

Status of Muslim Youth in Bihar

Quantitative and Qualitative Assessment

A study sponsored by
United Nations Population Fund, Bihar Office
April, 2017



Asian Development Research Institute

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

India, besides having a large population, is also characterized by immense diversity of its population. And this diversity arises out of linguistic, religious and caste background of the population, apart from a few other ethnic characteristics. While analyzing India's economic, social and political developments in the post-independent period, one could ignore this diversity if the different social groups were impacted in a similar manner by the development process. But, unfortunately, that was not the case. Whether one takes into consideration religion or caste or any other relevant characteristics, not only the different social groups were at varying levels of wellbeing to start with, but they remain so even seventy years after independence, with probably minor changes in their relative positions. This has been one of the most important deficits of the country's development trajectory. It was, therefore, not surprising that the Eleventh Plan document (2007-12) of the Planning Commission had for the first time tried to underline that the process of economic growth should not only be fast, but inclusive as well. There have been a number of studies and reports which show that, among the sections of the populations that have been largely bypassed by the development process, the Muslims form a major part. This, however, does not mean that other religious groups, particularly Hindus who constitute nearly 80 percent of the population, have all been equally benefitted by the growth process; there are many caste groups within the Hindu population which were also bypassed by the development process. It needs to be stressed here that the overall progress of the nation is not possible without all its disadvantaged groups integrated with the general population.

The Muslim population in India, as per 2011 census, is 172.2 million, accounting for 14.2 percent of India's total population of 1210.9 million. Although the geographical spread of the Muslim population is very wide, three states with the largest Muslim population are — Uttar Pradesh (38.5 million), West Bengal (24.7 million) and Bihar (17.6 million). The share of Muslims in the total population of these three states are —Uttar Pradesh (19.3 percent), West Bengal (27.0 percent) and Bihar (16.9 percent). However, in spite of this geographical contiguity of these states all along the Gangetic plains, an assessment of the status of Muslims in this region demands a disaggregated approach, because of several reasons. First, the level of economic development in these three states are very different. Bihar, as is well known, happens to be the most disadvantaged not just among these three states, but among all the major states in India. In 2015-16, the per Capita Income in Bihar was Rs. 26.8 thousand (at 2011-12 prices) which is barely one-third of the national average of Rs. 71.4 thousand. Secondly, the socio-economic background of the Muslim population in these states is again very divergent which has substantial implications for their access to

different development programmes. Finally, the spatial distribution of the Muslim population among the districts is also dissimilar in these three states, leading to different patterns of Muslim concentration zones. It is in this background that the present study attempts an assessment of the status of Muslim youth in only one of these states, viz., Bihar, taking into account both quantitative and qualitative dimensions of their standard of living. The rationale for a focus on young population in this study, as distinct from the general population, lies in the understandable premise that the most potent vehicle of change in the status of any disadvantaged community, including the Muslim population, is its currently young population who, with better education, better health, higher skills and modern outlook, could provide a stronger human capital base for the eventual upliftment of the overall community.

Objectives of the Study

One of the ways through which the broad objective of the present study could be achieved is to undertake a primary survey of the Muslim youth in Bihar in order to know their present status in terms of education, health, employment and other dimensions of welfare. However, the information base for the present study is mainly secondary data, supplemented by some information collected from a number of grassroots consultations with the members of the Muslim youth. Specifically, the study has the following four objectives:

- (1) Profiling the Muslim Youth in Bihar : The study will first prepare a profile of Muslim youth along a list of key indicators that include demography, education, health and employment. Subject to the availability of data, this will be a comparative profile of Muslim youth and their counterpart in the general population.
- (2) Assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of state policies in addressing the growth deficits amongst the Muslim youth : It is the usual practice for central as well as all state governments to implement a number of welfare programmes to meet the needs of specially disadvantaged sections of the population. But in the absence of any specific instructions about their implementation mechanism, these welfare programmes often bypass the Muslim population. In this perspective, the present study attempts to assess the content and operation of different state policies vis-à-vis the development needs of the Muslim youth.
- (3) Assess the efficacies of existing government programmes and entitlements in addressing the needs of the Muslim youth : Apart from the welfare programmes that cover the disadvantaged sections of the general population, the government

has also designed some welfare programmes, specially meant for the Muslim population. The present study, thus, attempts an evaluation of those Muslim-specific welfare programmes, some of them by the central government and others by the state government.

- (4) Understand and document the needs and demands of the Muslim youth through consultations : Although much of the development needs of the Muslim youth can be identified from their present profile or the mode of functioning of the welfare programmes, it is desirable that, for a deeper understanding of the issue, some direct consultations are made with the Muslim youth and the present study has tried to achieve this objective through a number of field-level consultations in various parts of the state. These consultations can provide valuable information on some of the qualitative aspects of status of the Muslim youth in the state.

Methodology of the Study

The information base of the present study, as has already been indicated above, comprises mainly secondary data. Within the scope of secondary data, the following sources have been utilized by the present study :

- (i) 2001 Census Data : This data has been used for three of the most important indications of the status of the Muslim youth — size of the population, literacy rate and Work Participation Ratio (WPR). One of the advantages of the census data is its availability at the district level, allowing for a regional analysis.
- (ii) National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) Data : The present study has utilized the NSSO 68th Round data on 'Employment and Unemployment Situation in India' for information relating to Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) and Work Participation Rate (WPR), as well as land endowment of Muslim households.
- (iii) National Family and Health Survey (NFHS) : The NFHS-4 was conducted in 2015-16 and provides valuable comparative data on health status for the Muslim and Hindu populations. However, since the results for NFHS-4 are yet to be published, the present survey has used the data from NFHS-3 (2004-05). Admittedly, the health situation for both Muslim and Hindu populations has improved in the intervening decade and the NFHS-3 data is not indeed valid for the present time; but it can still provide some information on the 'relative' health status of the Muslims and Hindu populations even now, although some changes are likely even with respect to their relative status.
- (iv) Socio-economic and Educational Status of Muslims in Bihar : This survey was conducted by the Asian Development Research Institute (ADRI), Patna in 2004-05

and, as such, its results are also not wholly valid now. But the overall socio-economic conditions are unlikely to have changed substantially since the time of survey and its findings can still be used to prepare a profile of the Muslim youth with, of course, some precaution. The present study has, thus, used some data from the survey, particularly with respect to the educational status and the extent of out-migration by the Muslim youth. It may also be mentioned that the sample size for this survey was more than 8000 households across 20 districts in Bihar, ensuring the reliability of its findings. Although the present study has not utilized it, the full report of the study also provides information on regional variations in the status of the Muslim population in terms of many indicators.

- (v) Official Data from the State Government : To address the development needs of the disadvantaged sections of society, the state government runs a number of welfare programmes, some for the general population and others for specific groups like the Muslim population. The data on financial and physical achievements under these programmes, although incomplete in many cases, has been used by the present study to assess the contribution of the state government towards the upliftment of the Muslim youth.

The secondary data on Muslim youth, as listed above, may indicate their present socio-economic status, but this data cannot reveal the Muslim youth's own perception about their development needs. The present study has tried to bridge this critical information gap by organizing field-level consultations with the Muslim youth in 9 places across the state — Patna, Gaya, Gopalganj, West Champaran (Bettiah), Madhubani, Munger, Bhagalpur, Madhepura and Kishanganj. Apart from holding Focused Group Discussions (FGD), the study team had also canvassed a questionnaire to collect information on a number of socio-economic characteristics of the Muslim youth. In all, 676 Muslim youths had participated in these 9 field-level consultations, the details of which are presented in Table 1.1

Table 1.1 : Details of Field-Level Consultations

Place	Dates for Consultations	No. of Participants
Patna	October 26-27	61 (9.0)
Gaya	December 27-28	80 (11.8)
Gopalganj	November 27-28	58 (8.6)
West Champaran	November 29-30	89 (13.2)
Madhubani	November 22-23	58 (8.6)
Munger	November 9-10	57 (8.4)
Bhagalpur	November 16-17	90 (13.3)
Madhepura	November 24-25	120 (17.8)
Kishanganj	November 18-19	63 (9.3)
Total		676 (100.0)

Plan of the Report

This study report comprises five Chapters. After from this introductory Chapter which has presented the objectives and methodology of the study, Chapter 2 is devoted to a profile of the Muslim youth along some selected characteristics, emerging from the relevant secondary data. Thereafter, Chapter 3 deals with the orientation of the various welfare programmes of the central and state government, particularly their relevance for the Muslim youth. In a later Section in this Chapter, the study analyses the implementation of those welfare programmes which specifically target the Muslim population or Muslim youth. Broadly speaking, this Chapter is evaluative of the policies of the state government towards welfare of Muslim youth in Bihar. In contrast to Chapters 2 and 3, both of which utilize the secondary data, Chapter 4 is based on primary data, collected by the present survey. At one hand, from the canvassed questionnaire, the Chapter presents some additional information on the profile of Muslim youth and, secondly, based on the Focused Group Discussion (FGD), the Chapter also presents the gist of suggestions made by the participating Muslim youth on how their present socio-economic conditions can be improved through properly designed state programmes or other activities. Finally, Chapter 5 presents the main conclusions of the study, along with some recommendations for policy makers.

CHAPTER II

PROFILE OF MUSLIM YOUTH

During the seven decades since independence, the pace of economic development in India was at least moderate with a growth rate of 4-5 percent during the first half and reasonably high during the second half, with the economy growing at a much higher rate of about 7-8 percent. This economic growth was also reflected, albeit partially, in the improvement of most indicators of social development like poverty levels, health status and educational achievements of the country's population. But one aspect of the development process that has continuously attracted criticism from many quarters, both national and international, is the unequal spread of the benefits of development across regions and social groups. Indeed, the pressure of this criticism, widely supported by empirical evidence, was so intense that the Eleventh Plan document (2007-12) of the Planning Commission specifically underlines 'inclusiveness' as one of the principal objectives of the planning process, parallel to the objective of 'faster' economic growth.

One of the social groups that have been at the receiving end of the non-inclusive growth process in India is the Muslims. Bihar is one of those states in India where Muslims constitute a sizeable part of the population (16.9 percent) and it is not possible to visualize a vigorous growth process in Bihar, of which Muslim population is not a beneficiary and in which it is not an equal and active participant. Although Muslims in Bihar are not a homogeneous population, the majority of them are afflicted by low income, widespread educational deficiency and many other socio-economic disadvantages. In this Chapter, an attempt has been made to prepare a profile of the Muslim youth in Bihar along some demographic, health-related, educational and employment-related characteristics. Whenever possible, this profile has been presented in a comparative framework — either Muslims and General Population, or Muslims and Hindus. But in the absence of relevant secondary data, a comparative profile has not been possible in all the cases.

As regards the definition of youth, which is the focus of the present study, one finds a lack of uniformity among the official documents; although the lower age limit for the youth is 14 or 15 years in all the documents, the upper age limit varies from 24 years (as in NFHS data) to 29 years (as in National Youth Policy, 2016). Since the basic purpose of the present study is advocacy, a consideration of policy alignment is very desirable and, as such, the present study has adopted the age-group 15-29 years as comprising the youth population, as was done by the document on National Youth Policy, 2016. Broadly speaking, this age-bracket can be split into two parts — the period of higher education, the secondary level onwards, (15-24 years) and the period of early employment (24-29 years). The

development of the youth during this period largely determines their future life in terms of employment and other achievements. Whenever available, the secondary data utilized by the present study relates to the age-group 15-29 years, but when such age-specific data was not available, the study had no option than to depend on the information relating to the entire population.

Demographic Profile

The total Muslim population in Bihar was 17.56 million in 2011 (Table 2.1). In 2017, the estimated population will be about 20 million. As mentioned before, the Muslim population in Bihar constitutes 17.6 percent of the state's total population of 104.10 million. There are only 5 states in India (Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal) where the concentration of Muslim population is higher than in Bihar.

Table 2.1 : Muslim Population in Bihar (2011)

District	Population (Million)		Muslim Population as	
	General	Muslim	Percentage of General Population	Percentage of Total Muslim Population
Patna	5.84	0.44	7.5	2.5
Nalanda	2.88	0.20	6.9	1.1
Bhojpur	2.73	0.20	7.3	1.1
Buxar	1.71	0.11	6.2	0.6
Rohtas	2.96	0.30	10.2	1.7
Kaimur	1.63	0.16	9.5	0.9
Gaya	4.39	0.49	11.1	2.8
Jehanabad	1.13	0.08	6.7	0.4
Arwal	0.70	0.06	9.2	0.4
Nawada	2.22	0.24	11.0	1.4
Aurangabad	2.54	0.24	9.3	1.4
Saran	3.95	0.41	10.3	2.3
Siwan	3.33	0.61	18.3	3.5
Gopalganj	2.56	0.44	17.0	2.5
W. Champaran	3.94	0.87	22.0	4.9

District	Population (Million)		Muslim Population as	
	General	Muslim	Percentage of General Population	Percentage of Total Muslim Population
E. Champaran	5.10	0.99	19.4	5.6
Muzaffarpur	4.80	0.75	15.5	4.2
Sitamarhi	3.42	0.74	21.6	4.2
Sheohar	0.66	0.10	15.1	0.6
Vaishali	3.50	0.33	9.6	1.9
Darbhanga	3.94	0.88	22.4	5.0
Madhubani	4.49	0.82	18.2	4.7
Samastipur	4.26	0.45	10.6	2.6
Begusarai	2.97	0.41	13.7	2.3
Munger	1.37	0.11	8.1	0.6
Sheikhpura	0.64	0.04	5.9	0.2
Lakhisarai	1.00	0.04	4.1	0.2
Jamui	1.76	0.22	12.4	1.2
Khagaria	1.67	0.18	10.5	1.0
Bhagalpur	3.04	0.54	17.7	3.1
Banka	2.03	0.25	12.3	1.4
Saharsa	1.90	0.27	14.0	1.5
Supaul	2.23	0.41	18.4	2.3
Madhepura	2.00	0.24	12.1	1.4
Purnea	3.26	1.26	38.5	7.2
Kishanganj	1.69	1.15	68.0	6.5
Araria	2.81	1.21	42.9	6.9
Katihar	3.07	1.37	44.5	7.8
Bihar	104.10	17.56	16.9	100.0

Source: Census of India 2011

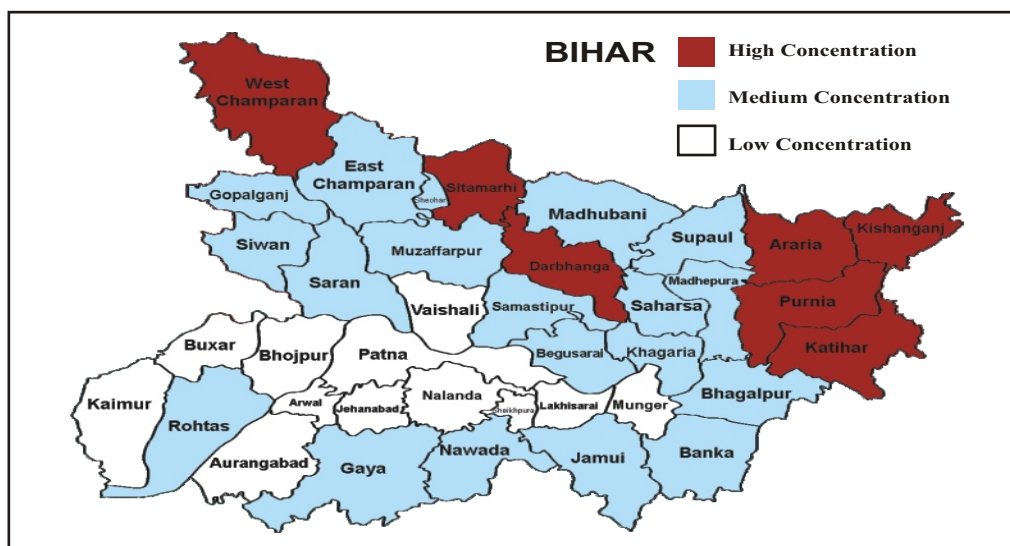
Within Bihar again, the Muslim population is widely dispersed (Table 2.2). Out of 38 districts in the state, the concentration of Muslim population is low (less than 10 percent) in 12 districts, all of which are in South Bihar, except Vaishali. The concentration of Muslim population is medium (between 10-20 percent) in another 19 districts, 6 of which are in south Bihar (including Bhagalpur which is bisected by the Ganges) and 13 in north Bihar. Finally, there are 7 districts, all in north Bihar, where the concentration of Muslim population is high (above 20 percent). There are 4 districts in north-eastern part of the state (Purnea, Kishanganj, Araria and Katihar) where the concentration of Muslim population is exceptionally high (above 35 percent). In one of these 4 districts (Kishanganj), the Muslims constitute the majority of the population, with a share of 68.0 percent. From this geographical distribution, it clearly emerges that the majority of the Muslim population in Bihar is located in the northern half of the state. Table 2.2 also presents the average Per Capita Income in the three demographic zones mentioned above. One can easily infer from these income figures that the relative economic status of the Muslim population is indeed lower. In the districts with high concentration of Muslim population, the average Per Capita Income stands at Rs. 10,075. In contrast, the per capita income stands at a much higher level (Rs. 16,534), for those 12 districts where the concentration of Muslim population is low.

Table 2.2 : Distribution of Districts by Concentration Level of Muslim Population

Percentage of Muslim Population	Districts	Average Income Per capita (Rs.) (2011-12)
Low (Less than 10 percent)	Patna, Nalanda, Bhojpur, Buxar, Kaimur, Jehanabad, Arwal, Aurangabad, Vaishali, Munger, Sheikhpura, Lakhisarai	16534
Medium (Between 10-20 percent)	Rohtas, Gaya, Nawada, Saran, Siwan, Gopalganj, East Champara, Muzaffarpur, Sheohar, Madhubani, Samastipur, Begusarai, Jamui, Khagaria, Bhagalpur, Banka, Saharsa, Supaul, Madhepura	11431
High (Above 20 percent)	West Champaran, Sitamarhi, Darbhanga, Purnea, Kishanganj, Araria, Katihar	10075
	All Districts	14574

Source : Computed from Table 2.1. The Figure for Per Capita Income is taken from the Economic Survey (2016-17), Government of Bihar

Fig. 2.1 : High, Medium and Low Muslim Concentration Districts in Bihar



Since the present study is focused on Muslim youth (15-29 years), it is necessary to estimate the size of the Muslim youth population in Bihar and the results of this estimation exercise have been presented in Table 2.3. Interestingly, in spite of some differences in fertility behaviour between Muslims and the general population, the proportion of population falling in the age-group 15-29 years is nearly same for them— 24.2 percent (general population) and 24.9 percent (Muslim). This yields a population of 4.4 million for the Muslim youth in Bihar. In other words, one out of every four Muslims is a young member of the community and their overall social and economic status is extremely important in determining the overall welfare status of the community in near future.

Table 2.3 : Muslim Youth Population (15-29 years) in Bihar (2011)

Religious Groups	Male	Female	Total
Population (million)			
All Religions	54.3	49.8	104.1
Muslims	2.0	8.5	17.6
Youth Population (million)			
All Religions	13.3	11.9	25.2
Muslims	2.3	2.1	4.4
Percentage of Youth Population			
All Religions	24.6	23.8	24.2
Muslim	25.2	24.4	24.9

Source : Census of India 2011

Educational Standard

The educational standard of a population has great significance for its overall welfare status. The importance of education is derived from several perspectives. First, education allows a person to acquire more and more knowledge which has an intrinsic value, as quest for knowledge is an inherent human tendency. Secondly, education enables a person to acquire practical knowledge and various skills, widening the space for vocational choice for the person and leading to higher income to pay for various needs of life. Apart from these two personal utilitarian dimension there are two more social gains of education. For one, education these are indeed the personal utilitarian dimensions of education. Reduces the cost of development communication, a requirement for a number of economic and social programmes, specially in a disadvantaged region like Bihar. This is an important 'social' gains of education, which supplements the two 'private' gains of education, noted above. Finally, one should also realize that the success of most development programmes and political process demands wide 'participation' of people, and this desired participations is more likely only when the people are sufficiently educated. Education enables people to be vocal and active. This is yet another social gains of education which has empowerment implications as well. In the context of socio-economic status of any community, it is also important to note that if a person does not have adequate physical or financial capital which could provide him with an employment opportunity, his next best option is generating enough human capital for himself through education, before joining the employment market. Since education has the potential to act as a substitute for usual income generating assets, raising the educational status of a social group can improve its economic status, with obvious social gains as well.

From the data presented in Table 2.4 on literacy rates for all religions and Muslims, it is quite apparent that the latter is clearly a disadvantaged community in terms of educational standards and this critical deficit is almost certain to affect other aspects of the well being of the Muslim population. In 2011, the literacy rate for Muslims in Bihar was 56.3 percent, compared to 61.8 percent for all religions, implying a difference of 5.5 percentage points. When one compares the gender-specific literacy rates, it is observed that the literacy rates are lower for both male and female Muslims, but this educational disadvantage is larger for male Muslims, compared to their female counterparts. The gender difference with respect to literacy rates is 20.1 percentage points for all religions, but noticeably lower at 15.4 percentage points for the Muslim population. This is because the gender disparity in education is comparatively less among the Muslims at least with respect to educations, a positive characteristics of the Muslim society. From a comparison of the literacy rates between Bihar and India, it emerges that the lower educational

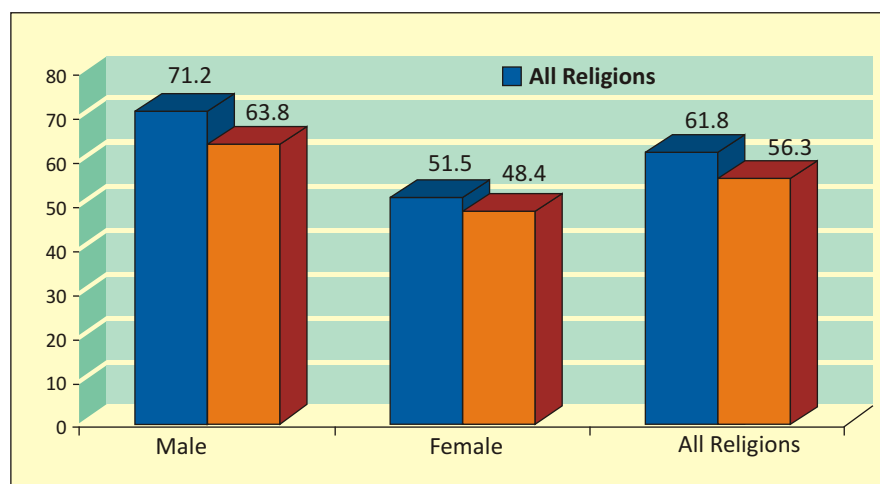
standard for the Muslims is an all-India phenomenon, and the extent of educational disparity between all religions and Muslims is nearly same for both males and females. Further, for an enquiry into the question 'Has the educational distance between the general population and Muslims been reducing over the years', Table 2.4 also presents the different literacy rates in two consecutive census years of 2001 and 2011. It is indeed disheartening to note that, over the decade, the educational distance between the two groups, instead of being reduced, has indeed been increased, albeit slightly. The difference between the literacy rates of general population and Muslims was 5.0 percentage points in 2001, which had increased to 5.5 percentage points in 2011. Although the increase is very marginal, the state government must factor this phenomenon in planning its future educational programmes. Between 2001 and 2011, the increase in literacy rate in Bihar was the highest in India — from 47.0 to 61.8 percent, an increase of 14.8 percentage points. This substantial increase was mainly because of higher increase in female literacy rate, compared to the male literacy rate. Fortunately, this phenomenon of faster growth in female literacy was observed among both Muslim and general population.

Table 2.4 : Literacy Rates for All Religions and Muslims — Bihar and India (2001 and 2011)

Year	Region	All Religions			Muslims		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2001	Bihar	60.3	33.6	47.0	51.8	31.5	42.0
	India	75.3	53.7	64.8	67.6	50.1	59.1
2011	Bihar	71.2	51.1	61.8	63.8	48.4	56.3
	India	80.9	64.6	73.0	74.7	62.0	68.5

Source : Census of India (2001 and 2011)

Graph 2.2: Literacy Rates (2011) in Bihar for All Religions and Muslim



The educational standard of Muslims in Bihar is quite expectedly not uniform across the state (Table 2.5). Among the 38 districts, the literacy rate ranges from 42.9 percent in Madhepura to 75.5 percent in Aurangabad. In some of the districts of south Bihar, the Muslim population is concentrated in urban areas and the literacy rates of Muslims are higher in these districts, compared to the general population. For example, the literacy rate for general population is 70.7 percent in Patna, whereas the rate for Muslims is 74.3 percent. One should also note from Table 2.5 that in the districts (mostly in north Bihar) where the concentration of Muslim population is relatively higher, the literacy rates for Muslims is relatively lower. The wide variation in literacy rates of Muslims across the state is also observed when one takes into account genderwise literacy rates. As regards literacy rates for rural and urban areas for the Muslim population, it can be observed that the difference is substantial — 54.3 percent for rural and 69.1 percent for urban areas. That the literacy rate for urban Muslims is reasonably high in some districts, however, should not be regarded as a matter of satisfaction, since only about 15 percent of the Muslims in Bihar reside in urban areas.

Table 2.5 : District-wise Literacy Rate for Muslim Population in Bihar

District	Literacy Rate				
	All	Male	Female	Rural	Urban
Patna	74.3	78.1	70.2	67.0	76.6
Nalanda	67.6	72.2	62.7	65.7	68.6
Bhojpur	70.9	78.9	62.4	71.5	69.9
Buxar	71.2	79.9	61.8	70.4	73.4
Rohtas	71.1	79.0	62.5	71.5	70.1
Kaimur	70.8	80.1	60.9	70.1	79.3
Gaya	71.0	77.1	64.6	69.2	77.1
Jehanabad	71.7	77.0	65.9	69.9	75.0
Arwal	72.2	79.4	64.6	71.2	78.6
Nawada	65.8	71.2	60.2	63.7	72.9
Aurangabad	75.5	81.4	69.2	74.2	79.7
Saran	65.8	75.7	55.8	65.0	71.4
Siwan	71.4	80.1	62.6	71.1	74.4
Gopalganj	67.5	77.6	58.1	67.0	73.7

District	Literacy Rate				
	All	Male	Female	Rural	Urban
W. Champaran	55.9	65.0	45.9	54.1	68.1
E. Champaran	54.3	63.0	44.9	53.3	62.4
Muzaffarpur	62.3	68.8	55.3	60.6	73.0
Sitamarhi	44.9	51.8	37.4	44.3	56.3
Sheohar	50.2	56.0	44.0	49.9	56.5
Vaishali	67.8	74.7	60.3	67.6	69.5
Darbhanga	55.1	62.3	47.4	53.1	69.6
Madhubani	49.0	58.6	38.9	48.7	54.1
Samastipur	60.9	67.9	53.3	60.2	77.1
Begusarai	56.9	63.4	49.8	55.8	60.0
Munger	68.1	72.9	62.7	64.1	71.8
Sheikhpura	73.6	78.1	68.7	73.0	75.2
Lakhisarai	60.0	66.7	52.7	59.5	62.4
Jamui	59.8	69.9	48.8	58.1	69.4
Khagaria	51.0	57.1	44.2	50.0	60.9
Bhagalpur	56.1	62.0	49.6	51.0	66.0
Banka	50.4	59.9	40.3	50.3	53.8
Saharsa	48.6	57.5	39.0	47.6	55.9
Supaul	52.7	63.3	41.4	52.0	63.4
Madhepura	42.9	51.0	34.3	41.7	62.8
Purnea	43.1	50.7	34.9	42.2	57.5
Kishanganj	53.1	60.7	45.3	52.4	63.5
Araria	48.3	55.8	40.1	47.5	61.2
Katihar	45.6	51.5	39.1	44.7	63.8
Bihar	56.3	63.8	48.4	54.3	69.1

Source: Census of India 2011

With the spread of educational facilities and increasing awareness about the importance of education, it is very likely that the educational standard of younger population is appreciably better than their older counterparts. In this perspective, Table 2.6 presents the educational standards of young population (15-29 years) for both general and Muslim population in Bihar. The 'literacy' is defined very liberally by the census authorities in India and, as such, many persons who are counted as literate by the census are indeed very moderately literate. Table 2.6, therefore presents the breakup of the young population by different levels of education, starting from 'illiterates' to 'graduates and above'. The table indicates that the burden of illiteracy is indeed lesser for the young population; for the Muslims, while 43.7 percent of the total population suffer from illiteracy, for the young Muslims, the figure stands at a much lower level at 38.1 percent. But from the data on educational standard of literate population, it clearly emerges that the educational disadvantage of the Muslim youth is larger than what the overall literacy rates indicate, as presented in Table 2.4. If one considers completion of higher secondary as the minimum qualification for any skill-based employment, only 8.8 percent of the Muslim youth in Bihar are found to be included in this category; for the youth among the general population, the corresponding share is not very high (14.9 percent), but it is certainly higher than for the Muslim youth. One arrives at the same conclusion about the relative educational disadvantage of the Muslim youth if graduation is considered to be a decent level of education. For males, the proportion of graduate among the young is 5.6 percent for the general population, but lower at 3.1 percent for the Muslim youth. Admittedly, a part of the young population are still continuing their education and their educational standard will improve when they complete their education process, but that is unlikely to change the comparative disadvantage of the Muslim youth vis-à-vis other sections of society.

Table 2.6 : Percentage Distribution of Young Population (15-29 years) by Education level for General and Muslim Population.

Educational Levels	Male Population		Female Population		All Population	
	General	Muslim	General	Muslim	General	Muslim
Illiterate	22.7	31.2	41.7	45.7	31.7	38.1
Below Primary	9.8	13.8	9.3	12.8	9.6	13.3
Primary	16.9	19.5	13.5	15.4	15.3	17.6
Middle	16.0	13.4	11.9	9.7	14.1	11.6
Secondary	17.5	11.5	13.3	9.5	15.5	10.6
Higher Secondary	11.2	6.5	7.1	4.4	9.3	5.5
Non-technical / Technical Diploma	0.3	0.9	0.2	0.9	0.3	0.9
Graduate & Above	5.6	3.1	3.0	1.7	4.3	2.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source : Census of India 2011

The educational status of the Muslim youth is considerably influenced by the current educational practices of school /college going students. Table 2.7 presents data on this aspect of Muslim youth, based on a survey of socio-economic and educational status of Muslims in Bihar. Although the survey was conducted in 2004, the basic conclusions of this survey are probably relevant even today, since the changes during the intervening years are likely to be limited. It is extremely important to note here that nearly one-fourth of the Muslim students in rural areas are receiving their education in 'Madarsas' where the curriculum is far from what modern education demands. The syllabus for madarsa education was revised as far back as 1970. Even in the urban areas, where availability of modern educational institution is relatively more, 9.0 percent of the Muslim students opt for Madarsa-based education. It is, however, heartening to note that many Muslims have already realized the substantial benefits of modern education and they are prepared to pay for this service. Even in rural areas, 17.7 percent of the Muslim students attend private institutions, some of them (2.0 percent) opting for expensive ones. In the urban areas, quite expectedly, this practice is wider and 32.2 percent of the students there opt for private educational institutions, 7.6 percent opting for expensive private institutions. Since the income positions of majority of the Muslim households is rather low, nearly half of the Muslim students, both in rural and urban areas, have to opt for government educational institutions. This pattern of educational practices among the Muslims strongly indicates that the state government needs to strengthen the government educational institutions further at both school and college levels which will benefit not just the Muslim population, but students belonging to other communities as well.

Table 2.7 : Percentage Distribution of Presently School/College-Going Muslim Students by Type of Institution

Type of Institution	Percentage of Students	
	Rural	Urban
Government Institution	51.1	53.9
Private Institution (Expensive)	2.0	7.6
Private Institution (Ordinary)	15.7	24.6
Minority Schools	4.1	3.2
Madarsas	24.1	9.0
Others	3.0	1.7
Total	100.0	100.0

Source : Socio-economic and Educational Status of Muslim in Bihar (ADRI, 2004)

Table 2.8 : Aspiration Levels of Muslim Parents for Their Children's Education

Characteristics	Rural		Urban	
	For Boys	For Girls	For Boys	For Girls
Percentage distribution of parents by aspiration levels of their children's education				
(a) Religious education	3.4	26.3	3.1	12.2
(b) Up to secondary education	59.3	60.2	42.4	51.8
(c) Up to graduation/above	37.4	13.6	54.5	36.1
(d) All	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Socio-economic and Educational Status of Muslims in Bihar (ADRI, 2004)

The ultimate educational achievement of a student depends on a number of factors, like availability of educational institutions, pedagogic standards of these institutions, parental ability to pay for education (not just tuition fees, but other related expenses) and the learning support available to the school/college going students at home. To this list, one should also add the aspiration of the parents regarding the education of their children. Table 2.8 presents this information, obtained from the survey, mentioned before. It is observed from the table that for a large number of parents (26.3 percent in rural areas and 12.2 percent in urban areas), religious education is all that they aspire for their daughters. For their sons, such expectation is much less (3.4 percent in rural areas and 3.1 percent in urban areas), but not altogether absent. Since a graduation degree is probably a minimum qualification for a decent employment even in a region like Bihar, one would have expected this level of education to be desired by all parents for their wards, at least for their sons; but that is not the reality. Even in the urban areas, only 54.5 percent of the parents aspire for a graduation degree for their sons. It appears that, due to serious income constraints, even the aspiration levels are low for many Muslim households regarding their children's education. As regards the gender disparities indicated by Table 2.7, one may note that this is not restricted to Muslim population alone, other communities also display this unfortunate attitude towards girls, both in Bihar and elsewhere in the country. However, the extent of this gender disparity is noticeably less in urban areas where the educational background of the parents are almost certain to be higher.

Health Status

Parallel to educational standards, the health status is of prime importance for assessing the standard of living of a population group. For any progress, it is first necessary that the security of life, at least as a biological phenomenon, is ensured and health indicators of a population shows how secure is its biological existence. Like educational standard, health status of a population is also both a cause and a consequence of the development

process. On the one hand, it is not possible for a population with poor health status to work hard and move towards higher levels of development; on the other, a population mired in underdevelopment is most likely to have poor health status, because of low income and poor public health services. Unlike educational standard, information on health is not part of the census data. The only source of secondary data where information on health is provided separately for different religions groups is National Family and Health Survey (NFHS), the most recent one being in 2015-16. However, this data is yet to be published and a comparative health profile of Muslim and Hindu populations, as presented in Table 2.9, is based on NFHS-III which was conducted in 2004-05. The health status of both the religious communities has obviously changed during the intervening years, but as mentioned before, one could obtain an idea about the relative health status of the Muslims vis-à-vis the Hindus even from this previous survey. From a comparison of the three mortality rates (Neo-natal, Infant and Under-5), it is expectedly observed that all these rates are higher for the Muslims, indicating their overall inferior health status. However, it is more important to note here that, while the difference between Neo-natal Mortality Rates for Hindus and Muslims is 3.8 (41.4 for Hindus and 45.2 for Muslims), this difference becomes wider in case of Infant Mortality Rates (63.2 for Hindus and 72.1 for Muslims, yielding a difference of 8.9). This trend is continued even in the next stage and, for Under-5 Mortality Rates, the difference between the two religious groups is ever larger at 17.4 (91.5 for Hindus and 108.9 for Muslims). This clearly indicates that, with increase in age, the health-related disadvantages for Muslims children are increasingly intensified, compared to the Hindu children. This low health status of Muslims children obviously is a consequence of combined negative impact of lower income of Muslim households and their lower awareness about good health practices; however, these negative impacts also seem to accumulate over the years to cause even poorer health standards for elder Muslim children. From Table 2.7, one can also infer that lower vaccination coverage is one of the important reasons for higher child mortality rates among the Muslims. In the recent years, there was a strong immunization drive in Bihar which had appreciably extended the vaccination coverage in the state and one hopes that Muslim children have also been benefitted by this immunisation drive of the state government. For the adult population, Table 2.9 presents data on two indicators of health — prevalence of anaemia and percentage of adults with BMI (Body Mass Index) of less than 18.5. Here again, one can notice that the health status of Muslims is inferior, but fortunately, the difference between the Muslims and Hindus is rather small, in contrast to the differences for children. Interestingly, in one case (prevalence of anaemia among male adults), the Muslims fare better than the Hindus.

Table 2.9 : Salient Indicators of Health for Muslim Population

Indicators	Hindu	Muslim	All
Early Childhood Mortality Rates			
(a) Neonatal Mortality Rate	41.4	45.2	42.1
(b) Infant Mortality Rate	63.2	72.1	65.0
(c) Under-5 Mortality Rate	91.5	108.9	95.0
Extent of Vaccination			
(a) BCG	67.8	50.3	64.7
(b) DPT	49.8	28.3	46.1
(c) Polio	82.7	80.6	82.4
(d) Measles	43.6	25.6	40.4
(e) All Vaccinations	35.8	18.5	32.8
Extent of Malnutrition among Children			
(a) Stunting	50.1	59.1	54.7
(b) Wasting	24.3	32.6	27.8
Prevalence of Anaemia			
(a) Children	76.7	83.3	78.0
(b) Women	67.3	68.1	67.4
(c) Men	34.5	33.0	34.3
Nutritional status of Adults (Percentage with BMI less than 18.5)			
(a) Women	44.2	49.6	45.1
(b) Men	34.9	37.5	35.3

Source : NFHS-III (2004-05)

Since traditional values still play a major role in social behaviour in India, the phenomenon of gender disparity is wide here in many fields, including health. Because of stronger roots for such traditional values, the practice of lesser attention to women is probably even more prevalent in Bihar. In this perspective, Table 2.10 presents the data on fertility behaviour and reproductive health which together indicate the health status Muslim women, unlike Table 2.9 which relate to all Muslims. As regards Total Fertility Rate (TFR), it is substantially higher for Muslim women at 4.8 children, compared to 4.0 children for Hindu women. The total reproductive pressure on the health of Muslim women is indeed even more that what the TFR indicates. In contrast to TFR of 4.8, the average number of children ever born to Muslim women (40-49 years) is 6.4, compared to 5.3 for Hindu women. To this fact of higher fertility for Muslim women, if one adds the fact that the income level of Muslim households are generally lower, then the burden of higher

fertility becomes even heavier for Muslim women; in addition, it also affects the health and educational development of their children. It is interesting to note that the difference between all regions and Muslims with respect to TFR is substantial in spite of their 'Wanted Fertility Rate' being close to each other (2.43 for all religions and 2.47 for Muslims). In other words, the extent of unwanted children is much larger for the Muslim couples.

Table 2.10 : Comparative Indicators of Fertility Behaviour and Reproductive Health for All Religions and Muslims

Indicators	Hindus	Muslims
Fertility		
Total Fertility Rate	4.0	4.8
Percentage Currently Pregnant	9.4	10.6
Average Numbers of Children Ever Born to Women (40-49 years)	5.3	6.4
Total Wanted Fertility Rate	2.43	2.47
Use of Contraceptive (Women)		
Any Method	34.1	19.0
Modern	28.9	12.7
Traditional	5.2	6.4
Use of Contraceptive (Men)		
Any Method	29.0	20.6
Modern	26.5	16.9
Traditional	26.5	16.9
Percentage Distribution of Births by Birth Interval		
Less than 18 months	11.6	16.0
18-23 months	16.9	16.4
24-35 months	34.5	33.2
More than 35 months	37.0	34.4
Total	100.0	100.0

Source : NFHS-III (2004-05)

One of the obvious factors behind unwanted children is limited use of contraceptives. Although the use of contraceptive is limited even by people belonging to the Hindus (34.1 percent for women and 29.0 percent for men), it is even more limited among the Muslims (19.0 percent for women and 20.6 percent for men). If one takes into account the 'modern' contraceptive methods, the coverage is slightly narrower. It is also interesting to note from Table 2.10 that the use of traditional contraceptive methods is relatively more among

the Muslim (both women and men) than among the Hindus. Finally, as a sensitive indicator of reproductive health of women, last block of Table 2.10 presents the percentage distribution of births in last five years by the length of birth intervals. In this respect, the reproductive behaviour of Hindu couples is better (with longer periods of birth interval), but it is only marginally so compared to the Muslims. If one takes 24 months as the minimum for an ideal birth interval, it was found that 71.5 percent of the Hindu children were born with a birth interval of at least 24 months, the corresponding figure being a little lower at 67.6 percent for Muslim children.

Employment patterns

The status of the young population, whether Muslims or any other social group, has many dimensions, apart from their educational and health standards. However, if one were to judge whether the current young population of a community has the capacity to improve the overall welfare standards of the entire community, it is imperative to assess the extent of participation of the young people in the production process and the nature of this participation in terms of productivity and income.

The general pattern of employment and occupation of a population is determined by the land and non-land resources of the household for self-employment, their education and skill levels for obtaining wage/salary employment, and the overall economic and employment conditions in the area they live in. These are all economic determinants of occupation and employment pattern and they are equally relevant for general and Muslim population. To this list, however, one may also add two additional non-economic considerations — the prevalence of employment market segmentation, if any, for the Muslim workers and, secondly, the socio-cultural factors that widely influence the Work Participation Rates (WPR) of the female population.

As regards endowment of land and non-land resources of the Muslim population in Bihar that could facilitate self-employment of their young members, the only source of information is a survey that was conducted by the Asian Development Research Institute (ADRI), Patna in 2004. In spite of not being recent, the survey data is able to indicate how limited are these land and non-land resources. The information on the land and related endowments of the rural Muslim households is presented in Table 2.11. One can easily infer from the table that only about one-third of the rural Muslim households (35.9 percent) have some cultivable land which could provide employment opportunities to their members for many of the land-owning households, the amount of land is so little that they find it uneconomic to cultivate it themselves and as such, prefer to lease it out. This leaves only 28.8 percent of the rural Muslim households who are actually cultivating some land. Since many of these cultivator households have only limited amount of land (less than

1 acre), the available land can offer only partial employment, not full employment to the workers in the household. The working members of these households therefore, need additional wage-employment for being gainfully employed round the years. It is, however, heartening to know that the availability of irrigation facilities (mostly from modern sources), is substantial for the rural landowning Muslim households; consequently, nearly whole of their land is double-cropped. One may also note here that, at the present of agricultural technology in Bihar, an endowment of 5 acres of land for a household is generally considered to be an economic holding which broadly ensures full employment for all its male workers. Such land endowment is extremely limited for rural Muslim households in Bihar. Consequently, working members of land poor or landless households have to opt for either agricultural labour or non-agricultural occupation, the opportunities for the latter category being rather limited in rural Bihar. Thus, as discussed later, outmigration is a very wide phenomenon in Bihar for rural Muslim workers, as it is for rural workers belonging to all religions.

Table 2.11 : Land and Related Endowments of Rural Muslim Households in Bihar

No.	Characteristics	Information
1.	Percentage of households possessing	
	(a) Homestead land	96.3
	(b) Cultivable land (owned)	35.9
	(c) Cultivable land (operated)	28.8
	(d) Orchard land	4.0
2.	Percentage distribution of households by land operated	
	(a) Nil	71.2
	(b) 0.1-1.0 acre	14.3
	(c) 1.1-2.0 acres	6.3
	(d) Above 2.0 acres	8.2
	(e) All	100.0
3.	Average size of landholding (acres)	
	(a) Per household	0.65
	(b) Per owning household	1.82
	(c) Per cultivating household	1.91
4.	Percentage of operated area irrigated by	
	(a) Traditional sources	7.3
	(b) Modern sources	80.1

No.	Characteristics	Information
	(c) Unirrigated	12.6
	(d) All	100.0
5.	Percentage of cultivating households possessing	
	(a) Plough	23.8
	(b) Bullock cart	5.0
	(c) Pumpset	10.5
	(d) Tractor	3.0
6.	Cropping intensity for cultivating households	
	(a) Net area cultivated per cultivating household (acres)	1.91
	(b) Gross area cultivated per cultivating household (acres)	3.37
	(c) Cropping intensity	1.76

Source : *Socio-economic and Educational Status of Muslims in Bihar (ADRI 2004)*

For a comparative data on land endowments of Muslim and all households, one may also refer to Table 2.12 which presents the distribution of rural households in Bihar by their landholding. This data is obtained from the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) which had conducted a survey on employment and unemployment in 2011-12. Admittedly, the phenomenon of absolute landlessness is relatively less among the Muslim households, only 1.1 percent of whom have no land, compared to 3.6 percent for all households. But the overall land endowment for Muslim households is clearly lower, compared to all households. The proportion of Muslim households falling in the lowest category (0.1-1.0 acre) is much higher (77.7 percent) than for all households (71.2 percent). Consequently, the proportion of Muslim households with higher endowment of land is comparatively less.

Table 2.12 : Percentage Distribution of Rural Households in Bihar by Land Possessed (2011-12)

Type of Household	Amount of land possessed (acre)				Total
	Nil	0.1-1.0	1.1-2.5	More than 2.5	
Muslims	1.1	77.7	11.4	9.7	100.0
All	3.6	71.2	12.4	12.8	100.0

Source : *NSSO (2011-12)*

It is not only the land resources which are limited for the Muslim households in Bihar, a similar situation also prevails for non-land resources (Table 2.13). This data is again from a survey conducted by the Asian Development Research Institute (ADRI) in 2004, and it is being used here under the assumption that the situation has changed only marginally. The

artisan-based activities are extremely limited, as only 2.1 percent of the rural Muslim households and 4.4 percent of their urban counterparts are engaged as artisans. Even those households which are engaged in artisan-related activities are doing so with a very narrow capital base (Rs. 2200 in rural areas and Rs. 1370 in urban areas) (in 2004 prices). With such a thin capital base, it is not surprising to note that these artisan-based activities are unable to provide full time employment to all the workers in the household. On an average, artisan-based activities provide full time employment to only 1.1 workers in rural areas and 1.5 workers in urban areas. Secondly, the extent of manufacturing activities is even more limited with only 0.6 percent of the urban Muslim households being engaged in such activities, the rural areas being completely void of them. Finally, for other self-employment activities (mostly retail trade), the prevalence is substantial (23.1 percent of rural Muslim households and 42.5 percent other urban counterparts), but the capital base of these self-employment activities is again very small. Indeed, under many circumstances, engaging in retail trade as an occupation is the last option for Muslim and other youth when they are not able to find a decent wage/salary employment anywhere. If one takes into account the lower educational standards of the Muslim youth (as elaborated before), together with the limited land and non-land endowments of the Muslim population, it clearly points to the enormous disadvantages that Muslim youth in Bihar faces for finding decent employment opportunities.

Table 2.13 : Information about Non-Land Resources of Muslim Households in Bihar

No.	Characteristics	Artisan-based activities		Manu- facturing activities	Other Self- employment	
		Rural	Urban	Urban	Rural	Urban
1.	Percentage of households engaged	2.1	4.4	0.6	23.1	42.5
2.	Average value of implements/ machinery per household (Rs. '00)	22.0	13.7	247.0	88.8	76.2
3.	Average number of hh. Members employed					
	(a) Full time	1.1	1.5	1.8	1.1	1.3
	(b) Part time	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
	(c) All	1.4	1.7	2.0	1.3	1.5

Source : Socio-Economic and Educational Status of Muslims in Bihar (ADRI 2004)

For assessing the overall employment status of the Muslim youth, one may first analyse the Work Participation Rate (WPR) for Muslims in Bihar. Based on 2011 census data, these rates are presented in Table 2.14. For the entire state, the WPR is higher for all religions (33.4 percent), compared to the Muslims (30.5 percent). When one compares the rates for rural and urban areas separately, the difference in WPR between all religions and Muslims is found to be present in both rural and urban areas. However, the difference in WPR is wider in rural areas — 34.0 percent for the all religions and 31.0 percent for the Muslims, indicating a gap of 3.0 percentage points; in urban areas also, the WPR is higher for all religions (28.6 percent), but it is only marginally so, the Muslims reporting a WPR of 27.0 percent. This lower WPR for Muslims obviously indicates a clear economic disadvantage for the community. With lower participation in productive employment, their income levels are also likely to be lower, leading to many other social and economic disadvantages.

Table 2.14 : Work Participation Rate for Muslims and All Religions in Bihar

District	Work participation rate 2011 census					
	Total Population		Rural Population		Urban Population	
	All Religions	Muslim	All Religions	Muslim	All Religions	Muslim
Patna	32.2	28.8	34.3	30.8	29.5	28.2
Nalanda	36.3	29.7	37.7	32.0	29.0	28.4
Bhojpur	30.1	27.0	30.9	27.9	25.7	25.4
Buxar	31.5	27.7	32.1	28.5	26.8	25.3
Rohtas	31.2	26.9	32.0	27.7	26.6	25.3
Kaimur	31.4	27.0	31.7	27.3	24.4	24.5
Gaya	37.9	32.7	38.9	33.8	31.0	29.0
Jehanabad	32.5	27.7	33.2	29.6	27.3	24.3
Arwal	33.7	29.9	34.2	30.7	27.6	25.4
Nawada	36.8	29.2	37.7	30.5	28.6	24.8
Aurangabad	33.0	28.6	33.5	29.8	27.5	24.7
Saran	26.3	25.0	26.4	25.0	25.7	24.7
Siwan	28.0	26.0	28.1	26.2	26.7	24.4
Gopalganj	28.4	25.4	28.6	25.6	26.2	23.1
W. Champaran	37.6	34.5	38.6	35.6	28.5	26.5

District	Work participation rate 2011 census					
	Total Population		Rural Population		Urban Population	
	All Religions	Muslim	All Religions	Muslim	All Religions	Muslim
E. Champaran	34.1	32.4	34.6	33.1	28.1	26.8
Muzaffarpur	32.2	29.6	32.5	30.0	30.2	26.8
Sitamarhi	32.6	31.1	32.7	31.2	29.5	29.5
Sheohar	33.0	32.5	33.2	32.7	28.5	28.6
Vaishali	30.3	28.8	30.6	29.1	27.3	26.2
Darbhanga	31.1	27.7	31.4	28.1	27.7	24.5
Madhubani	36.5	32.9	36.7	33.3	30.8	26.0
Samastipur	31.5	29.1	31.7	29.3	27.5	24.5
Begusarai	31.6	29.8	32.4	30.6	28.3	27.5
Munger	31.2	25.4	32.9	25.9	26.7	25.1
Sheikhpura	35.3	28.2	36.7	29.2	28.8	25.3
Lakhisarai	32.6	30.2	33.1	30.6	29.7	28.0
Jamui	41.3	38.1	42.1	39.2	32.4	31.5
Khagaria	33.6	30.8	34.0	31.2	26.6	26.8
Bhagalpur	32.4	30.6	33.1	30.9	29.5	29.9
Banka	37.9	34.3	38.3	34.6	27.6	27.5
Saharsa	34.2	31.7	34.9	32.8	26.7	23.2
Supaul	39.4	35.4	39.9	36.0	28.6	26.6
Madhepura	38.8	36.8	39.3	37.4	29.9	25.8
Purnia	35.0	30.5	35.7	30.7	29.2	26.7
Kishanganj	31.3	29.2	31.3	29.2	31.7	29.4
Araria	38.1	34.4	38.5	34.7	30.6	29.5
Katihar	33.0	29.3	33.5	29.5	28.2	26.4
Bihar	33.4	30.5	34.0	31.0	28.6	27.0

Sources: Census of India (2011)

From the data on districtwise WPR, presented on Table 2.14, one can easily note that this rate varies considerably, both for the all religions and Muslims. In particular, for Muslims, WPR varies from 25.0 percent (Saran) to 36.8 percent (Madhepura). Broadly speaking, the Muslim population in Saran is economically better off, thanks to the phenomenon of wide outmigration (many of them to gulf countries), compared to Madhepura. Consequently, the high WPR in Madhepura should be explained not in terms of higher employment opportunities, but in terms of 'forced' participation in work to compensate for low wages prevalent in the district. For all religions again, the WPR exhibits a similar dispersion pattern — the lowest in Saran (26.3 percent) and the highest in Araria (38.1 percent) a district adjacent to Madhepura. If one compares the WPR for three groups of districts with low, medium and high concentrations of Muslims (as divided in Table 2.2), it again emerges that the WPR is comparatively higher in those districts where the concentration of Muslim population is also higher (Table 2.15). For the rural Muslim population, the WPR in districts with high concentration of the community is 31.3 percent, compared to 29.3 percent in districts with low concentration of the community. In the urban areas also, a similar pattern is observed.

Table 2.15 : Work Participation Rates in Districts with Varying Concentration of Muslim Population

Type of District	Work Participation Rate (2011)					
	Total Population		Rural Population		Urban Population	
	All Religions	Muslims	All Religions	Muslims	All Religions	Muslims
Low Concentration of Muslims	32.5	28.3	33.4	29.3	27.5	25.9
Medium Concentration of Muslims	34.0	31.0	34.4	31.6	28.4	26.5
High Concentration of Muslims	34.1	31.0	34.5	31.3	29.3	27.5
All	33.4	30.5	34.0	31.6	28.6	27.0

Source : Census of India (2011)

Apart from the educational and skill level of the prospective workers and the overall economic vibrancy of a region, the WPR also depends on some cultural factors, particularly the social norm that guide the participation of women in work outside their homes. From a parallel source of information on WPR in Bihar (NSSO Survey on Employment and Unemployment, 2011-12, it is possible to judge whether the lower WPR for Muslims in Bihar is indeed a consequence of lower WPR for Muslim women (Table

2.16). Before analyzing the figures in Table 2.16, one should first note here that the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) and Work Participation Rate (WPR) presented in the table are different from those presented in Table 2.14. This is because the definition of a worker adopted by the census authorities (source of data for Table 2.14) and that adopted by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) (source of data for Table 2.16) are different, the one used by the NSSO being a stricter definition. However, this data can still be used to infer that the WPR for females is very low in both rural and urban areas of Bihar (less than 6 percent); but between the two population groups, all religions and Muslims, it is noticeably lower for the latter group. One can, therefore, safely conclude that the lower WPR for Muslims in Bihar is partly because of lower WPR for its female members. But it also needs to be underlined here that there are other factors as well, notably lower education and skill level of Muslims, that stand in the way of their wider participation in economic work, whether in self or wage-employment.

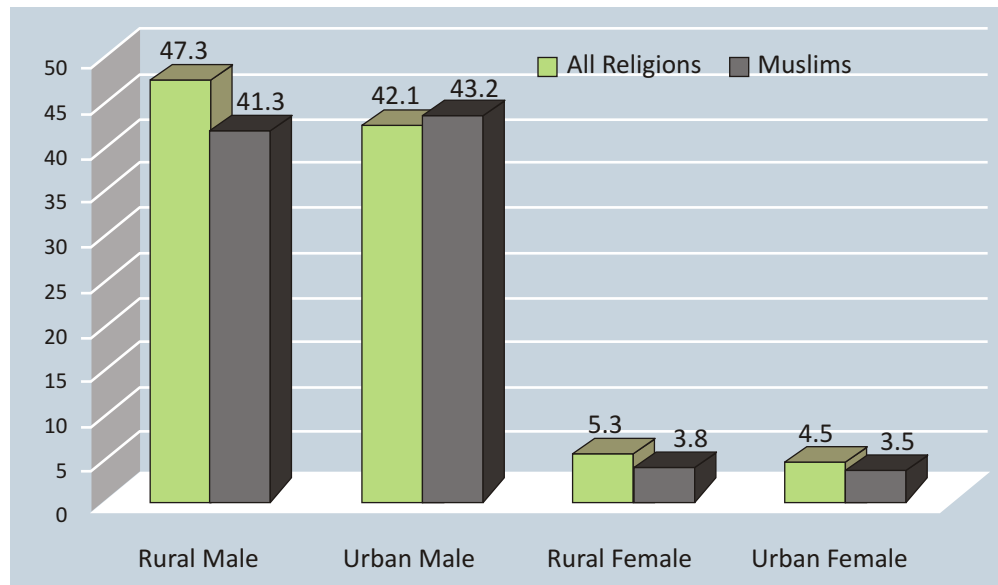
Apart from presenting data on WPR, Table 2.16 also presents data on Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR). While WPR refers to those who are actually working, the LFPR refers to those who are either actually working or are available for work. Thus, the difference between WPR and LFPR actually indicates the Unemployment Rate (UR), as presented in Table 2.16. These Unemployment Rates again underline the disadvantaged position of the Muslim workers in the labour market, as they are higher for Muslim workers for rural males, rural females and urban females, the only exception being urban males where the Unemployment Rates are equal for all religions and Muslims.

Table 2.16 : Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR), Work Participation Rate (WPR), and Unemployment Rate (UR) in Bihar- All Religions and Muslims

Area/Community	Male			Female			All		
	LFPR	WPR	UR	LFPR	WPR	UR	LFPR	WPR	UR
Rural									
All Religions	48.7	47.3	1.3	5.8	5.3	0.5	27.2	26.3	0.9
Muslims	42.9	41.3	1.6	5.2	3.8	1.3	24.0	22.6	1.4
Urban									
All Religions	44.1	42.1	2.0	5.4	4.5	0.9	24.8	23.3	1.5
Muslims	45.2	43.2	2.0	4.7	3.5	1.2	25.0	23.4	1.6

Source: NSSO (2011-12)

Graph 2.3: Worker Population Ratio (WPR) in Bihar for All Religions and Muslims



It is quite revealing that, although the WPR for Muslims is lower than for the general population (taking into account persons of all ages), the same for the Muslim youth (15-29 years) is higher than the youth belonging to the general population. This conclusion clearly emerges from Table 2.17 which presents the percentage distribution of young population by main activity for both general and Muslim population from the 2011 census data. Since the males constitute the major part of the workforce, one may compare here the percentage of workers among the male youth. Among the Muslim youth, the percentage of workers is 59.1 percent, compared to a lower figure of 55.7 percent for the general population. Simultaneously, one may also note that the percentage of students among the Muslim youth is 23.6 percent, compared to a higher figure of 30.2 percent for the general population. These figures clearly point to the phenomenon that Muslim youth discontinue their education earlier than their counterpart in the general population, to join the workforce. This is most likely the outcome of the poorer income status of the Muslim households which forces them to leave school/college early, so that they could start contributing to the household income by accepting an employment which has poor wages (in case of wage employment) or poor income prospects (in case of self-employment). In case of young Muslim females, they obviously do not join the workforce, but they are not students either — for them, an important activity status is household duties (42.5 percent) or other non-productive activities (16.8 percent). For the general female population, the pattern of activity status is not very rewarding either (many of them doing household duties or other non-productive activities), but their condition is slightly better than that of the Muslim females.

Table 2.17 : Percentage Distribution of Young Population (15-19 Years) by Main Activity for General and Muslim Population

Main Activity	Male Population		Female Population		All Population	
	General	Muslim	General	Muslim	General	Muslim
Worker	55.7	59.1	24.9	20.7	41.2	40.8
Non-workers	44.3	40.9	75.1	79.3	58.8	59.2
Student	30.2	23.6	22.4	20.0	26.5	21.9
Household duties	1.5	1.8	39.3	42.5	19.3	21.2
Others	12.6	15.5	13.3	16.8	13.0	16.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source : Census of India (2011)

For attaining reasonable standards of living, it is not sufficient to just obtain an employment, but to have an employment that offers scope for decent income opportunities. In the absence of any secondary data on income level of Muslim workers, one may refer to the 'Survey of Socio-economic and Educational Status of Muslims in Bihar', conducted by ADRI in 2004, which provides information on occupational classification of Muslim workers. Although this data is not recent, it can possibly still indicate the occupational pattern of Muslim workers and their income level (Table 2.18). Of the 10 broad occupational categories, the first three categories include the white collar workers, for which the wage/salary levels are relatively higher. The proportion of Muslim workers in these three categories is extremely small — only 4.4 percent in rural areas and 8.3 percent in urban areas. This is clearly indicative of the poor income status of Muslim workers, which obviously includes Muslim young workers. The fourth category (sales workers) is very important for Muslim workers, as it accounts for 17.0 percent of the rural Muslim workers and even a larger 32.9 percent of them in urban areas. In all probability, it includes a large number of petty traders for whom income opportunities are again very limited. For service workers, the income opportunities are at best moderate and they account for 8.7 percent of the urban Muslim workers. Next there appears the category of traditional rural workers (farmers/fisheries/related workers) which account for nearly half of the rural Muslim workers. Except for a limited number of them who have adequate land endowment, the income levels of these workers are likely to be rather low. Finally, the consolidated category (production and related workers/transport operators/others) is a heterogeneous group, offering varying income opportunities to its members. But since the level of industrial development is very low in Bihar, most of the industrial units here are small and operate with a low technological base where wage levels are also rather low or at best moderate. Among the transport operators, the

'rickshaw pullers' account for a large proportion which again is a low-income occupation. In urban areas, this consolidated category account for nearly half of the Muslim worker (47.1 percent); in the rural areas, their share is also substantial at 28.1 percent. Therefore, from this data on occupational pattern of Muslim workers in Bihar, one can safely conclude that a majority of them are engaged in occupations that generally command low income. The share of Muslim workers in occupations that offer moderate of high income opportunities is much smaller than their share in overall population. This phenomenon can be partly explained by the lower educational standard of the Muslim workers in Bihar, but there probably also exists a segmentation of the labour market that disfavours the Muslim workers, including the young Muslim workers.

Table 2.18 : Percentage Distribution of Muslim Workers by Occupation (1 digit NCO code)

Code	Occupation	Rural	Urban
0-1	Professional/Trained/Related workers	2	3.5
2	Administrative/Executive worker/ Managerial	0.1	0.6
3	Clerical/ Related workers	2.3	4.2
4	Sales workers	17.0	32.9
5	Service workers	0.6	8.7
6	Farmers/Fisherman/Related workers	49.8	2.9
7-8-9	Production and Related workers/Transport Operator/Others	28.1	47.1

Source: Socio-economic and Educational Status of Muslims in Bihar (ADRI 2004)

The practice of out-migration by workers from their village/town is very wide phenomenon in Bihar, both for the general population as well as Muslims. Thus, a profile of the Muslim youth in Bihar vis-à-vis their employment status is incomplete without some information about the extent of their outmigration and other aspects of this important economic practice. Here again, in the absence of any alternative source, the profile is based on a survey that was conducted in 2004. Table 2.19 presents this data, separately for rural and urban Muslims. From the table, one may first observe that the practice of outmigration is indeed very wide among the Muslims workers in Bihar. In the rural areas, two out of every three households (62.6 percent) are seen to have an outmigrant; in the urban areas, the practice is less wider, but even there one out of every four households (24.0 percent) is seen to have an outmigrant. The table also indicates that nearly all of these outmigrants (90.5 percent in rural areas and 89.3 percent in urban areas) have left their home, either for employment or for a better employment. Apart from employment, education is also an important reason for outmigration from Bihar, as there is dearth of good educational institutions in the state. But among the Muslims, such

outmigration is rather limited, only 1.8 percent in rural areas and 5.2 percent in urban areas. The average age of these outmigrants at the time of their departure (28.5 years in rural areas and 27.4 years in urban areas) also indicates that most of these outmigrant workers are young Muslims workers.

Table 2.19 : Extent of Outmigration and Profile of Muslim Out-migrants

1	Average number of out-migrants per 100 households	62.6	24.0
2	Percentage of male among out-migrants	99.1	97.6
3	Average age of out-migrants	28.5	27.4
4	Percentage of out-migrants going to		
	(a) Within state	8.4	9.7
	(b) Outside state, within country	83.8	78.5
	(c) Outside country	7.9	11.8
	(d) All	100.0	100.0
5	Percentage of migrants leaving due to		
	(a) Employment/better employment	90.5	89.3
	(b) Education	1.8	5.2
	(c) Others	7.7	5.5
	(d) All	100.0	100.0
6	Remittances from out-migrants		
	(a) Percentage of out-migrants remitting money	79.1	71.4
	(b) Average annual remittances per remitting out-migrant (Rs '00)	161.5	220.5
7	Prospective out-migrants		
	(a) Percentage of households reporting at least one desiring outmigration	5.2	5.3
	(b) Percentage of desiring out-migrants preferring to go outside country	43.3	44.4

Source: Socio-economic and Educational Status of Muslims in Bihar (ADRI 2004)

The destinations of these outmigrant workers vary considerably — within the state, outside the state (but within the country) and outside the country. The majority of the Muslim outmigrants, however, move outside the state (but within the country) — 83.8 percent of rural outmigrants and 78.5 percent of urban outmigrants. The proportion of outmigrants going outside the country (which obviously means high income opportunities) is 7.9 percent for rural Muslim workers and 11.8 percent for their urban counterparts. This ratio of international migration is generally considered to be higher for

young Muslim workers, compared to workers for other communities. It is very likely that some of these outmigrant workers are able to obtain a low-wage employment even after migration, but from the data on remittances, it can be concluded that majority of them earn enough to support their families back home. The proportion of outmigrants sending remittances is very high — 79.1 percent among rural Muslim workers and 71.4 percent among the urban Muslim workers. The amount remitted is also substantial. For rural Muslim outmigrants, the annual remittance is Rs. 16.2 thousand per remitting outmigrant and Rs. 12.7 thousand per outmigrant (all in 2004 prices). In present prices, these amounts will be about Rs. 40 thousand and Rs. 30 thousand respectively. For urban Muslim outmigrants, these sums are even higher.

From the overall information on outmigration of Muslim workers (most of whom are young), it is observed that the practice of outmigration mitigates to a large extent the lack of employment and income opportunities for them at their own villages/towns. The relief that outmigration brings to the employment status of young Muslim workers becomes even more substantial when one takes into account the fact that at least some of them manage to obtain employment outside the country where wage rates are high. It is, therefore, not surprising to find that more than 40 percent of the desiring or prospective outmigrants in the Muslim household would prefer to move outside the country.

CHAPTER III

WELFARE PROGRAMMES AND MUSLIM YOUTH

Since the level of economic development in India is not high, resulting in low income levels of the population, the central and state governments here undertake a number of welfare programmes to help various disadvantaged sections of the population. This welfare programmes include education, health, employment, women's status, support for the old people and a few others. Such welfare programmes are even more desirable in a place like Bihar where the level of economic development is much lower than the national average and a large section of the population is disadvantaged in many respects. Since Muslims constitute a major part of the disadvantaged population, the coverage and efficiency of these welfare programmes have substantial implications for the welfare of the Muslim population in general and Muslim youth in particular. In addition to the welfare programmes which are meant for the general population (including the Muslims), there are also a number of others which specifically try to address the needs of the Muslim population. In this Chapter, an attempt has been made to assess the working of these welfare programmes which might provide useful feedbacks to the state government to help it run these programmes more effectively.

General Welfare Programme

The number of welfare programmes, either in Bihar or in other states of India, is so large that it has often invited criticism from development experts. Quite understandably, they argue that, instead of having a large number of welfare programmes which entail thin spreading of limited resources of the state government, it is more desirable to have smaller number of programmes, each with a substantial resources base. This will also imply manageable workload for development functionaries at the grassroot level, enhancing the efficiency of these programmes.

It is not possible here to list of all welfare programme for the general population (since they are large in number), but the following are probably more important since each of them enjoys substantial resource base — Public Distribution System (for food security), Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) (for elementary education), Mid-Day Meal Scheme (for education and nutrition), Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) (for housing) and Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGRGS) (for employment). Although all these welfare programmes are meant for the general population, there is a provision for specific targeting of scheduled caste/tribe households under PMAY and again similar quota under MGRGS for scheduled caste/tribes and women workers. Unfortunately, for none of these programmes, there is any provision for specific targeting of Muslim households or

Muslim youth, although a majority of them are as disadvantaged as scheduled caste/tribe. Indeed, there is currently no policy framework or guidelines at the national level to address the predicaments of the Muslims, particularly the Muslim youth. Generally, national policies like those on population, education, gender issues or the very recent skill development, embrace an umbrella framework and refuse to even mention the need for a special focus on Muslims, leave alone identifying their special needs. Over the years, this has ensured a practice of persistent denial to the Muslim population, resulting in their present seriously disadvantaged social and economic status. Since Bihar has a substantial Muslim population, this policy void has serious implications for the state's overall development strategy.

Since the welfare programmes for the general population do not make any special provision for Muslims, the available data on the operations of these programmes usually does not mention the extent of coverage of these programmes among the Muslims. However, this study has tried to obtain a broad idea about the extent of exclusion of the Muslims by these programmes from two illustrative programmes, both of which have some data on the religious background of their beneficiaries. The first of these is the Public Distribution System (PDS) which has some data on the social background of about 42 thousand PDS dealers in Bihar (Table 3.1). Although Muslims constitute about 17 percent of the population of Bihar, their share in dealership of PDS is only 6.7 percent and, what is worse, their share has recorded a slight decrease in the last three years. One may note here that dealership for PDS is a decent employment opportunity for any worker, including those belonging to the Muslim youth. One should, however, add here that the conclusion about the relative deprivation of Muslims vis-à-vis 'dealership' of PDS does not imply that Muslims are also deprived in terms of 'services' of the PDS.

Table 3.1 : Social Background of PDS Dealers in Bihar

Social Background	Percentage Share		
	2014	2015	2016
Scheduled Caste/Tribe	17.0	17.2	17.2
Backward Castes	29.3	29.6	29.3
Extremely Backward Castes	7.2	7.4	7.6
General Castes	19.5	19.4	19.4
Minority	7.2	6.7	6.7
Women	8.0	8.0	8.0
Others	11.8	11.7	11.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source : Economic Survey (2016-17), Government of Bihar

The second example which indicates that the coverage of the welfare programmes meant of general population is relatively less among the Muslims relates to the 'Jeevika' programme in Bihar. This programme, run by the Bihar State Rural Livelihood Mission (BSRLM), aims to empower rural women, both socially and economically. It aims at increasing income of the rural poor women by developing their institutional capacity through Self-Help Groups (SHG). Till date, no less than 65.24 lakh households have been covered by the SHGs, promoted by Jeevika. Fortunately, BSRLM has data not just on number of households covered by SHGs, but the share of Muslims households among them (Table 3.2). It can be noted from the table that there are 5.7 lakh Muslim households covered by the SHGs, and they account for 8.8 percent of the total households covered. Since the share of Muslim population in the total population in the state is 16.9 percent, one can again safely conclude that, even for a successful welfare programme like Jeevika, the coverage of Muslim population is relatively less. From the districtwise figures in Table 3.2, one can also notice that this pattern of relatively limited reach of Jeevika among the Muslim households is true in all the districts. It is interesting to note that Jeevika's reach among the Muslim households has been relatively higher in the districts of — Gopalganj, West Champara, East Champaran, Muzaffarpur, Sheohar and Supaul. All these districts are in north Bihar. One may also note here that although this data on Jeevika's performance is presented for Muslim households; the actual coverage refers to Muslim women, most of whom are young.

Table 3.2 : Minority Households Covered by Jeevika

District	Total House holds (in '000)	Minority House holds (in '000)	Share of Muslims (in percentage)	
			In total population	In Jeevika-covered House holds
Patna	236.2	4.7	7.5	2.0
Nalanda	272.5	3.7	6.9	1.3
Bhojpur	95.2	3.0	7.3	3.1
Buxar	77.5	2.9	6.2	3.7
Rohtas	151.3	7.2	10.2	4.7
Kaimur	82.5	4.0	9.5	4.8
Gaya	362.6	14.8	11.1	4.0
Jehanabad	75.00	1.9	6.7	2.5
Arwal	44.6	1.9	9.2	4.3

District	Total House holds (in '000)	Minority House holds (in '000)	Share of Muslims (in percentage)	
			In total population	In Jeevika-covered House
Nawada	177.5	7.7	11.0	4.3
Aurangabad	114.6	3.7	9.3	3.2
Saran	162.1	10.6	10.3	6.5
Siwan	128.3	10.8	18.3	8.4
Gopalganj	185.3	18.5	17.0	10.0
W. Champaran	244.7	33.8	22.0	13.8
E. Champaran	314.7	37.8	19.4	12.0
Muzaffarpur	378.3	35.4	15.5	9.3
Sitamarhi	195.0	21.1	21.6	10.8
Sheohar	48.0	4.8	15.1	10.0
Vaishali	162.4	8.8	9.6	5.4
Darbhanga	217.8	19.5	22.4	8.9
Madhubani	327.5	28.3	18.2	8.6
Samastipur	218.4	12.9	10.6	5.9
Begusarai	180.3	14.3	13.7	7.9
Munger	89.8	2.0	8.1	2.2
Sheikhpura	45.6	0.8	5.9	1.7
Lakhisarai	49.9	1.4	4.1	2.8
Jamui	128.2	7.5	12.4	5.8
Khagaria	173.5	9.7	10.5	5.6
Bhagalpur	170.5	15.5	17.7	9.1
Banka	100.0	6.3	12.3	6.3
Saharsa	184.9	16.0	14.0	8.6
Supaul	188.3	23.0	18.4	12.2
Madhepura	168.9	12.5	12.1	7.4

District	Total House holds (in '000)	Minority House holds (in '000)	Share of Muslims (in percentage)	
			In total population	In Jeevika-covered House
Purnea	304.4	54.3	38.5	17.8
Kishanganj	93.1	34.3	68.0	36.8
Araria	126.6	26.5	42.9	20.9
Katihar	247.5	49.7	44.5	20.0
Bihar	6523.5	571.6	16.9	8.8

Source: Jeevika

Welfare Programmes for Muslims

Apart from the welfare programmes for the general population, as mentioned before, there are also welfare programmes in Bihar that specifically try to address the needs of the Muslim population. Some of these programmes are funded by the central government, and others by the state government. They are all, however, implemented by the state government. It is very relevant to mention here that the state government in Bihar has established a separate Department of Minority Welfare as early as 1991 and it was probably the first state to do so. Further, in each of the district headquarters, there is also a District Minority Welfare functionary to implement various welfare programmes meant for the minority community. In Table 3.3 is presented the annual expenditure of the state government on minority welfare. Such expenditure, as is apparent from the table, is incurred not just by the Department of Minority Welfare, but by two other Departments, Education and General Administration. As regards the total expenditure, it has grown at 13.4 percent over the last six years. This growth rate is rather moderate, mainly because of unusual drop in expenditure in 2014-15 and 2016-17. The total budget for the current fiscal, however, shows a nearly doubling of expenditure between 2012-13 (Rs. 118.31 crore) and 2017-18 (Rs. 224.77 crore). From the table, one can also infer that a substantial portion of the state government's expenditure on minority welfare is incurred through the Department of Education. This is indeed very desirable since much of the social and economic disadvantages of the Muslim community emanates from its educational deficiencies.

Table 3.3 : Annual Expenditure on Minority Welfare

(Rs. Crore)

Spending Department	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 (RE)	2017-18 (RE)
Minority Welfare	67.75	73.32	44.88	10.86	14.89	116.70
Education	50.41	65.29	34.94	212.11	123.76	96.69
General Administration	0.15	1.22	3.79	5.79	9.48	11.38
Total	118.31	139.82	83.61	228.76	148.14	224.77

Source: Bihar Budget, Government of Bihar

Presently, there are 11 welfare schemes for the Muslim population, 4 of which are funded by the central government and the remaining 7 by the state government. These welfare are schemes are.

- (a) Central Government : (i) Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme, (ii) Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme, (iii) Merit-cum-Means Scholarship and (iv) Multi-Sectoral Development Programme. Three of these schemes, as is obvious, is meant for promoting the educational standard of the Muslims and, as such, cover Muslim youth.
- (b) State Government : (i) Alpasankhyak Chhatravas Yojana, (ii) Mukhyamantri Alpasankhyak Siksha Rin Yojana, (iii) Mukhyamantri Vidyarthi Protsahan Yojana, (iv) Free Coaching Scheme, (v) Mukhyamantri Shram Shakti Yojana, (vi) Mukhyamantri Alpasankhyak Rojgar Rin Yojana and (vii) Mukhyamantri Parityakta Yojana. Of these 7 programmes, 4 are meant for promoting educational status of Muslim youth, 2 are meant for promoting employment opportunities for Muslim worker (most of them young) and the last one is for Muslim women who have been divorced or deserted by their husbands.

Unfortunately, the implementing authorities of these important welfare programmes do not maintain systematic records about the functioning of the programmes like expenditure levels, numbers of beneficiaries, regional distribution and the like. However, based on whatever official data is available, the details about the functioning of these welfare programmes are presented below :

Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme : This scheme has started in 2008-09 when its expenditure was shared by the central and state governments in the ratio 75:25. Since 2014, however, it is a fully funded Centrally Sponsored Scheme. For Muslim students studying in Stds. I-V, the scheme provides for financial assistance for maintenance costs, whereas for students studying at Stds. VI-X, the assistance covers both maintenance costs and course fees. There are two eligibility criteria for the scheme — first, the annual income of the parent/ guardian

should be less than Rs. 1.00 lakh and, secondly, the students must obtain at least 50 percent marks in their last examination. The implementation modality also demands that at least 30 percent the beneficiaries are girl students; in case the quota for girl students remains unfilled, the benefit may be extended to boy students belonging to the same community. The data on number of beneficiaries under this scheme is presented in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 : Number of Beneficiaries under Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme (2010-11 to 2015-16)

Years	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
No. of Beneficiaries	290682	141747	291618	65663	122833	24724

Source: Minority Welfare Department, Government of Bihar

The average number of school-going Muslim students who have been benefited per year by the scheme is 156.2 thousand. This might indicate a reasonable coverage of the scheme, but the yearly figures vary considerably (24.7 thousand in 2015-16 to 291.6 thousand in 2012-13), suggesting some operational deficiency of the scheme. It is quite possible that the eligible students are not paid their scholarship amounts 'regularly' and there is wide practice of delayed payments, leading to substantial year-to-year variation in the number of beneficiaries. If this operational problem is removed, the scheme has the potential of benefiting even larger number of school-going Muslim students.

Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme : This scheme has been in operation since 2007-08 and has been a fully funded central scheme all along. The scheme covers Muslim students at all levels of higher education, starting from higher secondary and covering upto the doctoral level. The eligibility criteria as well as the provision for reservation of girl students are the same as for the Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme; however, the income limit for the parents/guardians stands at Rs. 2.00 lakh per annum for this scheme. The data on number of beneficiaries under the scheme is presented in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5 : Number of Beneficiaries under Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme (2010-11 to 2015-16)

Years	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
No. of Beneficiaries	31674	20079	24031	34485	42248	48192

Source: Minority Welfare Department, Government of Bihar

From the table, one finds that the average number of Muslim students benefited by the scheme per year is about 33.5 thousand. Since the scheme is supposed to cover a wide spectrum of students from the higher secondary level to the doctoral studies, the present coverage seems to be rather moderate, but it is heartening to note that this coverage is

expanding over the years and, in 2015-16, it has benefitted about 48.2 thousand students. Since the educational deficiency among the Muslim youth is more for higher levels of education (please refer to Table 2.6), this scheme for Post-Matric Scholarship needs to cover even more Muslim students to help them attain higher educational qualifications, opening the possibilities for their better employment with higher income.

Merit-cum-Means Scholarship : This scheme to promote technical and professional education among the Muslim youth was started in 2007-08. It is applicable for students at both under-graduate and post-graduate levels. The eligibility criteria for the scheme are — a limit of annual income of less than Rs. 2.50 lakh for the parents/guardians and clearance of the competitive examination for admission to the technical institutions. In case there is no competitive examination for admission, the students should have at least 50 percent marks in their last examination. The provision of reservation for girl students is the same as for two other central government schemes.

The details about the operation of this scheme is presented in Table 3.6. From the table, it is quite apparent that the financial support under the scheme is being increasingly utilized by the Muslim students, their number being 11.3 thousand students in 2015-16. A year before (2014-15) this number was even higher at 13.4 thousand students. As this scheme is intended to promote technical/ professional education, which enhances the employability of the Muslim youth, a greater attention for the scheme is very desirable. As regards the expenditure of the central government for the scheme, it was Rs. 9.46 crore in 2010-11 which has increased nearly four times to the reach the level of Rs. 37.52 crores in 2014-15. On an average, this implies an annual financial assistance of about Rs. 28 thousand for each student.

Table 3.6 : Number of Beneficiaries and Annual Expenditure under Merit-cum-Means Scholarship (2010-11 to 2015-16)

Year	Number of Beneficiaries			Annual Expenditure (Rs. lakh)
	New	Renewed	Total	
2010-11	1458	1661	3119	946.08
2011-12	1457	1950	3407	664.41
2012-13	4358	1478	5831	1196.28
2013-14	4362	3610	7972	2226.28
2014-15	NA	NA	13419	3752.09
2015-16	NA	NA	11263	3285.44

Source: Minority Welfare Department, Government of Bihar

Multi-Sectoral Development Programme : Unlike the previous three welfare programmes which were all aimed at increasing the educational standard of the Muslim youth, the Multi-Sectoral Development Programmes (MSDP) aims to cover many sectors, besides education. Indeed, the MSDP aims at improving the socio-economic condition of the Muslims through providing basic amenities to them for improving the quality of their life and reducing infrastructural imbalances in the identified minority concentration areas in all the states, including Bihar. The projects under MSDP are related to the provision of better infrastructure for education, skill development, health, sanitation, pucca housing, roads, and drinking water, besides creating income generating opportunities. The objective of the scheme would be to fill the gaps in the existing schemes of the central government by providing additional resources and also take up non-gap filling innovative projects for the welfare of the Muslim population.

Under Area Development Plan, the MSDP guidelines mention the principle that any asset, created under the programmes, must benefit the minority population. These guidelines further mention that MSDP strategy will be revised to reform the programme away from topping up existing Centrally Sponsored Schemes. The revised MSDP strategy would enable poor settlements of minorities to identify what they believe to be their most urgent needs and to focus resources on those needs; it could be drinking water, drainage, livelihood support, electrification, support to dying vocations (such as handlooms or handicrafts), innovation in skill-based education, training to artisans with backward and forward linkages into new markets, equipping technical institutes with adequate equipment and infrastructure, remedial school support for children who are first generation learners and so on.

In Bihar, 8 towns and 75 blocks have been identified as the project unit area for MSDP (Table 3.7). These towns and blocks were selected on the basis of backwardness parameters, as given by the Ministry of Home Affairs. The state government had planned for a social infrastructure survey in all those 8 towns and 75 blocks where MSDP is to be focused. Although MSDP has been in operation for nearly a decade, its achievements in Bihar have not been evaluated. But one must accept that this is an innovative effort for improving the socio-economic status of Muslims in India.

**Table 3.7 : List of Towns and Blocks Identified for
Multi-Sectoral Development Programme (MSDP) for Minorities**

District	Town/Block
Patna	Phulwari Sharif (1 town)
Nalanda	Bihar Sharif (1 town)
Rohtas	Sasaram (1 town)
Nawadah	Nawadah (1 town)
Bhagalpur	Bhagalpur (1 town)
	Sunhaura, Jagdishpur (2 blocks)
Banka	Dhuraiyan (1 block)
Siwan	Siwan (1 town)
	Hasanpura, Hussainganj, Barhariya (3 blocks)
Gopalganj	Uchchkagaon, Manjha, Thabe (3 blocks)
East Champaran	Nainatand, Narkatiaganj, Lauria, Sikta (4 blocks)
Sitamarhi	Bairgania, Bokhra, Parihar, Bajpatti, Pupri, Nanpur (6 blocks)
Vaishali	Chehra Kalan (1 block)
Darbhanga	Darbhanga, Manigachhi, Alinagar, Hayaghat, Jale, Singhwara, Kautirnwa, Kiratpur, Gora Bauram (9 blocks)
Madhubani	Madhubani (1 town)
	Kaluahi, Madhubani, Bisfi (3 blocks)
Samastipur	Tazpur (1 block)
Supaul	Supaul (1 town)
	Basantpur (1 block)
Purnea	Krityanandnagar, East Purnea, Kasba, Sringagar, Jalalgarh, Amour, Baisa, Baisi, Dagaoura (9 blocks)
Araria	Narpatganj, Raniganj, Forbesganj, Araria, Sikti, Palasi, Jokihat (7 blocks)
Kishanganj	Terahagachh, Dighalbank, Thakurganj, Pothia, Bahadurganj, Kochhadhaman, Kishanganj (7 blocks)
Katihar	Falka, Korha, Hasanganj, Kadba, Balrampur, Barsoi, Azamnagar, Pranpur, Katihar, Mansahi, Barari, Manihari, Amdabad (13 blocks)

Source: Minority Welfare Department, Government of Bihar

Alpasankhyak Chhatravas Yojana : Many Muslim students are not able to complete their education upto the desired level, because of non-availability of schools and colleges within a manageable distance from their residence. To take care of the educational needs of such Muslim students, the state government has a scheme to establish hostels for them at all the district headquarters, each with 100 beds. At presents, 34 such hostels for boys have been

constructed, and 24 of them are operational. The remaining 10 boys hostels will soon start functioning. For girls, 6 hostels have already been constructed and 2 of them (at Patna and Gaya) are operational. Unfortunately, information on the number of students who are utilizing this hostel facility, indicating the extent of actual benefit of this important scheme, is not available.

Mukhyamantri Alpasankhyak Shiksha Rin Yojana : For providing technical and higher education to Muslim students, this scheme was introduced in 2012-13, in collaboration with the Bihar Minority Financial Corporation. The approved outlay for this scheme is Rs. 50.00 crore for a five-year period, starting from 2012-13. The scheme is open to those Muslim students who opt for technical courses (B.Ed, M. Ed., management degrees, etc) and whose parents/guardians have an income of less than Rs. 4.50 lakh per annum. The limit of loan amount is Rs. 1.00 lakh per annum and the subsidized rate of interest is fixed at 4 percent per annum. Such loan can be obtained for a maximum period of 5 years. During the four-year period, (2012-13 to 2015-16), this loan facility has been availed by 1232 Muslim students, the total expenditure being Rs. 1796 lakh. On an average, this implies a loan of Rs. 1.46 lakh per student and the number of beneficiary student is 308 per year. Although this scheme is very useful for Muslim students aspiring for technical education, it appears that the scheme has a very limited coverage.

Mukhyamantri Vidyarthi Protsahan Yojana : To incentivize higher education among the Muslim youth, this scheme was initiated by the state government in 2007. Initially, the scheme provided for a one-time payment of Rs. 10,000 to those students who pass their matriculation examination in first division. In 2014, the scheme was first extended to students passing intermediate examination as well and further to those who pass in second division. Presently, the incentives amounts are — first division in matriculation (Rs. 10 thousand), second division in matriculation (Rs. 8 thousand), first division in intermediate (Rs. 15 thousand) and second division in intermediate (Rs. 10 thousand). Table 3.8 presents the data on number of beneficiary students under this scheme during 2010-16. It is heartening to note that this scheme has been able to benefit no less than 1.3 lakh Muslim students in 2015. The total expenditure for this scheme in 2015 was Rs. 216.17 crore. This is indeed a popular scheme and it has been widely appreciated not only by the Muslim community, but by many educationists as well.

Table 3.8 : Number of Students Beneficiaries under Mukhyamantri Vidyarthi Protsahan Yojana (2010-16)

Year	Matriculation		Intermediate		Total
	First Division	Second Division	First Division	Second Division	
2010	20225	-	-	-	20225
2011	14011	-	-	-	14011
2012	19921	-	-	-	19921
2013	29498	-	-	-	29498
2014	22678	63003	12484	17088	115253
2015	28879	61965	20633	20316	131793
2016	21206	53399	13627	35715	123947

Source: Minority Welfare Department, Government of Bihar

Free Coaching Scheme : To improve the representation of Muslims in government jobs, this scheme was introduced in 2006-07. At present, the Maulana Mazharul Haque Arbi Persian University is the nodal agency for the scheme. As an illustration, one may note that, during 2014-15, the scheme was utilized for training of the Muslim youth for several government jobs — police constable (344 trained, 101 recruited), fire-brigade police (90 trained, 43 recruited) and Urdu teacher (1000 trained). This free coaching is also provided to Muslim youth who intend to appear in competitive examinations of Union Public Commission (UPSC) or Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC). In the absence of more data on the working of the scheme, it is not possible to judge how effective has been this scheme since its inception about a decade ago.

Mukhyamantri Shram Shakti Yojana : To help Muslim youth obtain either wage or self-employment, this scheme was introduced in 2008-09. It has two components — first, providing skill training to the Muslim youth to help them obtain wage-employment and, second, providing loan at subsidized interest rate (5 percent) to those trainees who are desirous of self-employment. Till date, the Department of Minority Welfare has collaborated with a number of institutions in organizing the skill training programmes — with the Central Institute of Plastic Engineering Technology (CIPET) at Hazipur; Raymonds Limited (for training in tailoring), ITI at Digha, and the Tool Room and Training Centre at Patna of the Department of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) of the central government. The loan assistance is provided by the Bihar Minority Financial Corporation. Unfortunately, the information on the working of the scheme since its start in 2008-09 is not available, except that 577 Muslim youth were trained by CIPET and Raymonds Limited during the three years 2013-14 to 2015-16, at a total cost of Rs. 1.80

crore. The absence of relevant data here again prevents one for judging the contribution of this scheme towards enhancing the employability of Muslim youth.

Mukhyamantri Alpasankhyak Rozgar Rin Yojana : This scheme is again aimed at promoting employment for the Muslim youth. It was started in 2012-13 and is planned for next 5 years. Under this scheme, the Bihar State Minorities Financial Corporation provides a loan upto Rs. 5.00 lakh to a Muslim youth to help him start an enterprise, ensuring self-employment for him. This loan is subject to the condition that the annual family income of the youth is less than Rs. 1.00 lakh. During the last four years (2012-13 to 2015-16), the scheme has benefitted 7303 Muslim youth, the total loan amount being Rs. 75.2 crore. This implies that, on an average, 1825 Muslim youth are benefitted under this scheme every year, and the average loan amount is Rs. 1.03 lakh per beneficiary. Since the loan amount is rather small, it is very likely that it has been generally used for starting retail trade, not for any manufacturing activities. However, compared to the Mukhyamantri Shram Shakti Yojana, this scheme is relatively more successful.

Mukhyamantri Paritaktya Yojana : This scheme was started in 2006-07 for improving the socio-economic status of divorced and separated Muslim women. The scheme provides for a one-time financial assistance of Rs. 10 thousand to divorced/separated Muslim women which may help them in obtaining some self-employment. During the six years (2009-10 to 2014-15), the scheme has benefitted 10790 women. This implies that, on an average, this scheme has been benefitting 1798 women every year.

From the above discussion about the welfare programmes that are presently being implemented by the state government, it is quite apparent that the coverage of the welfare programmes for the general population and those for the Muslim population are not the same. The welfare programmes for the general population are more pervasive, covering as they do such diverse needs like food security, housing, education, employment and probably a few others. In contrast, the welfare programmes that try to meet the development need of the Muslims cover only two dimensions — education and employment, with the exception of a programme for the divorced/separated Muslim women. As regards the issue whether the welfare programmes for the general population adequately cover the Muslim population, there is no specific data. But from some indirect indicators, it was observed that such coverage is often less than adequate. For some welfare programmes for the general population, the guidelines mention specified quota for disadvantaged communities (like scheduled castes/tribes), but there is no such specified quota for Muslims, a community which is no less disadvantaged.

For the Muslim-centric welfare programmes, as mentioned above, the focus is only on two

aspects — education and employment. Both these welfare programmes are in effect for the Muslim youth (not the entire population) and it is indeed desirable that this section of the Muslim population should receive maximum attention of the development administration. From the available data on the working of these programmes, it emerges that the reach of the education-oriented welfare programme has been wider among the Muslim youth, than those which help them to obtain employment. Between the two employment-oriented welfare programmes, skill training for wage-employment and financial assistance to start enterprises for self-employment, the former is probably more relevant for the youth in Bihar (whether Muslim or from other social groups); in the absence of a robust infrastructural support, starting a new enterprise is rather difficult in Bihar. It is in this context that the Multi-Sectoral Development Programme (MSDP) is of crucial importance for improving the welfare status of Muslims in Bihar, since it tries to strengthen both the physical and social infrastructure of those towns and blocks where there is concentration of Muslim population. Once the required infrastructure is in place, it will enable the Muslim youth to help themselves, both in the context of education and employment.

CHAPTER IV

FIELD-LEVEL CONSULTATIONS

The previous two chapters, based as they are on secondary data and official information, have identified the different dimensions of the development needs of the Muslim youth; in many cases, it had also provided some quantitative measures to indicate the extent of those development deficits. All these would help the Department of Minority Welfare to identify and implement appropriate programmes to improve the status of Muslim youth in Bihar. But this exercise of identifying a development strategy for the Muslim youth also demands that it includes sufficient inputs from the Muslim youth themselves. It was in this background that the present study had planned to organize field-level consultations with Muslim youth across the state on their own predicaments. It was indeed an innovative approach and, besides confirming some of the conclusions already drawn from the secondary data, some valuable suggestions have also emerged from the field-level consultations.

To ensure adequate geographical spread of the field-level consultations, it was decided to hold the 9 consultations in 9 districts, each one a divisional headquarters (Patna, Gaya, Gopalganj, Bettiah, Madhubani, Munger, Bhagalpur, Madhepura and Kishanganj). The day-long consultations at each centre was preceded by visits by the research team to some selected villages around the centre from where young Muslims were enlisted to join the consultation process. In organizing the field visits on the first day and consultations on the second day, the study team had taken the help of a local institution. It was decided to have about 80 participants in each consultation meeting, but this goal could not be achieved in five places, the lowest attendance being in Munger, where only 57 participants were present. In each meeting, the participants were first explained the objectives of the exercise, following which Focused Group Discussions (FGD) were held, each group having 15-20 participants and one member of the research team to steer the discussion. In addition, as mentioned before, a questionnaire was also canvassed among the participants to gather some useful information.

Profile of the Participants

The total number of participants in 9 consultative meeting was 676, ranging from 57 in Munger (lowest) to 120 in Madhepura (highest) (Table 4.1). During the

preparatory stage, roughly equal number of young male and female Muslims were invited to join the consultation meetings, but the share of females in the actual meeting was 41.9 percent, taking into account all the centres. Among the districts, the ratio had varied, but nowhere it was less than 20 percent.

Table 4.1 : Profile of Participating Muslim Youth in Field-Level Consultations

Place	Total No. of Participants	Percentage of Women Participants	Average Age of Participants (Years)	Percentage of Married Participants	Percentage of Graduate and Above Participants
Patna	61	21.7	21.6	23.3	21.3
Gaya	80	47.5	26.3	45.0	20.0
Gopalganj	58	60.3	27.2	70.7	55.2
Bettiah (West Champaran)	89	65.0	25.6	71.9	34.8
Madhubani	58	32.8	26.5	81.0	46.6
Munger	57	33.3	27.0	22.8	63.2
Bhagalpur	90	57.8	25.2	43.3	38.9
Madhepura	120	26.7	28.1	73.3	16.7
Kishanganj	63	65.0	24.8	76.2	42.9
Total	676	41.9	24.9	55.9	35.1

Source: Primary Survey

The average age for participants in all the consultation meetings was 24.9 years, indicating that nearly all the participants belonged to the age group 15-29 years, the focus of the present study. This average age ranges between 21.6 years in Patna to 28.1 years in Madhepura. Since fertility behaviour among the Muslims and the reproductive health of women were expected to be discussed during the consultations, the group of participants had included married young Muslims as well (55.9 percent). Finally, one may note that 35.1 percent of the participants were graduates or above, the ratio varying between 20.0 percent in Gaya to 63.2 percent in Munger. However, the participants had also included young Muslims whose educational standard was very low, ensuring that the emerging observations are not of educated Muslim youth alone. There was also a reasonable balance between number of participants from rural and urban areas. From this overall profile of the participants, it is not difficult to realize that the group had representation of all sections of Muslim youth.

From the responses to another set of questions, it was interesting to note that the coverage of JAM (Jandhan Yojana, Aadhar and Mobile Phone) is fairly wide among the Muslim youth (Table 4.2). Since JAM forms an important pillar of the current development strategy of the central and state governments, its wide coverage among the Muslim youth at least creates a space for a growth process that could include the Muslims. As regards Aadhar Card, its coverage is nearly universal (94.1 percent); for mobile phone and bank account, the coverage has already reached the level of about 85 percent and very soon it is also likely to become nearly universal.

Table 4.2 : Selected Characteristic of Participating Muslim Youth in Field-Level Consultations

Characteristics	Percentage of Participants		
	Maximum	Minimum	Average
Possession of Aadhar Card	Madhubani (100.0)	Munger (86.0)	94.1
Possession of Mobile Phone	Madhubani (98.3)	Bhagalpur (74.4)	85.4
Holding of a Bank Account	Madhubani (100.0)	Munger (75.4)	84.6
Possession of a Debit/ATM Card	Madhubani (72.4)	Munger (38.6)	51.5
Possession of a Computer	Gaya (11.3)	Madhepura (2.5)	6.8

Source: Primary Survey

It was almost certain that the participants in the field-level consultations would discuss the issues of family planning in the overall context of health status. The research team had, therefore, collected some information on selected health service and family planning issues from the participants and these responses are presented in Table 4.3. One may first note from the table that only about one-third (35.5 percent) of the participants are satisfied with the public health care services in Bihar. This poor opinion about the public health services is not indeed surprising when it is observed that only 28.1 percent of the participants households have even been benefitted by ASHA/ANM and the percentage of households benefiting from Anganwadi Centre (AWC) is even lesser at 26.9 percent. The state government should realise that, at the present low income level of the population (belonging to either Muslims or other religions), it is not possible to attain decent health standards, unless the public health delivery system is adequate, efficient and accessible by all. As regards family planning issues, it is heartening to note that no less than 78.2 percent of the participants appreciate the necessity of reducing fertility rate among the Muslim community; but unfortunately, only 46.8 percent of the participants were knowledgeable about the use of different birth control measures. That family planning service are available free of cost at all government health institutions is also known to only 59.5 percent of the participants and, thus, not a common knowledge. Fortunately, however, this

scenario is now changing, as mentioned by several participants in the discussion that were held.

Table 4.3 : Information on Selected Health Service and Family Planning Issues Provided by Participating Muslim Youth in Field-Level Consultations

Information	Percentage of Participants		
	Maximum	Minimum	Average
Health Service			
Satisfied with Health Care System	Munger (61.4)	Bhagalpur (27.8)	35.5
Benefitted from ASHA/ANM	Madhubani (43.1)	Gaya (7.5)	28.1
Benefitted from AWC	Madhepura (42.9)	Gaya (12.5)	26.9
Family Planning			
Appreciate the necessity of reducing Total Fertility Rate	Madhepura (88.3)	Bhagalpur (66.7)	78.2
Knowledgeable about the use of different birth control measures	Patna (87.0)	Gaya (93.8)	46.8
Aware about free family planning service at government health institutes	Patna (93.4)	Gaya (57.5)	59.5

Source: Primary Survey

Before presenting the observations and suggestions of the participants in the consultation meetings, one may note here the extent of awareness of the Muslim youth about the various welfare programmes that specifically try to meet the developments needs of the Muslims youth (Table 4.4). Among these welfare programmes, the Muslim youth is most aware about the Mukhyamantri Alpasankhyak Siksha Rin Yojana, nearly half of them (50.5 percent) being knowledgeable about the scheme.

Table 4.4 : Percentage of Participants in Field-Level Consultations who are Aware about Different Welfare Programmes of State Government

Welfare Programme	Percentage of Participants who are Aware		
	Maximum	Minimum	Average
Alpsankhyak Chhatrawas Yojana	Madhepura (55.8)	Patna (9.8)	37.3
Mukhyamantri Alpasankhyak Siksha Rin Yojana	Kishanganj (57.1)	Gaya (10.0)	50.5
Mukhyamantri Vidyarthi Protsahan Yojana	Madhubani (85.2)	Patna (11.5)	45.6
Free Coaching Scheme	Gopalganj (22.4)	Bhagalpur (2.2)	10.4

Welfare Programme	Percentage of Participants who are Aware		
	Maximum	Minimum	Average
Mukhyamantri Shram Shakti Yojana	Kishanganj (50.8)	Munger (1.8)	17.2
Mukhyamantri Alpasankhyak Rojgar Rin Yojana	Kishanganj (65.1)	Patna (6.6)	30.2
Mukhyamantri Parityakta Yojana	Gopalganj (22.4)	Munger (5.3)	12.7
Mukhyamantri Saat Nischay	Madhubani (74.1)	Munger (21.1)	46.0
Percentage of Participants who have been benefitted by at least 1 scheme	Madhubani (34.5)	Munger (3.5)	24.3

Source: Primary Survey

In spite of this high awareness, it is rather surprising that the coverage of the scheme is rather limited, as discussed in previous chapter. The scheme reporting the next highest level of awareness (45.6 percent) was Mukhyamantri Vidyarthi Protsahan Yojana, whose coverage (as was reported earlier) in very wide. In 2015, no less than 1.31 lakh students have been benefitted by this initiative of the state government. In general, it is observed that the level of awareness about the various Muslim-centric welfare programmes is not high, even among the Muslim youth; among the Muslims of all ages, the level of awareness is likely to be even more limited. It is interesting to note that the level of awareness about welfare programmes is relatively more among the Muslim youth in north Bihar where the concentration of Muslim population is higher. For a comparison, the participants were also asked whether they were aware about Mukhyamantri Saat Nischay. Table 4.4 indicates that only a modest 46.0 percent of the Muslim youth are aware about this important development strategy of the state government. Such moderate level of awareness about the welfare programmes and the Mukhyamantri Saat Nischay leads to the suggestion that the state government should strengthen its efforts for development communications. In view of low level of literacy, both among the general and Muslim population, the development communications should extensively utilize audio-visual media as well, besides the print media.

Finally, on the last line of Table 4.4, the figures indicate the percentage of participants who (or any member of their family) have been benefitted by any of the welfare programmes. For all the participants, this ratio stands at only 24.3 percent. Even in Madhubani, where this figure is the highest, it is only 34.5 percent. All these welfare programmes are indeed demand-based and, as such their low coverage is primarily due to limited awareness about these programmes. With appropriate communications strategies, the state government could remove this awareness gap, leading to wider coverage of these welfare programmes.

Observations and Suggestions

During the field-level consultations, the members of the research team had tried to collect the observations of the participants on a wide range of issues, related to the socio-economic status of Muslim youth. But for understandable reasons, the discussions had mainly covered the issues of education, health and employment. In what follows next, therefore, the collected observations and suggestions are grouped under these three heads.

Education

1. Unlike in the past, the demand for education is now high, even among the poor Muslim households. However, what primarily stands in the way of spread of education among the Muslim is the non-availability of adequate number of government schools upto the higher secondary level. The private schools try to fill this gap to some extent, but they cannot be a substitute for the government schools, because most of the Muslim households cannot afford the cost of education in private institutions. It is, therefore, very necessary to expand the present schooling system. Secondly, the state government should also make adequate efforts to improve the infrastructural and teacher quality in the government schools. The participants also mentioned that these steps to strengthen school system in the state would also benefit other social groups, besides the Muslims.
2. For many Muslim students, generally coming from households with very low income, Madarsa education is the only education available, where the syllabus has not been revised after 1970. The state government should ensure revision of their syllabus, so that Madarsas also teach science, mathematics and English language. The participants also mentioned that Madarsas are of different kinds and there are some Madarsas that award formal degrees; the religious education is not the only agenda of Madarsas. It was also suggested that, with some reforms in Madarsas, even Muslim students attending modern educational institutions can obtain religious education from Madarsa, if their parents so desire. Finally, it should be noted that it is necessary for the state government to provide assistance to Madarsas, but the status of Madarsa education should not be equated with status of Muslim education.
3. Many participants pointed out that, under the present circumstances, a Muslim students is expected to learn as many as four languages — Arabic (for religious text), Urdu (as mother longue), Hindi (as national language) and English (for modern education). In those schools which have at least a specified number of Muslim students, arrangement should be made for learning all the languages.

4. The opportunity for higher education (higher secondary above) is limited in many areas in Bihar which affects both the Muslim and general population. Admittedly, there are some welfare schemes which provide for financial assistance for higher education, but they cannot reach all the aspiring Muslim students. The state government should ensure that there are enough number of degree colleges across the state. At present, there are 769 degree colleges in Bihar (276 of them being government/constituent colleges) for 196 towns and 593 blocks. This means, on an average, there is hardly 1 college in a block. For distance education, there are now two opportunities in Bihar — Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and Nalanda Open University (NOU). But there are not enough number of regional centers of these open universities, so that Muslim students in remote areas can enroll themselves in these open universities and take advantage of distance education.

Health

1. The participants in the field-level consultations generally felt that the public health facilities at the rural areas in Bihar are even poorer than the educational facilities. Thus, in many instances, when a Muslim households is seen to opt for a quack, it is not because of their ignorance, but due to the non-availability of a qualified doctor nearby. The Primary Health Centres (PHC) in Bihar often lack good infrastructure, adequate medical personnel and sufficient medicines. Unless the present conditions of the PHCs and other government health institutions are improved, it will not be possible to ensure health services, either for the general or for the Muslim population.
2. The reproductive health is an important component of overall health services which concerns not only mothers, but their children as well. Many women participants in the consultation meeting pointed out that reproductive health receives much less attention than its deserves. They also felt that one of the important reasons for such inadequate attention to reproductive health was the a sense of shame with which the society perceived sexuality. Unfortunately, in spite of being well aware of this problem, the participants could not suggest any strategy to overcome this negative social attitude. However, since there is a clear demand for more scientific information on sexual and reproductive health, the state government may promote wider health education, either in school/college or through such grassroot health functionaries like ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activist).
3. The Muslim community has generally recorded a higher fertility rate than other religious communities. The participants in the consultative meeting, both males

and females, were aware about this demographic phenomenon, but they maintained that Muslims in general were not against the practice of family planning. Consequently, the resistance to adoption of contraceptives is gradually decreasing now among the Muslim youth, both men and women. However, most Muslims were still against the practice of sterilization.

4. The phenomenon of early marriage is very wide among the Muslims, specially among the poor Muslims. The health problem for mothers and children arising out of early marriage get compounded when the age difference between the boy and girl is wide, which is also quite common. The participants felt that, although the state government could promote awareness programmes to stop this undesirable practices, the Muslim community itself should take some collective initiative to educate its defaulting members about the problem.
5. To improve the health standard and fertility practices, it is necessary for the Muslim population to adopt some behavioural changes. This requires awareness campaigns and regular counseling. The participants in the consultation meetings suggested that if such campaigns are undertaken by the religious functionaries, it might prove to be more effective. This has indeed been the case in some Muslim countries in Asia and it can show similar success in Bihar and India.

Employment

1. The vast majority (nearly 85 percent) of the Muslims in Bihar live in rural areas. As such, efforts of the state government to improve the economic infrastructure in rural areas (like roads, electricity or irrigation facilities) will go a long way towards expanding employment opportunities there, benefitting both the general and Muslim population. However, for enhancing the employment opportunities for the Muslim workers, it is desirable that in areas with concentration of Muslim population, these measures should receive additional attention.
2. There are a number of artisan industries in which the Muslim have been widely engaged, with the traditional skill being transferred from one generation to the next within the family. Many of those artisan industries are now disappearing, due of lack of adequate marketing arrangements for their products and poor credit support from the banks. The state government could establish a specialised agency to remove these obstacles and help in revival of those artisan industries. Measures should also be taken to provide appropriate knowledge input for these artisan industries by undertaking research and development (R & D) aimed at enhancing their competitiveness.
3. The practice of Muslim workers acquiring their professional skill through family

tradition and informal methods is also wide for a number of modern occupations, like auto-repair, maintenance of electric/electronic equipment, air-conditioning and refrigeration, plumbing, cooking and catering, textile-dyeing, tailoring, embroidery, etc. Thanks to this practice, the Muslim workers are often seen to command a substantial share in these occupations. In the absence of any formal certification of such skills, these workers are forced to remain in the informal sector where the wages are low. The state government, after proper testing (as is the practice for issuing driving license), should arrange for certification of such skills which would help the workers to acquire better employment opportunities.

4. Acquisition of professional skill is extremely necessary for obtaining a decent employment for all workers, including the Muslim workers. Unfortunately, the opportunity for skill training is rather limited in Bihar. The state government should, therefore, take appropriate steps to establish more ITI's, computer training centres, para-medical training centres, etc., specially in those areas where there is concentration of Muslim population. These skill training centres should also design their technical courses in such a manner that it matches the existing demand pattern in the local economy or in those places where the Muslim workers tend to migrate. For example, it is observed in Gopalganj town that there are many private skill training centers where Muslim and other workers are trained matching the demand pattern in gulf countries, the destination of many outmigrant workers.
5. The outmigration to gulf countries provides employment opportunities to a substantial number of Muslim workers in Bihar. But it was pointed out by participants in some consultation meeting that sometimes innocent or uninformed Muslim workers are duped by unscrupulous agents; after reaching the destinations, they are either provided with a low-wage employment or are provided employment for a limited period. The state government should establish an agency which will regulate the activities of the agents, with its officers in important labour-exporting districts.

Finally, it should be noted that each of the 9 consultative meetings was not only attended by a large number of young Muslims, they had also participated in the discussion most enthusiastically. The level of consciousness of these young men and women about the challenges faced by the Muslim community was very high and they had also articulated most affectively to share their observations and suggestions, as listed above. The Department of Minority Welfare should occasionally hold such grassroot consultations across the state to know more about the felt needs of the Muslim youth and the overall Muslim population and correspondingly plan its intervention programmes.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The pace of economic development in India during the seven decades since independence was at least moderate upto the eighties and reasonably high thereafter. This economic growth was also reflected, albeit partially, in the improvement of most indicators of social development like poverty levels, health status and educational achievements of the country's population. But one aspect of this development process that has continuously attracted criticism from many quarters, both national and international, is the unequal spread of the benefits of development across regions and social groups. It was, therefore, just surprising that the Eleventh Plan document (2012-17) of the Planning Commission specifically underlines 'inclusiveness' as one of the principal objectives of development process, parallel to the objective of 'faster' economic growth.

In terms of social groups, Muslims happen to be one who have been at the receiving end of the non-inclusive growth process in India. This has obviously reinforced the problem of security, identity and equity for the community. Bihar is one of those states in India where the Muslims constitute a sizeable part of the population (16.9 percent) and it is not possible to visualize a vigorous growth process in the state of which Muslims are not a beneficiary and in which it is not an equal and active participant. The present study is an attempt to assess the status of Muslim youth (15-29 years) in Bihar, in terms of both quantitative indicators and qualitative observations. The rationale for the focus on Muslim youth lies in the understandable premise that the most potent vehicle of change in the status of a disadvantaged community like the Muslims, is its currently young population who, with better education, better health, higher skills and modern outlook, could emerge as a strong human capital base for the eventual upliftment of the overall community.

Conclusions

1. The Muslim population in Bihar (17.6 million in 2011) is not spread evenly across the state. There are 12 districts where Muslims constitute less than 10 percent of the population, 19 districts with Muslim population ranging from 10-20 percent, and 7 districts where Muslims account for more than 20 percent of the population. The per capita income in the districts with low concentration of Muslim population is the highest and it is the lowest in those districts where the concentration is the highest. This indicates the relative economic deprivation of the Muslim Community.
2. In spite of some difference in the fertility behavior between the Muslims and the general population, the proportion of population falling in the age-group 15-29

years is nearly the same for them— 24.2 percent (general population) and 24.9 percent (Muslims). In other words, one out of every four Muslims in Bihar is a young member of the community.

3. The educational status of the Muslims in Bihar, as judged from the literacy rates, is noticeably lower than that of the general population. In 2011, the literacy rate for Muslims was 56.3 percent, while the rate for general population was 61.8 percent. When one compares the gender-specific literacy rates, it is observed that the literacy rates are lower for both male and female Muslims, but the gender difference is wider for the general population than for the Muslims. This is a positive characteristics of the Muslim society.
4. A comparison of the literacy rates between 2001 and 2011 for both Muslim and general population indicates that the rates have increased for both the categories. But, the difference between the literacy rates of general population and Muslim was 5.0 percentage points in 2001 which has increased to 5.5 percentage points in 2011. Although the increase is very marginal, it is an undesirable trend.
5. The districtwise literacy rates for Muslim indicate wide variations, from 42.9 percent in Madhepura to 75.5 percent in Aurangabad. Further, it is observed that in the districts (mostly in north Bihar) where the concentration of Muslim population is relatively higher, the literacy rate is relatively lower.
6. In terms of educational achievements (not just literacy) for the young population (15-29 years), the disadvantage of the Muslim Community is seen to be deeper than what the literacy rates indicate. For example, the proportion of young Muslims who have passed higher secondary and above is only 8.9 percent, compared to 13.9 percent for the young among the general population.
7. The low educational standard of the Muslim Youth is primarily because of inadequate availability of government educational institution and poor economic status of Muslim households for whom private education is not affordable. In addition, there are two cultural factors which also contribute the low educational status of Muslim youth — first, preference of a section of the Muslim parents for Madarsa education for their children and, secondly, low aspiration level of Muslim parents for their children's education.
8. Parallel to lower educational standards, the health status of the Muslim population is also lower than that of the Hindu population. This is borne out by such health indicators like child mortality rates and extent of malnutrition among both children and adults.

9. In addition to lower educational and health status, the Muslim population also suffers from lower endowment of land and non-land resources and these conditions together imply lower employment status of Muslim working population in terms of Work Participation Ratio (WPR). The difference between the WPRs of Muslims and general population is wider in the rural areas where majority of the Muslims of Bihar reside.
10. The disadvantage of the Muslim workers is revealed further when one considers their occupational patterns. A majority of them in rural areas are employed as farmers or sales workers (petty trade) or transport operators (mainly rickshaw-pullers); in the urban areas, they are mostly engaged again as sales workers or transport workers. This pattern of low-wage employment for majority of the workers may be true for general population workers also, but its extent is higher for the Muslim workers.
11. Because of limited employment opportunities in Bihar, both in rural and urban areas, the practices of out-migration of workers is very wide in the state. This is true for workers belonging to both Muslim and other communities. However, for Muslim workers, out-migration to outside the country is probably higher which is an advantage for them.
12. For the welfare of the Muslim youth, there are 11 programmes, 4 of them funded by the central government and 7 by the state government. Of these programmes, seven are meant for promoting education among the Muslim youth, two for promoting their employment opportunities, one for improving the social infrastructure in areas where Muslims constitute a sizeable portion of the population, and one for deserted Muslim women. A number of Muslims has been benefitted by these programmes, but its coverage is not wide enough to substantially impact the welfare standard of the Muslim population.
13. Muslim population is also supposed to be benefitted by the welfare programmes of the central/state governments which are meant for the general population. There is no data to indicate the extent of coverage of Muslim population under these general welfare programmes, but from two illustrative programmes (dealership of Public Distribution System and Jeevika), it is observed that such coverage is less than the share of Muslims in the overall population.
14. From the field-level consultations, it was found that the awareness about the different welfare programmes of the central/state government (either for the general population or for the Muslims) is very limited among the Muslim youth.

This is partly because of low educational status of the Muslims, but the development communication practices in the state also seems to be inadequate.

15. A large number of Muslim youth who had participated in the field-level consultations had made some valuable observations on the status of Muslim youth in the state and also offered some significant suggestion to improve that disadvantaged status. Some of these observations/suggestion are:
 - (a) Unlike in the past, the demand for education is now high, even among the poor Muslim households. However, non-availability of adequate number of government schools upto the higher secondary level and poor teaching standards in the existing schools are the main reasons for low educational standard of Muslim population.
 - (b) For many Muslim students, generally coming from low-income households, Madarsa education is the only education available. It is, therefore, desirable that Madarsa education is reformed and modernized.
 - (c) Just as non-availability of schools in rural areas is responsible for the low educational status of Muslim youth, the poor public health institutions are responsible for low health status of Muslim youth. Indeed, improvement in educational/health infrastructure in the state will greatly benefit not only the Muslim population, but members from other communities as well.
 - (d) Due to a sense of shame with which society perceives sexuality, the reproductive health for women receives much less attention than it deserves. The state government should promote wider health education, both through educational syllabus in schools/colleges and through grassroots health functionaries.
 - (e) The phenomenon of early marriage is very wide among the Muslims which has obvious negative health implications. This problem could be solved by conducting awareness programmes by the state government at one hand, and some initiatives by the Muslim community itself to educate its defaulting members.
 - (f) The religious functionaries should be encouraged to organize campaigns to promote behavioural changes among the Muslims which enhance their health standards. This strategy has been successful in many Asian countries and it could be successful in Bihar too.
 - (g) Thanks to family tradition, Muslim workers enjoy some advantage for such modern occupations like auto-repair, maintenance of electric/electronic equipment, tailoring, etc. In the absence of any formal certification, these workers

are often forced to remain in the low-wage informal sector. The state government could arrange for their certification (after proper testing) helping them to move to high-wage formal sector.

Recommendations

The present study shows that the social-economic status of Muslim Youth in Bihar is, in practically all aspects, much lower than that of the youth belonging to the general population in the state. This is attributable to a number of factors and, in the previous section, a number of specific suggestions have already been made to improve the status of Muslim youth, along with the main conclusions of the study. This section presents a summary of those earlier conclusions, along with a few more which were not included before.

1. Since the vast majority of the Muslims in Bihar live in the rural areas, any measure taken for the general improvement in the rural areas — like strengthening of rural infrastructure, improving agricultural productivity, processing of primary products and reviving rural-based industries — will go a long way towards improving the economic conditions of the Muslim youth as well. However, for improving the socio-economic conditions of the Muslim youth, it is desirable that, in areas with concentration of Muslim population, these measures receive additional attention.
2. Much of the social and economic disadvantage of the Muslim youth emanates from their educational deficiency. Thus, expansion of the educational infrastructure is a prime requirement for improving the status of Muslim youth. This expansion plan should include all levels of education — school education, higher education and technical education.
3. In case of health standards, one should again remember that improving the overall health delivery system would benefit both the Muslim youth and those belonging to other religious communities. However, as Muslims are required to overcome some additional cultural constraints, the state government should organize some special campaigns in which, apart from usual community-based organizations, even the religious functionaries could be engaged.
4. One of the ways of improving the employment status of the Muslim youth is to spread technical education for them, as mentioned above. Some additional efforts in this direction would be providing credit, marketing and R & D support to those artisan-based manufacturing activities in which many Muslim households have

been traditionally engaged. This may require establishment of a specialized agency by the state government. Secondly, many Muslim youth acquire professional skill in some selected trades through family traditions. The state government should arrange for certification of these traditionally acquired skills, after necessary tests. This again will enhance the employability of those Muslim youth.

5. The Multi-Sectoral Development Programme (MSDP) of the central government has already identified those blocks and towns in Bihar where the concentration of Muslim population is reasonably high. The state government should undertake a comprehensive survey in those block/towns which would indicate the extent of infrastructural deficiency in those areas. This will help the state government in optimal allocation of MSDP resources among those areas.
6. The state government is already spending a substantial amount of resources towards welfare of the Muslim youth, covering particularly the areas of education and employment. Unfortunately, however, there is not adequate information on the implementation of these welfare programme like financial outlay, number of beneficiaries, their gender distribution, regional distribution or outcome of the assistance. The Department of Minority Welfare should remove this information gap, allowing for evaluation of these programmes which, in turn, would improve their implementation. Secondly, the state government should also enhance the professional capacity of the functionaries of the Department of Minority Welfare in the field of planning, identification of innovative welfare programmes of the Muslims and ensuring the convergence of its own programmes with those of other welfare programme of the state government. Finally, the state government should also reform the Department of minority welfare so that it uses the current technology to establish an effective Management Information System (MIS).
7. A large part of the responsibility for improving the socio-economic conditions of the Muslims in Bihar rests on the leaders of the Muslim community. Therefore, many of these recommendations are also addressed to them. These recommendations are unlikely to be implemented without their enlightened leadership and their effort to organise the community. Other civil society organisations should fully support them in their effort and collaborate with them whenever they are called upon to do so. The state government should also provide encouragement and support to such civil society organizations. They can also play a stellar role in promoting wider and more effective participation by the community in social and political organisations. For all these, the Muslim

community in Bihar, as elsewhere in the country, should promote youth leadership, particularly of the girls, who could guide the community in their effort for overall development and influence the state government policies and programmes for the development of the community.

The Asian Development Research Institute (ADRI) Society was established and registered by a group of social scientists in 1991. The motivation for starting yet another Institute in Patna was not merely to expand social science research, but to lend it a distinct development orientation and deliver all research output to its potential users in a demystified form. In this research perspective, the broad objectives of ADRI Society are:

- ✎ to undertake academic research of direct relevance to development efforts made by an individual or a group or the community itself;
- ✎ to broaden the database of research as also of its end use by involving as many classes of persons and institutions as possible;
- ✎ to offer research results in a more innovative, demystified and useworthy form; and finally
- ✎ to restore man to his central position in social research in totality and with full dignity.