

Impact of Demographic Change on the Muslim Community of Tripura

Mijanur Rahaman

Abstract

Tripura is a small state of Indian Union situated in the North-Eastern part of the Indian sub-continent. The area of Tripura, in ancient time, was said to be very extensive. The present territorial area of Tripura is 10491square kilometers. Of the total area, 6, 06,150 hectares, i.e. near about 60% are forest areas. It has a geographical area of 10,491.69 sq. km. The population of our State is 36,71,2032 out of that the population belongs to minorities is 3, 35,135 i.e. 9.12% of total population of this State. The breakup of the population are Muslims 3, 28,870 (8.96%), Christian (Non ST) 2,322 (0.06%), Buddhist 3,647 (0.09%), Jain 262 (0.007%) Sikhs 34 (0.0009%) as per the census of the year 2011. Total 2, 94,837 minorities are residing in rural areas and 40,298 are in urban areas.¹It is difficult to find out the exact date of growth of Muslim population before beginning of the census operation in 1881.² However, Muslims of Tripura are the ancient inhabitant of this state. Demographic change in Tripura affects the life of the Muslims community of this state. The number of Muslims which was 20.1% in 1960 came down to 06.6% in 1970. Thousands of Muslims were sent in the Bangladesh and at the same time due to the communal riots in Bangladesh thousands of refugees came here to take shelter and became permanent settlers. Yet in certain part of the state a very small section of educated and comparatively well to do Muslim population are living and another section of Muslims are very poor. They became marginalized community of this state and their position has come down below the other marginalized community of this state. Muslims are now backward in social, political and economic field.

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Introduction

Demographics are the quantifiable statistics of a given population. Demographics are also used to identify the study of quantifiable subsets within a given population which characterize that population at a specific point in time.³ A word derived from the ancient Greek, “demography” literally means “describing the population”. And that’s precisely what demographers do: they describe the size, composition and structure of populations. The term “demographic change” is most commonly used to refer to shifts in population structure that have emerged in many industrialized nations including Germany since the 1970s, chiefly as a result of three major developments: declining birth rates, longer life expectancy and increasing immigration. These changes present many challenges, but many opportunities, as well.⁴

However, the state of Tripura experienced a huge number of migration from nearby states and areas also which resulted in its big demographic change. Tribals who were the original inhabitant of this state became minority after 1960. Tripura’s tribes lost their majority share of the population as long ago as 1960, when Bengalis took their place. Tripura’s Bengalis are Hindus however, not Muslims, many of whom came to India as refugees, after Partition in 1947 and in the 1970s, during Bangladesh’s war of independence from Pakistan.⁵

The original inhabitants of Tripura were tribals, known for their tolerance and passive obedience to the maharajas of the Manikya dynasty for centuries. Historically, the Hindu rulers of Tripura’s Manikya dynasty had always encouraged the immigration of and settlement of non-tribals, especially Bengalis to Tripura. Rajmala authenticates the fact that Ratna Manikya (1464-1468) was the first to ‘settle 4000 Bengalis in four places’ in Tripura.⁶

While the immigration of the Brahmins and other upper castes was encouraged to enhance the status of the state and to run its administration, encouragement to lower-caste people and landless Muslim cultivators or sharecroppers from the then East Bengal was only for reclaiming fallow lands, to increase revenue. The rulers were so desperate to

³ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics>

⁴ <http://www.ideen2020.de/en/176/>

⁵ The Economist Newspaper , Aug 24th 2012, 8:19 by S.B. | KOKRAJHAR AND DHUBRI

⁶ Manas Paul, The Eyewitness: Tales from Tripura’s Ethnic Conflict, Lancer Publishers, New Delhi, 2009, p. 25 as cited in Changing Mentality of the Bengalee Refugees: The Story of Tripura (1946-1971) By Anindita Ghoshal Assistant Prof. in History, Rishi Bankim Chandra College, Naihati Refugee Watch, 39 & 40, June and December 2012

bring the land under tillage that they even introduced the *jangal abadi system*⁷ in this land abundant and thinly populated State.⁸ In the reign of Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya, the first batch of Hindu Bengali refugees received by Tripura fled East Bengal fearing communal violence after the unprecedented Raipur (Dhaka) riot of 1941. Around 15,000 people entered Tripura. Some of them were jiratia prajas of the Chakla Roshanabad estate and hence subjects of Tripura state, in one way or the other.⁹ Most of them were offered permanent rehabilitation either in the form of employment or settlement on freehold land.¹⁰ A huge number of refugees migrated to Tripura from Noakhali district and Chandpur subdivision of Tipperah District (Comilla) when horrific communal riots broke out as a counter-effect of 'Direct Action Day' declared by the Muslim League in Calcutta on 16 August 1946.¹¹ About 175,000 Hindu Bengali refugees crossed the border and took shelter in Tripura from adjoining districts after 1950.¹² It claimed that in March-June 1950, 3,866 families had been settled on 23,450 acres.¹³ However, the Tripura government stopped the process of official registration of refugees from 1 May 1958. Still migrants continued to trickle in till 1958. But another refugee exodus began from the middle of 1963 due to huge riots in Khulna, Jessore and other districts of East Pakistan. The problem was aggravated after the riots of 1964. Refugee registration, which had stopped for the first time with effect from 1

⁷ As declared by the Tripura Durbar, a tenant who accepted a lease for reclamation of hilly lands by clearing jungles got remission of rent at least for three years from the date of lease is called jangal-abadi system.

⁸ Changing Mentality of the Bengalee Refugees: The Story of Tripura (1946-1971) By Anindita Ghoshal Assistant Prof. in History, Rishi Bankim Chandra College, Naihati Refugee Watch, 39 & 40, June and December 2012

⁹ Landless labourers who used to work in khas lands owned by the royal family of Tripura in the zamindari of Chakla Roshanabad for decades. Though they were share croppers, the maharajas of Tripura often treated them as their own subjects, whom they could not evict.

¹⁰ Interview with Jiten Pal in Agartala on 24 February 2012 as cited in Changing Mentality of the Bengalee Refugees: The Story of Tripura (1946-1971) By Anindita Ghoshal Assistant Prof. in History, Rishi Bankim Chandra College, Naihati Refugee Watch, 39 & 40, June and December 2012

¹¹ B.G. Verghese, India's North East Resurgent: Ethnicity, Insurgency, Governance, Development, Konark Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1996, pp. 167-169

¹² File No. F. 3(1)/57 ADM, Year-1957, Rehabilitation Department, Tripura State Archives as cited in Changing Mentality of the Bengalee Refugees: The Story of Tripura (1946-1971) By Anindita Ghoshal Assistant Prof. in History, Rishi Bankim Chandra College, Naihati Refugee Watch, 39 & 40, June and December 2012

¹³ Jagadis Gan-Chaudhuri, A Political History of Tripura, Inter-India Publications, New Delhi, 1985, p. 54

May 1958, resumed in 1964 and finally stopped on 26 March 1971.¹⁴ Again, during the period of the Bangladesh War, refugee migration increased exponentially: the number of refugees (14, 16,491) that came to Tripura in 1971 was a little less than the state's total population (15,36,342).¹⁵

Table-1

Population History of Tripura¹⁶

Year-AD	Total Population	% of Increase	Native Tripuri	Others+ Bengali	% of Tripuri	% of Others + Bengali
1881	95,637	-	83,257	12,380	87.06	12.94
1891	1,37,442	43	1,04,114	33,328	75.75	24.25
1901	1,73,325	26	1,29,431	43,894	74.68	25.52
1911	2,29,613	32.48	1,47,950	81,653	64.34	35.66
1921	3,04,437	31.59	2,08,052	96,386	68.34	31.66
1931	3,82,450	25.63	2,68,067	1,14,383	70.09	29.91
1941	5,31,010	34.14	3,18,359	1,94,651	62.06	37.94
1951	6,39,028	24.56	3,10,946	3,28,082	48.65	51.35
1961	11,42,005	78.71	3,60,070	7,81,935	31.55	68.47
1971	15,56,342	36.28	4,50,544	11,05,798	28.95	71.05
1981	20,53,058	31.92	5,83,920	14,69,138	28.44	71.56
1991	27,57,205	25.54	8,53,920	19,03,860	30.95	69.05
2001	31,91,168	15.74	10,69,622	21,21,546	33.52	66.48

Above table shows how Bengali immigrants from outside Tripura made the majority tribal into minority.

Impact of Demographic Change on Muslim

¹⁴ Sibopada De, *Illegal Migrations and the North East: A Study of Migrants from Bangladesh*,

Anamika Publishers, New Delhi, 2005, p. 107

¹⁵ The Pakistan Observer, 14 May 1964

¹⁶ Census Biharani 1931 AD, Tripura Darpan 15th Nov. 2003

The Muslims of Tripura proved themselves as politically conscious since many years before the merging of Tripura with Independent India¹⁷. Though they belong to the peasantry background, the upper section of the community involved themselves into the politics and administration of Tripura has proved that they are political activists also. Since the princely period, they involved themselves in the decision-making functions of the state. But the demographic change altered their life style.

Like the tribal, Muslim community of Tripura suffered due to demographic change. The historical background of the Muslims in Tripura shows that they are not original inhabitants of the land but settled in the early medieval period. One of the earlier kings of Tripura¹⁸ brought a number of Muslim families along with other Bengali castes of Hindu communities from the Muslim Sultan of Bengal and he arranged their permanent settlement in all over Tripura. King of Tripura encouraged Muslim cultivators in large numbers during the end of 17th century.¹⁹ Since then from time to time, the Muslim Bengalis like the major Hindu Bengali inhabitants migrated from the plane lands adjacent to the present Tripura which was regarded as District of Tipperah or State of Hill Tipperah.

According to the census of 1891, the people of Tripura were divided into two parts, i) Bengali and ii) Loutya race (Tribal).²⁰ Bengalis are divided into three branches, e.g. Hindus, Muslims and Christians.²¹ Thus people inhabiting the small hilly land of Tripura are comprised of three major groups of population: Tribal, Bengali and others. Tribal are called the indigenous people of the land. Bengalis- both Hindu and Muslims are the permanent immigrants for several centuries i.e. since the historical and medieval period. Others comprise of people came from different regions of India and also outside of India. Muslims population in Tripura during 1874-75 was in second position after the Tribals who had first position and Manipuri, Hindus, Christians 3rd, 4th and 5th position respectively.²²

¹⁷ Anjali Chakraborty, "Status of Muslim women in Tripura", an unpublished thesis.

¹⁸ Colved Prakash, 'Encyclopedia of North East India', Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, vol.V., p.2186

¹⁹ Suchintya Bhattacharya, *Genesis of Tribal Extremism in Tripura*, New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House, 1991, p. 54.

²⁰ Kailash Chandra Singha, Rajmala, Akhswar Publications, p.7

²¹ Ibid,p.8

²² W.W.Hunter "Statistical Account of Bengals" part-VI, p-482

Table-2

Different Communities of Tripura (1874-75)

Sl.No.	Name of the community	Population
	Tribe	42345
	Muslim	14225
	Manipuri	7045
	Hindu	4339
	Christians	112
	Not classified(others)	173
	Total	74242

At present the population of the State is 36,71,032 out of that the population belongs to all minorities is 3, 35,135 i.e. 9.12% of total population of this State. The breakup of the minority population are Muslims 3, 28,870 (8.96%), Christian (Non ST) 2,322 (0.06%), Buddhist 3,647 (0.09%), Jain 262 (0.007%) Sikhs 34 (0.0009%) as per the census 2011. Total 2,94,837 minorities are residing in rural areas and 40,298 are in urban areas.²³

Muslims of Tripura are backward in all the aspects of their life. Demographic change in the Muslim population is one of the causes for their socio-economic position to remain at the bottom of social heap. The number of Muslims which was 20.1% in 1960 came down to 06.6% in 1970. Thousands of Muslims were sent to Bangladesh and at the same time due to the communal riots in Bangladesh thousands of refugees came here to take shelter and became permanent settlers. Yet, in certain part of the state a very small section of educated and comparatively well to do Muslim population are living and another section of Muslims is very poor.²⁴

Table-3

Muslim Population

Year	Total Population	Muslim Population	% of Muslim Population
1901	173325	45323	26.15%
1911	229613	65953	28.72%

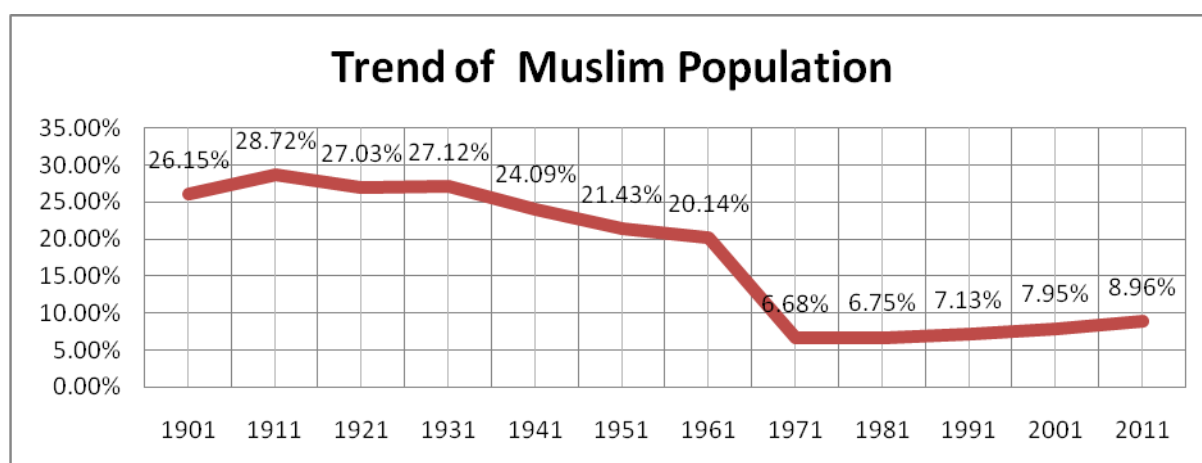
²³ Report of Tripura Minorities Co-Operative Development Corporation Limited

²⁴ Source-Status of Women in Tripura by-Mr. Ratan Chakraborty and Ms. Minakshi Sen Bandyopadhyay

1921	304437	82288	27.03%
1931	382450	103720	27.12%
1941	513010	123570	24.09%
1951	639029	136950	21.43%
1961	1142005	230002	20.14%
1971	1556342	103962	6.68%
1981	2053058	138529	6.75%
1991	2757205	196495	7.13%
2001	3199203	254442	7.95%
2011	36,71,032	3, 28,870	8.96%

Source: Census of India (Tripura) 1991 & Trend of Muslim population (Census Reports 1931-1971)

Figure-1



However, large-scale demographic movement continues to take place in the NE, resulting in demographic imbalance in this state. At the time of partition, in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) the Hindu population was 25.6 percent. It got reduced to 14 percent in 1991 and today it has come down to terrible 7 percent. Most of the Bengali people of Tripura were originally inhabitant of East Pakistan.²⁵ During the first half of the freedom movement of Bangladesh (1971) total refugees in Tripura from Bangladesh were 1221754 as stated in the table-4.

²⁵ Roy, Bidhan, "Agartala Ekattuor"(2013)(Bengali), Parijat Prakashani, Dhaka-1100, p.11

Table-4

Total Refugees in Tripura from Bangladesh

Category	Population
Local people	1559000
Refugee	1221754
Total shibir	36
Unit	382
Peoples in shibir	692154
Personal adjustment	150000
With relative	389600
Sent outside the state	25440
Reserved	75000
Expenditure up to August	Rs. 45crores
Treatment	Total 360 doctors and health stuff

Source- Roy, Bidhan, "Agartala Ekattuor" (2013) (Bengali), Parijat Prakashani, Dhaka-1100, p.17

Even when Pakistan surrendered to Indian army, there were more than 16 lakh refugees in Tripura from Bangladesh. However, large-scale demographic movement continues to take place in the NE, resulting in demographic imbalance in this state. At the time of partition, in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) the Hindu population was 25.6 percent. It got reduced to 14 percent in 1991 and today it has come down to terrible 7 percent. Most of the Bengali people of Tripura were originally inhabitant of East Pakistan.²⁶

However, this demographic change influences the life of the people. Their number reduced and the Muslims became backward in this state. They are backward socially, economically and politically.

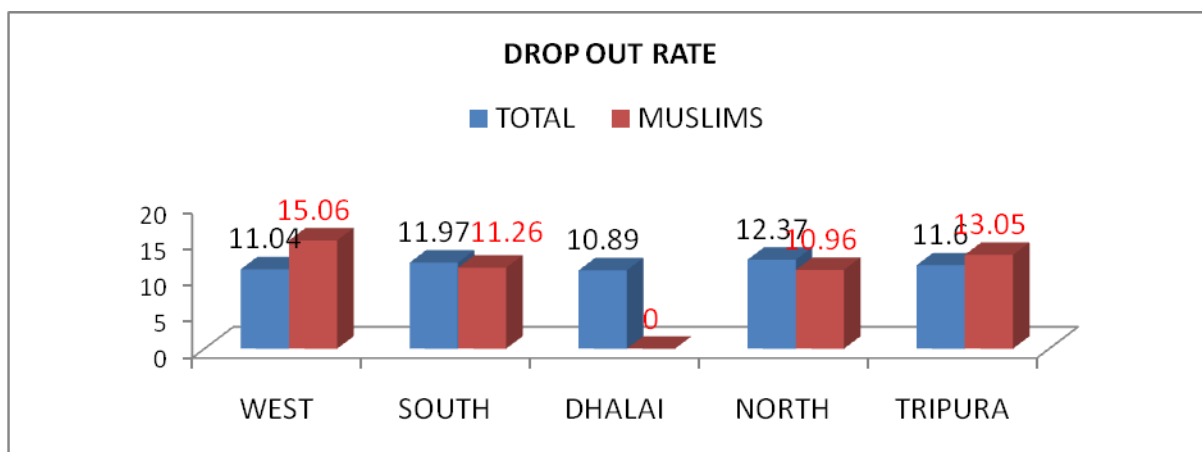
Educational Scenario

²⁶ Roy, Bidhan, "Agartala Ekattuor"(2013)(Bengali), Parijat Prakashani, Dhaka-1100, p.11

Owing to lack of education, the Indian Muslims lagged far behind in every walk of life.²⁷ Due to lack of high qualifications, Muslims do not get jobs in many fields in comparisons with others. Muslims are found little in professional, vocational and scientific courses. Madrassa education is one which follows traditional curricula.

Dropout rate in class I-X among the Muslims is 74.27 percent in govt. schools compared to National Average of 62.58 percent.²⁸

Figure-2



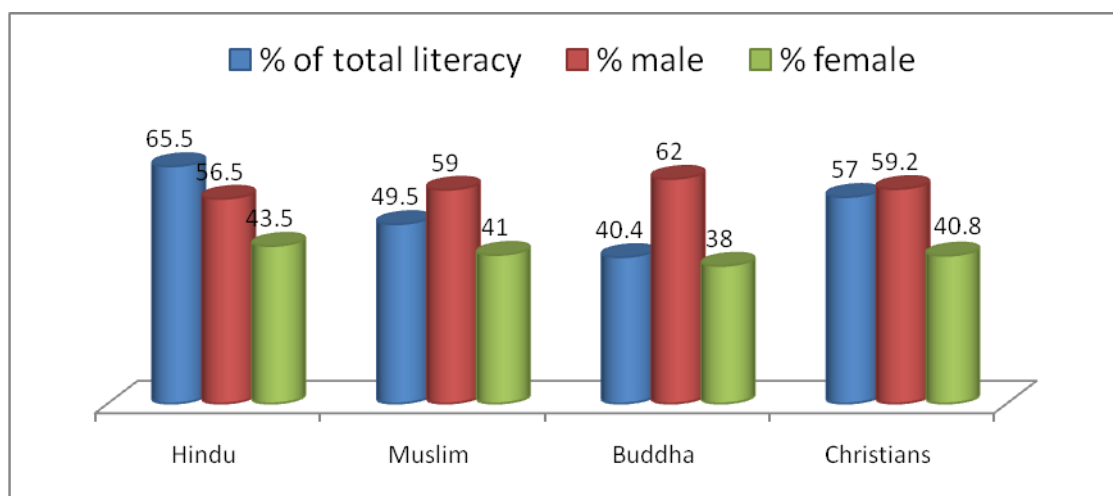
SOURCE-GOI: Annual work plan and budget on MDM 2007-08

The literacy rate among the Muslims is 49.5%. Male literacy rate is 59% and female literacy rate is 41%. Muslim literacy is lower than General literacy rate (65.5%). Their female literacy in compare to male is insignificant.

²⁷ A Research Journal of South Asian Studies Vol. 27, No. 1, January-June 2012, p.2

²⁸ Ranganath Misra Committee report

Figure-3



Source-Census 2001

In Tripura Muslims students' participation is low in higher education. In each college, it is seen that the number of Muslim student is very low. Girls' position in colleges is less than 1.5% where boys' position is 3.6%.

Table-5

Muslims Student's Enrolment in Colleges

Total Students			Muslims Students			
Total-	Male	Female	Total-	Male	Female	%
29607	17861	11746	1445	1066	379	4.8

Source-data collected from 22 colleges

In professional colleges, it is seen that the number of Muslim participation is very low i.e. 1.04% and girl's position is 0.3% of the total.

Table-6

Muslims students in professional colleges

Name of colleges	Total students			Muslims			
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	%
Govt. College of Arts and Crafts	37	92	129	01	01	2	
Govt. Law College	86	74	160	3	0	3	
Womens Polytechnic, Hapania		76	76		1	1	

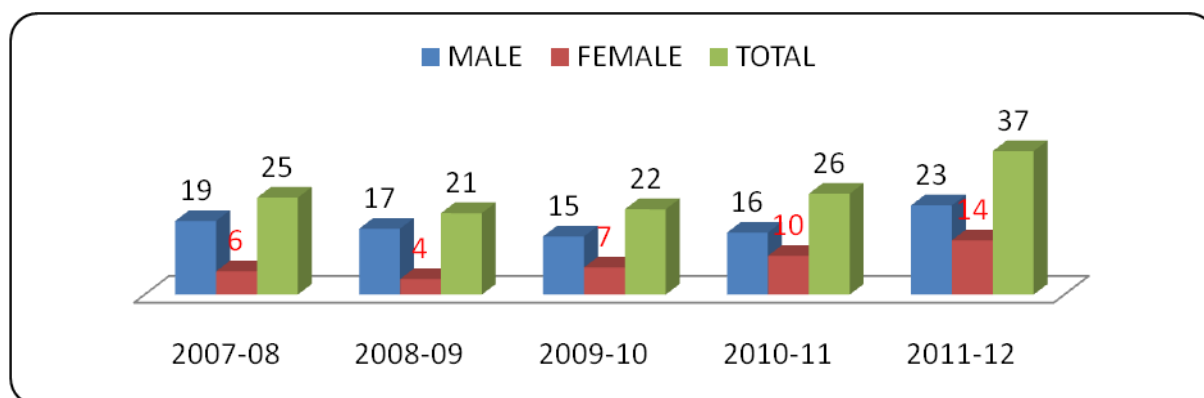
Dhalai District Politechnic	182	52	234	2		2	
Tripura Institute of Technology	660	233	893	5	3	8	
1.Degree Level Students	388	229	617	5	2	7	
2.Diploma Level Students							
Govt. College of Art and Craft	87	92	179	1		1	
Total	1440	848	2288	17	7	24	1.04

Source-data collected from 22 colleges

Student participation in university proves their backwardness in education. The number of Muslim girl participation is lower than the boys.

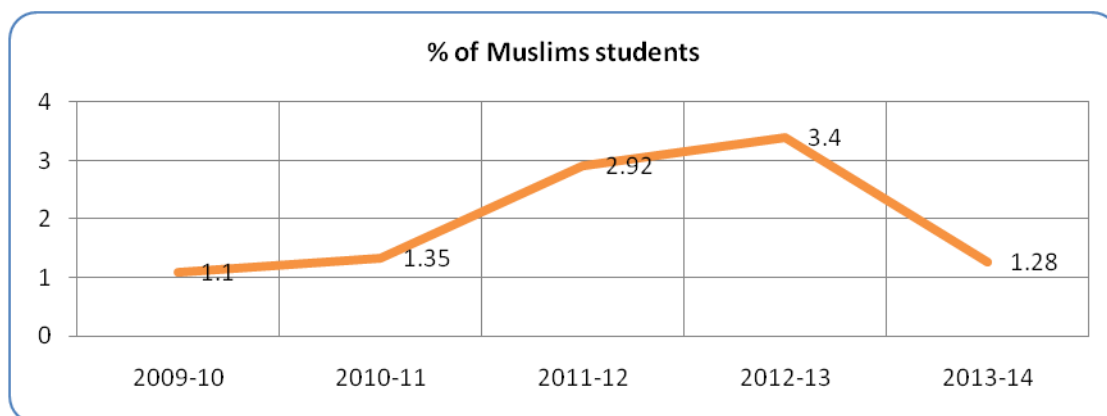
Figure-4

Muslims students' enrolment in Tripura University



Source-SPIO, T.U. 2012

Figure-5



Source-SPIO, T.U. 2012

From the above discussion, it is seen that educationally Muslims are backward both at school level and also at higher level. Due to the lack of education Muslim participation in economic and political field is also negligible.

Muslim representation is lower than the total candidates and female representation is less than half of males representation.

Table-7

Muslims Representation in Professional Courses

Qualification	Total in Tripura			Muslim		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
BE Civil	293	77	370	1	0	1
BE Electrica	227	118	345	3	0	3
BE Mechani	253	45	298	2	0	2
PG civil	17	3	20	0	0	0
PG Electrica	9	3	12	0	0	0
PG Mechani	7	0	7	0	0	0
Diplo Civil	423	40	463	6	0	6
Diplo Electri	247	39	286	5	0	5
Diplo Mech	345	15	360	3	0	3
ITI	1845	158	2003	8	0	8
MBBS	47	25	72	0	0	0
BDS	42	19	61	0	0	0
Vetenary	23	11	34	0	0	0
BAMS	37	10	47	2	0	2
BHMS	49	32	81	1	0	1
Agri BSc	77	24	101	0	1	1
Agri MSc	31	15	46	0	0	0
Lawyer	124	30	154	0	0	0
BBA	118	36	54	0	1	1
BCA	139	44	183	1	0	1
MBA	109	28	137	1	0	1
MCA	41	21	62	1	0	1
Chemical eng	0	1	1	0	0	0

Total	4503	794	5197	34	2	36
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Source - SPIO, Employment Exchange, 2011

It means that girls are not getting sufficient education and opportunities in the society.

Muslims female literacy is lesser than the male literacy rate. In rural area, the number is more pitiable.

Table-8

Literacy among the Muslims in rural and urban areas

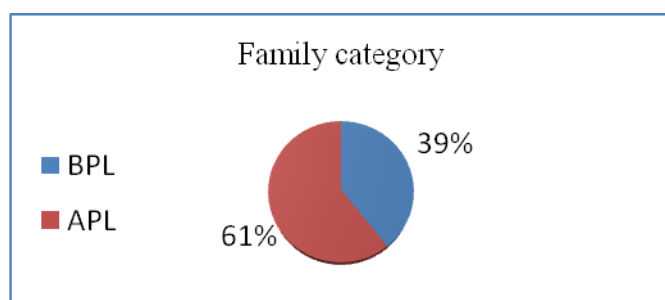
Total Muslim Population		Literate	%	Male	%	Female	%
Total	254442	125973	49.50951	74356	59.02535	51617	40.97465
Rural	236748	115605	48.8304	68369	59.14018	47236	40.85982
Urban	17694	10368	58.59613	5987	57.74498	4381	42.25502

SOURCE-CENSUS 2001

Economic Scenario

Tripura being a hilly state, the cultivated area is not much compared to the other states of India. There are no huge industries where people would get employment opportunities and other economic facilities. Most of the people have to depend on govt. services. Many of them are depending on agriculture, forest like rubber plantation, small business, export, import, daily labour etc. Families belonging to Below Poverty Line in Tripura among the Muslims are more (34.44%) than the National Average of (26.10%).²⁹

Figure -6



It is found in both the blocks that total number of among the Muslim community is 39% and APL listed is 61%.

²⁹ Ranganath Misra Commission Report

The numbers of educated unemployed among the Muslims girls are very low.

Table-9

Unemployment among the Muslims

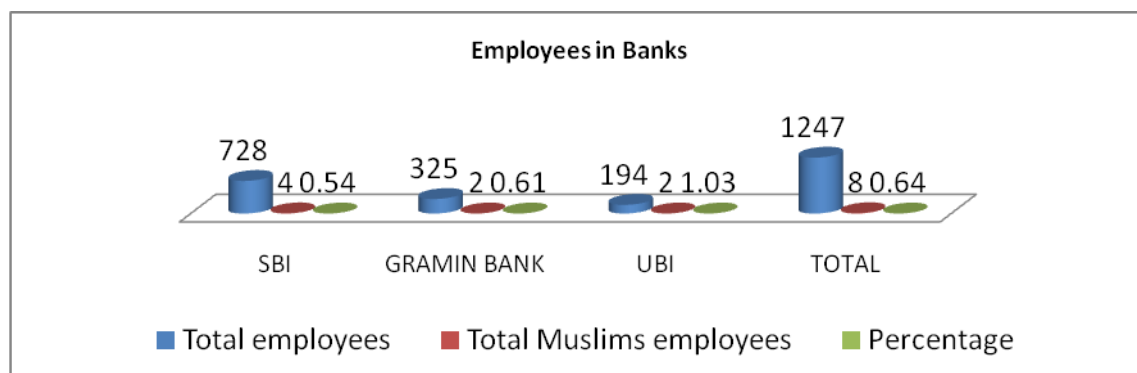
UR	Male	Female	Total
	175224	115012	290236
Muslim	Male	Female	Total
	14846	5693	20539

Source-employment exchange report, 2012

Even their number is microscopic in the field of engineering, medical and other professional fields.

- Tripura state has sent 14 IAS officers to Indian administration, serving across the country, out of which none was Muslims.³⁰ There are 4 TCS officer and one TPS officer of Muslim community in Tripura.

Figure-7



³⁰ Muslims in Indian Administration : Towards Inclusion, By Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary-www.google.com (22-01-2014)

Figure-8

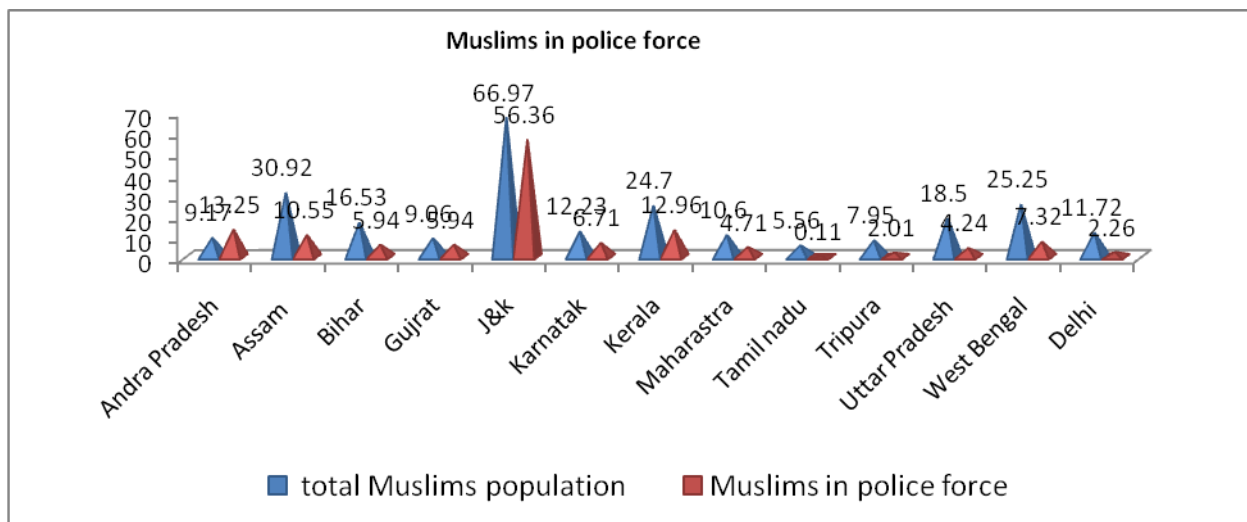
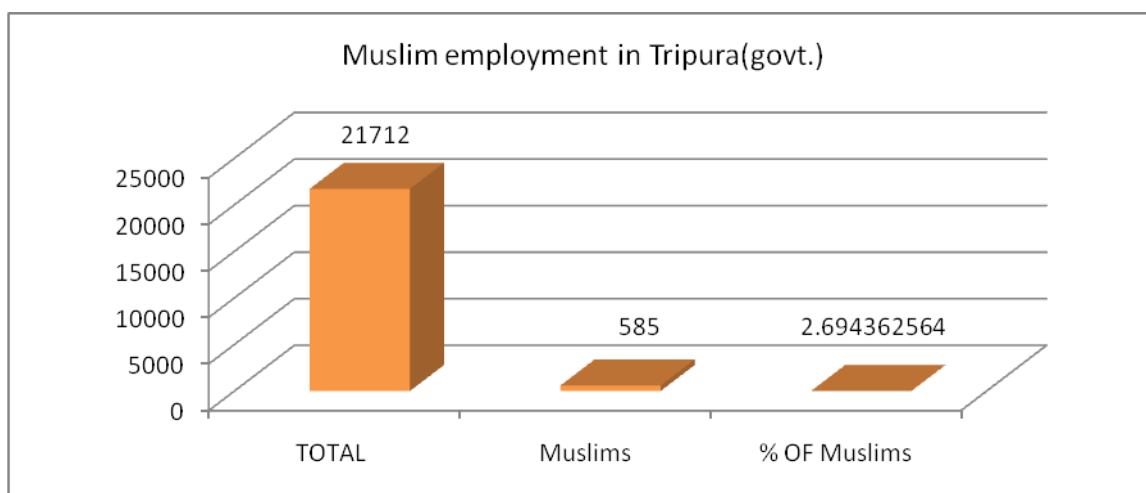


Figure-9



Source-Surveyed by most of the govt. departments

The figure shows the total employment situation of the Muslims of Tripura. Muslim’s share in govt. services is found only 2.69% where their population share is almost 9% in Tripura.

Business

- In Business: (Sonamura) above 76% Muslims around the market
- It is seen that out of 102 medicine sellers, only 18 belongs to Muslims. Out of 95 pharmacists, the number of Muslims is 18.

- Out of 82 stalls at Dainik bazaar, Muslims stalls are 10. In the main market, out of 108 stalls, 36 belong to Muslims. In case of small business, out of 410 stalls, Muslims have 125. Out of 36 fisheries, the number of Muslims is 5. However, Muslims have 26.28% share in business.
- Muslims' share in other fields under those villages are shown below-
 - In govt. services 2.5%
 - In foreign countries 640
 - Other states 285
 - Driving profession-125
 - Car business-128

In Kamalpur market the Muslims have low share in the business. Through the research it was seen that out of 982 stalls, Muslims have only four stalls and in Manikbhandar market, out of 495 stalls, Muslims have 12 stalls. It shows their participation in business is very low. Out of 9% population, 1.5% has been staying outside the state.

- Loan sanctioned for Muslims community through banks-

UBI Tripura

Total-274989.11

Muslims-15384.35

% of Muslims- 5.95%

Gramin Bank Tripura

Total-118934

Muslims-1367

% of Muslims- 1.14%

Muslim Women's backwardness

It is seen in the above discussion that the position of Muslim women is negligible in respect of males of this community. In the field of education, employment, politics and working participation, Muslim women reside at the level of ground. As per census data literacy rate is not so bad among female population of Tripura in comparison with Indian standard. But lower in comparison within Tripura. Girls' position in colleges is less than 1.5% where boys' position is 3.6%. In professional colleges, the number of Muslims participation is very low or 1.04% and girl's position is 0.3% of the total.

Muslims of Tripura are generally spread throughout the state. There are variations in terms of language, cultural activities, and ethnic differentiations. So due to these diversities, they have never been able to integrate themselves as a united community.

Recently, 124 villages and 27 wards of Nagar Panchayet have been re-identified where 20% and more minority population reside for multi-purpose development.

Election Commission of Tripura reported that presently (2013) there are no candidates in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha from Muslim community and only 2 male candidates are in the Vidhan Sabha from the minority Muslims. Since the formation of this state, no women candidate from the Muslim community elected as MP or MLA.

The Muslim participation in assembly election from 1952 to 2013 is 43 from Congress, 31 from CPI (M) and 74 from others or neutral party.

- Total contesting candidates from Muslims (assembly election)

Table -10

Year	Congress	CPIM	Others
1952	5	3	10
1957	6	2	9
1962	4	4	5
1967	3	1	1
1972	3	2	4
1977	3	3	8
1981	1		
1983	3	2	3
1988	2	2	2
1993	2	2	8
1998	3	2	3
2003	2	3	8
2008	3	2	13
2013	3	3	
total	43	31	74

Source- Magazine of Tripura Darphan, 2013

The Muslim participation in different blocks are not equal to their population. In some blocks, it is seen that Muslims participation is nil.

Table-11

Panchayet (Election, 2009, Contesting Candidate)

Gram Panchayet Election, 2009						
23 Nos. Block	No. of GP	NO. of Contesting Candidate	NO. of Muslims	% of Musli ms	Male	Female
Total	511	10899	1276	11.7	712	398

Source-Election Commission, Directorate of Panchayet, Govt. of Tripura

Women are getting more participation opportunity to contest as 1/3rd has been reserved for them.

Table -12

Panchayet (Contesting Candidates, 2009 under three tiers)

Total Contesting Candidates, 2009					
Sl No	Name of Bodies	Total GP/PS/Z P	Total Seats	Total Contesting Candidates	Total Women Candidates
1	Gram Panchayet	511	5295	10983	4060
2	Panchayet Amity	299	299	683	269
3	Zilla Parishad	82	82	208	54
Total		892	5676	11874	4383

Source-Election Commission, Directorate of Panchayet, Govt. of Tripura

Total Muslims contesting candidate in three tiers Panchayet is very low.

Table -13

Panchayet (Minority Muslims-contesting candidates, 2009)

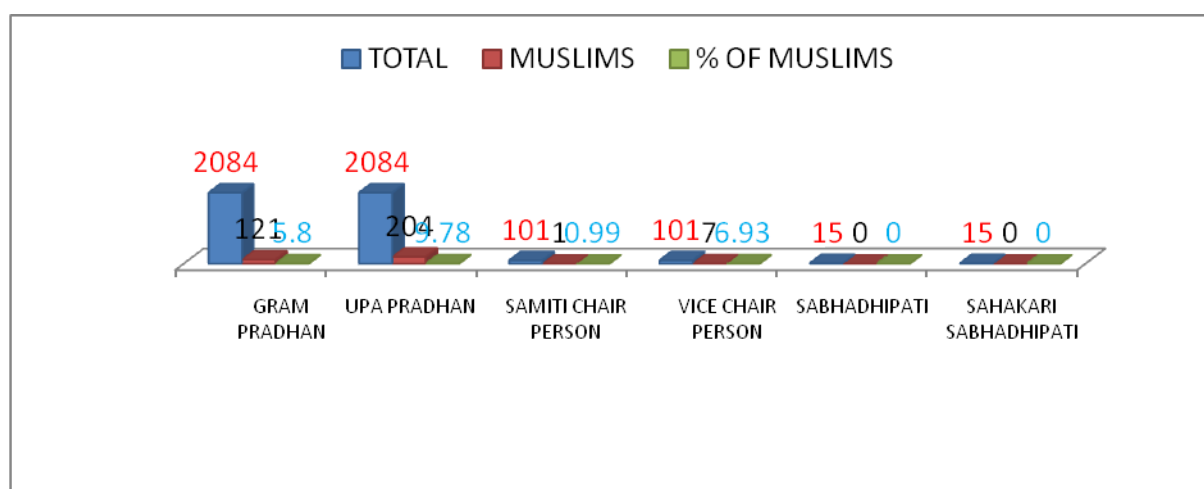
Minority Muslims-contesting candidates from all party, 2009

Sl. No	Name of the Bodies	Total Muslims contesting candidate	Male	Female
1	Zilla Parishad	20	11	9
2	Panchayet Samity	65	43	22
3	Gram Panchayet	1276	712	398
	Total	1361	766	429

Source-Election Commission, Directorate of Panchayet, Govt. of Tripura

Muslims holding the office of Pradhan in Three-tier Panchayet in Tripura is lower than the other communities.

Figure-11



It is clear that Muslims women participation in the decision making bodies is lower than Muslims male.

Table-14

Muslim Pradhan and UpaPradhan Panchayet Election, 2009

Pradhan			Upa Pradhan		
Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
41	28	13	85	88	07

Source-Election commission, Directorate of Panchayet, govt. of Tripura

Less number of participation of Muslims in Panchayet and women's poor condition gallantly exemplify that Muslims are victimized politically.

Table no. 15

Muslims Members in Three-tier Panchayet (1994, 1998, 2004)

1994						
Name of three tiers	Women	Men	Total	Muslim		Total
				Women	Men	
Gram Panchayats (525)	1809 (33.24%)	3618 (66.66%)	5427	119 (6.58%)	N.A.	N.A.
Panchayat Samiti (16)	67 (34.18%)	130	197	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Zilla Parishad (3)	24 (34.28%)	46 (65.71%)	70 (100.00)	01 (4.17%)	01 (2.17%)	02 (2.86%)
1999						
Gram Panchayat- 535.	1895 (33.33%)	3790 (66.67%)	5685 (100.00)	159 (8.39%)	438 (11.56%)	597 (10.50%)
Panchayat Samiti-- 23.	105 (35.44%)	194 (64.88%)	299 (100.00)	06 (5.71%)	15 (7.73%)	21 (7.02%)
Zilla Parishad--4.	28 (34.14%)	54 (65.85%)	82 (100.00)	02 (7.14%)	02 (3.70%)	04 (4.88%)
2004						
Gram Panchayat- 513.	1785 (33.35%)	3567	5352 (100.00)	147 (8.23%)	394 11.04%	541 10.11%
Panchayat Samiti-- 23.	118 (35.45%)	179	297	11 (10.38%)	13 7.26%	24 8.08%
Zilla Parishad-- 4.	32 (34.5%)	57	89	03 (9.37%)	02 3.51%	05 5.26%

Source-Election Commission, Directorate of Panchayet, Govt. of Tripura

Muslim Representatives for Gram Panchayet under few Blocks shows that Muslims women representation is very low.

Table no-16

Muslim Representatives for Gram Panchayet under few Blocks

Sl.No..	Name of the Block	Women Elected	Muslim Women & % of total women
1	Dukli	17	04 (23.52)
2	Jirania	93	07 (7.53)
3	Bishalgarh	32	14 (43.75)
4	Kathalia	21	13 (61.90)
5	Boxonagar	23	19 (82.61)
6	Melaghar	23	17 (73.91)
Total in West district		160	123 (76.87)
1	Gournagar	55	28 (50.91)
2	Salema	11	04 (36.36)
3	Panisagar	15	05 (33.33)
4	Kadamtala	61	26 (42.62)
Total in North district		142	63 (43.37)
1	Matabari	14	07 (50.00)
2	Kakraban	08	02 (25.00)
3	Rajnagar	03	01 (33.33)
Total in South district		25	10 (40.00)

Source-Election Commission, Directorate of Panchayet, Govt. of Tripura

In State Legislative Assembly (Tripura) (1952—2003), it was seen that women position was very poor.

Table -17

Representation of Women in the State Legislative Assembly (Tripura) (1952—2003)

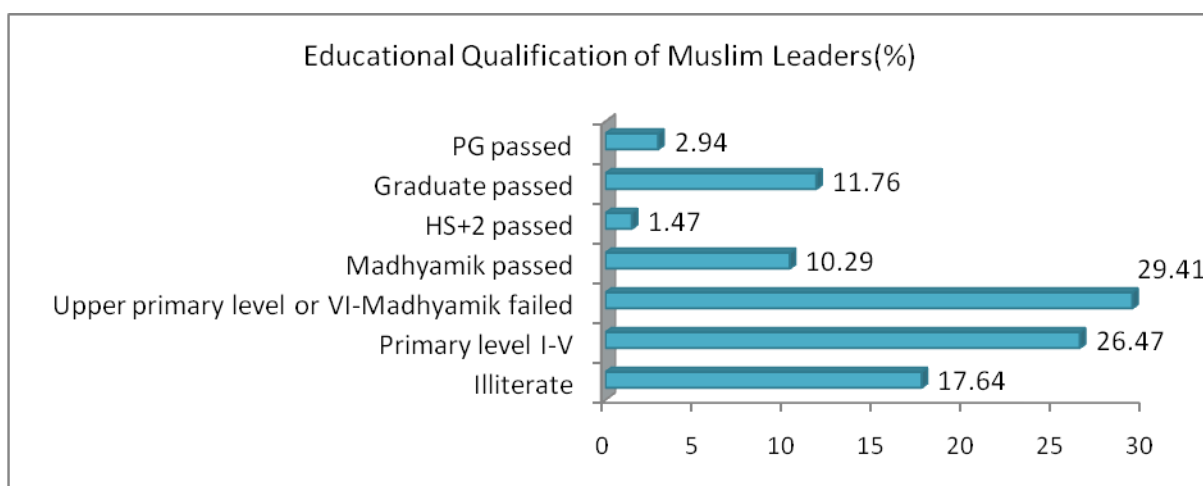
Year	Legislative Assembly	Number of Seats	Number of elected women	Percentage to the total
1952	Electoral College	30	1	3.3
1952	Tripura Regional Council	30	-	-
1962	Tripura Regional Council	30	1	3.3
1967	State Legislature	30	-	-
1972	State Legislature	60	2	3.3

1977	State Legislature	60	1	1.6
1983	State Legislature	60	3	5.00
1988	State Legislature	60	2	3.2
1993	State Legislature	60	3	5.00
1998	State Legislature	60	2	3.2
2003	State Legislature	60	1	1.6

Source: State Election Department, Agartala

A survey on Muslim politicians like MLA, MP, Panchayet and Nagar Panchayet members show their level of education.

Figure-12



Political participation needs good education to understand the policy and its necessity. Education makes people conscious about their rights and duties. The policy makers and the leaders who take part in the decision making should be qualified. But among the Muslims leaders in Tripura, it is seen that only a few of them are high qualified. It deprives Muslims from gaining opportunities favorable to them both at national and local level.

Conclusion

The above discussion give a clear picture of the Muslims community of Tripura. Demographic change affected the progress of Muslims in Tripura. Muslims of Tripura are backward and their backwardness is found in social, political, cultural and economic fields. Only govt. initiatives cannot make remedial measures for their condition. If the whole

community cannot change their own condition with the govt. steps, their condition will remain unchanged. Muslim bureaucrats and high officials should come forward to support and give assistance to the backward Muslims. State Govt. and Central Govt. should implement those policies and programmes as suggested by Sachar Committee, Ranganath Misra Committee and Gopal Singh Committee.

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