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Madrasa Education: Need To Upgrade The Syllabus Of Madrasas.

Abstract: Education is the main cause of development of any culture or civilization. A nation cannot progress without the development of education. Muslims' education is related to Madrasas. A Madrasa is a place for acquiring knowledge. Madrasas have been the only source of education for Muslims for ages. These Madrasas have not been able to integrate their education system with modern education, so there is lack of modern outlook and insight among Madrasa graduates. Thus, there is a decline in the education standard of Muslim. To upgrade the educational standard of Muslims, there is a need to develop the Madrasa education system. This study focuses on the development of Madrasas with modern curriculum, including English as a subject. Madrasas are already providing religious teachings. Now there is a need to reform these Madrasas in line with modern educational standard. This paper focuses on the reformation of Madrasas' education system. It also investigates the syllabus used in the Madrasas.

Key words: Madrasa, Curriculum, and Education.

Aims of the study.

Following are the aims:

- 1 . To examine the syllabus used in the Madrasas.
2. To examine the objectives of the students behind learning English.

Objectives of the study

1. To examine students' proficiency level in English.
2. To examine students' objectives behind learning English.
3. To find out whether the syllabus is grammar- dominant or communicative- dominant.
4. To examine the status of English language teaching in Madrasas.

Research methods and framework

This study is conducted among five hundred students and twenty teachers of ten Madrasas of India.

List of the Madrasas:

- 1) Tameer -e- Millat Islamia- Aligarh
- 2) Madarsatul Uloom Al Islamia, Aligarh
- 3) Madarsa Shahi, Muradabad
- 4) Jameatus salehat, Rampur
- 5) Manzar- e- Islam, Bareilly
- 6) Jamiatur Raza, Bareilly
- 7) Jamiatul Muminaat Al Islamia, Lucknow
- 8) Aaisha Siddiqa Shariah College, New Delhi
- 9) Jamia Islamia Sanabil, Delhi
- 10) Jamia Syed Nazeer Hussain Delvi, Delhi

Sampling Method

The data is collected through questionnaires and interviews.

A Brief history of Madrasa

Islam gives the highest importance to education. This can be seen clearly in the Arabic word 'Iqra' used in the Quran which means to 'read' it is because of education that a society changes and progresses. Education nurtures man and keep him away from superstitions and ignorance. Learning and teaching are considered to be the most valuable job in Islamic society. Imparting education is a noble work in Islam. Madrasas play a very important role in the upliftment of Muslims' society. A Madrasa is a place where education is imparted. The basic role of Madrasa is to follow the Quran and the traditions of Prophet (Sunna). Therefore, Madrasa stands on these two pillars: the Quran and Sunna (tradition of the Prophet).

The origin of Madrasas started at the time of Prophet in his mosque, Masjid al-Nabwi in Medina. There he taught his followers the tenets of Islam. The first formal Madrasa was established in Neshapur in Khurasan and the second was Madrasa Nizamia in Baghdad by Nizam- ul- Mulk in 11 th century. (Basheer,2016)

Madrasa and Maktab

Earlier there was no particular place for teaching. Mosques were used to be the place for worship as well as teaching. Mosques were the places where teachings of Islam were imparted in early times. But with the spread of Islam, the number of students also increased. It was not possible to manage education in the mosques. This led to the evolution of a particular place for education that is maktab and madrasa.

Maktab : “The word Maktab is derived from Arabic kitab, was a place meant for elementary religious teaching”. (Kuldeep, 2003) The basic role of Maktab was to introduce to their students the knowledge of alphabets and religious prayers.

Madrasa : It was a place for learning and a centre of higher education, alumni of which came to be known as Ulama. Both the religious and secular subjects were taught in the Madrasa. (Kuldeep, 2003)

Madrasa during the Mughal period

The education system of Muslims flourished during the reign of Mughals. A large number of maktabas and Madrasas were built during this period. Every ruler spent large amount of money to make maktabas and Madrasas. The literacy rate of Muslims increased during this period. They provided all sorts of facilities to educate people.

A great number of Madrasas and mosques were built in the period from Qutubuddin Aibek to Aurangzeb (1618-1707). The Madrasa education during this period started with Qutubuddin who built large number of mosques. After him, Iltutmish established Nasiriya college at Delhi and Al-Firoza Madrasa in Multan. After him, the Khilji, the Tughlaqs, and Lodhi constructed a large number of Madrasas. Giasuddin Awwal constructed many Madrasas and provided scholarships to the students. He was the one who ruled over Bengal between 1212 and 1227 AD. Sultan Ahmad Shah (1411 to 1441) in Gujrat established many maktabas and Madrasas. Babur (1483-1531), Humayun (1508-1556) and Akbar (1542-1605) established a large number of Madrasas and mosques. Akbar took much interest in the field education. He established many Madrasas in Fatehpur Sikri near Agra. He was the one who introduced morality, arithmetic, accounts, agriculture, geometry, astronomy, geography, economics, and the art of governance, physics, logic, natural philosophy, divinity and history in Madrasas. Aurangzeb (1618-1707) rebuilt many Madrasas in Gujrat. A large number of Madrasas were

built in Delhi during Mughal rule. Some of them are Madrasa Rahimiyah, the Madrasa of Bazr Khanam, and Madrasa Ghaziuddin at Ajmeri gate. (Basheer, 2016)

During Aurangzeb's reign, the new curriculum reform was introduced in Madrasa system. Mulla Nizamuddin of Sihali, prepared a fresh curriculum for Firangi Mahal Madrasa in Lucknow which came to be known as Dars-i- Nizami or the Nizami Curriculum.

Madrasas during the British rule in India

As the British ruled over India, there was a drastic change in Muslim education. Muslim education declined. A large number of mosques and makhtabs were closed down. There was a gradual decline in the literacy rate of Muslims. Moreover, the evolution of modern schools also led to the decline of religious institutes. Madrasa -i- Aliya in Calcutta was the first step of Britishers to provide traditional education for Muslims. In 1781, the Calcutta Madrasa College for Muhammadans was established by Warren Hastings. Moreover, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, a great social and educational reformer, started the Aligarh movement to improve the Muslim education. (Basheer, 2016)

After the revolt of 1857, the Muslim education totally declined. Some of the famous Madrasas established after the revolt of 1857 were Madrasa Darul Uloom of Deoband (1866), Madrasa Mazahirul Uloom of Saharanpur (1866) and Nadwatul Ulama of Lucknow (1894). Another important change was seen with the replacement of Persian by English in 1837 as the language of courts.

Need to upgrade Madrasa education with English language

“English language teaching at Madrasas is a part of the modernization program introduced by the state as an initiative to make the future prospects of Madrasa graduates. The reason behind

the state driven modernization could be political and/ or social.”

(<http://www.anveshi.org.in/the-english-language-at-madrasas/>)

English language is an international language because of a large number of people making use of it. Today in the world of globalization where trade and commerce has reached at its highest peak through communication between the people of different countries. This became possible because English helps them in connecting with other people for trade. All this has made English an essential language to learn.

For Madrasa graduates who are lacking in communication, it is mandatory to learn English. It helps them to be up to date with the modern world of technology. Madrasa graduates often lack modern outlook and insight. Therefore, it has become very important to include English as a subject in their curriculum in Madrasas.

Today English is taught as a subject in many Madrasas not only in view of job opportunities but also to spread Islam to the people who do not understand Arabic. Parents also want their children to learn English language skill in Madrasas so that their children do not lag behind from other children of modern schools. Teaching of English language in Madrasas is important in order to develop and spread language and culture of Islam through dawa (awareness of the religion), to translate classical works in Arabic and Urdu into English, to create job opportunities for Madrasa graduates, to improve educational standard, social and economic condition of the society.

Madarsas have been the only source of education for Muslim where education as well as food and lodging are free for students. Now there is a need to reform these Madrasas with modern syllabus and technology. Because only through balanced education religious as well as modern education can uplift the education standard of the Muslim. Now, the English language has become a separate subject in the curriculum of many Madrasas of India. This shows a great achievement in the education system of Madrasas.

Syllabus of Madrasas in India

The syllabus of Madrasas is one of the important topics to be discussed. There is lot of works regarding the syllabus used in the Madrasas. Moreover, there have already been many Islamic seminars, workshops, conferences on the syllabus used in the Madrasas. It is difficult to make generalized statements regarding the syllabus used in Madrasas. Yet it is very clear that every Madrasa follows its own pattern of syllabus. There is no uniformity in any of the Madrasas with regards to subjects, books or emphasis. Moreover, there is no uniformity in preparing students for various degrees as every Madrasa follows its own pattern of studies.

Darul Uloom Deoband

All important Madrasas in India follow Dars-e- Nizami syllabus with some modifications. But the syllabus of Darul Uloom Deoband is comprehensive and is not the same as Dars-e-Nizami, rather it is a mixture of three educational institutions of past.

Madrasa Rahimia of Shah Waliullah in Delhi, Ferangi Mahal of Mulla Nizam in Lucknow and Madrasa in Allama Fazal-e- Haq in Khairabad. All the Madrasas of that time proclaimed to any of the three. But the revolution of 1857 swept all of them away except Ferangi Mahal in Lucknow. It exists even today as a symbolic of the elders.(Qasmi, 2005)

Daru Uloom Deoband has a important contribution in protecting the Islamic identity. It has prepared a combined syllabus with the characteristics of three centres and is used by the majority of Madrasas in India. Darul Uloom Deoband plays an important role in the field of Madrasa education system. It has brought about many modifications in its education system according to the time.

Darul Uloom Deoband has a syllabus which is of four phases: primary, middle, high and specialization. All these four courses are for Fazilat. DarulUloom syllabus is not only followed

in India but also in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal etc. Mazahir Uloom of Saharanpur, one of the great Madrasas of India also follows Darul Uloom syllabus.

Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama Lucknow

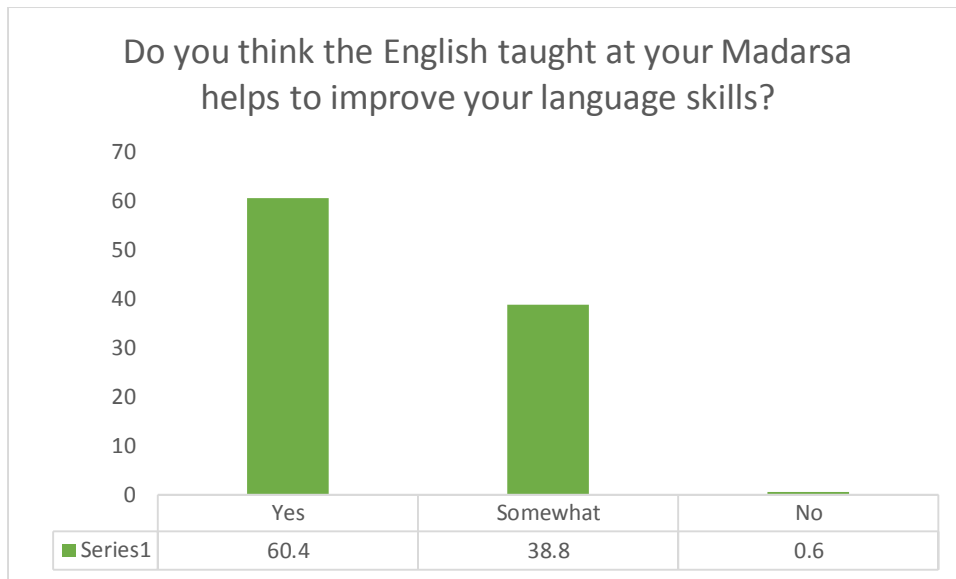
Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama focused on the holy Quran and introduced it into syllabus. The attention was given to Arabic language as it helped in the understanding of the Quran and Sunnah. Darul Uloom included Arabic in its syllabus both as a classical and a modern language. Darul Uloom education system is from primary stage to the university stage. It covers major branches of theological learning and Arabic literature. The primary stage is of six years. It provides elementary education in Hindi, Urdu and English as well as Arithmetic, Geography, General Science etc. It imparts primary education as given in secular schools besides giving a religious education. (Qasmi, 2005)

The secondary stage is a three-year course. In this, besides English, thorough knowledge in Persian and Arabic grammar, Literature and composition is provided. Higher secondary stage has a two-year course comprising ninth and tenth year of the curriculum. It imparts instruction in Arabic, Persian and English besides religious education. Graduation (Alimiyat) stage is a four-year course. It is equivalent to graduation course. It offers instruction in the commentary of the Quran (Tafseer), Traditions (Hadith), Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh) besides Arabic literature and Islamic learning.

Post- graduation (Fazilat) stage is a two-year course providing instruction in Arabic literature and branches of Islamic learning. (Qasmi, 2005)

Results and Discussion

1. What is your objective behind learning English?



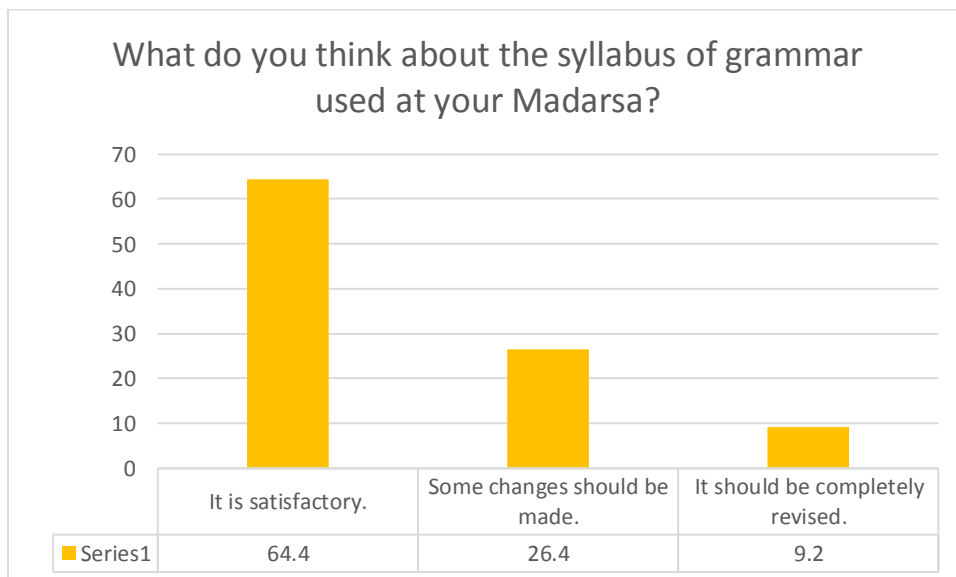
4. What do you think about the syllabus of grammar used at your Madarsa?

It is satisfactory

Some changes should be made.

It should be completely revised.

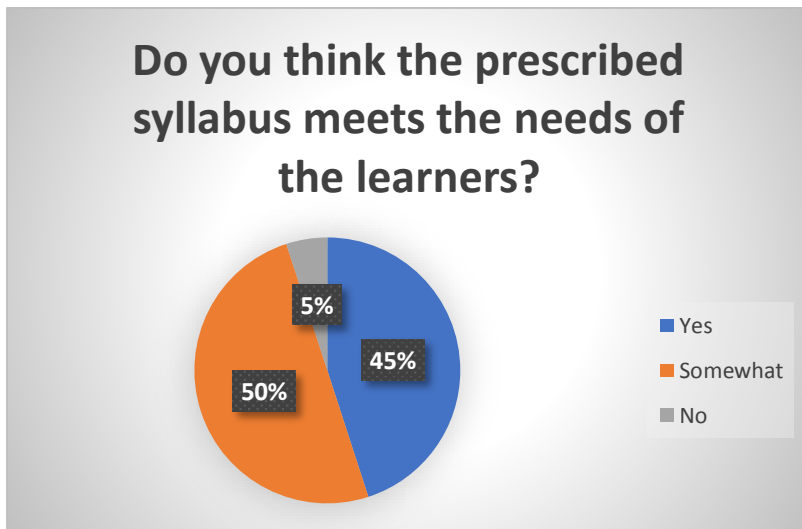
Pie chart-4



5. Do you think the prescribed syllabus meets the needs of the learners?

Yes () Somewhat () No ()

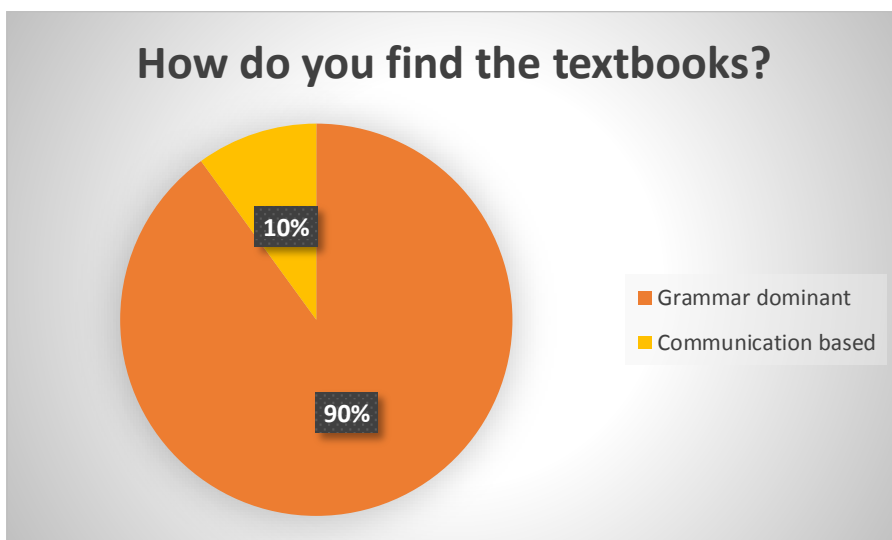
Pie chart-5



6. How do you find the textbooks at your Madarsa?

Grammar dominant () Communication based ()

Pie chart-6



Conclusion

The above responses of the students show that majority of the students want to get job in foreign countries to fulfill their dreams. Most of the students' responses show that they want to become good English speaker so that they can communicate fluently in English anywhere. Students are learning English so that they can use it in real life situations. Internet has become mandatory for today's working lifestyle; therefore, students also want to be up to date with fast moving life internet, chatting, mailing, online shopping etc. The basic aim of Madarsa students is to spread Islam to the people who are not aware of it. Therefore, one of the objectives behind learning English is to promote Islam. Above results also show that, Madrasa students are very much eager to learn English. They want to live their lives as other school students.

The above responses of the teachers show that some of the teachers think that prescribed syllabus meets the needs of the learners whereas some of them say that prescribed syllabus meets the needs of the learners somewhat. This may be because they are using grammar dominant syllabus instead of the latest communication-based syllabus. The majority of the responses of the teachers show that grammar dominant textbooks are being used in Madarsa. Therefore, there is a need to upgrade the syllabus of the Madrasas to face the challenges of the modern world. The best suggestion would be the balance of both religious and modern syllabus. The policy makers, educationalists, stakeholders and religious scholars are supposed to ponder over this issue and come forward to upgrade the syllabus of Madrasas.

Future Suggestions

- There should be a proper arrangement of resources.
- There should be well maintained language laboratory.
- Teachers should be well trained.
- Reformation of the curriculum is required at Madrasa level.

- There should be seminars, workshops and conferences for the motivation and guidance.

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