring to your attention certain real incidents.

Incident one: It is the renowned madrasa of the state at Hubballi. When our representatives went to see the faculty, the faculty using the cane to punish the students was indeed a sorry scenario. When we happen to glance at the neighboring class there once again the faculty was treating the pupils like the Jailor dealing with prisoners! Then we saw in the same class the students lined up before the teacher. They were trembling with fear. They were as though getting readied for a punishment for a crime committed.

Incident two: This is a renowned madrasa run by a religious leader at Bangalore when we visited there we encountered a student pursuing 4<sup>th</sup> year studies in Aleemiyath he logically posed with us regarding the trauma that went with the revelation of Holy Quran! He was trying to say that Prophet Mohammed(S) experienced severe stress or pain during the revelation of Holy Quran to justify the punishment on students!

According to him in order to acquire religious knowledge it is quite logical to undergo some pain! Thus we could see how there is ignorance and mediocrity prevailing among students and their peers.

Incident Three: It is a renowned madrasa at Bangalore, the capital of Karnataka. When our representative visited the students of Tamilnadu, Andhra and other states got acquainted. Our representatives did assess the status and situation prevailing in these madrasas. When chosen five students were inquired, three of them said they are penalized by beating and other two students said they are merely fined.

### **Course Time Duration:**

As per our understanding different syllabus are taught in Madararasas. In some Madararasas Aleemiyath Degree duration is kept as 6 years, it may be 10 to 12 years in certain other Madararasas. In some Madararasas the girls are imparted Dayee, Muhmin, and Fahmul Quran courses within 2, 3 or 4 years. In these courses tailoring or calligraphy is also included as a vocational subject. Hence it is advisable to reduce the course duration of boys too! We discussed on this aspect with many religious leaders. However we are not getting any concrete answers. They are adhering to the conventional modes of education. However when we had a discussion with Maulana Salim Nadvi of Iqra Arabic School, Mangalore he opined “we have assessed where the students time is wasted, so we shift to secular education to bridge the gaps, our students have progressed in both secular and religious domains, Thus we have discovered a balanced learning model”.

When we look at Madararasas in Karnataka, there are lots of students pursuing BA (aleemiyath) courses. But those pursuing MA Arabic are rare. One or two are appearing for MA (Arabic) of Madras University. It is really sorry state of affairs to know that there aren't any facilities to pursue post graduation in Arabic or Aleemiyath since most of the universities do not recognize the BA (Aleemiyath)! There is no arrangement to teach Arabic at these Universities. As such, there is an immediate need to commence BA (Arabic or Aleemiyath) courses in our universities in line with Kerala Universities. At the same time, arrangements should be made to commence post graduation courses too. By organizing to commence the Arabic Studies chairs under all the universities of Karnataka many of the present ills of the system stands mitigated.

### **Faculty:**

The student faculty ratio is in good proportion. However among the faculty there is deficiency of secular learning. Limiting themselves with religious learning, they have kept away from social and contemporary knowledge. This in turn affects the Madarasa students who assimilate pure religious knowledge without added social perspectives.

While we look at the above problems besetting education, it really saddens us further to learn that the faculty is the most underpaid lot. In rural areas their honorarium is limited to mere Rs.3000. Even in urban areas they may get a modest pay of Rs.5 to 8

thousands! It is very difficult to lead their lives with this meager salary. It is also recommended to fix a salary of minimum Rs. 15000.

**Cleanliness:**

If we are talking about cleanliness at Madarasas, we regret that many of the Madarasas where we conducted the surveys were in a sorry state as far as cleanliness is concerned.

In Bidar and Raichur at the girls Madarasas there was heavy stench emanating from the open drainage. When we inquired about this with the manager of the institution, he said that in spite of his complaints to the local councilor nothing has been done! Those who teach “Cleanliness is the better part of the religion” fail to infuse in children the relevance of teachings.

**Percentage wise statistics of Infrastructure facilities at 55 Madarasas**

- Libraries - 21.81%
- First aid kits - 12.72%
- Innovative learning - 9.09%
- Computer - 18.18%
- Drinking water facilities - 72.72%
- English language learning - 43.68%
- Maths, science and social studies - 18.18%
- Kannada Language - 43.63%
- Own Building - 82.85%
- Well integrated furniture - 50.90%
- Playing ground - 41.81%
- Physical Education teacher - 10.90%
- Sports equipments - 23.63%

**Ranking information of 55 Madarasas:**

Score	Number of Madarasas	Rank
90	0	A+
80	4	A
70	4	B+
60	9	B
50	38	C

**A few role models**

**Madarasa Baithul Uloom, Sindagi**

In the Madarasa based in Sindagi at Bijapur district 400 girls and 200 boys are

pursuing education. Here there is spacious playground; good library, computer laboratory and other facilities are available. English, Kannada, Science, mathematics, social science is taught with a well-integrated curriculum of secular and religious learning is the unique trait of this institution.

**Special characteristics:**

- There is separate arrangement for girls and boys with equal emphasis on quality education for both the sexes.
- Here language is taught as a special skill. Because of which 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> standard students are able to read and write Urdu legibly. They are also taught Kannada and English simultaneously.
- 400 girls are spread over 22 classrooms with 25 faculties attending to them. Similarly 200 boys are spread over 16 class rooms and 20 faculties attend to their needs. On an average for 18 female children one classroom and for 16 children one faculty. Similarly for 12 boys one classroom and for 10 children the facility of one faculty is available.
- Admissions open throughout the year. As such, opportunity of education is kept open without depriving it to any child.
- Though the curriculum of the Madarasa is designed for 8 years, those bright students are provided the opportunity of finishing same within a span of 5 years.

If one assesses the cleanliness aspects, compared to other Madarasas this Madarasa has placed much importance for cleanliness.

**Madarasa Ziya-ul-Uloom, Kandlur**

Madarasa at a place called Kandlur at Kundapur taluk has its own building, a vast playground, a well-facilitated library and a peaceful campus draws our attention. There are 12 faculties for 120 children which means for every 10 children one faculty is available.

**Special Characteristics:**

- 30 students are pursuing BA studies from MANU
- There is facility of reading English and Kannada newspapers
- Those pursuing final year Aleemiyath are able to converse in Arabic.
- In order to impart creative writing among Madarasa students a weekly wall magazine is published.
- Debates are arranged on contemporary social and political issues.
- Faculty being drawn from MA and BA are well disposed to guide students.

**Iqra Arabic School, Mangalore**

A well-known Madarasa at the heart of Mangalore. Established in 2000 this Madarasa has 140 boys and 60 girls.

**Special characteristics:**

- Those pursuing religious learning at the Madarasa are also provided the opportunity of secular education.
- 22 classrooms, library in a placid environment. Clean drinking water is provided.
- According to the head of the Institution for every 8 Hifz (memorization of Holy Quran) students one faculty is provided. There will be admission test for aspiring students.
- 40 students have completed Hifz courses. Among them many are pursuing studies in prominent institutions. A student pursuing 12<sup>th</sup> standard studies at Kerala has secured 6<sup>th</sup> rank in the state. Now he has secured admission to MBBS.

**Houze-Ilmiya-Baqirul-Uloom, Alipur**

This is a spacious Madarasa imparting education to 30 boys and 25 girls. Those pursuing religious education here further pursue secular education from the nearest schools. A vast playground, a library, a good residential facility is the specialty of this institution.

**Special characteristics:**

- Those completing education at this Madarasa are sent overseas for higher education.
- There is a separate beautiful campus “Daruzahra“for girls.
- Girls are provided professional training in embroidery, tailoring, etc. Most of the students converse in Kannada and English languages.
- Students are imparted SSLC, PUC and B.com learning.

**Jamiya Islamiya, Bhatkal**

This Madarasa having more than 1200 students is said to be the largest Madarasa in the state. A beautiful campus, vast play ground, well designed hostels, well stocked library highlights of this institution. This may be called as Model Madarasa.

**Special characteristics.**

- Kannada, English, mathematics, social science, science, computer is taught thus covering secular education.
- Those studying in final year are well versed in Arabic language conversation.
- Prominent ulamas such as Maulana Ayyub Nadwi, Maulana Salman Nadwi recognize themselves as the aluminums of this Institution. Many others serve as faculty in Dubai, Sharjah and other Middle Eastern Countries.

**Darul Umoor (Tipu Sulthan Study and Research Center)**

The Madarasa which commenced in 2002 at Srirangapatna has a spacious library, computer laboratory, a beautiful campus, garden thus placing itself as a premier Madarasa. The integration of religious and secular learning is one of the major specialties of this Madarasa. Here only one year Diploma course is taught.

**Special characteristics:**

- Those having Aleemiyath and Fazeelath eligibility are admitted.
- The students undergo special assignment as teaching faculty in Urdu schools and other Madarasas.
- History, Management studies, Islamic Banking, inter-religious studies, Guest Lectures from prominent figures, etc thus projecting a diverse curriculum is the highlight of this Madarasa.

**Conclusion & Recommendations:**

Madarasas can play the crucial role in the development of Muslim Community. The dynamics of Indian society is built on tolerance and pluralism where symbiotic existence of religion, language and cultures are formed. But the syllabus of our Madarasas is not evolving for adapting to the opportunities and challenges for its students to lead their life in a plural society. Instead majority of the students who pass out from these Madarasas are aloof from the mainstream.

- To establish a non-governmental Madarasa regulating body constituting all schools thought.
- A committee to study the infrastructure requirements of Madarasas has to be established.
- To appoint physical education teachers, providing sports equipments and to ensure sufficient play grounds has to be given prominence. Inter madrasa sports must be encouraged.
- Arabic learning must be encouraged. Students must be encouraged to speak and converse in Arabic within the campus.
- As Arabic attains prominence even in terms of the geo-political situation of Middle Eastern and African countries including all Muslim countries, the Government must make provision to include Arabic second and third slots of language selections.
- Arabic studies Chair has to be opened in all the Universities. All the Universities in Karnataka should commence BA in Arabic courses. Madarasa students must be made eligible to join these courses. MA courses must be commenced as a follow up for these courses.
- The teaching of mathematics, science, social studies, Kannada and computer education must be made compulsory in Madarasas.
- There must be provision to hold social and cultural functions at Madarasas.
- Teaching of Kannada and English language to be made compulsory.
- Graduate trained teachers who are having Religious degrees may be appointed

- as faculty.
- Prathibha Karanji programmes organized by the Government of Karnataka at the state level may be extended to the Madarasas.
- Time duration has to be fixed for the graduation course (aleemiyath), like all other educational institutions.
- To fix a salary of minimum Rs. 15000 for the teachers.

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