



ENROLMENT PATTERN AND RETENTION STATUS OF MUSLIM MINORITY GIRLS AT PRIMARY STAGE

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Abstract

Educating girls is equated with educating a family and so as educating a nation. Societies across globe though accord importance to education of girls, yet disparities and inequalities are noticed against girls and women. Equality of educational opportunities is fundamental to national development. It is more pertinent in the context of education of Muslim girls who are away from the mainstream of development --being born as girl and grown up with minority status. Due to efforts made by the government in last decades through DPEP and SSA programmes, states have achieved certain targets successfully in terms of educating girls in general and marginalised girls in particular. Though access has been widened and enrolment pattern has moved upward yet retention and achievement of girls in general and Muslim girls in particular has become a major concern for all states in the country. In order to enable Muslim girls to draw maximum benefits from education system, enrolment, retention and achievement are equally important. Muslim girls need extra care and attention in terms of enrolment and supporting their retention at primary stage. Therefore, enrolment pattern and retention of Muslim girls have become major concerns for the society. A number of factors has been examined and identified as the potential correlates of enrolment and retention at primary stage. Studies conducted earlier though provide sufficient empirical evidences on enrolment and retention, hardly any systematic attempt is noticed in relation to enrolment pattern and retention of Muslim primary school girls. In order to give a fillip in the existing literature on education of Muslim girls, an attempt has been made to study enrolment pattern and retention status of Muslim girls at primary stage. The present study was carried out among 500 Muslim primary school girls in five Muslim Concentrated Districts of Uttar Pradesh. Results of the study revealed that there exists variation in admission pattern and age of enrolment of Muslim girls in primary classes. It is found that retention rate of Muslim girls in selected primary schools is below the satisfactory level and Parents' wish is the single most factors responsible for retention of Muslim girls in all selected schools. Though schools and government have taken corrective measures in terms of encouraging enrolment pattern and retention rate, yet much ground is still left out to be explored where need for involvement of parents and community is highly warranted.



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INTRODUCTION

Education of girls is inevitable for the nation. "Growing evidences indicate that educating girls in general and Muslim girls in particular brings a number of benefits to girls, their families and their societies at large. Economic productivity, social development, desirable child care and social equity are the outcomes of education in general; whereas transferring

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education from one generation to another is possible only through educated girls and women” (Das and Mohanty, 2009). Viewed from a realistic angle, the picture of Muslim girls’ education in India is also not at all cheerful rather it is bleak. As per 2001 census, about 46 percent women are illiterate and an equal percent of girls had not seen classroom of any school. It was reiterated in the Delhi Summit (held among E-9 countries in December, 1993) that “the gap between boys and girls participation in elementary education is the biggest single gap that needs to be filled for universalisation. The problem of Universal Elementary Education (UEE) is, in essence, the problem of girl child. The gender disparity among the minority reflects the discriminatory attitude to the girl child”. Due to the efforts made by the Govt. of India in the last decades, girls’ participation in primary stage is indicating an upswing trend. A press release of Govt of India in 2008 reveals that girls’ enrolment at primary stage increased from 5.4 million in 1950-51 to 61.1 million in 2004-05. At upper primary level, the enrolment increased from 0.5 million to 22.7 million girls. The proportion of girls in total enrolment has also been growing. Survey data revealed that participation of Muslim girls in basic education has grown steadily over the years. The overall gender gap in enrolment at primary stage has dropped to 4.6% and at upper primary level has reduced to 8.0 percentage points in 2005. The trends in transition rate have increased from 80 percent in 2004-05 to 83 percent in 2005-06 leaving a gender gap of 3 percentage points (Rath, 2008). Nayar(1993) observed that situation of rural female is worst and rural girls are way behind both at primary and upper primary stage. Larger majority of girls are required, by the time they reach the age of eight, to be at home to do various domestic chores (UNESCO, 1987).

If education of Muslim girls is to be discussed in Indian context, the nine educationally backward states, i.e., Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and west Bengal, represent almost a similar kind of picture. Educational problems of minority girls in any part of country are different in nature and magnitude. Education of girl child has always been a major concern for the policy makers, thinkers and reformers of our society. Poverty, illiteracy, ignorance, and discrimination are significant impediments for which such children are unable to join the mainstream of education. Being born as girl and that to in a deprived condition brings innumerable problems to the sight of educational planners. Factors, such as, non-availability of school/no-formal education centres, non-provision of segregated schools for girls, lack of women teachers in rural sector, and unsuitable school timings are responsible for non-participation of rural girls in education. Poor socio-economic status does not allow parents to

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afford girls education. While discussing the problems, house hold factors such as poverty, involvement of girls in domestic work, parental illiteracy, and lack of motivation among parents should not be ignored. Social factors, such as, early marriage, purdah, lack of awareness about benefits of girls' education, and lack of support services need extra care and attention. In the present globalization era, academic achievement is of paramount importance. A number of factors may be held accountable for the academic achievement of Muslim girls at primary stage.

In certain contexts, reviewed evidences represent that the institutional set up (especially schools) and classrooms are fuelling social exclusion on the basis of castes. "Religious schools are more likely to uphold gender differences than eradicate them, and schools are often places of intolerance, discrimination and violence. Girls are disproportionately the victims" (UNESCO, EFA: 2003-2004). Women have been oppressed in many parts of the world, though they equally contribute towards national development. Professions or types of vocations or jobs are also responsible for alienations— adolescent girls in slums of Delhi (2005), scavengers in Lucknow (Mohanty 2011), SC girls at primary level in Haryana (Mohanty 2000). Participants of each of the above-cited empirical studies revealed that professions such as barber, sweeper, scavenger, butcher etc. are deemed as the low level of vocations having low or no social recognition and acceptance in rural places. They are denied access across all fundamental human rights in rural parts of India. But their social recognition and acceptance is reversed in the urban places attributing to the universally acknowledged fact of educated society. Researches indicated that improvement on a few indicators like poverty, education, health, etc is noticed but with regard to Muslims rate of growth is much lower than for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Urban poverty is highest amongst Muslims, rural poverty amongst Muslims is also higher than that of other religious groups and, indeed, than that of other backward classes (OBCs). One-third of the Muslims in the country were living below the poverty line. The rate of decline in poverty has also been slowest in the Muslim community (Human Development Report, 2011).

A significant improvement in participation of Muslim Minority children in elementary education programmes has been noticed. The data which has been received from more than 1.28 million recognised schools imparting elementary education from across 635 districts spread over 35 States and Union Territories of the country reveals a total enrolment of 17.17 million (against 14.83 million in 2008-09) Muslim children in Primary classes in 2009-10 which is 13.04 percent of the total 131.72 million enrolment (Total, provisional) in Primary

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Classes I to V. Of the total Muslim enrolment in Primary classes, the percentage of Muslim girls is 48.89 which are quite similar to the share of girls in overall Primary enrolment (48.44 percent) at the all-India level. The highest percentage of Muslim enrolment is observed in Lakshadweep UT (99.61 percent) which is because of the fact that the percentage of Muslim population to total population in the UT in 2001 was as high as 95.47 percent. In Jammu and Kashmir, the percentage of Muslim children in Primary classes is reported to be 67.80 percent which is almost the same as its share in population (66.97 percent). Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal are a few other states which too have a high percentage of Muslim Minority children in its Primary classes.

Like enrolment in Primary classes, percentage of Muslim enrolment in Upper Primary classes has also improved to 11.47 percent in 2009-10 from 9.13 percent in 2008-09 and 8.54 percent in 2007-08. Of the total 54.02 million enrolments in Upper Primary classes in the country in 2009-10, Muslim enrolment is reported to be 6.20 million (4.87 million in 2008-09) and the percentage of Muslim girls to total Muslim enrolment in Upper Primary classes is 49.97 percent which is above the national average of 48.04. Like enrolment in Primary classes, Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal too have high percentage share of Muslim enrolment in its Upper Primary classes. The preliminary data also reveals 12.58 percent Muslim enrolment in Elementary classes I to VIII of which 49.20 percent are girls. Both Primary and Upper Primary enrolment together have a total of 23.37 million Muslim enrolments in Elementary classes. Uttar Pradesh alone has a total of 3.09 million Muslim enrolment against 3.51 million in West Bengal and 2.57 million in Bihar in Elementary classes. The provisional Gross Enrolment Ratio at Elementary level of education in case of Muslim children comes out to be around 93 percent.

About 13.5 million children in India in the age group of 6-13 years are out of school, with Muslims being the most affected section of the society, a study by UNESCO has found. The recently released Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2007 found that the 13.5 million out-of-school students account for 6.9 per cent of the 6-13 age group children in the country. Significantly, the rate of out-of-school children among Muslims was higher, at 10 percent. West Bengal has the highest number of out-of-school children after the states of Bihar, Jharkhand and Assam. It also has the highest number of Scheduled Tribe children out of school. Eleven per cent of Muslim children in the Left Front-ruled state do not go to

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school. The state has been sluggish in its commitment to widen the access to education. High dropout rates and gender disparities continue despite a 93 per cent enrolment rate claimed by the Government of India. While reviewing literature, it was found that Zoya Hasan and Ritu Menon (2005) examined the condition of Muslim women's education in five cities in India: Delhi, Aligarh, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Calicut (Kozhikode). They argued that given the poor condition of Muslim women's education there is a special need for the state to take a pro-active role in this regard in order to promote social justice and empowerment of Muslim women and to remove the barriers that systematically reinforce their marginalization. Quoting their own study (2001), conducted in 42 districts of India they argued that over 75% of Muslim women are illiterate. The situation in the northern states, especially in rural areas, is said to be particularly dismal. In rural North India 85% Muslim women are said to be illiterate. On the other hand, the situation in the south, especially in urban areas, was found to be considerably better, with 88% urban South Indian women said to be literate. Mushirul Hasan (2003) reported that educational backwardness among the Muslims is the product of poverty and neglect by the state. Due to structural location in the economy and the perception of discrimination few Muslims can afford or aspire for the higher education. He stressed the need for affirmative action. Bhalotra and Zamora (2010) reported low Growth in School Enrolment and completion rates amongst Muslims in India. Exploring the extent to which enrolment and completion rates have grown over time, they found that while enrolment rates among Muslims have gone up, drop-out rates have not declined as much. Ahmed (1987) observed that Muslims have been slow to take advantage of the vast educational development the country due to the particular ethos of their religion and an invidious discrimination to which they have been subjected as a minority community is another cause of their educational backwardness. Usha Nayar (2007) recommended that Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan should have a strong pro girl child programme, with added emphasis on Muslim girls; encourage and equip a continuous and comprehensive database; collect educational data through village education registers as is done in the Madhya Pradesh Model; provide cost free quality education for all children from BPL households; provide girls hostels in regular middle and secondary schools so that more girls can enrol, specially Muslim girls; open schools in states should waive off examination fees for girls; SYNERGY Model for holistic development should be adopted; early marriages should be stopped; self help groups should be encouraged; and higher percentage of GDP should be allocated for education. Seema Kazi (1999) reiterated that lack of social opportunities for Muslim women is a crucial issue

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needing urgent action. An improvement in literacy rates would directly influence Muslim women's socio-economic and political status as citizens of India. The acknowledgement of the universality of women's rights by the international community is relevant to the debate on Islam and women's rights, particularly with reference to women's rights in the family. Nasrin (2013) argued that the condition of Muslim women is different today from yesterday in all walks of life. They are coming out of their purdha and are partaking greater tasks in national reconstruction. The literacy status of the Indian Muslim women is very low because of their economic conditions, lack of honest leadership in the community, no availability of schools, and lack of resources in the available schools, more drop outs and lack of interest in education. These entire factors create problems in the way of women education. Khan (1993) in his study "Education among Muslim" mentioned that educational status of Muslims community is very poor as compare to others. The major problems to education were poor economic condition and traditional mode of occupation. Most of the respondents was of those who gave economic reason for not to send their children to education. Children from poor economic background had highest percentage of drop out. At all levels of schooling the percentage of girls was very low.

RATIONALE

Meaningful insights and experiences on backward primary schools girls of Haryana revealed wide range of problems associated with girls at large, scheduled castes/tribes or backward castes or minorities in specific. It was found that more or less girls, across all communities, localities are in jeopardy. The girls from backward communities face severe discrimination. Despite reservation quota, they never get opportunity to enter a college, whatever is the course of study. Latest data show that about one in 17 Muslim girls, one in 10 Hindu girls, one in eight Sikh girls and one in six Christian girls, avail higher education. Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe and Other Backward Class girls have poorer access to higher education than higher-caste girls. Less than one in every 20 Scheduled Caste girls accesses higher education, compared with one in every five for girls from higher castes. The imbalances in the access to higher education among Muslim, SC, ST and OBCs girls also warrant serious concern. If higher education demonstrates such bleak picture on education of Muslim girls then situation in primary and school education may be more inferior. Muslim community is believed to be one of the minority communities of our country is not only excluded socially, culturally, educationally but also victimized due to a couple of allied problems and challenges. Religious and social ethics, moral values, social taboos, low social

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and professional recognitions ---- are the some of the significant factors for which Muslim girls are in distress. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan or Education For All programme recognizes that ensuring girl's education particularly Muslim requires changes not only in educational system but also in societal norms and attitudes. Considered from this point of view, the emphasis has to be laid on the education of the deprived and disadvantaged groups, particularly Muslim minority group who have no tradition of education for centuries. With this backdrop, attempt was made through the present study to examine enrolment pattern and retention status of Muslim Minority girls at primary stage which deemed to be stepping to further educational growth and development.

OBJECTIVES

For the purpose of present study, following objectives were chalked out.

1. To examine the enrolment pattern of Muslim girls in selected primary schools of MCDs of Uttar Pradesh.
2. To explore the status of retention of Muslim girls in selected primary schools of MCDs of Uttar Pradesh.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on above cited objectives, following research questions were formulated.

1. What is the enrolment pattern of Muslim girls in selected primary schools of MCDs of Uttar Pradesh?
2. What is the rate of retention of Muslim girls in selected primary schools of MCDs of Uttar Pradesh?

PLAN AND PROCEDURE

Keeping objectives and formulated research questions in view, the present research warranted both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Descriptive survey methodology is employed to collect data on selected (purposive sampling -- based on Muslim female literacy rate) five districts, i.e, Barabanki, Behraich, Ghaziabad, Lucknow and Rampur districts of Uttar Pradesh.

Sampling & Sample Size

As per the design of the study, five districts were to be selected for the primary survey from the State of Uttar Pradesh based on Muslim female literacy rate. Further, in these selected districts, 2 blocks each and a total no. of 10 blocks were selected. From these 10 blocks, 100 villages , 100 schools and 1000 Muslim girls were to be contacted for the primary research.

For the study, field work was carried out in 100 villages from 10 blocks and 05 districts;
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covering approximately 497 households in all villages. Apart from these 497 households, 147 Muslim Primary school teachers, 97 Primary School Principals were also consulted. Further Block Education Officers and village Education Officers were interviewed for cross validation of various data. The detailed break-up of the sample size for the primary survey is given in Table-1.

Table-1 District wise Sample Breakup

MCD Districts	Blocks	Villages	Schools	Muslim Girl Students	Muslim Teachers	Principal	Household
1.Barabanki	1.Banki	10	10	100	20	10	50
	2.Dewa	10	10	100	11	10	51
2.Behraich	1.Behraich Town area	10	10	100	10	10	52
	2.Chittura	10	10	100	15	10	48
3.Gaziabad	1.Ghaziabad Town Area	10	10	100	10	10	50
	2.Loni	10	10	100	12	07	45
4.Lucknow	1.Malihabad	10	10	100	20	10	45
	2.Kakori	10	10	100	19	10	50
5.Rampur	1.Rampur Town Area	10	10	100	15	10	51
	2.Chawava	10	10	100	15	10	55
Total- 5	10	100	100	1000	147	97	497

Tools

The nature of the present research demanded adoption of systematic procedure in collecting data from primary and secondary sources. Data on education and social profiles of districts and their demographic deceptions were collected from secondary sources. Prior research studies, records and documents of Department of Elementary Education (state and union government), data collected from records of BEOs, Head Masters and teachers are considered as secondary source data. Data collected from primary sources include field Survey, interviews and observation. On the basis of information gathered through secondary data, the survey/research tools have been developed, pre-tested and finalized for collecting relevant information from the field sites. A mixed methodology comprising of an extensive household survey based on standard data collection instruments (questionnaires), as well as key-informant interviews (semi-structured interviews) with village level teachers/parents/leaders/facilitators (based on interactive techniques/tools).

- **Functionaries Interviews/In-depth Interviews**

In-depth Interview Schedules are basic and most important instruments to be used during the qualitative data collection. In the present study, in-depth interviews were conducted with the concerned functionaries of education at District level and Block level. This part of discussions enabled us to understand the details of the education schemes, its organizational

and management structure, implementation mechanism and other relevant aspects of Muslim girl child education, its importance, their vision and mission towards enrolment and retention of Muslim girls in schools and problems they are facing and efforts they are making towards achieving it.

- **Key-Informant Interviews/Semi-Structured Interviews**

Semi-Structured Schedules are the instrument used for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. In the present study, Semi structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders at the village level, including school principal/head master/teacher, community elders, *Panchayat* representatives, local influential persons, etc. to understand their perspectives regarding education of Muslim girls. These interactions also aimed at studying the innovations in design of the education programme for ensuring an increase in the retention and enrolment of Muslim girl child in the community.

- **Household Survey**

Extensive household survey was conducted in rural and urban areas for collecting data from Muslim households at each level. Parents were contacted in each household for assessing their perception regarding girl child education, its importance, available facilities in the vicinity, enrolment and retention of girls in schools and reasons for non- enrolment and retention and also for getting their feedback for enhancing the retention rate. These interactions also aimed at identifying the key issues, challenges that restrain the girls from gaining primary education. The household schedule had been developed consisting of close-ended multiple response questions, and a few open-ended questions.

The tools designed for school head teacher, teachers, the households (parents), students, community members, district education officer and village education officer were translated to Hindi, since these had to be canvassed in the local language. These translated questionnaires were checked by our project team members and finalized for printing. These translated questionnaires were referred by the project team, during data collection and data analysis. Subsequently, field visits were undertaken to check the relevance and accuracy of each and every question posed in the data collection tools. *Kakori* Block of Lucknow District (sample district) was randomly selected for Pilot-testing of all the tools – both quantitative and qualitative questionnaires/ tools. The pre testing for household and school level questionnaires were done at *Kakori* block. After field-testing, some of the questions were reorganized and a few were modified and/or re-worded accordingly, in consultation with the client.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data collected through various techniques (such as observation, interview, and survey) were analysed and interpreted according to formulated objectives.

Objective-1: To examine the enrolment pattern of Muslim girls in selected primary schools of MCDs of Uttar Pradesh.

In order to achieve objective pertaining to enrolment pattern, data were collected from selected samples (that include students, teachers, parents, and principals of purposively selected primary schools) with relevant tools. Collected and analysed data are classified from Table-2 to Table-6 on following dimensions that determine enrolment pattern of Muslim girls in government primary schools.

- (a) Classes in which admission of Muslim girls have been made
(Responses collected form students)
- (b) Enrolment age range of Muslim girls
(Responses collected from parents and teachers)
- (c) Birth certificate as an essential requirement of enrolment of Muslim girls
(Responses collected from parents and teachers)
- (d) Admission period in selected schools
(Responses collected from teachers and principals)
- (e) Enrolment rate of Muslim girls in selected schools
(Responses collected from teachers and principals)

Table-2 Class-wise Admission Student Responses (in Percentage)

Classes	Behraich	Rampur	Ghaziabad	Lucknow	Barabanki
Class-I	86	83.82	63	70.37	84
Class-II	11	14.71	17	20.99	10
Class-III	3	1.47	13	8.64	6
Class-IV	0	0	7	0	0

It is evident from above cited data collected from student source (classes in which their admissions have been made) that a majority of students(86%) have taken admission in Class-I in Behraich followed by 20.99% in Class-II and 13% in Class-III in Ghaziabad and 7% in Class-IV in Ghaziabad. It clearly indicates that the majority of students have taken admission in Class-I though there exist a variation in the admission pattern of primary classes.

Figure 1

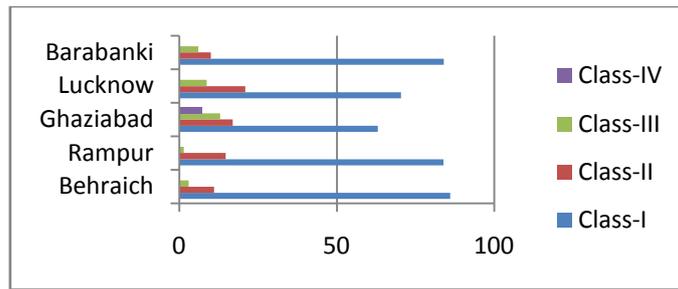


Table-3 Enrolment age range of Muslim girls Responses of Parents and Teachers (in Percentage)

Age	Behraich	Rampur	Ghaziabad	Lucknow	Barabanki
5 years	0	36	0	23.08	0
6 years	100	56	100	71.79	100
Other(More than 6 years)	0	8	0	5.13	0

It is observed from the data given in table 3.1.2 that a majority(100%) of students are taking admission in the age of six years in Behraich, Barabanki and Ghaziabad where as 71.79% in Lucknow and 56% in Rampur. Enrolment at five years is also noticed in Rampur (36%) and Lucknow(23.08%). Enrolment at more than six years is noticed in Rampur(8%0 and Lucknow(5.13%). It may be interpreted that there exist variation in the enrolment age range of Muslim girls of primary schools.

Figure 2

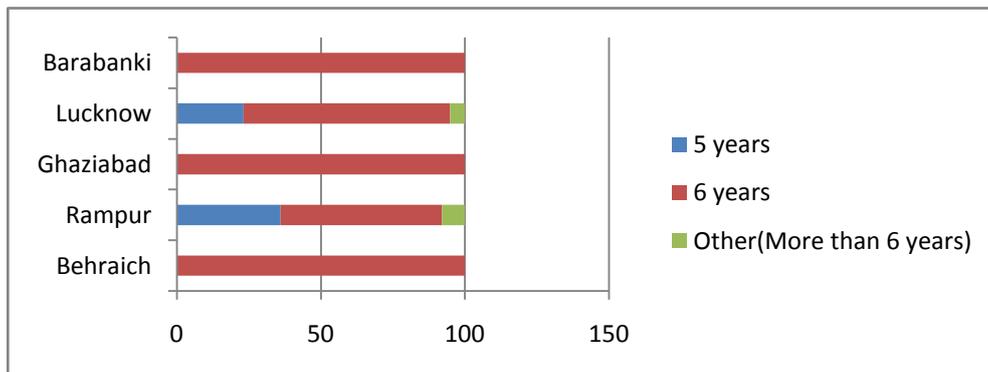


Table-4 Birth certificate as an essential requirement of enrolment of Muslim girls Responses of Teachers (in Percentage)

	Bahraich	Rampur	Ghaziabad	Lucknow	Barabanki
Yes	77.42	32	76.19	43.59	76.67
No	22.58	48	14.29	46.15	23.33
Some Time	0	16	4.76	7.69	0
Not for use	0	4	4.76	2.56	0

It is revealed from the above data on responses of teachers on birth certificate as an essential requirement for Muslim girls getting enrolled in primary schools that a majority of schools 77.42% in Behraich followed by 76.67% in Barabanki and 76.19% in Ghaziabad, 43.59% in Lucknow and 32% in Rampur. It may further be interpreted that teachers are giving importance to birth certificate and practicing it as an essential requirement for enrolment of Muslim girls in a majority of selected schools. Practice of checking birth certificate during admission is below the satisfactory level in Lucknow and Rampur.

Figure 2

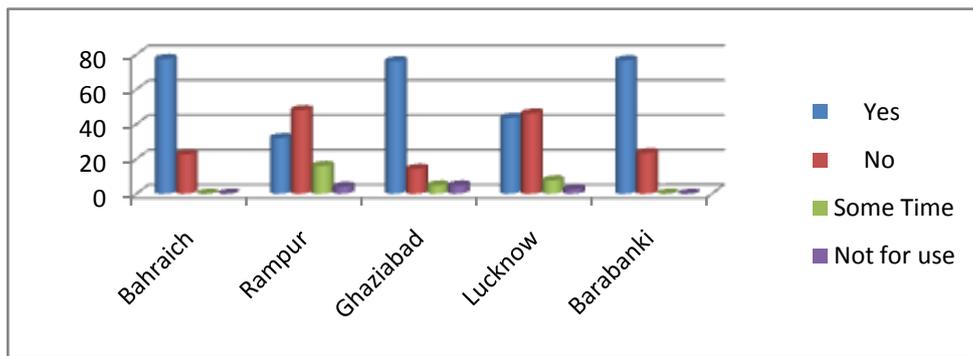


Table -5 Admission period in selected Schools Responses of Teachers and Principals (in Percentage)

	Behraich	Rampur	Ghaziabad	Lucknow	Barabanki
April	0	8	4.55	2.56	1
July	0	8	0	5.13	1
Throughout Year	100	72	86.36	84.62	98
All	0	12	9.09	7.69	0

It is revealed from above data on admission period that all selected government primary schools in Behraich(100%) and Barabanki (98%) have been admitting Muslim girls throughout the year while schools in Ghaziabad(86.36%) followed by Lucknow(84.62%) and Rampur(72%) . It is evident from above data that selected primary schools have been admitting Muslim girls throughout the year and promoting Muslim girls towards primary schooling.

Figure 3

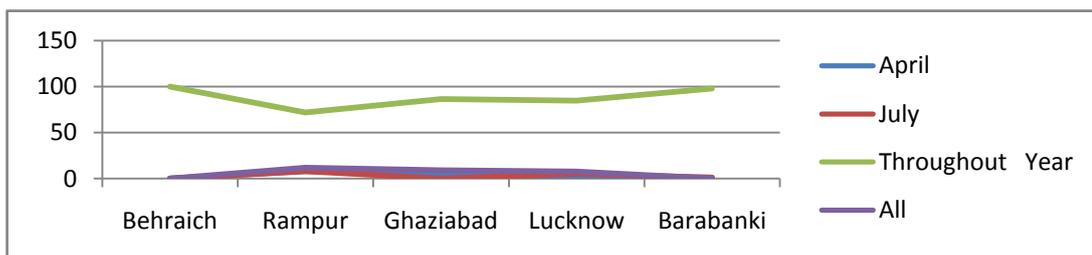
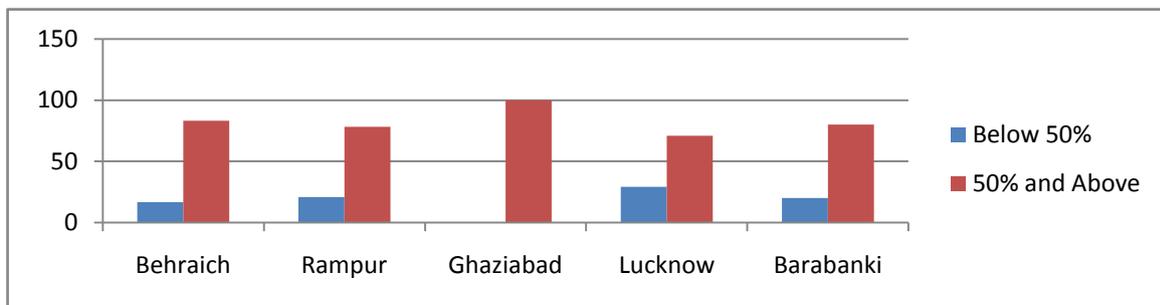


Table -6 Enrolment rate of Muslim girls in selected schools Responses of Teachers and Principals (in Percentage)

	Behraich	Rampur	Ghaziabad	Lucknow	Barabanki
Below 50%	16.67	20.74	0	29.17	20
50% and Above	83.33	78.26	100	70.83	80

It is evident from above table that the rate of enrolment of Muslim girls from respective villages (50% and above) are found to be 100% in Ghaziabad, followed by 83.33% in Behraich, and 80% in Barabanki whereas the enrolment rate of Muslim girls in Rampur and Lucknow are found to be 78.26% and 70.83% respectively. It indicates that majority of Muslim girls have been participating in primary schools in selected villages.

Figure 5



Objective-2 : To explore the status of retention of Muslim girls in selected primary schools of MCDs of Uttar Pradesh.

In order to investigate the status of retention of Muslim girls in selected primary schools, responses teachers and records available in schools were taken into consideration in the present study. Data pertaining to status of retention in primary schools have been presented in Table-7 and Table-8.

Table -7 Retention Rate of Muslim girls in selected Schools Responses of Teachers (in Percentage)

Enrolment rate	Behraich	Rampur	Ghaziabad	Lucknow	Barabanki
Below 50%	87.1	75	4.55	64.87	90
50% and Above	12.9	25	95.45	35.13	10

It is revealed from above data that retention rate of Muslim girls is found to be below 50% in selected schools of all sample schools except Ghaziabad where retention rate of Muslim girls is found to be more than 50%. It indicates that retention rate of Muslim girls in selected primary schools is below the satisfactory level. In order to explore factors responsible for low

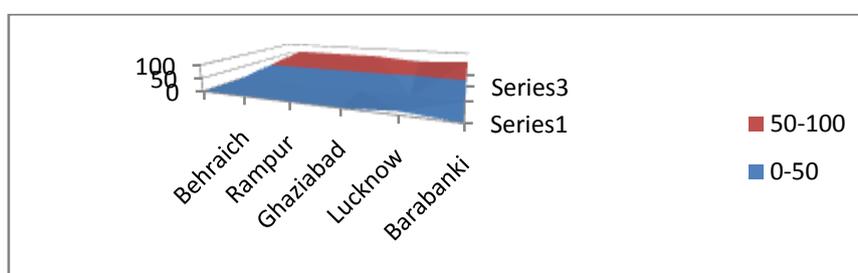
retention rate of Muslim girls, data were collected from teachers of selected primary schools which have been presented in Table-8.

Table -8 Factors responsible for low retention rate of Muslim girls in selected Schools Responses of Teachers (in Percentage)

Factors for retention	Behraich	Rampur	Ghaziabad	Lucknow	Barabanki
Appreciation/reward/ Benefits	0	0	0	12.5	0
Parents wish	100	100	100	87.5	100

It is revealed from the above table that parent wish is the single most factors responsible for retention of Muslim girls in all selected schools (100%) of all sample districts (87.5%).

Figure 6



CONCLUSION

From the above cited results and discussions on enrolment pattern of Muslim girls at primary stage, it is concluded that there exists variation in the admission pattern of primary classes. Results pertaining to classes in which admission of Muslim girls have been made revealed that a majority of students (86%) have taken admission in Class-I in Behraich followed by 20.99% in Class-II and 8.64% in Class-III in Lucknow, and 7% in Class-IV in Ghaziabad. Data pertaining to birth certificate as an essential requirement of enrolment of Muslim girls indicated that though teachers are giving importance to birth certificate and practicing it as an essential requirement for enrolment of Muslim girls in a majority of selected schools, yet practice of checking birth certificate during admission is below the satisfactory level in Lucknow and Rampur. It was found that a majority of schools 77.42% in Behraich followed by 76.67% in Barabanki and 76.19% in Ghaziabad, 43.59% in Lucknow and 32% in Rampur. Results with regard to admission period in selected schools exhibited that selected primary schools have been admitting Muslim girls throughout the year and promoting Muslim girls towards primary schooling. All selected government primary schools in Behraich(100%) and Barabanki (98%) have been admitting Muslim girls throughout the year while schools in Ghaziabad(86.36%) followed by Lucknow(84.62%) and Rampur(72%) . Results relating to

enrolment rate of Muslim girls in selected schools indicated that majority of Muslim girls have been participating in primary schools in selected villages. Rate of enrolment of Muslim girls from respective villages (50% and above) are found to be 100% in Ghaziabad, followed by 83.33% in Behraich, and 80% in Barabanki whereas the enrolment rate of Muslim girls in Rampur and Lucknow are found to be 78.26% and 70.83% respectively.

With regard to retention status of Muslim Girls at primary stage, it is concluded that retention rate of Muslim girls in selected primary schools is below the satisfactory level. Retention rate of Muslim girls is found to be below 50% in selected schools of all sample schools except Ghaziabad where retention rate of Muslim girls is found to be more than 50%. While exploring factors responsible for low retention, it was found that parents' wish is the single most factors responsible for retention of Muslim girls in all selected schools (100%) of all sample districts (87.5%).

The plea for not having any deadline for admission for achieving universal enrolment may not be justified since the priority of SSA is to improve enrolment and retention periodically. Therefore, a deadline for admission is to be decided by the appropriate authority and to be displayed either in the notice board of schools or Gram Panchayats/Municipalities. Flexible criteria for admission are decided and incentive schemes introduced to achieve timely admission of all Muslim Girls at primary stage which may support them till terminal stage of elementary or secondary schooling. The state government should create web page for each school currently functioning in the state. Date of Birth is the primary reference for all purposes including education and therefore a valid (DOB) certificate should be made mandatory for children to take admission in the school and a regulation/ordinance is to be notified by concerned authority.

It is worth mentioning that if results on dynamics of enrolment and retention of girls in Muslim Concentrated Districts(MCDs)are not that encouraging then it has become necessary to examine(in the form of suggestions for future research) existing status of Muslim Girls in districts other than MCDs. The study has aptly yielded valid results and has successfully generated wider scope for promotion of Muslim Girl students in particular and children of all communities in general. In order for education to be socially responsive to generate a cohesive society, meaningful and exciting for educational experience of girls need to be re-prioritised in the national education plans/policies of the nation.

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