

Pattern of Employment among Muslims in Aurangabad District: An Overview

Sadik Bagwan

Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad (MH), India

Abstract: The present research paper aims to understand the economic opportunities available for Muslim in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra. The paper tries to decode the reasons for underlying pattern of employment among Muslims. The over-representation in informal sector and self employment activities of Muslims is in itself a setback for their educational and economic progress. The general disinterest towards education and lack of financial resources is major impediment in educational achievement and corresponding employment opportunities for Muslim community in district. While the disparity in urban areas was more, the Muslims in rural areas of Aurangabad are mostly engaged as farm labourers with little or no land for agriculture. The present research paper is an outcome of doctoral dissertation of the author. This paper gives insights about the pattern of employment and perceptions about employment opportunities available for Muslims in Aurangabad.

Keywords: Agriculture, Employment, Informal sector, Labour,

Introduction:

The journey of Muslims in post-independent India has evinced interests in understanding their socio-economic and political status. The position of Muslims in society, their contribution and overall progress vis-à-vis other communities will provide general idea of their status in society. There is widely held belief that Muslims have remained largely unaffected by the process of economic development and social change, that have been taking place in independent India and their general economic condition has been deteriorating progressively (Ahmad 1981). This decline is clearly visible by identifying the job profiles of Muslims, their education levels and general well-being. The low income levels and poor economic capability has affected the community by and large. The Muslims on daily basis have to navigate themselves through multitude problems. The issues of security, identity and equity are at the forefront and tackling them without institutional support is an arduous task for Muslim community. The lower representation in salaried jobs both in rural and urban areas has resulted in over representation of Muslims' in self employment activities (Pandya 2010). Low level of education combined with lack of opportunities has slowly and steadily pushed the Muslim community to the lowest rungs of development resulting in widespread marginalization and exclusion of Muslims.

The participation in regular employment across different social groups is determined by the relative advantage of groups in terms of attributes and access. The lack of attributes necessary for regular employment is holding the Muslims back (Borooah 2005). The access disadvantage of Muslims is considerable as compared to other communities. Though there might be possibility that Muslim choose self-employment to avoid discrimination in the formal labour market, but evidences and data point to low educational endowments, experience and other essential attributes which are largely responsible for differentials across different SRCs in regular employment as well as earnings (GOI 2006). In lower educational categories, the unemployment rate is highest among Muslims, followed by scheduled castes (SCs) and scheduled tribes (STs). Poverty among Muslims in urban areas was twice the national average in 2011-12 and four times more than among upper caste Hindus (Mukherjee 2014).

Data available from different sample surveys conducted in different parts of the country reveal that the Muslims have been left out of the developmental process. They are not only the minority, but also the most backward community of India in all walks of life (Ahmad and Mistry 2010). Marginalized status of India Muslims is not merely confirmed by the individual researchers and survey of voluntary organizations, but also by committees of government. Socioeconomic and educational backwardness of

Muslims are self speaking facts mentioned by government constituted commissions/committees. Dr. Gopal Singh Committes (1983), Sachar Commission report (2006), Rangnath Commission report (2007), Mohammad-ur-Rehman committee report (2013) have corroborated the fact that socio-economic and educational status of Muslims lags far behind than other communities in India.

Objective: The aim of the research paper is to analyse the employment pattern among Muslims in Aurangabad District.

Research Methodology:

In Maharashtra, the Muslim population in absolute terms stood around 12.97 million. In other words, Maharashtra has the fourth highest number of Muslim population after Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Bihar. The Muslim population is unevenly spread across the state. After the state capital Mumbai (22%), Aurangabad district (19.7%) has the second highest concentration of Muslims. The Aurangabad administrative division covers 8 districts of Marathwada which also contributes to the largest share of the Muslim population in Maharashtra. Around 21.56 % of the Muslim population of Maharashtra lives in Aurangabad division, and out of this around 48 % is rural which comprise around 35 % of total rural Muslim population of the state. Aurangabad Division has the lowest literacy rate among Muslims as compared to other divisions and much lower than the state average (GOM 2013). Multi-stage Random Sampling Method was adopted for collecting the primary data. Aurangabad district has both rural and urban areas. The sample size for the study was limited to 400 which were arrived at by applying Taroyamane formula (1967). But the researcher took 600 households as a sample for the study. Hence, 600 respondents were taken as sample in order to make the study more reliable and also increase the scope of study area from rural and urban considering the population ratio of Aurangabad District. Of these randomly selected 600, 200 households belonged to rural areas and 400 households belonged to urban areas. The division of rural and urban household was done in tune with rural and urban Muslim population of the district, and also urban nature of Muslim population in Maharashtra. The data was collected with the help of a structured interview schedule.

Pattern of Employment of Muslims in Aurangabad District:

Employment, for an individual, is a source of satisfaction of wants and fulfillment of desires. The income derived from employment decides the conditions of living such as housing, provision of basic amenities, level of education and future opportunities. There is wide inequality of incomes among the weaker and underprivileged sections of society and others. The SCs, STs and Muslims are the most marginalized section of society. Infact, the Muslims are more marginalized as compared to SCs and STs (Sachar, 2006). The major occupational categories and their distribution is presented as follows

1) Distribution of Respondents According to Major Occupational Categories:

Occupational Category	Female		Male		Total	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Farmer	3	0.5	97	16.1	100	16.6
Agricultural labour	4	0.6	96	16	100	16.6
Non-agricultural labour	8	1.3	80	13.3	88	14.7
Self-employment	15	2.5	141	23.5	156	26.0
Service	20	3.4	75	12.5	95	15.9
Professionals	13	2.1	48	8	61	10.1
Total	63	10.5	537	89.5	600	100

Source: Primary Data

The occupational category of Self-employment constitutes largest group with 26 percent. The males have overwhelming presence in self employment constituting 23.5 percent as compared to 2.5 percent of females. Similarly, Muslims in rural areas are engaged in agricultural and allied activities. Majority of work is related to the occupational category of farmer constitutes second largest group along with occupational category of agricultural labour with both constituting 16.6 percent. In occupational category of farmer, the males constitute 16.1 percent as compared to 0.5 percent of females. Similarly, in occupational category of agricultural labour, the males constitute 16 percent as compared to 0.6 percent of females. The occupational category of service constitutes third largest group. In service category, the males constitute 12.5 percent as compared to 3.4 percent of females. This category is followed by occupational category of Non-agricultural labour which constitutes 14.6 percent of overall categories. The males constitute 13.3 percent as compared to 1.3 percent of females of non-agricultural labour. The occupational category of professionals is smallest group constituting 10.1 percent. Among the professionals, the males constitute 8 percent as compared to 2.1 percent of females. It is revealed from the data that a higher share of Muslims is found in self employment category which provides insecurity, uncertain income and lack of social security is a matter of concern.

2) Distribution of Respondents According to Type of work:

Sector	Female	Male	Total
	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)
Primary	7 (3.5)	193 (96.5)	200 (100)
Secondary	- (-)	3 (100)	3 (100)
Tertiary	56 (14.2)	341 (85.8)	397 (100)
Total	63 (10.5)	537 (89.5)	600 (100)

Source: Primary Data

The tertiary sector constitutes the largest category (66.1 percent) in which Muslims are engaged. The presence of females is low 14.2 percent as compared to males, who have an overwhelming presence constituting 85.8 percent of tertiary sector workers. The secondary sector has almost negligible (0.5 percent) presence in total workforce. In secondary sector there is no presence of Muslim women in workforce. The primary sector constitutes second largest category (33.3 percent) of total workforce. In this sector, there is overwhelming presence of males (96.5 percent) while the females constitute 3.5 percent of primary sector workforce. The large presence of Muslims in tertiary sector is generally concentrated in self employment and labour related activities characterized by low wages and lack of social security.

3) Distribution of Respondents According to Conditions of Employment

Sr. No.	Do you carry employment in Muslims dominated locality/area	Rural		Urban		Total	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	Yes	149	74.5	245	61.3	394	65.6
2	No	51	25.5	155	38.7	206	34.4
	Total	200	100	400	100	600	100

Source: Primary Data

The conditions of employment are deciding factor in availability of varied job opportunities for the community. It has been observed that majority of Muslims 65.6 percent carry out their economic activities in Muslim dominated localities or areas. Almost 34 percent of Muslims are engaged in

livelihood activities in areas other than Muslim localities. Majority of Muslims (74.5 percent) in rural areas in Aurangabad prefer to work in Muslim localities as compared to 61.3 percent of Muslims in urban areas. While, more number of Muslims in urban areas (38.7 percent) were seeking employment in other than Muslim areas as compared to 25.5 percent of Muslims in rural areas. The non-visibility of Muslims in workforce in other than Muslim dominated localities is attributed to issues of identity and security that the community faces on daily basis.

4) Distribution of Respondents According Reasons for not Seeking Employment in Non-Muslims localities

Sr. No	Reasons for not seeking employment in non-Muslim localities	Rural		Urban		Total	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	Away from home	23	11.5	52	13.0	75	12.6
2	Fear of discrimination	43	21.6	145	36.2	188	31.4
3	Insecurity of life	5	2.6	23	5.7	28	4.6
4	No acquaintances	56	27.8	92	23.1	148	24.6
5	No social support	29	14.5	31	7.7	60	10
6	Low salary	7	3.5	27	6.8	34	5.6
7	Other reasons	37	18.5	30	7.5	67	11.2
	Total	200	100	400	100	600	100

Source: Primary Data

The mobility in search for employment helps an individual to gain knowledge of many things paving way for further growth and prosperity. The fear of discrimination in Muslims is the most important reason (31 percent) hindering mobility for seeking employment in non-Muslim localities. The lack of acquaintances (25 percent), more distance from home to place of job (12 percent) and no social support (10 percent) of any kind in non-Muslim localities restricts them from seeking employment opportunities in non-Muslim dominated localities. The reasons of low salary (5 percent) and insecurity of life (4 percent) also finds mention within the community. However, 11 percent of respondents were of the opinion that there were other reasons for not seeking employment in non-Muslim localities.

Analysis of Pattern of Employment of Muslims in Aurangabad District:

1) Low level of education and high dropout rate is the underlying cause of high representation of Muslims in self employment activities. The lower level of education in itself cuts the aspiration of youths in Muslim community for salaried jobs with good income and security This high presence of Muslims in self employment activities is detrimental for future educational and economic progress of community as self employment are devoid of good salary, surety of income and social security measures. Majority of Muslims in urban areas work either as informal workers within the ghettos or are engaged in self employment activities. In Maharashtra, 70.7 per cent of the total Muslims workers in urban areas are working as 'other workers' which includes industrial (non-household industry) and service sector employments as compared to 38.7 per cent of Hindu workers (GOM 2013). Muslims in rural areas of Aurangabd district due to low ownership of land are engaged in subsistence agriculture and work as farm labour. The low percent of female presence in agriculture related activities in tune with general attitude of community toward women's employment. The ownership of agricultural land among Muslims is significantly lower. Only 8.1 per cent of total Muslim workers are cultivators as compared to 32.2 per cent of the Hindus. Similarly, the share of agricultural labourers among Muslims is substantially higher as compared to Hindus (GoM, 2013). The low representation in service and professions of Muslims in Aurangabad district reflects the general findings of reports of government

committees (Sachar,2006; Rangnath Mishra,2007; Kundu;2013) of negligible presence of Muslim in government services and services/profession having high income potential and respect in society.

2) The large presence of Muslims in tertiary sector is mostly found in the lower rung of jobs having low salary. Such jobs are basically manual labour work. Self employment activities also form a major part of tertiary sector. employment pattern of Muslims in tertiary sector is more concentrated in self employment activities or blue-collar workers. The largest numbers are concentrated in low paying activities like drivers, vendors, labourers, workers in hotels/shops/warehouses/godowns etc. Another one third of workforce is self employed in service sector where job work/ piece work/ rented services/ manual work are major type of work engaged in. The income derived from such work is minimal and always insufficient to meet basic needs. Similarly, the engagement of Muslims in rural area of district in primary sector activities also fetches low income. 95% of Muslims of India are estimated to belong to the category of peasant, craftsman and semi skilled and unskilled labourers. Majority of Muslims in rural areas are landless labourers. In urban areas, Muslims are mostly traditional artisans and petty traders. Muslims are extremely underrepresented in all government services (Vempany 2003). In tertiary sector, the employment of Muslims in district in the field of services and professions is low. The percent of persons engaged in occupations like school and college teachers, doctors, lawyers, engineers, managers, administrative officials, police, clerical jobs etc. In services, their representation is at lower rungs of hierarchy having no security of tenure and majority in private organization/institution. While in profession, they are at a position comparable to their peers in other communities. However, their representation is much less as compared to high concentration of respondents engaged in low and menial work or self employment activities

3) The issue of identity, security and equity are the most important aspects in life of Muslims in India through which they have to navigate on daily basis. Muslims in district, both in rural and urban areas, were found to engage in employment in Muslim dominated areas. The lack of sense of belongingness among communities, perception of discrimination and alienation have made majority of Muslims to eke out their living in safe and secure Muslim neighbourhoods. These community ghettos gives rise to a certain kind ideology and world view in inhabitants creating negative impressions on the people. The ghettoisation of Muslims, identification of their areas for singling out and being indifferent to their demands and appeals has in certain ways compounded the Muslim problem. The interlinking of various problems of the community has brought it to a place, where it finds itself today (Basant and Sharif 2010)

4) The mobility in search for employment helps an individual to gain knowledge of many things paving way for further growth and prosperity. However, the issues of identity, equity and security obstruct the movement of Muslim community members in seeking for employment across the cross sections of society. As for the Muslims in district are concerned, the fear of discrimination was an important reason for not seeking employment in non-Muslim localities. The feeling of discrimination coupled with lack of community bonds with little to no interaction has aggravated the feeling of 'otherness' in community members. The ghettoisation of living areas has ensured that staying in one's own area is safe and economically viable. The distance from home deters Muslims from venturing out of their locality for seeking opportunities of jobs and income, and hence they are confined to their own areas. The exclusionary urbanization is an important social factor constraining mobility of Muslims thereby affecting their employment opportunities and containing their livelihood particularly in smaller urban centres (Kundu 2013).

Conclusion:

The Muslims in Aurangabad district have many features in common with their counterparts across the country. The Aurangabad district has the second highest concentration of Muslims, after the state

capital Mumbai. The level of literacy among Muslims is much lower than the state average. This has invariably affected their employment and earning potential. The failure of community on different indices of development is a cumulative effect of low education and larger presence in unorganized sector. The question of security has bounded them to Muslim dominated areas for seeking employment. The attainment of Muslims is low as far as technical and professional education is concerned. The participation of Muslims in government and private jobs assuring salary and other benefits is not commensurate with their population. The larger presence of Muslims in informal sector and their over reliance on self employment activities, petty businesses, hawking etc tend to make them more vulnerable. The low earning potential from such activities tend to increase economic marginalization manifold. A concerted effort at the level of government, non-governmental organizations and community itself will bring growth and prosperity to the Muslim community.

References:

- Ahmad, Imtiaz.1981. ‘Muslim Educational Backwardness: An Inferential Analysis’, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 16(36): 1457-1465.
- Ahmad.S. and Malika.M.2010. ‘Modern Education and Socio-Economic Change: A case study of Muslim women in Pune city’, *Research World –Journal of Arts, Science and Commerce*.1 (1):139-149
- Basant R. and Sharif, A.2010. *Handbook of Muslims in India: Empirical and Policy Perspectives*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Borooah,V. and S.Iyer.2005. ‘Religion, Literacy and Female-to-Male Ratio’, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 40(5):419-427
- Government of India.2006. Social, Economic and Educational status of Muslim Community of India: A Report. New Delhi: Prime Minister’s High Level Committee. (Sachar Committee)
- Government of India.2013. Report of Post Sachchar Evaluation Committee. New Delhi: Ministry of Minority Affairs. (Kundu Committee)
- Government of Maharashtra .2013. Socio-Economic and Educational Backwardness of Muslims in Maharashtra. A Report. Mumbai: Chief Minister’s Study Group.
- Pandya,Amit.2010.Muslim Indians:Struggle for Inclusion,H.L.Stimson Center,Washigton, DC.
- Mukherjee, Sanjeeb.2014. ‘Unemployment, poverty rates high among Muslims’, accessed at <http://www.buisness-standard.com/article/economy-policy/unemployment-poverty-rates-high> on 3/08/2016
- Vempany, S. 2002. *Minority in Contemporary India*. New Delhi: Institute of Objective Studies.