

# Muslims of West Bengal: Some Demographic, Socio-Economic and Educational Situation

Md. Intekhab Hossain\*

\*Lecturer, Department of Sociology, Aliah University, Kolkata, West Bengal, India

Email: [intekhab.soc@aliah.ac.in](mailto:intekhab.soc@aliah.ac.in)

## Abstract

Practically research studies on Muslim society and culture in West Bengal are very negligible owing to which very inadequate is known to the people and such lacuna in knowledge have caused a great amount of loophole in understanding the society under study from empirical point of view.

The present account is a modest attempt to assess and enquire the socio-economic situation of the Muslims including both males and females of West Bengal besides presenting some demographic profile of the Muslims of West Bengal compared to the people of other religious communities of the state. Emphasis has also been given to find out the contributory factors acting as obstacle towards their socio-economic development, change and modernization.

For this endeavor the textual facts are mostly gathered from a variety of in print resources while the primary data are mainly the author's personal observations and field study among the Muslims of this state.

**Keywords:** Muslims, society, economy, demography, backwardness, development.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Muslims constitute the second largest religious group in India and thus the largest religious minority. The 2001 census enumerated India's Muslim population at over 138 million, and by 2006 the Muslim population would be over 150 million. India's Muslim population is amongst the largest in the world, exceeded only by Indonesia's and close to the Muslim populations of Pakistan and Bangladesh. Moreover, it is larger than the total populations of most countries of the world. India is considered an overpopulated country and India's population policy seeks to achieve replacement level fertility by 2010. However, population policy implementation in India has come under severe attack, more so due to the element of coercion inherent in the promotion and acceptance of modern contraceptives. Besides, Indian population policy does not adequately recognize the multi-dimensionality of the economic and social forces that prevail upon the household decisions regarding the size of families. For example, there are no noteworthy and dependable social safety nets in place to protect the interests of the poor and infirm, and therefore old age security still dominates fertility decisions, although the average family/household size has reduced over time. The population programme is over dependent on female sterilization with little or no choice based access to a basket of family limitation procedures. There is little recognition of the fact that ultimately it is development and equity that empowers citizens to make informed choices with respect to family formation. In this regard the impact of education, especially of women, has shown dominant influence, not only in reducing fertility but also in the reduction of infant and child mortality, improvement in birth weights and overall human development (GOI, 2006: 27). The economic development of a country cannot be achieved without development of each constituent of the country at micro level as well as macro level. Poverty is the curse to any economy. Muslims are by and large poor. They have power and will to have education and to work in any field.

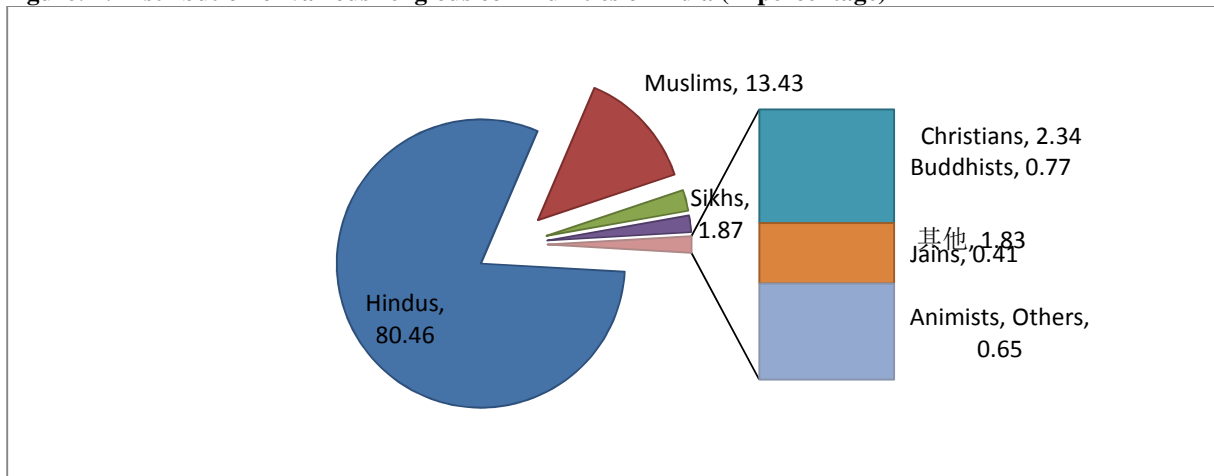
In spite the fact of power and will, the Muslims in India are backward both educationally and economically. Unless an assessment is made and the root causes of poverty and backwardness are found out, and would continue to contribute negatively in the economic development of the country.

The study of socio-economic condition of Muslim Society in India is practically negligible. A few studies on some Muslim groups of Northern, Western and Southern parts of the country have been made so far. Very little is known about the socio-economic status of Muslims of Eastern part of India. Hence, the effort is made to have an in-depth study of socio-economic condition of Muslim Inhabitants of Eastern part of the country (Rahaman and Bhuiamali, 2011: 09). India is well thought-out to be a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-cultural nation. People of this nation are belongs to diverse color and creed and live side by side since time immemorial. Harmony in variety and veracity within poly-ethnic cultural environment is one of the basic characteristic features of this multicultural country. Many religious minority groups have also been living in coincidence in this sub-continent. Muslims, one of such groups, who bear the traits of Islamic 'great tradition' as well as local 'little tradition' playing a key part in the growth of Indian society, culture and civilization since the time of their advent and origin in Indian soil.

## 2. LAND AND PEOPLE

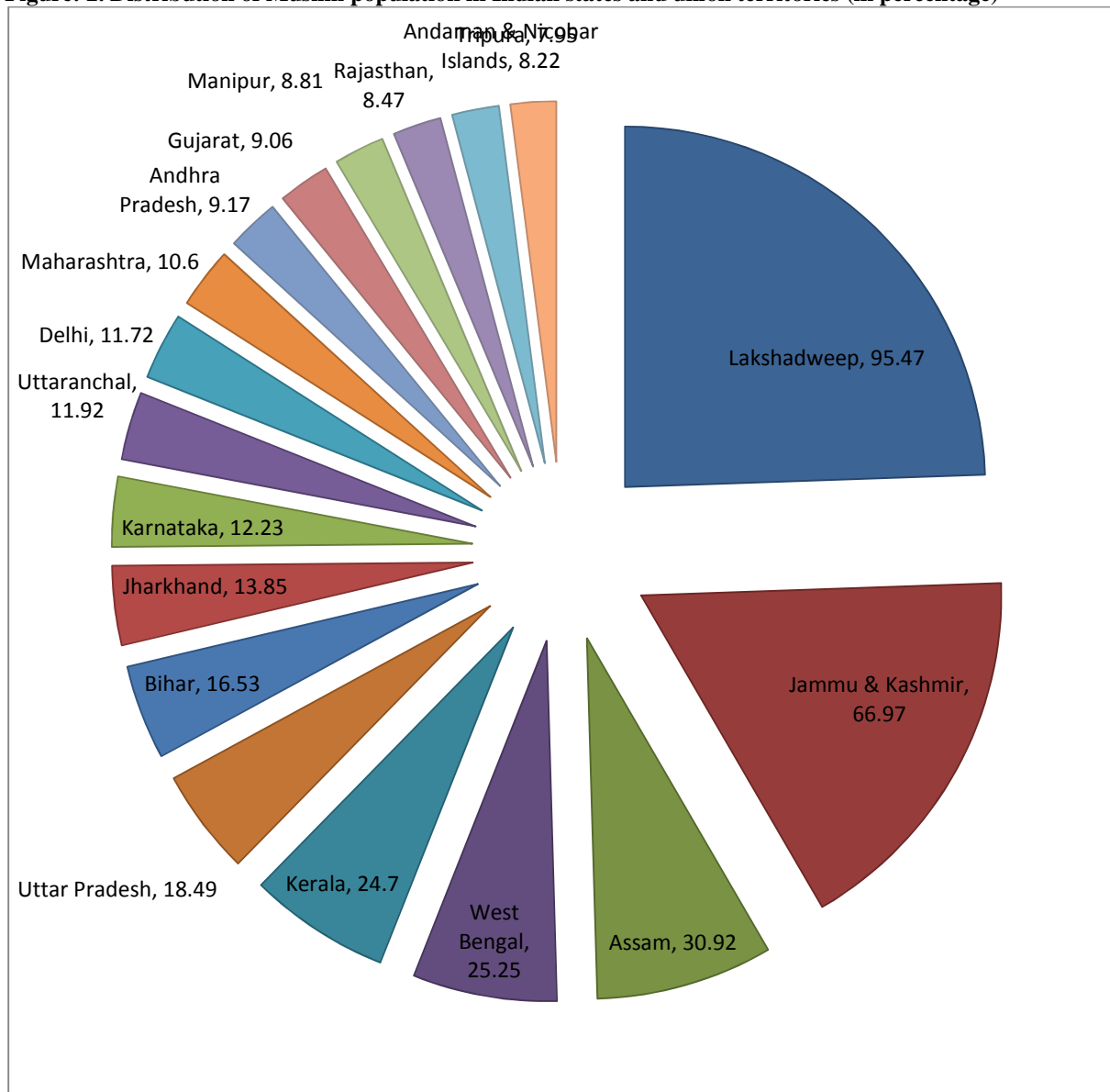
The Indian Constitution is committed to the equality of citizens and the responsibility of the State to preserve, protect and assure the rights of minorities in matters of language, religion and culture. That is why our national leaders while framing the Constitution, emphasized the doctrine of unity in diversity. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National, Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities says that the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to such minorities contribute to the political and social stability of the countries in which they live. Meeting their aspirations and ensuring their rights acknowledges the dignity and equality of all individuals and furthers participatory development. This in turn contributes to the lessening of tensions among groups and individuals. These factors are major determinants for stability and peace. All developed countries and most developing ones give appropriate emphasis to looking after the interests of minorities. Thus, in any country, the faith and confidence of the minorities in the functioning of the State in an impartial manner is an acid test of its being a just State (GOI, 2006: 01). The Indian Muslims, found to reside in almost every States and Union Territory of the sub-continent with diverse proportion. It has been reported that such a larger section of the democratic, secular and republic country like India is lagged behind the rest of the Indian Society as compare to the other religious minorities of this nation due to various external and internal factors. They have still been remained socio-economically and educationally toward the rear when modernization is the order of the day. With regards to economic, educational and political empowerment Muslims of this subcontinent are most marginalized, deprived, secluded and are in a state of impoverishment and destitution which retarded in normal progress in the field of economy, education, politics, knowledge and culture. The all-around strange evils faced by them are associated to anxieties in relation to security, identity perception, discrimination and equity. Obviously, it is a matter of great concerns for each and every one that the trends of development and the forces of modernization have bypassed this group and as a result they are subjected to destitution and seclusion, as the various reports reveal, suffering from the stigma of relative backwardness, insecurity, identity crisis, discrimination and injustice which have developed fear-psychosis, Islam phobia and inferiority complex inside their heart and mind and become tradition bound due to various reasons.

**Figure: 1. Distribution of various religious communities of India (in percentage)**



Based on Census of India 2001

**Figure: 2. Distribution of Muslim population in Indian states and union territories (in percentage)**



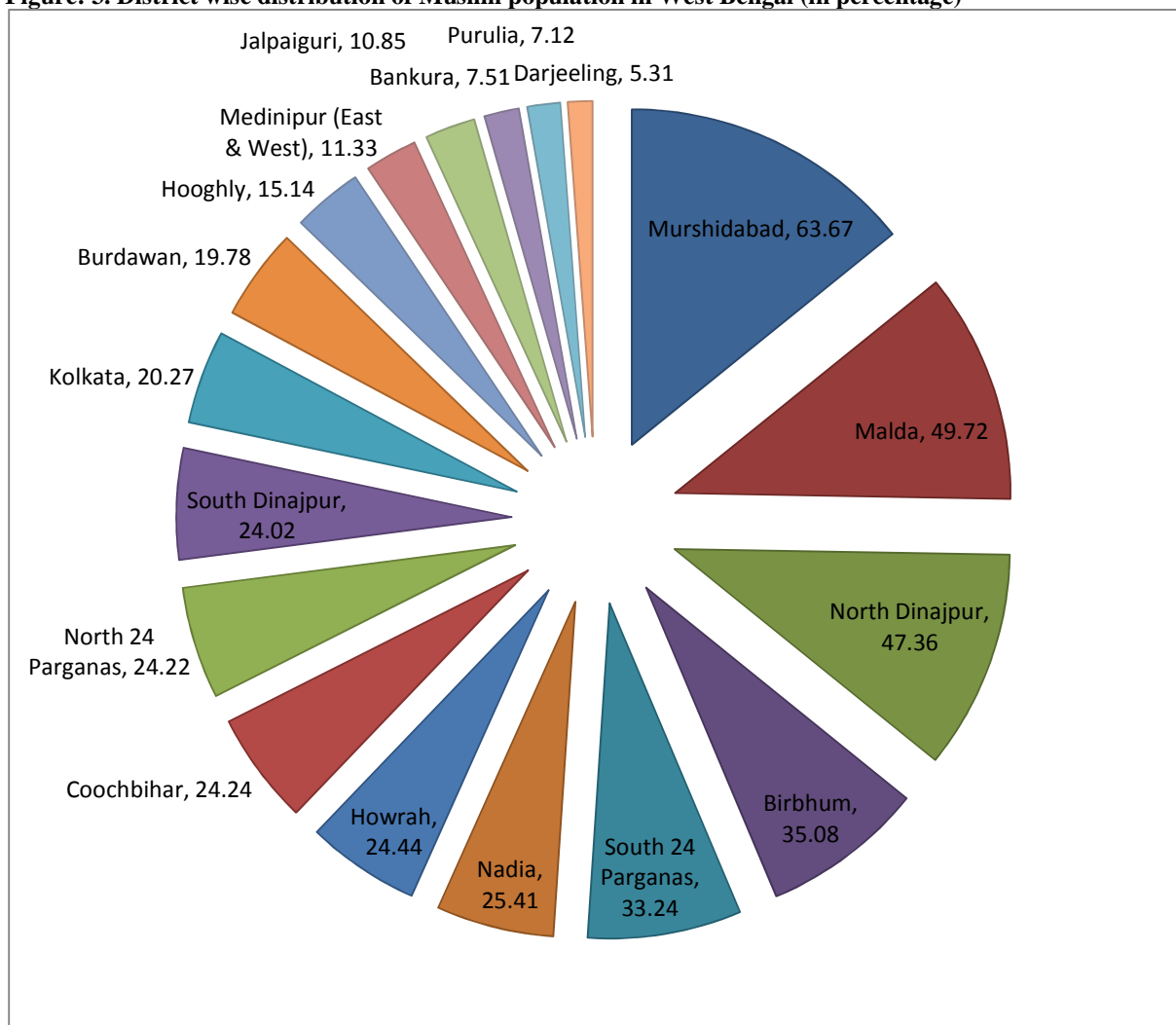
Based on Census of India 2001

West Bengal is India's fourth most Muslim populous state in the eastern region of India stretching from the Himalayan in the north to the Bay of Bengal in the south. In the eastern part of this state Bangladesh and Assam are located and Jharkhand and Bihar in the west are located. In these state mountains, valleys, plains, rivers, sea, stream and forests are originated and a complete representation of socio-economic dynamics and multicultural pattern are found. People belonging to various religious faith, ethnicity, linguistic group, racial variety, tribal affiliation, caste, class, status groups, minority groups and the like co-exist forming a varied cultural panorama found nowhere else in India. Owing to their divergent origin either the descendents of various groups of ethno-social milieu of foreign origin or native converts from various caste/social backgrounds and the mixture of both. They are both horizontally and vertically divided in to various ethnic, status groups, caste, class, school of thought, sect, language and the like.

The biggest concentration of the Muslims of about forty seven per cent to the India's entire Muslim inhabitants is in three states viz. West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar encompassing 25%, 18.5% and 16.5% respectively. Again in

the states like Assam (31%), West Bengal (25%) and Kerala (24.7%) high concentration of Muslims are found to live according to the Report of the Census of India, 2001, Government of India. So far West Bengal is concerned, it is estimated (Census Report, 2001) that one-fourth of the total state population are the Muslims considered as the largest and principal minority of West Bengal with a population potency of about 96% (Census Report, 2001) to the entire minority population of the state. They are found to live in all the districts of West Bengal in varied proportion. There are twelve such districts where the Muslims represent about twenty five per cent (Census Report, 2001) population to the respective district entire population and in the district like North Dinajpur, Malda and Murshidabad Muslims correspond to more than fifty (Census Report, 2001) per cent to the entire population of the respective districts.

**Figure: 3. District wise distribution of Muslim population in West Bengal (in percentage)**



Based on Census of India 2001

### 3. ISLAMIC PRECEPT AND THE MUSLIMS

Though Islam as a way of life is fairly defined yet, Muslim communities all over the world differ widely from each other. Spread all over the globe they have been drawn in from a wide range of racial, social, linguistic and regional backgrounds and in a good number of cases they are in living touch with the backgrounds they have been drawn from. The persisting elements of their past cultural background known as 'little tradition' as distinct from 'great tradition' are also a feature of a large body of Muslims (Siddiqui, 2011: 137). Islam means peace. Muslims are the

followers of Islam, the second most practiced religion of India. The most sacred text (book) is the holy Quran and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is considered as the last and greatest prophet in Islamic ideology. Islam prescribes five essential duties commonly known as the five pillars of Islam: belief in Allah (the almighty God), prayers five times in a day, giving of alms to the destitute, one month fasting in the month of *Ramzan*, and making a pilgrimage (*Hajj*) to Mecca at least once in a lifetime if possible (or when one can afford) to the devoted Muslims. Islam advocates for equity and universal brotherhood and strictly opposes and condemns inequality between rich and poor, high and low, superior and inferior, and pure and impure in society. In the Islamic precept there is also no place of discrimination on the ground of language speaking, race, ethnicity, property status and such other criteria in humankind. Domination of one group over other and class or caste conflicts are extraterrestrial to the sphere of Islam.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

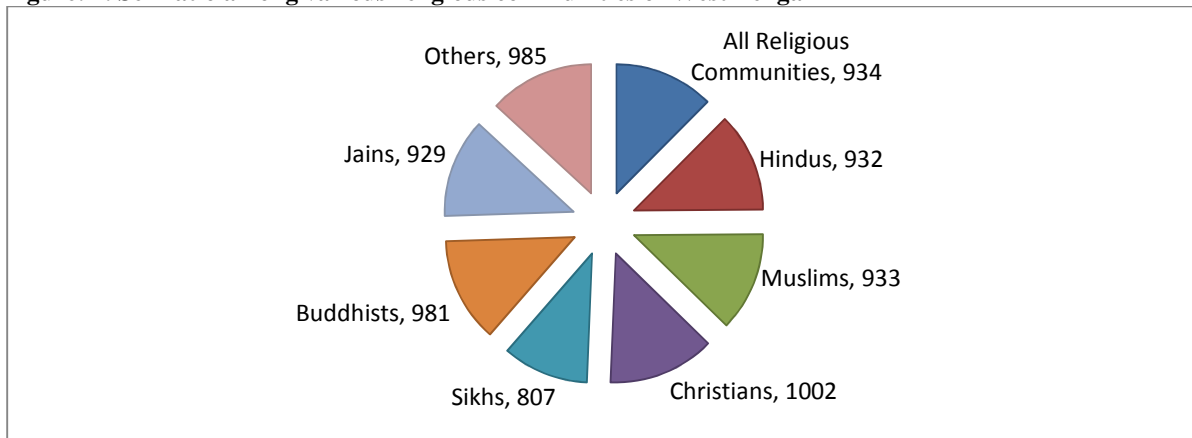
There is a lack of data on Muslim communities in India. Census information includes a broad count by religion but does not present socio-economic information according to religion. Furthermore, there are very few studies on the economic profile of Muslims. There are, reportedly, numerous studies and analyses on Muslims in the possession of the Indian government, (based on census reports), however, these are yet to be made public (Kazi, 1991: 24). The socio-economic condition of the Muslims has not been changed much in dependent India. The various reports and research studies clearly show that Muslims in India are educationally and economically backward. The backwardness of the Muslims is a cyclical and ongoing process leading to economic backwardness. Like other minorities, Muslims are suffering from multifaceted problems; in addition, they face problems relating to security, identity, and equity. Problems faced by Muslims are a combination of those faced by the poor ( a large proportion of Muslims are poor). The feeling of insecurity among Muslims is very high, especially in communally sensitive states and among women. Ghettoisation is a result of insecurity and prejudice in housing, schools and jobs. Insecurity adversely affects mobility, especially of women leading to situations wherein Muslims are not able to fully exploit economic opportunities. Backwardness in education is a key concern of the community. Limited access to good quality schools is a major problem that affects female students more adversely (Rahaman and Bhumali, 2011: 08). The socio-economic condition of the Muslims in India can be assessed by examining the indicators like economy and land ownership, occupation, work participation, levels of living, literacy and schooling condition among the people of the said community (Mondal, 2000: 101).

**Table: 1. District wise distribution of Muslim population on the basis of sex in West Bengal (in percentage)**

Sl. No.	Districts	Total Population	Male Population	Female Population	Differences	Rank of the Districts
1.	Kolkata	35.11	55.70	7.24	48.46	1
2.	Burdawan	31.84	52.16	9.77	42.39	2
3.	Nadia	33.87	54.29	12.10	42.29	3
4.	North 24 Parganas	30.59	50.95	8.67	42.28	4
5.	Howrah	29.53	49.51	7.57	41.94	5
6.	Hooghly	31.81	51.61	11.14	40.47	6
7.	South 24 Parganas	27.71	46.83	7.53	39.3	7
8.	Birbhum	31.89	50.91	11.91	39.00	8
9.	South Dinajpur	34.54	53.28	14.94	38.34	9
10.	Darjeeling	29.97	47.25	10.08	37.17	10
11.	Medinipur (East & West)	30.56	47.75	12.52	35.23	11
12.	Murshidabad	33.52	49.64	16.69	32.95	12
13.	Coochbihar	36.78	52.18	20.64	31.54	13
14.	Jalpaiguri	36.12	51.27	20.02	31.25	14
15.	North Dinajpur	35.51	49.21	21.09	28.12	15
16.	Bankura	39.64	52.37	25.86	26.51	16
17.	Purulia	34.48	46.27	21.88	24.39	17
18.	Malda	40.09	51.35	28.23	23.12	18
	All over West Bengal	32.89	50.52	13.99	36.53	N.A.

Source: Govt. of India, Census Report, 2001

**Figure 4. Sex ratio among various religious communities of West Bengal**



Based on Census of India 2001

The education commission, Ministry of Education, Government of India, 1966, stated that it is the responsibility of the educational system to bring different social classes and groups together to promote the emergence of an egalitarian and integrated society. But unfortunately the educational development is very poor in India. Various efforts have been taken in the post independent period to spread education among the masses. But result is not very satisfactory, especially in the context of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, minorities and other backward communities or weaker sections (Mondal, 1997:19).

**Table 2. Rate of literacy among various religious communities of West Bengal (in percentage)**

Persons	All Religious Communities	Hindus	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs	Buddhists	Jains	Others	Religion not stated
Total	68.64	72.44	<b>57.47</b>	69.72	87.19	74.73	92.81	51.53	-----
Male	77.02	81.12	<b>64.61</b>	77.20	91.37	83.09	96.46	68.63	71.52
Female	51.61	63.09	<b>49.75</b>	62.30	81.98	66.22	88.87	34.24	54.82

Source: Govt. of India, Census Report, 2001

The educational backwardness of Muslim women is a matter of particular concern, especially the high drop-out rate, resulting in subsequently fewer proportions of them managing to complete high school, and even less availing of higher education. Not surprisingly, Muslim women account for the lowest levels of educational attainment (Hasan and Menon, 2004:47).

**Table 3. Rate of literacy and illiteracy among the Muslims of West Bengal on the basis of sex and place of residence (in percentage)**

Place of Residence	Literacy Rate		Illiteracy Rate	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Whole State	64.61%	49.75%	35.39%	50.25%
Urban	72.04%	59.23%	27.97%	40.77%
Rural	62.92%	47.87%	37.08%	52.13%

Source: Govt. of India, Census Report, 2001

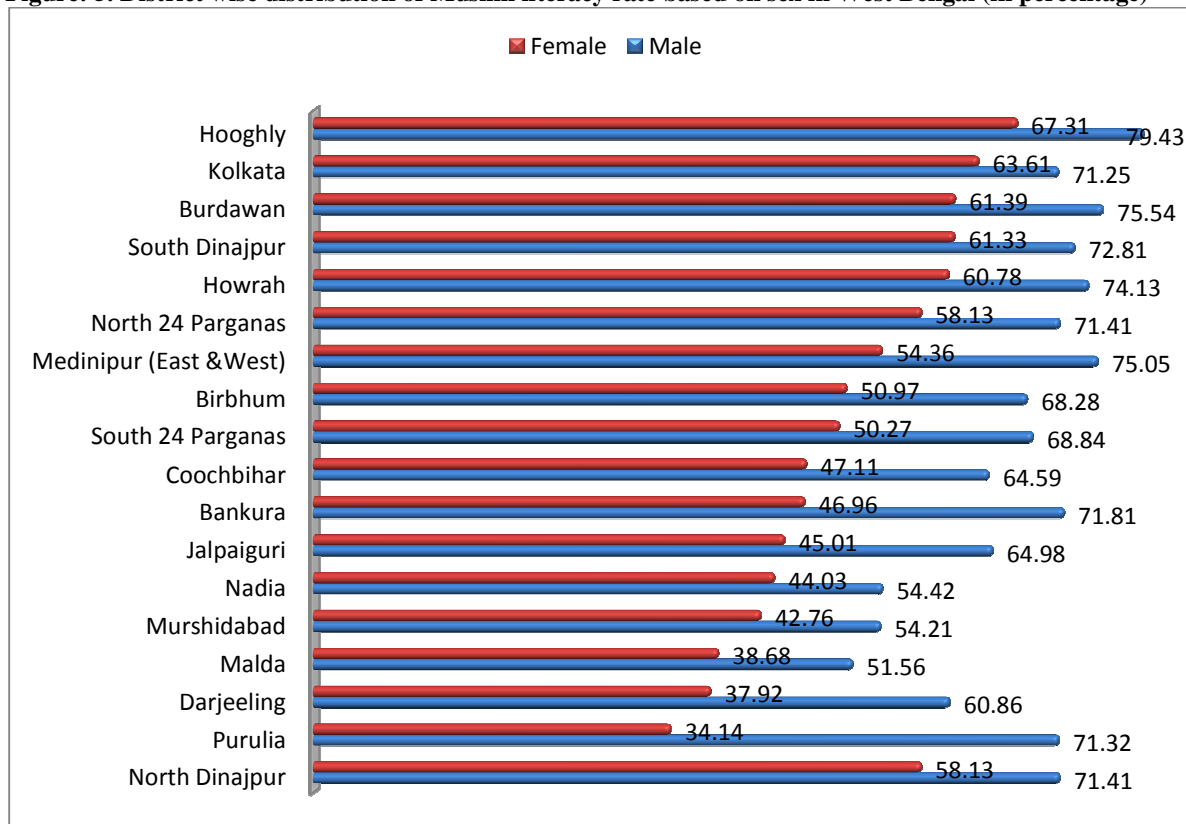
There is also a common belief that Muslim parent feel that education is not important for girls and that it may instill a wrong set of values. Even if girls are enrolled, they are withdrawn at an early age to marry them off. This leads to a higher drop-out rate among Muslim girls. Our interactions indicate that the problem may lie in non-availability of schools within easy reach for girls at lower levels of education, absence of girl's hostels, absence of female teachers and availability of scholarships as they move up the education ladder (GOI, 2006:85).

**Table: 4. District wise rate of literacy between general population and Muslim population of West Bengal on the basis of sex (in percentage)**

Sl. No.	Districts	General Population			Muslim Population		
		Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1.	North Dinajpur	78.07	83.92	71.72	65.05	71.41	58.13
2.	Purulia	55.57	73.72	36.50	53.44	71.32	34.14
3.	Darjeeling	71.79	80.05	62.94	50.38	60.86	37.92
4.	Malda	50.28	58.80	41.25	45.30	51.56	38.68
5.	Murshidabad	54.35	60.71	47.63	48.63	54.21	42.76
6.	Nadia	66.14	72.31	59.58	49.41	54.42	44.03
7.	Jalpaiguri	62.85	72.83	52.21	55.34	64.98	45.01
8.	Bankura	63.44	76.76	49.43	59.91	71.81	46.96
9.	Coochbihar	66.30	75.93	56.12	56.07	64.59	47.11
10.	South 24 Parganas	69.45	79.19	59.01	59.83	68.84	50.27
11.	Birbhum	61.48	70.89	51.55	59.86	68.28	50.97
12.	Medinipur (East & West)	74.90	84.91	64.42	64.97	75.05	54.36
13.	North 24 Parganas	78.07	83.92	71.72	65.05	71.41	58.13
14.	Howrah	77.01	83.22	70.11	67.80	74.13	60.78
15.	South Dinajpur	63.59	72.43	54.28	67.21	72.81	61.33
16.	Burdawan	70.18	78.63	60.95	68.79	75.54	61.39
17.	Kolkata	80.86	83.79	77.30	68.06	71.25	63.61
18.	Hooghly	75.11	82.59	67.21	73.50	79.43	67.31

Source: Govt. of India, Census Report, 2001

**Figure: 5. District wise distribution of Muslim literacy rate based on sex in West Bengal (in percentage)**



Based on Census of India 2001

Another pillar towards modernity and economic progress apart from education is employment. Employment is a other major concern of the country. In India, low participation in government jobs disproportionate with share of population is observed. As compared to others, Muslim workers (especially women) are concentrated more in self employed (home-based) activity and their share in regular work, especially in the government, public sector and large private sector is very low.

The Muslim minority of India forms 13.4 percent for the country's total population, having a significant decadal growth and greater orientation toward urban areas. They have, however, negligible influence on the process of economic development of the country. A massive part of Muslim work force seems to have taken shelter in the low paid unorganized sector showing a trend of isolation from the economic mainstream and scientific and technological advancement of the country.

The issue of economic backwardness of Muslims of India has received attention of various organizations and scholar in the past, but in recent times Sachar committee has worked in detail on it and reports has been submitted to the Central Government. The Central Government and different State Governments have taken initiatives, yet slowly to redress the problems and improve the socio-economic conditions of Indian Muslims (Rahaman and Bhumali, 2011: 35-36).



**Table: 5. District wise work participant rate among the Muslims of West Bengal on the basis of sex (in percentage)**

Sl. No.	Districts	Total	Male	Female	Difference	Rank of the District
1.	Kolkata	35.11	55.70	7.24	48.46	1
2.	Burdawan	31.84	52.16	9.77	42.39	2
3.	Nadia	33.87	54.29	12.10	42.29	3
4.	North 24 Parganas	30.59	50.95	8.67	42.28	4
5.	Howrah	29.53	49.51	7.57	41.94	5
6.	Hooghly	31.81	51.61	11.14	40.47	6
7.	South 24 Parganas	27.71	46.83	7.53	39.3	7
8.	Birbhum	31.89	50.91	11.91	39.00	8
9.	South Dinajpur	34.54	53.28	14.94	38.34	9
10.	Darjeeling	29.97	47.25	10.08	37.17	10
11.	Medinipur (East & West)	30.56	47.75	12.52	35.23	11
12.	Murshidabad	33.52	49.64	16.69	32.95	12
13.	Coochbihar	36.78	52.18	20.64	31.54	13
14.	Jalpaiguri	36.12	51.27	20.02	31.25	14
15.	North Dinajpur	35.51	49.21	21.09	28.12	15
16.	Bankura	39.64	52.37	25.86	26.51	16
17.	Purulia	34.48	46.27	21.88	24.39	17
18.	Malda	40.09	51.35	28.23	23.12	18
All over West Bengal		32.89	50.52	13.99	36.53	-----

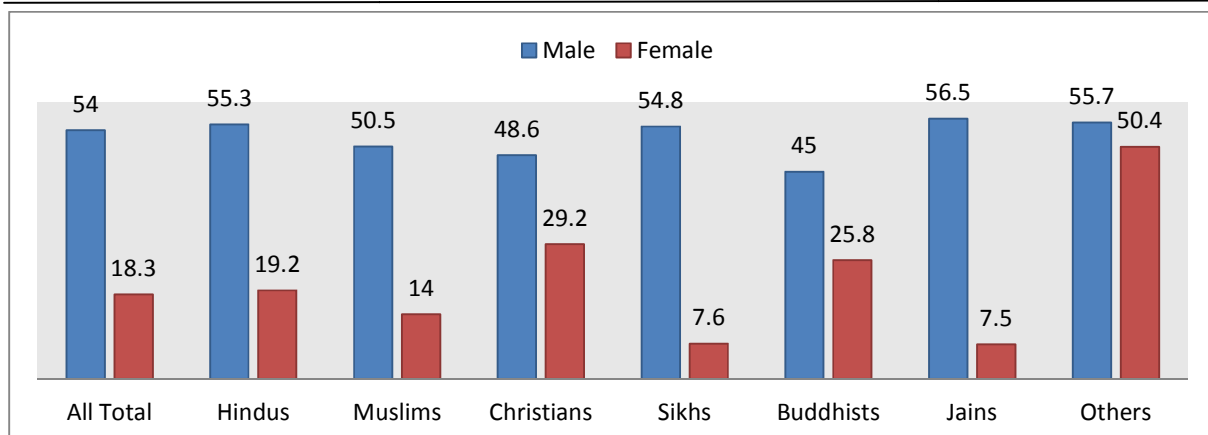
Source: Govt. of India, Census Report, 2001

**Table: 6. Various occupational pursuits of the Muslims in comparison to other religious communities of West Bengal (in percentage)**

Occupations	All Total	Hindus	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs	Buddhists	Jains	Others
Cultivators	19.2	18.6	<b>20.3</b>	15.3	2.8	21.1	7.8	32.0
Agricultural Laborer	25.0	24.0	<b>26.6</b>	19.9	4.4	9.2	5.4	52.9
Household Industry	7.4	5.9	<b>12.6</b>	2.1	1.6	2.9	1.0	4.5
Other Workers	48.4	51.4	<b>40.5</b>	62.7	91.2	66.8	85.8	10.6

Source: Govt. of India, Census Report, 2001

**Figure: 6. Work participant rate on the basis of sex among various religious communities of West Bengal (in per cent)**



Based on Census of India 2001

Predominantly rural, the Muslim population in the state is engaged in agricultural pursuits, a very large number of them work as agricultural labour and many others suffer from unemployment and under-employment. Facilities for education are awfully inadequate and to the extent they are available, they are beyond easy reach of their overwhelmingly large number, because of the cost involved.

Impelled to resort to self employment for their survival a substantial number specializes in a few crafts like carpentry, needle and *zari* works, tailoring, embroidery, paper crafts and the occupation of gold smith etc. and such odd jobs like rickshaw pulling, which draw them to cities including Delhi and Bombay. Kolkata provides very limited scope for their presence in the city is not quite significant. Day labourers, including women from poverty stricken families from suburban areas, arriving to the city every morning, largely through local trains quite often get grossly exploited. The sad tales of their sufferings deserve serious attention.

The presence of Muslims from rural areas of West Bengal from districts, in the city is so negligible that a few educated Muslim youth, arriving to the city in search of employment do not find accommodation in suitable areas, and under situational pressure have to change their name for obtaining place to live in non-Muslim areas. These and similar other social facts go to explain the overall prevailing social situation (Siddiqui, 2011:213-214). Muslims are mostly self-employed and their share in regular paid jobs is low. The Hindu population is relatively better employed in regular salary-paying jobs in urban areas. The work participation of Muslim females is extremely low. The landholding is better among Hindus than Muslims, and Muslims work on non-agricultural occupation in substantial proportions in rural part of India. Muslims, are, by far, the least educated when compared with Hindus and Christian populations in India (Shariff, 2003: 92). W. W. Hunter states that, "...earlier it was impossible for a well born Musalman to become poor; at present it is almost impossible for him to continue rich" (Hunter, 1969:158). Any assessment of the socio-economic conditions of Muslims in India needs to recognize that, like other minorities, issued faced by Muslims are multifaceted as they simultaneously face problems relating to security, identity, and equity. And the interplay of these dimensions is at the core of the socio-economic and political processes that the community is exposed to on a daily basis. An empirical exploration of these multidimensional issues is typically hampered by the non-availability of relevant 'hard and unbiased' data. Such data constraints are typically more severe for security and identity-related concerns (Basant and Shariff, 2010: 02). Muslims in India are facing two major problems-education and employment which are essential for the socio-economic development of human beings. It is evident that Muslims in India as well as Muslims in West Bengal are lagging behind in terms of quantitative and qualitative education (Rahaman and Bhumali, 2011: 84). It is evident that the condition of Muslims in West Bengal in the field of education is very poor, even poorer than SCs/STs. Again, women's education among Muslims in the state is lower than men. It is seen that the educational status of Muslims in West Bengal, like other parts of the country, is also depressing. Among various reasons, the major reasons for educational backwardness among the Muslims are poor economic condition, limited number of government and government aided schools in Muslim areas and lack of job opportunities of the educated people in the community. Perhaps Muslim women are

lagging behind in education because of socio-cultural pattern of the family and the society, the negative attitude towards girls' education and are lack of infrastructural facilities for education in Muslim concentrate4d areas. Muslims have limited access to far off school. Need of the hour is to provide job oriented education and also to set up sufficient number of technical schools for male and female separately in the Muslim concentrated areas (Rahaman and Bhumali, 2011: 91). Observing a general lack of knowledge about the meaning and implications of being a minority the author is critical of the people who discourage revealing the facts of extremely bad socio-economic condition of the Muslims for fear of making them unnerved. Revealing truth is necessary for creating awareness leading to the solution of the problem.

Quoting reports of the national Family Health Survey it is shown that Muslim Women are seven times behind Hindu women in high school education and in post-high school they are nine times behind them.

Muslims in rural Bengal bare predominantly engaged in agriculture, a very large number of them are agricultural labour. They also specialize in several handicrafts. Predominantly much smaller number of Muslims from districts has come to live and work in this difficulty they have to change their name to conceal; their identity.

Over 75% of Muslims in Calcutta live in *bustees*, large areas of their abode have been acquired by the authorities and t5hey have been seldom resettled in the area developed. They are the victims of the wrong notion of being a floating population. Nearly 80% are either born in the same *bustee*, or in Calcutta or in West Bengal. 4 percent of the total numbers of children are enrolled in recognized schools and a total of 9% attend same sort of school recognized or unrecognized and 91% do not have any school to attend. Those enrolled hardly complete school education and 90% of the enrolled get dropped out. Child labour is rampant.

Occupational structure of the Muslims in Calcutta differs sharply from that of the Hindus. Their *bustees* are the hub of a number of handicrafts besides providing them space to live. Action programme to improve the overall condition has to keep in mind both economy and education because of their interdependence (Siddiqui, 2011: 210-211).

## 5. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS AND REMARKS

The preceding consideration reveals the fact of the Muslims, the largest minority not only in numerical sense but also in the sense of their subjugation and deprivation from equal treatment in the given society in India broadly and West Bengal in particular. These realities come into scene more prevalently when the Sachar Committee and the Ranganath Misra Commission present their empirical findings regarding the situation of the Muslims of Indian subcontinent. The reports mostly advocate towards the socio-economic, employment, educational, cultural, political marginalization and exclusion of the Muslims living in this subcontinent owing to which a larger section of the population remains way behind the mainstream. The multifaceted strange troubles faced by the Muslims of West Bengal are correlated to anxieties pertaining to protection, identity perception, discrimination and equity.

Furthermore, social scientists with special reference to sociologist and social anthropologists, academicians, researchers, scholars, social activists, planners and policy makers and the like have also not paid as much concentration to study and explore the Muslim society of West Bengal. As a result we hardly know about their society, economic activities, social structure, social organization, social stratification, social problems, gender issues, social mobility and social change, developmental process and culture. Again a good number of the studies, which are easily available, frequently advocate to the way of Islamic theology, ideology, laws, religious reformatory movements, historical perspectives and the like.

The backwardness of any community or social groups of any nation or any part of a country is a national catastrophe which ought to be recognized as a hinder of the entire county and to overcome from this menace the nation as a whole act together to eradicate such evil curse of humanity.

What needs to be done are the awareness growing which is very indispensable for their development along the line of growing more inspiration within the community and last but not the least their mass participation in the almost all the developmental programmes whatever available coming out from their tradition bound nature, frustration, low level of aspiration, minority as well as inferiority complex, fear psychosis and so on for their over-all progress and upliftmen in the society.

## References

Besant, Rakesh and Shariff, Abusaleh, (2010), “The State of Muslims in India: An Overview” in *Oxford Handbook of Muslims: Empirical and Policy Perspectives*, (Eds.), R. Besant and A. Shariff, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, p.02.

Census of India, A Report, 2001, Government of India, New Delhi.

GOI, 2006, Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India – A Report, Prime Minister’s High Level Committee, Cabinet Secretariat, Chairperson- Justice Rajindar Sachar, Government of India, New Delhi, p. 27.

*Ibid.*, p. 01.

*Ibid.*,p. 85.

Hasan, Z. and R. Menon, (2004), “Unequal Citizens: A Study of Muslim Women in India”,

New Delhi: Oxford University Press, p. 47.

Hunter, W. W. (1969), “The Indian Musalmans”, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Delhi: Indological Book House, p. 158.

Kazi, S. (1991), Muslim Women in India – A Report, London, UK: Minority Rights Group International, p. 24.

Mondal, S. R. (1997), “Educational Status of Muslims: Problems, Prospects and Priorities”, New Delhi: Inter-India Publications, p. 19.

\_\_\_\_\_ ‘Muslim population in India: some demographic and socio-economic features’, International Journal of Anthropology, Vol. 15-N. 1-2 (91-107)-2000. P. 101.

Rahaman, Md. T. and A. Bhuimali, (2011), “Indian Muslims and their Economy”, Delhi: Abhijit Publications, p. 09.

*Ibid.*,p. 08.

*Ibid.*,pp. 35-36.

*Ibid.*,p. 84.

*Ibid.*,p. 91.

Shariff, A. (2003), National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), 43RD ROUND, 1987-88, quoted in Sebastian Vempeny, Minorities in Contemporary India, New Delhi: Kanishka, p. 92.

Siddiqui, M. K. A. (2011), “Muslims in India: Issues and Challenges” (A collection of articles), Kolkata: Abadi Publication, p. 137.

*Ibid.*,pp. 213-214.

*Ibid.*,pp. 210-211.

**Notes:** In spite of the fact that the provisional data of the Census of 2011, Govt. of India has been accredited on 31st March 2011 for the census year-2011, still to avail the religion wise data, it will take at least about two to three years to make such data ready in public. For this grounds the foregoing discussion as far as necessary, is based on the data of 2001 Census, i.e. The Census Report of India, New Delhi: Government of India, 2001.

-----  
**Few words about the author:** Mr. Md. Intekhab Hossain receives his first class Master Degree in Anthropology in 2005 from the University of North Bengal, West Bengal, India and specialized himself in the field of Social and Cultural Anthropology. Mr. Hossain has qualified University Grants Commission, New Delhi, India conducted National Eligibility Test for Lectureship twice in December, 2007 examination and December, 2008 examination respectively. Mr. Hossain joins Aliah University, West Bengal, India as Lecturer in Sociology in 2009 and has been serving there till date. Mr. Hossain is not only engaged in teaching he is also active in research. Mr. Hossain is a registered Ph. D. scholar at Vidyasagar University, West Bengal, India with effect from 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2010 and has published various research papers in various journals of national and international character besides his participation in various academic seminars and workshop.