

# An Evaluative study of the Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madrasas from Stakeholders' Perspective

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## ABSTRACT

Muslims are the biggest minority community of this nation comprising 13.4 Percent of its population; the challenges of the 21st century (a century of Knowledge) can appositely not be met without considering the problems of Muslim education in India. On this count Madrasa education contributes a noteworthy, although not leading part of the concerns relating to Muslim education in India. Madrasa are the nucleus of the cultural and religious-educational life of Muslims. As an invaluable instrument of traditional education, the Madarsas, have played a vital role in spreading literacy mainly among the down-trodden segments of Muslim society. Not astoundingly, for that reason, different governments have been enthusiastically looking at Madrasas and the possibility of their role in mitigating educational backwardness among Muslims. A number of initiatives have been taken for this purpose and for promoting the teaching of modern subjects therein. While the scheme for Madrasas modernization has been underway for the past two decades, the Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madrasas (SPQEM) was initiated in 2009 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India. Apart of other initiatives the new scheme stipulates that financial assistance will be provided for conducting in service teacher training programmes for the teachers appointed under the scheme in Madrasas to upgrade their pedagogical skills. Training will be arranged in groups by SCERTs/DIETs/BRCs etc. and the funds for this purpose will be provided to the training institution through the State Government. The study was conducted in the five Madrasas of Bhopal. The information was collected through interview schedule from the teachers who had been trained under the scheme and managers of Madrasas. It was found that SPQM teachers training programme welcomed by Madrasa with open arms but they are not very happy with its nature, which they find to be superficial. The teachers really want to learn something so that they may swim with the streams. But the providers take it in a routine official manner.

## Keywords:

## Introduction

As far as the present status of Muslim education is concerned, providing quality education through madrasa is indeed an important dimension in the realm of Muslim educational system in India; which need vital attention. Muslims are the biggest minority community of this nation comprising 13.4 Percent of its population, the challenges of the 21st century (a century of Knowledge) can pertinently not be met without considering the problems of Muslim education in India. On this count Madrasa education contributes a significant, although not predominant part of the concerns relating to Muslim education in India. Madrasa are the nucleus of the cultural and religious-educational life of Muslims. As an invaluable instrument of traditional education, the Madarsas, have played a vital role in spreading literacy mainly among the down-trodden segments of Muslim society. Generally speaking, the poor segment of Muslim community is inclined to sending their children to Madarsas essentially because they not only offer them free education but also free boarding and lodging. It is also a well recognized fact that in many remote parts of the country, Madrasas have been the only educational institutions available for the children of the community. Not surprisingly, therefore, various governments have been keenly looking at Madrasas and the possibility of their role in mitigating educational backwardness among Muslims. Additionally, the popular misconception about Madrasas as being a den of fundamentalism and a belief that Madrasas students have no access to the study of modern subjects has invited attention of governments at the centre their mainstreaming. A number of initiatives have been taken for this purpose and for promoting the teaching of modern subjects therein. While the scheme for Madrasas modernization has been underway for the past two decades, the *Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madrasas (SPQEM)* was initiated in 2009 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India. In this regard it appears to be quite pertinent to have a look at the utility of SPQEM scheme from the perspective of madrasa teachers and management.

SPQEM is conceived as a demand driven scheme. The scheme provides for extending support and resources for capacity building of madrasas to teach modern subjects by providing finances for paying salary of teachers, strengthening of libraries, developing book banks, providing teaching learning materials (TLMs)

and other essential pedagogical equipment for teaching modern subjects at primary/middle/secondary and senior secondary levels. Financial assistance is also provided for establishment of Science/Computer Labs/workshops in Madrasas at the Secondary/Senior Secondary levels followed by an annual grant for maintenance/ purchase of consumables. Besides, direct financial assistance to the Madrasas, there is a provision in the scheme for in-service training of teachers as well as establishing linkages with the NIOS and other institutes offering vocational courses.

Most of the teachers recruited by the Madrasas are inexperienced, under-qualified and devoid of training to teach modern subjects that they are supposed to teach. While there is a provision for mid-career teacher training that certain Madrasas Boards (for e.g Chhattisgarh Madrasas Board) have taken up, it largely remains insufficient. The new scheme stipulates that financial assistance will be provided for conducting in service teacher training programmes for the teachers appointed under the scheme in Madrasas to upgrade their pedagogical skills. Training will be arranged in groups by SCERTs/DIETs/BRCs etc. and the funds for this purpose will be provided to the training institution through the State Government. Rs. 100/- per day per teacher trainee for a maximum of 15 days training, will be paid to the training institution to cover training expenses and TA/DA of the trainee teacher.

Training of teachers by DIETs has been perceived as a welcome step by the parents, management and the teachers themselves. However, an evaluation report by K.R.Narayan Institute (2013) found complaints (serious ones in Madhya Pradesh) suggesting that DIET officials were not serious enough to take up task. Teachers alleged that they were not being exposed to training in modern subjects with the seriousness that it deserves. Teachers from Uttar Pradesh complained that the trainers were themselves under qualified. The training that was provided to some teachers was done for teaching Hindi only or in some cases for teaching Urdu, whereas, teachers were eager to be trained in subjects such as Maths, Science and English. However, despite the fact that the teacher training component under SPQEM has not been very effective (with no uniform implementation across the states) yet the a large number of teachers themselves are desirous of getting regular and effective training. The Madrasas heads as well as the parents realise the importance of a separate and trained teacher to teach modern subjects. Substantially large number of teachers requested that special skill training in the use of computer as an effective teaching learning tool should also be provided. Some even demanded that teachers without a teacher training qualification should be given the opportunity to get training on the job itself. The demand for modern education has clearly and substantially increased after the introduction of these subjects. There was also a demand made for providing training to teachers in the use of Computers as well as for the appointment of a computer teacher. The above mentioned evaluation study showed a grim picture of the training at the grassroots level. In this regard it appears to be quite pertinent to have a look at the utility of SPQEM scheme from the perspective of madrasa teachers and management.

### ***Objectives of the study***

The aim of the study is

- to assess the efficiency of- SPQEM's administration and implementation at the state level,
- to understand the experience of the beneficiary organizations and the stakeholder-community

### **Methodology:**

The study was qualitative in nature. The data was collected from the Madrasa having SPQEM scheme and from DIET of Bhopal.

### **The Sample:**

The study was conducted in the five Madrasas of Bhopal. The information was collected from the teachers who had been trained under the scheme and managers of Madrasas.

### **Tools of the study:**

To find out the teachers' overall view for the scheme an unstructured interview schedule was prepared by the researcher and a marginally different schedule was administered on the managers of the Madrasas.

### **Data Collection:**

For data collection interview model was chosen. An in-depth interview was conducted with teachers and managers and their responses were recorded verbatim. Additionally, field notes were also taken.

### Analysis and Discussion

After carrying out the interviews and taking field notes some issues came out. Amongst them the managers and administrators were happy with the scheme and reported that some positive difference was registered in the teaching style of teachers. But one administrator added that element of disparity was in vogue in that the the 'small madrasas were getting more benefit than the larger ones. He added that they were having a good number of trained teachers and they learnt all during their training period. But small madrasas that are not having the trained teachers are also benefitted with the scheme. But then, for the last two years no such programmes were conducted.' While asking the teachers about the programme and their satisfaction level they reported that programme was good and some speakers were really good but mediocre ones were also there. They were more concerned about the pedagogy and the practical approach of the subject teaching. One of the teachers added that 'as and when they wanted to apply new methods in their actual classroom a number of problems arose. There is no provision for taking care of the problems and suggestions to overcome the barriers. The approach should be practical and somehow one or two of the participants should be given the opportunity to practice the new ways, then and there only'. The teachers opined that they needed more information about the methodology of teaching and about the new approach of teaching such as activity based learning. A number of questions arose in their minds and confusions grabbed them, which needs to be addressed. Another teacher observed that the 'training which is provided to us is in bits and pieces and a bit superficial one'. They are of the view that well thought out techniques and methods should be applied to achieve the objective with concern and serious efforts. A number of teachers stated that that they were not being exposed to training with the seriousness that it deserves. A large number of teachers were eager to getting regular and effective training. A number of teachers requested that special skill training in the use of computer as an efficient teaching learning tool should also be made available.

To find out the readiness and attitude of the benefactors of the scheme, the researcher approached the DIET. They reported that they run the programme as per Rajya Shiksha Kendra format and instructions. At first, the DIET people were unable to understand the SPQEM scheme when they were told 'training for Madrasa teachers' only then they came to understand the matter under enquiry. They told us that they usually run capacity building programme, ALM, ABL and cover other general topics for Madrasa teachers. But due to some administrative technicalities they were unable to hold the programme last year. Since 'now the fund allocation has been made we are in the process of organizing the programme.

To conclude it may be said that SPQM teachers training programme welcomed by Madrasa with open arms but they are not very happy with its nature, which they find to be superficial. The teachers really want to learn something so that they may swim with the streams. But the providers take it in a routine official manner.

### References

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